



# RHODE ISLAND COLLEGE HANDBOOK OF POLICIES, PRACTICES, AND REGULATIONS

## Chapter 3

### Academic Policies and Procedures

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All questions and comments may be directed to Michael E. Smith,  
Assistant to the President, at (401) 456-8004 or [MSMITH@RIC.EDU](mailto:MSMITH@RIC.EDU).

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### 3.1 ADMISSIONS

#### 3.1.1 Undergraduate Degree Candidates

Admission of all undergraduate candidates is authorized by the Office of Undergraduate Admissions. Students may be admitted as freshmen (traditional, Preparatory Enrollment Program, or performance-based admission), transfers, second-degree or second-major candidates, readmitted students or international students. Admissions policy is formulated by the Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Admissions Policy, a Council Committee consisting of faculty, administrators and students. Admission guidelines are reviewed and approved on an annual basis.

##### (a) Freshman Admission

**Traditional Freshmen:** Freshman admission is designed for students who possess a diploma from an accredited secondary school or expect to receive one before enrolling at the College and can present substantial evidence of the ability to do college work. This category includes a secondary school program or at least 18 college preparatory units, appropriate level of academic achievement, standardized test scores, essay and counselor recommendation. The majority of students offered admission rank in the top 50% of their graduating class.

**Preparatory Enrollment Program (PEP):** A limited number of recent graduates from Rhode Island high schools who have the ability and potential to succeed in college with appropriate academic support services, but who do not meet the College's criteria for regular admission, may be selected to participate in PEP. Preference in selection is given to low-income students, who are first-generation college students, and to students with disabilities evidencing academic need. Students who are selected must participate in two academic phases: a six-week component during the spring of the senior year in high school and a seven-week summer residential component of intensive academic study.

**Performance-based admission (PBA):** Performance-based admission is an option for adult students with non-traditional credentials and who have little or no college credit. Students offered acceptance design a special plan of study with a program advisor before the beginning of the first semester. Students must complete the plan of study with a minimum grade point average to be allowed to continue as a regular degree student.

*Note:* Rhode Island College will accept a high school equivalency diploma (GED) in lieu of a regular diploma if the applicant has achieved superior scores on the GED tests. All other applicable admission requirements must be fulfilled. Home-schooled students whose curriculum is not from an accredited agency must submit GED scores as part of the application process for freshman admission.

**(b) Transfer Admission**

Transfer admission is offered to students who have had a successful college experience at one or more institutions. To be considered for transfer admission, a minimum of 24 earned credit hours in a diversified program of study is required. Transfer students with 24 – 29 earned college credits must have a minimum overall grade point average of 2.25 for consideration or a 2.00 with 30 or more earned credits. Students with fewer than 24 transferable credits will be evaluated according to the standards for freshman admission. Transfer credit is usually awarded for courses completed at a regionally accredited college in which the student has achieved a minimum grade of C; however Rhode Island College reserves the right of final judgment on any such decision. Students who have been taking courses at Rhode Island College as non-degree students may qualify for admission as internal transfers, provided they have the requisite number of credits and a satisfactory GPA.

The Joint Admissions Agreement (JAA) is an agreement between the Community College of Rhode Island and Rhode Island College that enables students to move efficiently from the associate's degree level to the baccalaureate degree level. This plan allows students to graduate from CCRI with an Associate's in General Studies with 60 credits that will be applied directly to a specified bachelor's degree program at Rhode Island College. Students sign up prior to 30 credits at CCRI, they must select an approved JAA Transition Plan, graduate with a minimum of a 2.4 GPA and complete their Associates Degree within five years of their enrollment in this program. They are required to meet with advisors at CCRI as well as at RIC.

**(c) Second-Degree Candidates**

Persons holding baccalaureate degrees from regionally accredited institutions may apply to Rhode Island College for a second undergraduate degree. This policy assumes completion of all previous baccalaureate requirements, including General Education and a 2.00 cumulative grade point average (higher for some programs). Candidates for a second degree must successfully complete a minimum of 30 semester hours at Rhode Island College, no more than 9 credits of which may be completed as a non-degree student. At least 15 of the 30 hours must be taken in the department of the program or major. A plan of study is developed with the academic advisor as part of the application process and is approved by the chair and dean prior to admission. Course/credit proficiency, field experience, prior learning credit, or transfer credit may not be counted towards the 30-credit-hour requirement. Admission to a second degree program does not guarantee admission to those programs with a secondary admission process (i.e. education, nursing, social work).

**(d) Second Major Program**

Students may not earn two separate B.A. degrees or two B.S. degrees from Rhode Island College. Students with an undergraduate degree from Rhode Island College will pursue a second major rather than a second degree if the degree to be earned is the same as the first degree. A plan of study is developed as part of the application process. There is no limit of the number of non-degree courses which may be completed prior to application.

**(e) Candidates for Readmission**

Undergraduate degree candidates in good academic standing who withdraw from the College will be eligible to re-register without completing a formal application for readmission, unless they have taken courses at another institution during their absence or have course credit(s) more than ten years old. Otherwise, the student must make application as a readmit student.

**(f) International Students**

The policy of the College is to consider for admission international students who have the appropriate academic credentials and sufficient mastery of English as demonstrated by required acceptable scores on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). International credentials must be translated and evaluated by an approved agency and students must submit a Declaration of Finances Form before an admissions decision can be made.

**(g) Admission to Professional Programs**

Undergraduate students who intend to major in certain programs of study are admitted to the College on the strength of the high school record (for freshmen) or the college experience (transfer candidates), but each student must also submit a separate application to the department involved, which may have additional admission requirements.

The admission requirements for each major are listed under the individual departments in the *College Catalog*. This category includes the following programs: the Bachelor of Fine Arts (B.F.A.) degree in studio art; the Bachelor of Music in Performance (B.M.); all programs leading to teacher certification; majors in nursing, social work and chemical dependency/addiction studies.

**3.1.2 Graduate Degree Candidates**

Graduate students are admitted by the office of the dean which oversees the program. Persons holding a baccalaureate degree who are not candidates for an advanced degree may take some courses in a non-matriculating status.

**3.1.3 Non-Degree Undergraduates**

Individuals who wish to explore college, pursue an interest, or take a course for enrichment may register for regular college courses but must satisfy all pre-requisites for these courses. Individuals must contact the Records Office for registration information.

**(a) Visiting Students**

- i.* College: Students in good academic standing at other accredited institutions of higher education may attend Rhode Island College on a part-time and space-available basis as a non-degree undergraduate.

- ii. High School: High school students may register on a part-time basis as non-degree undergraduates for appropriate courses offered at the College. Interested students should discuss this option with a high school guidance counselor and the Admissions office.
  - iii. National Student Exchange Student: The National Student Exchange Program includes over 190 four-year colleges and universities that allow undergraduate students to study for up to one academic year at a college or university in another part of the United States and several U.S. Territories. The program embraces social and cultural experiences as well as academics, offering an opportunity for further self-exploration and examination of educational objectives. In order to qualify for participation, a student should (1) be a full-time student at the home campus, (2) be in the sophomore or junior year during the exchange, and (3) have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.50 at the time an application is submitted.
- (b) Rhode Island Teacher Education Program (RITE)
  - (c) Certification in Nonprofit Studies
  - (d) Case Management Certification (Social Work)
  - (e) Early Enrollment Program: Through the Early Enrollment Program some high school students may take Rhode Island College courses in their own high schools. Degree credit is earned and can be transferred to other institutions. Students are cautioned that not all institutions of higher education accept early enrollment credits and are advised to contact the college or university to which they intend to apply prior to registering in the Early Enrollment Program.

## 3.2 **ACADEMIC ADVISEMENT**

### 3.2.1 **Responsibilities for Advising**

Academic advisement is crucial to a student's success at Rhode Island College. The College believes that the student and the College share responsibility for the overall success of the advising process.

Student Responsibilities:

- (a) The completion of degree requirements is a student's responsibility. Any modification a student wishes to make to established requirements must be approved in writing by the appropriate authority or authorities.
- (b) Students should determine their faculty advisor assignment through their RIC online accounts, the academic department, or OASIS.

- (c) Students must consult their advisor(s) regularly throughout the academic year, especially prior to changing majors, dropping/adding courses, and registering for succeeding semesters.
- (d) Students should officially declare a curriculum/major as early in their academic career as possible. Students should also formally declare any changes to the curriculum/major. The *Change of Curriculum/Major/Concentration/Minor Form* should be completed and signed by the department chair of the new program. At this time an advisor is assigned. This form is then submitted to the Records Office by the student for each such change.
- (e) Students should retain all official documents and communications from the College for future reference.

#### College Responsibilities:

- (a) Academic advising is a responsibility of faculty, academic departments and the Office of Academic Support and Information Services (OASIS).
- (b) Advisors are assigned by and accountable to department chairs and are available at least during scheduled office hours or by appointment.
- (c) Department chairs or their representatives will have information about degree programs and requirements in specific areas.
- (d) The institution is responsible for providing timely, accurate, and adequate academic information to students through printed materials and faculty advisors.
- (e) The institution, through the Records Office, is responsible for monitoring student progress and reporting on that progress to students. Transcripts and degree audits are available to faculty and departments. In addition, the grades of all new undergraduate students and students with academic deficiencies are reported to the OASIS.
- (f) Initial advising of entering undergraduate students takes place during orientation in conjunction with OASIS. Subsequent advising of students who have declared a major is the responsibility of the academic departments/programs or OASIS.

#### **3.2.2 Resources for Advising**

- (a) Faculty Advisors

All matriculated undergraduate students who have declared a major are informed of the advising process at the orientation program and subsequently assigned an advisor by the department.

Students who do not attend orientation will be assigned an advisor by the major department.

Students who intend to enter a teacher certification program (other than secondary education), but who have not yet been formally admitted, will be assigned to OASIS.

Students in the secondary education curriculum are assigned an advisor in their major department.

All matriculated undergraduate students who have declared a major to the Records Office are assigned a faculty advisor in the department of the declared major. If students change their advisor(s), the advisor portion of the *Change of Curriculum/Major/Concentration/Minor Form* should be changed by the new advisor.

Undergraduates who have not yet declared a major are advised by OASIS (see below).

All new graduate students are assigned an advisor by the department in which their program is located when they are recommended for acceptance.

(b) Office of Academic Support and Information Services (OASIS)

OASIS provides academic advising for students who have not yet declared a major, conducts workshops for faculty/staff and students, and serves as a source of referrals for students who are considering changing programs. Questions concerning advising should be referred to OASIS or to an appropriate dean.

(c) *Rhode Island College Catalog*

The *Catalog* contains descriptions of undergraduate and graduate academic policies as well as outlines of degree requirements and course descriptions. Students are encouraged to read the *College Catalog* carefully.

Students are normally bound by the requirements in force when the student enters degree candidacy. Students should retain a copy of this *Catalog* for future reference.

Every effort is made to ensure that the *College Catalog* is as complete and accurate as possible at the time of publication; however, notice should be taken of the following disclaimers that are included with the publication:

*"This Catalog was prepared on the basis of information available at the time of publication. Therefore, specific statements concerning fees, dates, course offerings, admission requirements, financial aid practice and policies, graduation requirements, and other procedures or policies may be subject to change without notice."*

*Each step of the educational process, from admission through graduation, requires continuing review and appropriate approval by College officials. The College, therefore, reserves the right to change the requirements contained*

*in this bulletin, to determine whether a student has satisfactorily met the requirements for admission or graduation, and to reject any applicant for admission for any reason the College determines to be material to the applicant's qualifications to pursue higher education.”*

(d) Semester Course Bulletins

Before each term, the College publishes a course schedule listing the course offerings and registration procedures for that term. The bulletin also contains statements of significant academic policies, a description of the general education requirements, and other pertinent information.

(e) *Transfer Guide for Students*

This guide, prepared by the Office of Higher Education, contains the policies for articulation and transfer agreed to by RIC, CCRI and URI. The *Guide* includes procedures relating to articulation between programs and transfer of students from one college or university to another. In addition, the guide is designed to show students how courses offered at CCRI are accepted at RIC and URI. College-level credit earned at RIC is transferable to CCRI or URI as earned credit and *vice versa*. The guide is available online at [www.ribghe.org/transferguide.htm](http://www.ribghe.org/transferguide.htm)

(f) *Joint Admissions Agreement* (See section 3.1.1 (b))

(g) Departmental Curriculum Checklists

Many departments produce curriculum checklists outlining specific degree requirements. These checklists are available in the particular department.

(h) General Education Program Checklist

The College has produced a pamphlet describing the requirements of the general education program. This pamphlet can be obtained either from OASIS or from the Office of the Associate Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences.

### **3.3 COURSE CREDIT -- USES AND TYPES**

A student shall receive credit only for a course in which that student has been properly registered.

#### **3.3.1 Transfer Credits Earned Prior to Matriculation at Rhode Island College**

Transfer credit is usually granted for courses completed at a regionally accredited institution in which the student has achieved a grade of 2.0 (C) or better; however, Rhode Island College reserves the right of final judgment on any such decision. In some cases, credits transferred from other institutions may count as elective credit at Rhode Island College but may not necessarily be applied toward the student's major, minor, or general education requirements. Official transcripts for credits earned prior to matriculation at Rhode Island College must be submitted at the time of application in order to be considered for transfer credit. Admission of all undergraduate degree candidates is authorized by the undergraduate admissions office. Students may be admitted as traditional freshmen, under the performance-based admission option, as transfer students, second degree candidates, readmitted students or international students.

Courses presented for transfer from colleges other than Rhode Island College become part of the student's permanent record, but no quality points are assigned. These courses are not used to determine the grade point average.

Degree credit may be earned through other means as outlined in the *College Catalog* and administered through the Admissions Office and the offices of the academic deans. (see Sections 3.3.7 and 3.3.8.)

#### **3.3.2 Credits Taken at Other Institutions After Matriculation at Rhode Island College**

A student desiring to receive credit towards graduation for courses taken at other institutions must, *before the work is undertaken*, have these courses approved by the chair of the department in which credit is sought. The student is responsible for securing the *Authorization of Credit Form* from the Records Office. This form must be completed and submitted to the Records Office prior to the beginning of the course. Credit for courses taken at other colleges will be treated as transfer credits (see Section 3.3.1).

To obtain transfer credit, a student must arrange to have an official transcript sent to the Rhode Island College Records Office from the institution that offered the course.

#### **3.3.3 Undergraduates Taking Graduate Courses**

##### **(a) For Graduate Credit**

Undergraduates may enroll in graduate courses with the approval of the department chair when:

- i. the semester in question would result in the completion of the bachelor's degree requirements, i.e., the student's final semester prior to graduation; or
- ii. the student needs nine or fewer credits for graduation.

In the event that the per-credit cost for graduate courses exceeds the general fee that the student pays as a full-time undergraduate student, the student shall pay the excess.

(b) For Undergraduate Credit

In certain circumstances, qualified undergraduate students who have earned at least 90 credit hours may be admitted, with documented consent of the instructor and the appropriate dean.

Undergraduates are not admitted to 600-level courses.

Courses cannot be counted for credit in satisfaction of both an undergraduate and graduate degree requirement.

### **3.3.4 Graduate Credit for Graduate Students Enrolled in 400-Level Courses**

Any graduate student enrolled in a 400-level course will be given graduate credit for that course. However, the matter of the applicability of such credit toward an individual student's graduate program rests with the advisor. Normally, not more than three 400-level courses may be included in a graduate student's approved Plan of Study.

### **3.3.5 Limit on Use of Credits (10-Year Rule)**

Upon re-admission to the College, Rhode Island College credit earned more than ten years prior to the date of re-admission will be treated as transfer credit and evaluated under the current transfer model.

At the discretion of the undergraduate admissions office, college credit more than ten years old from a college other than Rhode Island College may be accepted for transfer and applied toward graduation requirements. The chair of the student's major department will determine how the credit is to be applied in the student's curriculum.

Credits awarded by another college through special proficiency procedures are evaluated on an individual basis.

### **3.3.6 Repeating Courses**

Courses may be repeated only once. This policy applies to courses taken for undergraduate credit unless subject to restrictions within undergraduate programs.

The later grade for a repeated course will be calculated in the cumulative grade point average. In order for the GPA to be adjusted, courses must be repeated at Rhode Island College.

A student who wishes to enroll in a course for a third time must request permission to do so from the Academic Standing Committee prior to registering for the course. If the Academic Standing Committee approves the second repeat, the grade from the second repeat replaces the previous grade in calculating the GPA.

Once students have graduated, courses may not be repeated in order to obtain a higher grade on the transcript.

### **3.3.7 Proficiency Credit and Advanced Placement**

Students may increase their opportunities to pursue advanced work or may earn credits toward graduation through proficiency and advanced placement. Such credit is substituted for specified courses and is usually gained through appropriate scores on the following examinations which are administered by the College Board: Advanced Placement Tests, and the College Level Examination Program (CLEP) tests at both the Subject and General levels. CLEP tests are usually taken by returning adult students. A list of CLEP Tests accepted by the College can be found in the Transfer Guide at [www.ribghe.org/transferguide.htm](http://www.ribghe.org/transferguide.htm). All proficiency and advanced placement credit must be approved by the appropriate academic department. Further information is available from the Admissions Office.

Limited credits from a combination of proficiency credit and/or prior learning credit may be counted towards the credits needed for graduation.

### **3.3.8 Assessment of Prior Learning**

Undergraduate credit may be granted for prior college-level learning achieved through experience such as employer- or armed service-sponsored training, community service, self-education, relevant work assignments, or artistic development. Limited credit will be granted for documented learning only when such learning is clearly germane to the student's degree program but not for experience *per se*. The basis for the granting of credit will be a portfolio of documentation prepared by the student with the guidance of a faculty sponsor.

The College accepts the results of the CLEP (College Level Examination Program) and DANTES (armed services) testing programs and makes use of the guide prepared by the American Council on Education (ACE) and other sources which contain evaluations of a wide variety of training opportunities sponsored by the armed services, business, industry, and labor organizations.

Returning adult students, especially those who have been in the armed services, who have participated in apprenticeship or other extensive training programs, or who have held positions of responsibility, are encouraged to apply for assessment of their prior learning. Applications are available in the Office of the Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs.

### 3.3.9 Continuing Education Units (CEU)

The College offers non-credit continuing education experiences in which the participants may earn continuing education units (CEU). One CEU is earned through ten contact hours of participation in an organized continuing education experience under responsible sponsorship, capable direction, and qualified instruction. CEU's provide a way for adults, especially those in

the professional and technical occupations, to accumulate, to update, and to transfer a record of their educational experiences in non-credit activities. Students who wish to enroll in an educational experience offering continuing education units may range from an adult who has not finished high school to someone who has an advanced degree. For further information, contact the Director of Continuing Education and Summer Sessions.

Continuing education units may not be changed to academic course credits, and CEU's do not count as credit toward an undergraduate or graduate degree.

### 3.3.10 Independent and Directed Study

Guidelines for the administration of courses in independent or directed study are as follows:

- (a) Faculty seeking to supervise independent studies may do so only with the prior approval of the department chair and appropriate dean.
- (b) Students seeking to take independent study should complete an *Application for Independent Study and/or Directed Study Form*. (Applications are available from the Records Office, department chairs and deans. If the instructor and department chair approve, the application shall be forwarded to the appropriate dean along with a copy of the faculty's course assignments and load credit for both semesters of the academic year.
- (c) *Normally*, students shall complete an application for independent study by November 15 for the subsequent spring semester or April 15 for the subsequent summer sessions or fall semester.
- (d) No undergraduate student shall be permitted more than three or four credit hours of independent study per semester nor a total of more than six credit hours toward the total credits needed for the degree, except for programs where independent study is part of the degree plan.
- (e) Independent study may be offered on topics for which the department does not have a course offering or to provide for a required course which is not offered when necessary for the timely graduation of the student.

- (f) Ordinarily, independent study courses will be offered to undergraduates in the department of their major and to graduate students only in degree programs and in the department or field of that degree program.
- (g) Independent study is appropriate only for students with outstanding academic records and clear evidence of an academic interest that cannot be met in the traditional course structure. Normally, the independent study must be required in the student's program.

### **3.4 COURSE LOAD**

#### **3.4.1 Undergraduate**

Full time status is accorded those who enroll for 12 or more credit hours during the fall or spring semesters. *Normally*, no student shall be permitted to enroll for more than 18 credit hours in the fall or the spring semester. Maximum course load during the summer is eight credit hours per summer session, or a total of 12 or more credit hours combined in the two summer sessions. Any exception to this policy must be approved by the appropriate academic dean.

#### **3.4.2 Graduate**

In order to be considered full-time, students must register for at least nine credit hours during a fall or spring semester or six credit hours during a summer session, except as indicated below. Any student registered for fewer credit hours is considered part-time. Maximum loads are fifteen credit hours per semester and eight credit hours per summer session.

Students holding appointments as graduate assistants normally register for nine credits, but may register for a minimum of six credits and still be considered full-time. However, such students may not register for more than twelve credits without prior permission from the appropriate academic dean.

#### **3.4.3 School of Social Work**

The School of Social Work has special course load and residency requirements. Contact the school for complete information.

### 3.5 REGISTRATION

#### 3.5.1 Registration Period/Procedures

To be considered registered, a student must complete the process for enrolling in specific classes *and* pay all applicable College fees. Information regarding fees and payment arrangements is published in the *Catalog* and is also available from the Bursar's Office.

The Director of Records and staff of the Records Office are responsible for the administration of all aspects of the registration procedure for class enrollment.

(a) Degree Candidates (Undergraduate and Graduate)

Degree candidates are assigned a specific time to register and will not be allowed to register before their assigned time. Specific information regarding dates, times, and procedures is mailed to faculty and students several weeks prior to the registration period.

Registration Periods:

For the spring term	October - November
For the fall term	April - June
For the summer sessions	April - June

(b) Non-degree Students (Undergraduate and Graduate)

Non-degree students, both undergraduate (Continuing Education) and graduate, shall not register for classes until the late registration period for fall and spring terms. Non-degree students may register for summer sessions during the registration period from April to June.

#### 3.5.2 Late Registration

A late registration period is held for degree candidates who do not complete registration for classes during the regular registration period and for returning non-degree students, students dropped for non-payment of their bills, and non-degree students new to the College. Students eligible for late registration will be billed by the Bursar's Office. Students are assigned a specific time to register and will not be allowed to register before their assigned time. Specific information regarding dates and times, as well as procedures, are mailed to faculty and students several weeks prior to the late registration period.

Late Registration Periods:

For the spring term	January
For the fall term	August
For the summer sessions	First 2 days of each session

### **3.5.3 Pre-registration**

Some departments offer early registration for their courses. This procedure is usually restricted to departmental majors and allows students to enroll before the normal registration period. Departments will notify students of pre-registration opportunities. Students, however, must still register at their designated time for course work outside their major.

### **3.5.4 Course Registration Drops for Non-Payment of Bill**

A student's registration is not complete until payment or arrangements for payment of all financial obligations to the College have been made. Academic credit, degrees, grade reports, and transcripts are not granted to students who have not fulfilled all financial obligations to the College.

Students who do not pay their bills on time will be dropped from their classes. (Students offered financial aid should refer to the next paragraph.) This policy means their seat(s) will be available to other students. Students who pay their bills after being dropped shall have no guarantee that they will be able to re-register for the same course(s) and/or section(s) from which they were dropped. Re-registration resulting from non-payment is possible only during the late registration period, at which time payment is due in full.

Students who are offered financial aid awards to cover the cost of tuition and fees will be sent a bill reflecting the anticipated award. Students who decline the aid award (and, therefore, are liable for the tuition and fees themselves) will not have their registrations canceled by the College at the time the aid is declined. The student's responsibility in this case is to drop all courses which will not be paid for by financial aid or by the student. Students who fail to drop courses will be subject to a failing grade.

### **3.5.5 Schedule Conflicts**

Students may not schedule a course in any manner that renders full attendance in each course impossible.

If a course is not offered when a student needs it, the student shall consult her/his faculty advisor regarding the substitution of an equivalent course. Upon recommendation of the advisor, acceptability of the substitution shall be determined by the department chair.

### **3.5.6 Auditing a Course**

By auditing, a student participates in a course without receiving credit or having the grade point average affected. Auditing requires the permission of the instructor and of the appropriate department chair, who together determine the student's responsibility to the course. A course may be audited only if registration for it has not been closed. Preference must go to those enrolling for credit.

During the first two weeks of a semester, a course may be added for audit -- and no late registration fee charged -- or changed from audit to credit through the regular Add/Drop procedures. After that time and up to mid-term, a course may be changed from credit to audit. The course, in the latter instance, must be dropped for credit and added for audit.

Full-time undergraduate students may register as auditors without paying additional fees. Part-time students pay the full per-credit fee. Any refunds will be made only at the student's request and according to the standard College refund schedules.

Under no circumstances will audited courses be counted for credit toward a degree.

### **3.5.7 Adding or Dropping a Course or Section**

(a) Before the Start of a Semester

A student may add or drop courses or sections using the registration system during the times the system is available for that student. No consultation or permission is required, but consultation with an advisor and/or the instructor is encouraged. No transcript record of enrollment will be maintained for courses dropped during this period.

(b) During the Add/Drop Period

The first two weeks of the semester constitutes the Add/Drop Period. Students who wish to change their registration by adding or dropping a course section may do so using the registration system. No consultation or permission is required, but consultation with an advisor and/or the instructor is encouraged. No transcript record of enrollment will be maintained for courses dropped during this period.

(c) After the two-week Add/Drop Period (only withdrawing from a course is permitted)

Students wishing to change their registration by withdrawing from a course or section must complete the process indicated below and in accordance with the timetables stated.

*i. After the Second Week of Classes Until Last Withdrawal Date (specified in College Calendar):* Students who wish to change their registration by withdrawing from a course section may do so using the registration system. No consultation or permission is required, but consultation with an advisor and/or the instructor is encouraged. Drops before the last withdrawal date will be recorded as *W* which will not count in the grade point average; however, the student is responsible for the course fee.

*ii. After Last Withdrawal Date Until the End of Classes:* Permission to withdraw from a course after the date specified in the College calendar as the last withdrawal date, will be granted by the faculty member teaching the class only when extenuating circumstances make such action advisable. Ordinarily, academic difficulty in the course alone shall not be sufficient grounds for

withdrawals after the last withdrawal date. Faculty members will give the students they approve for withdrawal a *W* grade on the final grade roster.

- iii. ***Unofficial Drop/Withdrawal:*** A student who does not complete the drop or withdrawal procedure but stops attending classes may be assigned a failing grade at the discretion of the instructor.

### **3.5.8 Withdrawal from the College**

Students who wish to withdraw from the College, whether or not they plan on returning, should be advised to complete the official withdrawal process in order to protect their records and facilitate readmission.

- (a) *Withdrawal from College* defined. Students who drop all their courses during the regular academic year will be considered to have withdrawn from the College. However, their names will remain in the College's computer files, and they will receive course registration materials for three semesters (including the Summer Sessions). Students who wish to register for courses after the three-semester limit will be subject to the readmission policies (see Section 3.12).

- (b) **Official Withdrawal Process**

- i. **During Drop Period**

Students who wish to withdraw from the College (drop all courses for a particular semester) during this time may do so via the registration system. They should contact the Office of Student Life to discuss the withdrawal, especially if they receive financial aid (grants or scholarships), are living in the residence halls, or desire a refund. No record of the courses will appear on the transcript if dropped during the Add Period (usually the first two weeks of classes). Courses dropped after the Add Period will appear on the transcript with a *W* grade.

- ii. **After the last drop date and until the last day of classes.**

Students who wish to withdraw from the College (drop all courses for a particular semester) after the last drop date and up to the last day of classes should contact the Office of Student Life to complete the withdrawal form. This form must be signed by the appropriate academic dean and a designated official of the Office of Student Life. The Office of Student Life will file the form with the Records Office. A grade of *W* will appear on the transcript for all courses withdrawn from during this time.

- iii. After the last day of class.

Students who wish to withdraw from the College (drop all courses from a particular semester) after the last day of class must file a petition with the Academic Standing Committee for a retroactive withdrawal from the College. If the Academic Standing Committee grants the retroactive withdrawal request, a grade of *W* will appear on the transcript for all courses withdrawn from retroactively.

### 3.5.9 Joint Registration at Other Institutions

- (a) To provide an opportunity for students matriculated at one of Rhode Island's public institutions of higher education to take courses at one of the other public institutions without the payment of additional tuition, the following regulation has been established by the Board of Governors:

*"Any full-time student matriculated at one of the public institutions of higher education in Rhode Island may enroll for a maximum of seven (7) credit hours of his/her full-time schedule per semester for study at one of the other public institutions at no additional expense. Each institution will determine and maintain the integrity of the degree to be awarded. Students will be subject to the course selection process applicable at the receiving institution. Summer session and continuing education registrants are not covered under this program."*

Further information and forms for initiation of the procedures are available in the Records Office and online.

- (b) Providence College and Rhode Island College agree to accept each other's students for enrollment in specific courses under the following conditions:
  - i. The student must present written approval from the department chair of the college in which he/she is primarily enrolled and must obtain approval by both the appropriate department chair and course instructor of the college in which the student seeks enrollment in specific courses.
  - ii. Each college retains the right to review the credentials of any students seeking enrollment in specific courses and to interview the student, if appropriate.
  - iii. Each college shall pay the other the normal tuition for each student enrolling in a specific course. Rhode Island College students must reimburse Rhode Island College for the difference between the cost of tuition at Rhode Island College and that of Providence College.

### **3.6 CHANGE OF CURRICULUM, MAJOR, CONCENTRATION OR MINOR**

Change of major or curriculum requires the approval of the chair of the department of the new major or curriculum. Upon approval of the student's request, the chair of the new department will assign an academic advisor to the student (see Section 3.2 for information on academic advising).

The form for completing this change (*Change of Curriculum/Major/Concentration/Minor*) is available in the Records Office.

### **3.7 GRADING**

#### **3.7.1 General Guidelines**

Faculty have the responsibility for providing students, on a regular basis, with information regarding their performance in courses.

Semester grades are reported by the instructor through the online system. The schedule of dates when grades are due appears in the academic calendar.

Faculty members who terminate their employment at Rhode Island College are requested to turn in any grade books to their department chairs before leaving. In this way, grade records can be available for future reference if needed.

#### **3.7.2 Grading Standards**

The grade assigned in any course should represent the instructor's considered judgment of the degree to which the student has achieved the goals of the course. In most cases this means the degree of mastery attained in specified subject matters or skills.

Various methods -- examinations, papers, oral reports, experiments, and participation in discussion -- are commonly used by instructors as means of determining the student's degree of mastery. Attendance or absence may be used for such a purpose if students are so informed in the course syllabus provided by the instructor.

As in other instances of human motivation, a student will invariably perform better when possessing a clear understanding of what is expected. The instructor's explanation of goals and objectives at the beginning of each course not only provides this understanding but also serves to assure students that the instructor has carefully thought out the objectives. Each instructor shall, therefore, provide a complete guide, syllabus, or plan of study to each student in each course before the end of the second week of the course. It shall effectively inform the students of their responsibilities with respect to attendance, participation, reading, writing, examination, and other means of evaluation for the course. Department chairs shall periodically review syllabi for completeness and clarity.

### 3.7.3 Grading System

#### (a) Grades

For each student in each academic course, one of the following grades is to be reported by the instructor:

<i>A</i>	4.00 grade points per semester hour
<i>A-</i>	3.67 grade points per semester hour
<i>B+</i>	3.33 grade points per semester hour
<i>B</i>	3.00 grade points per semester hour
<i>B-</i>	2.67 grade points per semester hour
<i>C+</i>	2.33 grade points per semester hour
<i>C</i>	2.00 grade points per semester hour
<i>C-</i>	1.67 grade points per semester hour
<i>D+</i>	1.33 grade points per semester hour
<i>D</i>	1.00 grade points per semester hour
<i>D-</i>	0.67 grade points per semester hour
<i>F</i>	No grade points
<i>W</i>	Withdrawn with permission; no credit and no grade points; disregard in computing GPA (see below)
<i>I</i>	Incomplete; no grade points (see below)
<i>CR</i>	Passing grade (any grade higher than <i>F</i> ) in a course in which the student is enrolled on a credit/no credit basis; credit earned is not computed in the GPA
<i>NCR</i>	No Credit earned - not computed in GPA
<i>H</i>	Honors credits earned - not computed in GPA
<i>S</i>	Satisfactory credits earned - not computed in GPA
<i>U</i>	Unsatisfactory; no credit earned - not computed in GPA
<i>AUD</i>	Notation used for course which was audited - not computed in GPA

#### (b) Explanation of Some Grades

##### *i.* *W* Grade

Until the last day for withdrawing from courses (as specified in the academic calendar), students may withdraw from a course (see Section 3.5.7). After this date, students must follow the late drop procedures described in Section 3.5.7(c).

Faculty may assign a grade of *W* on the midterm grade roster for a student who either never attended or who has stopped attending class for an extended period. Also, faculty may have students withdrawn from a class if they do not attend class for the first week and do not contact the instructor. Note that faculty are not to assign a *W* grade as a replacement for a failing grade.

On the mid-term grade rosters for the Fall and Spring semesters (see 3.7.7) faculty may assign *W* grades to those students whom the faculty member wishes to drop from the course. (This action may apply to freshman and probationary students, as well as to other students listed.)

Because of the brevity of the Summer Sessions, faculty may assign *W* grades on the Summer final grade rosters, and this action is deemed an exception to the above stipulations.

Faculty are reminded that such *W* grades should be given only to those students who stopped attending class before mid-term, and not to replace an *F* or *I* grade.

*ii. I Grade*

A grade of *I* (incomplete) may be reported if, in the instructor's judgment, a student is unable to complete the work of the course within the semester due to unusual or extenuating circumstances. Normally the student must initiate a request for an *I* grade; however, in extreme circumstances, faculty members may assign this grade at their discretion, *i.e.*, without discussing it with the student.

Incompletes are only appropriate if most of the work has already been completed and the student is able to complete by the end of the succeeding semester (excluding Summer Sessions) the remaining requirements with a minimum of faculty supervision. The end of the semester is defined as the last day of classes; however, the instructor may stipulate an earlier deadline for completion. "Sitting in" on a course again is not a valid way of rectifying an incomplete grade.

Instructors who assign an *I* grade have the option of indicating a default grade other than *F* (*A-* to *D-*) on the grade sheet. The default grade will only appear on internal work copy transcripts and not on student grade reports or official transcripts. In addition, the instructor will indicate on the *Incomplete Grade Report* all the work to be completed, the deadline for completion, and any default grade. Copies of this form will be given to the student and forwarded to the department chair. The original will be retained by the instructor.

If by the date grades are due for the semester, the instructor has not assigned a grade for the course or has not notified the Records Office in writing of an extension of the deadline for completion, the *I* grade will change automatically to an *F* or to the default grade indicated. Departmental provision shall cover unavailability of the instructor.

*iii. H Grade in Student Teaching*

The grade of *H* (Honors) will be given to a student who has been nominated as outstanding by the cooperating teacher and College supervisor supported by

anecdotal statements giving clear evidence that the behavioral objectives defined have been achieved to a degree termed unusual for a student teacher.

### 3.7.4 Change of Grades

No grade may be changed after it has been reported and saved on the grade roster, except upon written approval of the appropriate dean (*Notice of Change of Grade Form*), unless the instructor states in writing to the Director of Records and to the dean that the grade originally submitted was wrong because of a purely clerical error. Changing an *I* grade utilizes the change of grade form but does not require the chair's or dean's signature.

### 3.7.5 Grade Point Average

A grade point average (GPA) is obtained by dividing the total quality points earned by the number of semester hours attempted.

### 3.7.6 Credit/No Credit (CR/NCR) Option

*Note: Graduate students are not permitted to take graduate courses under the credit/no credit option.*

- (a) No more than one course in any given semester may be taken under the *CR/NCR* option during a student's degree program.
- (b) The total number of *CR/NCR* courses to be counted toward graduation cannot exceed six.
- (c) Any course taken as a free elective may be taken under the *CR/NCR* option.
- (d) No courses taken to meet the general education requirements are to be taken with the *CR/NCR* option.
- (e) Courses taken to meet the requirements of a student's concentration, major, minor, or cognate cannot be taken under the *CR/NCR* option.
- (f) For students in the teacher education program, courses in the professional sequence cannot be taken under the *CR/NCR* option.
- (g) The designation *CR/NCR* is to be used where *CR* is to be given to students who achieve a *D-* (.067) or above; *NCR* is to be given to students who do *F* (0.0) work. Courses passed with a *CR* count toward graduation but are not figured in the grade point average. Courses graded *NCR* do not count toward graduation and are not computed in the grade point average.
- (h) A student must indicate a choice of *CR/NCR* for a course before the end of the DROP period and may change this option anytime before the end of the DROP period.

- (i) Under no circumstances can a student change the option after the DROP period.
- (j) The Records Office will indicate the student's grade, or *CR/NCR*, according to the option chosen by the student. The student's letter grade will not be recorded or kept if the credit/no-credit option is chosen.

### **3.7.7 Mid-Semester Grades (Undergraduate and Graduate)**

Evaluation with feedback to students should be provided in all courses before mid-semester. This mid-term assessment affords students the opportunity to assess their progress in order to seek help if needed to be successful. Sources for such help may include the instructor, the various academic support services, counseling, and/or outside sources. Also, mid-term assessment gives students information on which to base a decision to continue in the course past mid-semester.

At mid-term during the fall and spring semesters, the Records Office will provide grade rosters for every section listing the name of each student registered for that section. Freshman and probationary students for whom grades are required will be specifically designated. Faculty shall be responsible for the following:

- (a) Assigning appropriate grades for freshmen and students on probation.
- (b) Assigning *W* grades for those students whom the faculty member wishes to drop from the course. This action may apply to freshman and probationary students as well as to the other students listed.
- (c) Reporting grades for any student whose work is deficient, that is, below *C-*.

If none of the above conditions applies, grade rosters may be left blank.

- (d) Submitting the grade rosters to the Records Office.

Except for the *W* grade, none of the other grades assigned at mid-semester become part of the student's permanent record. These grades are advisory in nature.

NOTE: Due to the brevity of the summer sessions, no such mid-semester grades shall be solicited.

The Office of Academic Support and Information Services (OASIS) shall review mid-semester freshman grades. Letters are sent to those students with grade point averages below 2.0 strongly suggesting a meeting at OASIS to discuss their progress. At this meeting referrals to appropriate help centers and/or other strategies are discussed.

Timely deficiency reports can help to motivate students and are useful to their advisors and counselors. These reports are especially important for seniors, as unsatisfactory work may jeopardize their eligibility for graduation. Advisors shall be notified of any deficiency assigned to an advisee and shall also receive reports of any advisee on probation.

### **3.8 EXAMINATIONS**

The College recognizes the necessity for meaningful evaluation procedures. There are many methods for evaluation of students which can vary from department to department. Final responsibility for this matter lies with the departments themselves. Therefore, the specific methods of evaluation used shall be the responsibility of the classroom instructor with approval of the respective department.

The following sections are applicable for those departments that have determined courses for which final examinations are to be administered:

#### **3.8.1 Exemption of Seniors**

Faculty may exempt a senior with a grade of *B* or better from a final examination in a course taken in that student's terminal semester. The terminal semester is that in which a senior's name appears on the official graduation list prepared by the Director of Records. Faculty shall have sole discretion as to when during the semester a determination is made whether to permit these exemptions. However, no student is to be denied the opportunity to take the final examination.

#### **3.8.2 Scheduling**

Final examinations shall not normally exceed two hours in length and shall be scheduled by the Associate Director of Records. Except in an emergency or by prior approval from the department chair and satisfactory arrangement with the Associate Director of Records, no faculty member may change the scheduled time, place, or length of any final examination. In the event of disagreement between the department chair and the Associate Director of Records, the disagreement will be resolved by the appropriate dean. When a student is unable to take the regularly scheduled final examination, said student must make appropriate arrangements with the instructor for a make-up examination (see Section 3.13.2).

#### **3.8.3 Conflicts**

If a student is scheduled for two final examinations at the same hour, the student should observe the following priorities: first preference should be given to any exam for which more than one section of the course is taking a common final; second preference should be given to an examination in the student's major. Neglecting to reconcile conflicts prior to the start of the examination period may result in the denial of a make-up examination. Students should notify their instructors regarding any exam conflicts and the resolution of those conflicts as soon as possible.

### 3.8.4 Examination Overload

Students are expected to take no more than two final examinations in a single day. A student scheduled for more than two final examinations in one day should report this to the instructor of each of these courses. If it is not possible to adjust the final examination schedule to correct this matter, the student should follow the procedure outlined in Section 3.8.3 for the resolution of conflicts.

## 3.9 ACADEMIC STANDARDS

### 3.9.1 Academic Dishonesty

*(As amended by the Council of Rhode Island College – 11/07/08)*

Academic integrity is the foundation of the academic community. Students who violate College rules on academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure or removal from a course, disciplinary probation, and/or dismissal from the College. Individual schools may have additional standards and policies related to academic honesty.

(a) Examples of Academic Dishonesty include (but are not limited to):

- Cheating: intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information or study aids in any academic exercise.
- Fabrication: intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.
- Plagiarism: intentionally or knowingly representing the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise. The following are examples of plagiarism:
  - i.* Word-for-word plagiarism: This includes (a) the submission of another student's work as one's own; (b) the submission of work from any source whatever (print or electronic) without proper acknowledgement by footnote or reference within the text of the paper; (c) the submission of any part of another's work without proper use of quotation marks.
  - ii.* Patchwork plagiarism: This consists of a piecing together of unacknowledged phrases and sentences quoted verbatim (or nearly verbatim) from a variety of sources. The mere reshuffling of other people's words does not constitute original work.
  - iii.* Unacknowledged paraphrase: It is perfectly legitimate to set forth another author's facts or ideas in one's own words, but if one is genuinely indebted to the other author for these facts or ideas, the debt must be acknowledged by footnote or reference within the text of the paper (e.g., the above paragraphs are based largely on Sears, Harbrace *Guide to the Library and Research Paper*, p. 39).

Many facts, ideas, and expressions are considered to be in the public domain or general knowledge and need not be acknowledged (e.g., the fact that the Declaration of

Independence was signed in 1776; the idea that universal public education is essential to the survival of democratic institutions; such proverbial expressions as "A rolling stone gathers no moss," or "New York is a great place to visit, but I wouldn't want to live there,") but as a general rule, when one is in doubt, it is best to acknowledge the source.

- Collusion: facilitating academic dishonesty intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic dishonesty.
- Deception: Providing false information to an instructor concerning a formal academic exercise, e.g. giving a false excuse for missing a deadline or falsely claiming to have submitted work.
- Sabotage: Acting to prevent others from completing their work. This includes cutting pages out of library books or willfully disrupting the experiments of others.
- Multiple Submissions: Submitting for credit, when a student has not been given permission to do so, any work that is the same or substantially the same as work that has been submitted for credit in another course. Many professors allow re-working or building on prior work; however, multiple submissions are permitted only with the prior permission of the instructor(s), and only when the student acknowledges the multiple submission in the work itself.

#### (b) Faculty Role

The faculty member has two clearly defined roles: first, to establish preventive measures; and, second, to ensure that detected instances of academic dishonesty are dealt with appropriately and reported.

Preventive measures should include a statement to each class by the faculty member outlining expected standards of intellectual honesty and the necessity for such standards.

The faculty member should also maintain reasonable security of all examination materials and procedures. Generally, the faculty member should employ any reasonable methods to discourage acts of academic dishonesty.

A faculty member may take action up to and including failing a student accused of academic dishonesty. Some often-used penalties include:

- i.* A low or failing grade on the assignment in which the offense occurred.
- ii.* An additional assignment.
- iii.* Reduction of the final grade up to and including failure.
- iv.* Any combination of the above.

In all cases, a report describing the nature of the dishonesty and the subsequent action taken by the faculty member shall be filed with the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Additionally, the faculty member may recommend that the Board of College Discipline recommend further action.

(c) Vice President for Academic Affairs Role

The Vice President for Academic Affairs shall maintain a file of any and all reports of academic dishonesty. At the discretion of the Vice President for Academic Affairs and depending upon the severity of the infraction, the student may be informed in writing about possible consequences of further infractions.

In the case of multiple infractions, the Vice President for Academic Affairs will refer the student's name to the Board of College Discipline for review and possible action.

d) Board of College Discipline role

The Board of College Discipline shall consider cases referred to it by a faculty member or the Vice President for Academic Affairs, and has the option to recommend any ~~of the~~ penalties ranging from those available to the faculty member to placing the student on academic probation or expelling the student from the College.

*i.* Appeal

Any student accused of academic dishonesty may appeal action taken by the instructor in a case to the Board of College Discipline.

*ii.* Appeals Procedure

- Appeals or referrals to the Board will follow the standard procedure of the Board.
- The Board shall inform the student, the faculty member, and Vice President for Academic Affairs of its decision.
- A record of the cases concerning academic dishonesty will be kept in the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs.
- A student may appeal the decision of the Board of College Discipline (concerning academic dishonesty) to the Vice President of Academic Affairs. Appeals may be considered on the basis of new information or procedural errors.

### 3.9.2 Course Failure

A student who fails a course is not allowed to take any course to which the failed course is prerequisite until the course has been satisfactorily completed.

(a) Undergraduate Students

*i.* Repeating a Failed Course

See Section 3.3.6.

*ii.* Second Failure of Required Course

Because students may not repeat a course for a third time without permission of the Academic Standing Committee, students are cautioned through advisement that they will not be able to complete the major. Students will be advised to

consider an alternate curriculum or major wherein the course is not required. Students are subject to dismissal when a required course is failed a second time.

(b) Graduate Students

A graduate student with a failing or unacceptable grade in a course that has been retaken or replaced will be awarded no program credit; however, the grade will remain on the student's transcript and will be included in calculating the grade point average.

### 3.9.3 Academic Probation and Dismissal - Undergraduate

(NOTE: See the *Graduate Manual* for probation and dismissal policies applicable to graduate students.)

(a) Probation/Dismissal Criteria.

i. Grade Point Average (see Section 3.7.5).

<b>CREDITS</b> Total Attempted Credits <sup>1</sup>	<b>PROBATION</b> GPA Lower Than	<b>DISMISSAL</b> GPA Lower Than
0 - 29	1.75	n/a
30 - 59	1.90	1.75
60 - 89	2.00	1.90
90 and above	n/a	2.00

ii. College Writing Requirement and College Mathematics Requirement (see Section 3.10.4).

Academic probation will result from the completion of 40 attempted credits at Rhode Island College without having fulfilled the College Writing Requirement, and/or 15 attempted credits at Rhode Island College without completing the College Mathematics Requirements.

(b) Probation

At the end of each Fall Semester, Spring Semester, and Summer Session II, students will be placed on academic probation based on the above criteria.

<sup>1</sup> Includes transfer and proficiency credits. Transfer students should understand that the credits transferred from another institution will count toward their total attempted credits, but that their GPA will be based only on credits earned at Rhode Island College. As with all students, transfer students will not be subject to academic dismissal prior to attempting a minimum of 30 credits at Rhode Island College.

- i.* Students on academic probation will receive written notification from the Records Office with an explanation of the consequences and policies relating to probationary status.
- ii.* Students on academic probation will be held to a semester course load limit of 14 credit hours. If a student placed on probation fails to adjust a course load exceeding this limit for which he or she has previously registered, the appropriate dean will adjust the schedule and notify the student of the action taken.
- iii.* Students on academic probation will be monitored as follows:
  - Midterm grade reports will be sent to students on academic probation and their advisors.
- iv.* Students on academic probation may receive focused academic assistance and support from the College in the form of:
  - A self-assessment instrument administered through the Academic Development Center within OASIS designed to help students identify factors contributing to their poor academic performance and to suggest appropriate ways to address those factors.
  - Conferences with their faculty academic advisor or another member of the student's major department designated by the department chair.
  - Conferences with academic advisors in the OASIS [see Section 3.2.2 (b)] if the student has not declared a major (including students in elementary education curricula who have not yet been formally accepted into their intended program of study).

(c) Dismissal

Retention in the College requires that students make reasonable and continuous progress toward their graduation requirements. Consequently, at the end of each Spring Semester students will be academically dismissed from the College based on the above criteria.

- i.* Academically dismissed students will receive written notification of their dismissal from degree candidacy and an explanation of the consequences of this action from the Records Office in mid-June.
- ii.* Academically dismissed students will have an opportunity to appeal the dismissal decision by filing a petition to the Academic Standing Committee.

- iii. Academically dismissed students will be dropped from any future courses they may have previously registered for as of June 30. If they choose to register again at Rhode Island College, they will register as new non-matriculated students.

Undergraduate students who do not complete all the requirements for graduation within ten years from the date of first matriculation will be considered not to have made satisfactory academic progress and may be academically dismissed.

### **3.9.4 Dismissal from an Academic Program.**

In certain academic programs, minimum standards for continuance in the program exist as described in the *College Catalog*. In addition to specifying minimum GPAs for such programs, the College reserves the right to deny continuance to any student who is adjudged to lack aptitude or fitness for the stated purpose of that academic program.

## **3.10 GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS AND RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS**

### **3.10.1 Undergraduate Degrees**

To graduate from the College a student must have:

- (a) attained a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale;
- (b) completed all curricular requirements including General Education, all requirements of the major or concentration, and, if applicable, the minor;
- (c) completed the College Writing Requirement;
- (d) completed the College Mathematics Requirement; and
- (e) attained a minimum of 120 credits, with at least 45 credits taken at Rhode Island College. At least 15 of the 45 hours must be taken in the department of the major and at least 12 credits must be at the 300-level or 400-level in a selected major program at Rhode Island College. Course/credit proficiency, field experience, or prior learning credit may not be counted toward these requirements.

### **3.10.2 Graduate Degrees**

- (a) Graduate students must have a 3.0 (*B*) grade point average in order to graduate. Each program has additional graduation requirements and students should contact their program

advisor or the Dean of the School in which the program is administered for specific information.

- (b) The master's degree may be earned either through full-time or part-time study or by a combination of both. However, candidates must take at least four-fifths of the credits required for the degree at Rhode Island College. Upon the recommendation of the student's advisor and upon the approval of the appropriate Dean, the number of transfer credits accepted may be increased.
- (c) A program of graduate study must be completed within six years from the time of registration following the acceptance to degree candidacy; otherwise, said candidacy will be terminated. An appeal for an extension requires review and approval by the appropriate department and the appropriate Dean. (Note: Credits earned seven or more years prior to the awarding of the degree, six years for the M.S.W., shall not count toward a student's degree requirements unless an exception is granted by the department and the appropriate dean.)

### **3.10.3 General Education**

The General Education program at Rhode Island College seeks to provide all undergraduates, regardless of curriculum or major, with a common base of knowledge that is deemed necessary in order for a student to be considered truly educated in today's world. Successful completion of the General Education requirements shall be a requirement for graduation for all undergraduate students from the College. Consult the *College Catalog* for additional information and for specific courses that may be taken to satisfy General Education 2000 requirements.

### **3.10.4 College Writing and Mathematics Requirements**

The Rhode Island College faculty believes that the critical and analytical skills emphasized by the College Writing Requirement and the College Mathematics Requirement serve as a necessary foundation for all undergraduates.

#### **(a) College Writing Requirement**

All College students are required to complete the College Writing Requirement. In most cases this requirement is satisfied by the completion of Writing 100: Introduction to Academic Writing, with a grade of C- (1.67) or better. If a student receives a D+ (1.33), D (1.00), or a D- (0.67) in Writing 100, said student will receive the college credit but will not be in fulfillment of the College Writing Requirement.

This requirement may also be satisfied by:

- i.* attaining a minimum score of 50 on the CLEP English Composition Examination with Essay and reporting this score to the Admissions Office; or

- ii. completing the course equivalent of Writing 100 with a grade of 1.67 (C-) or better.

All students who score 430 or below on either the SAT Critical Reading or the SAT Writing (or Writing subscore of 17 or less on the ACT) or students who have not taken the SAT are required to sit for the College Writing Examination. This placement examination will determine the student's readiness for Writing 100. As a result of the placement examination, some students may be required to enroll in English 010 prior to taking Writing 100.

Students are encouraged to fulfill the College Writing Requirement in their first year of study at Rhode Island College. Students who have not fulfilled the requirement will have that noted on their schedules and grade reports. Students who have not fulfilled the College Writing Requirement before the completion of 40 credits at the College will be placed on academic probation and be advised to satisfy the requirement as soon as possible.

(b) College Mathematics Requirement

Students are encouraged to complete the College Mathematics requirement by the end of their first semester of study at the College. Students who have not fulfilled the requirement will have that unfulfilled requirement noted on their schedules and grade reports.

Students who do not satisfy the College Mathematics Requirement by the end of their first semester (15 or more attempted credit hours at Rhode Island College) will be placed on academic probation

Note: Fulfillment of the College Mathematic Requirement is distinct from and does not substitute for completion of the Mathematics Category of General Education.

Entering freshmen shall have the following options for fulfilling the College Mathematics Requirement:

- i. Students who score 480 or better on the Mathematics section of the SAT (ACT Mathematics subscore of 20 or better) will have met the Requirement.
- ii. Freshmen who scored less than 480 on the Mathematic section of the SAT (or Mathematics subscore of less than 20 on the ACT) will be required to take the Mathematics Assessment Examination prior to or during freshman orientation. Students who achieve a satisfactory grade on the Assessment Examination will have met the Requirement. (This examination is given at least six times each semester and, if necessary, may be repeated once. The examination is administered by the Mathematics Learning Center.)

- iii.* Students who do not achieve a satisfactory grade on the Assessment Examination (which may be taken twice) must enroll in Mathematics 010 prior to or during their first semester at Rhode Island College. Students who fail to earn a satisfactory grade must re-enroll in Mathematics 010 until successful completion.

Entering transfer students have the following options for fulfilling the College Mathematics Requirement:

- i.* Students who score 480 or better on the Mathematics section of the SAT (ACT Mathematics subscore of 20 or better) have met the Requirement.
- ii.* Students who receive transfer credit for a course(s) deemed equivalent to Mathematics 010, or 177 or higher, will have met the Requirement.
- iii.* Transfer students who do not fulfill the College Mathematics Requirement by means of numbers I or 11 above will be required to take the Mathematics Assessment Examination prior to or during the first semester at Rhode Island College. Students who achieve a satisfactory grade on the Assessment Examination will have met the Requirement. (This examination is given at least six times each semester and, if necessary, may be repeated once. The examination is administered by the Mathematics Learning Center.)
- iv.* Students who do not achieve a satisfactory grade on the Assessment Examination (which may be taken twice) must enroll in Mathematics 010 prior to or during their first semester at Rhode Island College. Students who fail to earn a satisfactory grade must re-enroll in Mathematics 010 until successful completion.

### **3.10.5 Awarding of Degrees**

Rhode Island College confers undergraduate and graduate degrees each year at the spring commencements. Diplomas are presented at these ceremonies or are subsequently mailed to those who do not attend.

Undergraduate students who anticipate completion of their degree requirements in August, who will have no more than nine credits outstanding at the time of the spring commencement, and who plan to complete these requirements during Summer Session I and/or II are permitted to participate in the spring commencement; provided, however, that diplomas will not be mailed until all program requirements are met.

Students who complete degree requirements in August or January will receive their diplomas by mail.

Clearance of all financial obligations to Rhode Island College is required prior to participation in commencement exercises, issuance of a diploma or certificate, or issuance of a transcript.

The Records Office will forward to the President for transmittal to the Board of Governors, listings of individuals expected to complete degree requirements.

Upon approval by the Board of Governors and clearance of financial obligations, the Records Office will make available diplomas, letters certifying completion, or transcripts as appropriate.

### **3.10.6 Academic Honors (Undergraduate)**

Rhode Island College recognizes intellectual and creative excellence in four ways: through the publication each semester of the dean's list, through the departmental honors program, through the college honors program, and through the granting of graduation honors.

#### **(a) Dean's List**

Students who attain a GPA of 3.25 in any semester with a minimum load of 12 credit hours have their names placed on the Dean's List in recognition of their scholastic achievement for that semester. During student-teaching, students to be placed on the Dean's List (student teaching will be considered as having met the minimum load requirement) must achieve a cumulative GPA of 3.0 as well as a semester GPA of 3.0, and earn at least a satisfactory grade in student teaching.

#### **(b) Departmental Honors**

Departmental honors programs are designed to challenge the intellectual and academic curiosity of superior students. They afford such students the opportunity to do an independent research, critical, or creative project on a topic of the student's choice and directed by a professor of the student's choice. These projects are normally done in the two semesters of the senior year, although they may be begun in the second semester of the junior year. The projects normally involve two consecutive semesters of independent study (490 or its equivalent) for a total of six credit hours, although individual departments may require more hours and other course work. Recognition of the successful completion of departmental honors appears on the student's transcript.

The following requirements apply to students seeking departmental honors:

- i.* students must do honors projects in the departments of their intended majors.
- ii.* students must formally apply to do an honors project to their departmental honors committee. In addition to accepting or rejecting honors proposals, those committees decide on retention in the program and award the honors designation. Grades for a student's two semesters of independent study are given by the honors project adviser.

*iii* students must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 and a minimum GPA of 3.25 in the major to apply to do an honors project. Some departments may require higher GPAs.

Honors programs are offered in almost all departments in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, the School of Management, the School of Nursing, as well as in Elementary Education, and the Bachelor of Social Work Program. Students with individualized or interdisciplinary majors may apply to the Director of Honors, who will convene an appropriate faculty committee to direct the honors project.

#### (c) General Education Honors

General Education Honors is aligned with the General Education Program and is intended primarily for entering freshmen, although students may join the program during the freshman year or as transfers. Students in General Education Honors take at least six of their eleven required General Education courses in specially designed honors classes. Those classes are kept small (usually twelve to fifteen student), are taught in a seminar rather than lecture format, and are noted as honors classes on the students' transcripts.

Admission to General Education Honors is by invitation of the Director of Honors and the College Honors Committee. Students invited into General Education Honors normally rank in the top 20 percent of their high school class, have taken demanding academic schedules, and have scored at least 1200 on the SAT (critical reading plus mathematics) or a composite score of 26 on the ACT. Each student's application is looked at individually, however, and other factors are considered such as activities, recommendations, the student's high school curriculum, and his or her personal statement. Students may also be invited to join on the basis of their performance at the College during their first year or as transfer students, if they have not already completed too many General Education courses. As with General Education itself, most students will complete General Education Honors by the end of the sophomore year, although they are not required to do so. Students who complete at least six General Education courses in honors and who maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 during their matriculation at the college will receive the General Education Honors designation on their transcripts.

#### (d) College Honors Program

The College Honors Program is a structured sequence designed to provide a full four-year honors experience. The program is comprised of the following three parts: General Education Honors (d above), Departmental Honors (c above), and the Junior-Year Honors Colloquium (HONR 351) and the Junior-Year Honors Seminar (HONR 365). Students who successfully complete the entire three-part sequence receive the College Honors designation, in addition to the Departmental Honors and the General Education Honors designations, on the transcript.

The Junior-Year Honors Colloquium and Seminar are open to continuing and transfer students, whether or not they have done General Education Honors, who have attained junior status with a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0. The Colloquium helps prepare students to write their project proposals and then to successfully undertake their departmental honors projects, but the Colloquium is not required in order to do Departmental Honors.

(e) Graduation Honors

Graduating seniors are cited for honors at the annual commencement exercises in accordance with the following criteria:

<i>Summa cum laude</i>	3.85 - 4.00
<i>Magna cum laude</i>	3.60 - 3.84
<i>Cum laude</i>	3.25 - 3.59

Honors are based on the cumulative GPA of the student and reflect the student's total Rhode Island College record. Transfer students and second-baccalaureate degree candidates are eligible for honors at graduation if they have completed 54 or more semester hours of work at Rhode Island College.

### **3.11 ACADEMIC GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE (UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE)**

The filing of an academic grievance does not stay any action under College policy. If a student's grievance pertains to grading which has resulted in probationary status or dismissal from the College, the probation or dismissal will become effective. The student may, however, appeal the probation or dismissal to the Academic Standing Committee or the Graduate Committee as appropriate; these are the entities empowered to permit a waiver of academic policy. Assistance regarding grievances or appeals may be obtained through the Office of Student Life.

#### **3.11.1 Purpose**

The primary purpose of this procedure is to secure, at the lowest level possible, an equitable solution to the problems of those students who have disputes with either an academic unit or the classroom or grading conduct of faculty members.

#### **3.11.2 Definitions**

- (a) A *complaint* may be any point at issue between a faculty member and a student in which a student feels that an abridgement of personal rights or benefits has occurred. A complaint may, but need not, constitute a grievance.

- (b) A *grievance* means a difference, presented in writing, that may arise between a faculty member and a student with respect to, but not necessarily limited to:
- i. violation of established academic policies and regulations (e.g., examination policies, advisement policies, registration procedures);
  - ii. arbitrary and capricious grading practices;
  - iii. violation of the student's academic freedom, defined in the *Student Handbook* as "...the freedom to inquire, to discuss, to seek evidence, to speak, and to exchange ideas";
  - iv. failure to meet obligations to students (adherence to regular class hours, taking timely action, or correcting errors).
- (c) A *grievant* shall mean either:
- i. an individual student or
  - ii. a group of students having the same grievance.
- (d) A *working day* means any day on which the College is open for the transaction of business. For the purpose of handling grievances, working days during the semester break, the spring recess, and those days between the end of the summer session and the first day of classes of the next semester shall not be used to compute the time limitations contained in this procedure unless mutually agreeable to the parties involved.

### **3.11.3 Procedure for Handling Complaints**

Student complaints should first be discussed with the faculty member involved and such presentation and discussion shall be entirely informal. Any settlement, withdrawal, or disposition of a complaint at this informal stage shall not constitute a binding precedent in the settlement of similar complaints.

### **3.11.4 Procedure for Handling Student Grievances**

(a) Step 1. Faculty Level

The grievance should be presented in person to the faculty member involved as soon as possible after the grievant feels that an abridgement of that grievant's rights has occurred, but in no case shall it be later than ten working days following the grievant's knowledge of the act, event, or commencement of the condition which is the basis for the grievance except in the case of final grades and then no later than the tenth working day of the next full semester. This time limit shall not apply if a purely clerical error is discovered.

The grievance statement must include a summary of not more than one typewritten page stating the specific policy or policies violated or the exact nature of the grievance, the specific actions upon which it is based, and the remedy being sought. Supplementary materials may be presented to support the grievance.

The grievant shall discuss the grievance with the faculty member involved, who shall attempt to resolve the grievance and shall render a written decision to the grievant with copies to the appropriate department chair within five working days of the faculty member's receipt of the grievance.

(b) Step 2. Department Chair Level

If the grievance is not resolved through Step 1, the grievant may submit the grievance in writing to the appropriate department chair within ten working days of the grievant's receipt of the decision of the faculty member. Within five working days of the receipt of the grievance, the department chair shall meet with the grievant and the faculty member (either jointly or separately) to discuss the grievance and may discuss the grievance with the departmental advisory committee. The department chair shall issue a decision, setting forth the reasons therefor in writing to the grievant and the faculty member involved within seven working days of the chair's receipt of the grievance. In the case of grades, the decision of the department chair shall be final, unless upon appeal the person at the next higher level of appeal determines that the cause of the grievance is other than disagreement with academic judgment.

(c) Step 3. Dean's Level

If the grievance is not resolved through Step 2, the grievant may follow step 3a or step 3b depending on the nature of the grievance.

Step 3a. If the grievance is of a nature described in Section 3.10.2 but is not an alleged violation of established academic policies and/or regulations, the grievant may submit the grievance in writing within five working days of the grievant's receipt of the decision of the department chair to the appropriate dean. Within five working days of the receipt of the grievance, the dean shall meet with the grievant and the faculty member (either jointly or separately) to discuss the grievance. Within seven working days of the receipt of the grievance, the dean shall issue a decision, setting forth the reasons therefor in writing to the grievant, the faculty member involved, and the department chair.

(d) Step 4. Graduate Committee or Vice Presidential Level

If the grievance is not resolved through Step 3, the grievant may follow Step 4a or Step 4b depending on the nature of the grievance.

Step 4a. The grievant may submit the grievance within five working days of the grievant's receipt of the decision of the appropriate dean to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Within five working days of the receipt of the grievance, the Vice President shall meet with the grievant and the faculty member (either jointly or separately) to discuss the grievance. Within seven working days of the receipt of the grievance, the Vice President shall issue a decision, setting forth the reasons therefor in writing to the grievant, the faculty member involved, and the appropriate dean.

Step 4b. If the grievance involves a graduate course, the grievant may submit the grievance within five working days of the grievant's receipt of the decision of the appropriate dean for presentation at the next regular meeting of the Graduate Committee. The grievant and the faculty member will be invited to meet (either jointly or separately) with the Graduate Committee to discuss the grievance. Within seven working days of this meeting the Graduate Committee shall notify the grievant, the faculty member, the department chair, and the dean of the decision of the Graduate Committee, setting forth the reasons therefor in writing.

(e) Step 5. President's Level

If the grievance is not resolved through Step 4, the grievant may submit the grievance in writing within five working days of the grievant's receipt of the decision of the Vice President for Academic Affairs or the Graduate Committee to the President. Within five working days of the receipt of the grievance, the President shall meet with the grievant and the faculty member (either jointly or separately) to discuss the grievance. Within seven working days of the receipt of the grievance the President shall issue a decision, setting forth the reasons therefor in writing to the grievant, the faculty member involved, the appropriate dean, the Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the Chair of the Council of Rhode Island College.

### 3.11.5 General Provisions

- (a) Since it is important that grievances be processed as rapidly as possible, the number of days indicated at each level should be considered maximum and every effort should be made by any party to the grievance procedure to expedite the process. Time limits may be extended only by mutual consent and only when the limits are so specified in writing, or for extenuating circumstances as determined by the next higher level of appeal.
- (b) Failure at any step of the procedure to communicate the decision on a grievance within the specified time limits shall permit the grievant or faculty member to lodge an appeal at the next step of the procedure.
- (c) If a grievance is brought against a faculty member who serves as department chair the procedures outlined in Step 2 will be omitted. However, in cases of grievances concerning grades, the appropriate dean shall appoint a committee of three faculty members of that department to hear the matter. The decisions of that committee shall be final, unless upon appeal the person at the next higher level of appeal determines that the cause of the grievance is other than disagreement with academic judgment.

- (d) A faculty member may appeal any decision which is favorable to the grievant to the next highest level within the time limits specified in that step for the grievant.
- (e) Decisions of the President shall be final and binding upon all parties except that no decision shall be in conflict with the collective bargaining agreement between the collective bargaining agent for the faculty and the Board of Governors.
- (f) Appeals under this procedure shall not stay any action resulting from the appealed action or grade.

### **3.12 REINSTATEMENT TO THE COLLEGE**

There are two ways to be reinstated to degree status at Rhode Island College after having been dismissed:

- (a) readmission through the Office of Undergraduate Admissions, or
- (b) through appeal to the Academic Standing Committee (see also Section 3.9.4).

#### **3.12.1 Readmission Through the Office of Undergraduate Admissions**

Undergraduate degree candidates in good academic standing who withdraw from the College will be eligible to re-register without completing a formal application for re-admission, unless they have taken courses at another institution during their absence, or have course credits ten years old or older. Registration materials will be mailed to students in the above category for three consecutive semesters. After three semesters, these students may call the Records Office to request reactivation and registration materials.

Undergraduate degree candidates who have been dismissed for academic reasons or who have withdrawn and taken courses at another institution, or who have course credits ten years old or older, must submit a formal application for re-admission along with a non-refundable application fee. Application deadlines are August 1 for fall-semester enrollment and December 1 for spring-semester enrollment.

Students who have been dismissed from Rhode Island College for academic reasons must improve their cumulative GPA at RIC as a non-degree student before applying for readmission. Students must improve their GPA to at least the minimum GPA for good standing based on the total number of credits earned. Students are advised to repeat at RIC those courses in which they received a grade of *D* or *F*.

Students who have been academically dismissed, upon readmission to the College, are not automatically readmitted to a curriculum with additional admissions requirements. Students must formally apply for readmission to these programs.

### **3.12.2 Reinstatement to Degree Status Through Appeal to the Academic Standing Committee**

Students may appeal their academic dismissal to the Academic Standing Committee. In addition to approving the student's appeal, this committee shall have the authority to:

- (a) Decide the number of credit hours a student will be allowed to carry in the first semester after readmission.
- (b) Allow a student up to three semesters (Summer Sessions count the same as a semester) in which to attain the required minimum cumulative GPA corresponding to the number of credit hours attempted.
- (c) Require an GPA of at least 2.00 for each semester after readmission until the minimum cumulative GPA has been attained.

### **3.13 ATTENDANCE REGULATIONS**

#### **3.13.1 Student Attendance**

Students should attend all class meetings and are responsible for all class work and assignments. At the beginning of each semester instructors will distribute a syllabus which may include attendance and/or class participation as a component of the course grade. Students who incur absences must take the initiative in determining from the instructor what work can be made up.

Students with off-campus commitments (such as practicum, clinical, student teaching, internships, etc.) should comply with the following procedures in the event of absences:

- (a) Student Teaching: notify coordinator of student teaching and cooperating teacher, as soon as possible.
- (b) Others: notify off-campus supervisor and college instructor as soon as possible.

*All students who incur an extended absence (five consecutive days or more) should call the Office of Student Life so that a notice (not an excuse) can be sent to instructors.*

NOTE: See also Section 3.15 Field Trips

#### **3.13.2 Absence from Final Examinations**

In cases of extreme emergency when a student will be absent from a final examination, the student must notify the instructor of the absence prior to the examination and make alternate arrangements with said instructor. At the instructor's discretion a make-up examination may be scheduled.

### **3.13.3 Student Absence for Conferences, etc.**

The names of those students who will be absent from classes because of attendance at conferences, concerts, dramatic performances, and athletic contests should be submitted by the appropriate faculty member to the Office of News and Public Relations at least a week in advance for publication in the *College Briefs*. The list should clearly indicate the names of the student(s) and the purpose and the date(s) of expected absence.

### **3.13.4 Faculty Absence**

When a faculty member does not appear at the scheduled hour of class, students may excuse themselves after waiting 15 minutes from the scheduled start of the class.

## **3.14 CLASS LENGTH AND CANCELLATION**

### **3.14.1 Class Length**

Classes during the academic year meet one or more times a week for a minimum of 50 minutes per credit hour per week, unless otherwise specified in the schedule of courses. Academic departments should adhere to the scheduling blocks and times prescribed by the Records Office.

### **3.14.2 Cancellation of Classes**

Classes will be held at Rhode Island College except in cases of extreme emergency as determined by the President. When classes cannot be held, every effort will be made to notify those broadcast stations designated by the College not later than 7 a.m. If no announcement has been made by 7 a.m., faculty members and students should make every effort to attend classes. The morning broadcast will not apply to classes held after 4 p.m. If the College is in session, and it becomes necessary to cancel classes during the day, official notice will be given, as soon as possible, to the vice presidents, deans, directors, department chairs and faculty. Written notices will be posted on the student union bulletin board and an attempt will be made to inform all offices on campus. Announcements will be broadcast from designated radio and television stations at the earliest opportunity in accordance with policies at the several broadcasting stations. If no announcement is made prior to 3 p.m. indicating that evening classes are canceled, students and faculty will be expected to attend, even if classes earlier in the day have been canceled.

Radio and television stations designated by the College for carrying official announcements of cancellation of classes and/or closure of the College can be found on the College web site. When classes are canceled, other activities scheduled on campus may also be canceled. Listen for announcements or contact the sponsoring organization.

Confirmation of any decision to cancel classes and/or close the College can also be had by calling a recorded message at (401) 456-9500. There will also be a posting on the College web site at <http://www.ric.edu>.

When it is necessary to cancel classes, non-teaching employees are still expected to report to work unless the Governor has authorized otherwise by issuing an Executive Order. Parking lots D and E (in front of Roberts Hall) will be given priority for clearing under these circumstances. Employees who are unable to report to work or complete their work schedule due to adverse weather conditions may, with the approval of their supervisor, seek to utilize salary deferred pay, leave without pay, personal leave, or annual leave to compensate for their absence. The switchboard will also be staffed during these times. Provision will be made to meet the dining needs of residence hall students.

In extreme circumstances when the Governor officially orders a complete or partial shutdown of state services and/or orders the closure of state highways, the pay status of employees will be in accordance with the appropriate collective bargaining agreement or as agreed upon between the Board of Governors and the Unions representing the various bargaining units.

When there is a storm alert and College classes have not been canceled, students unable to get to class shall be allowed to make up any examinations and shall be allowed to submit required papers at the first opportunity after the storm alert.

### **3.15 FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips are an appropriate pedagogical method. For the purposes of this section, there are two different types:

- The use of community resources by students on class assignment which ordinarily does not interfere with the student's responsibilities to other classes.
- A trip taken by a whole class which extends over several hours or a day or more, and which must be arranged with care to minimize conflict with other College activities.

A field trip does not relieve a student of any responsibility to other classes. All missed work must be made up.

Field trips should be planned well in advance, and if possible, students should alert their instructors about these trips at the beginning of the semester. A notice of intent, including the names of the students involved, should be sent by the faculty member in charge of the trip to the Office of News and Public Relations at least a week before the trip for publication in the College *Briefs*.

Field trips should be planned so as to conflict as little as possible with College activities, academic and otherwise. No field trips shall be scheduled during the seven calendar days preceding the end of classes in a semester.

The College shall not be responsible for any expenses incurred as a result of field trips except as might be specifically agreed upon in writing prior to the scheduling of the trip.

### **3.16 STUDENT RECORDS**

#### **3.16.1 Transcripts**

Transcripts of grades are issued by the Records Office only at the request of the student. Students must request transcripts by letter or online; no phone requests will be taken. The College reserves the right to withhold a student's transcript until all financial obligations to the College have been met.

#### **3.16.2 Improper Disclosure**

Members of the Rhode Island College community hold privileged positions as teachers, advisors, and/or counselors. Students and former students are entitled to a reasonable expectation against improper disclosure of information acquired in the classroom, at conferences, or during other campus activities. Inquiries about students might come from officials engaged in law enforcement, government, the news media, or other activities. Faculty and professional staff may respond by giving judgments of a student's ability and/or character; however, it is improper to disclose student **views, beliefs, or political associations.**

Members of the college community are referred to Article IX of the Student Bill of Rights, which may be obtained through the Student Community Government Office, Student Union 200.

*COMPILER'S NOTE: This section was adopted by Council in March of 1968.*

#### **3.16.3 Access to Student Records and Files**

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)

Rhode Island College maintains students' records to support its educational and service programs. Its policies and procedures governing the utilization and maintenance of such records are in accordance with state and federal laws and the Rhode Island College Student Bill of Rights.

An educational record is defined as those records, files, documents, and other materials directly related to a currently or previously enrolled student, which are maintained by the College or one of its agents.

Educational records for an individual student may include the permanent record and folder, academic advisement materials, and materials in connection with an application for financial aid or placement services.

Education records do not include personal notes maintained by individual faculty or professional staff members as memory aids; records maintained by the campus security office; records maintained in connection with a student's status as a College employee; medical, psychiatric and counseling records; or confidential letters and statements provided prior to January 1, 1975.

The following information from the educational record of a student currently or previously enrolled is considered to be directory or public information: name, address, telephone number, class, field of study, dates of attendance and, for members of athletic teams, height and weight.

A student may cause the address and/or telephone listing to be removed from the directory or public information category by so informing the Records Office in writing.

The release of non-directory information by telephone to a third party is prohibited in most instances, except when such information is needed to resolve an emergency, or if the student has provided specific written permission for the release of such information.

A student has the right of access to the student's own educational records, including the right to secure copies of materials at cost or without charge, in accordance with procedures established by the office having custody of the records. A student may waive this right of access to confidential letters of recommendation in connection with job placement and receipt of awards. Services may not be withheld or prejudice result from a student's decision not to execute a waiver. If the student signs a waiver, that student is entitled to request a list of persons making confidential recommendations or statements.

Access to educational records in accordance with this policy will be granted upon the request of a student subject to the procedures established by individual offices. Access will be granted at the earliest possible date, but not later than 45 days from the date of the request. Educational records will be reviewed with a student by a member of the professional staff. Medical, psychiatric, and counseling records may be reviewed on behalf of a student by a qualified physician or other professional of the student's choice.

The public posting of grades either by student name, institutional student identification number, or social security number without the student's written permission is a violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. Even with names obscured, numeric student identifier numbers are considered personally identifiable information.

Release of information from student educational records normally requires a written request over the signature of the student specifying the individual to whom the information is to be released and the nature of the information to be made available. The information released will contain a clear statement indicating that the recipient has the responsibility for using the information in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974.

Exceptions to the requirement of permission of the student are:

- (a) Members of the faculty and professional staff in connection with their duties at Rhode Island College (except security officers);
- (b) Parents of legally dependent students whose dependency is carefully and completely documented by notarized copies of Internal Revenue Service tax returns and other material;

- (c) Officers and organizations authorized by state and federal statute, such as the Educational Testing Service (ETS) and the Department of Health and Human Services which require student data to evaluate and monitor services and programs affecting students at Rhode Island College;
- (d) Emergency situations where a release is necessary for the protection of the health and safety of the individual student or others;
- (e) Situations governed by a judicial order.

A log must be maintained in each student's record to document the use of that record by individuals other than members of the faculty, professional staff, or administrator at Rhode Island College. The log must indicate the date of the request, the individual or organization using the record and the purpose for which it was used.

A student is entitled to challenge the contents and accuracy (but not the qualitative and subjective aspects such as grades) of his/her educational record and may insert a written explanation.

To do so, a statement of objections and a request for a hearing must be filed in writing by the student with the supervisor of the office maintaining the record. If the matter is not resolved at that level, the student has the right to appeal successively to the next level of supervision through the appropriate vice president and the President.

This policy will be brought to the attention of the students by publication in the *Student Handbook* and other publications.

All concerned are urged to assist in compliance with this policy and the law. Failure to comply can be cause for the withholding of federal funds by the US Department of Education.

### **3.17 ELIGIBILITY FOR PARTICIPATION IN INTERCOLLEGIATE SPORTS**

For each semester of participation in an intercollegiate sport, a student must be in good academic standing, be enrolled as a full-time degree candidate with a course load of at least 12 credit hours, and have satisfactorily completed at least nine credits in the previous semester of intercollegiate athletic participation.

Students failing to meet these standards will be notified by the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics of their ineligibility to participate in future intercollegiate events. Eligibility to participate will be restored upon satisfactory completion of at least nine credit hours from the last semester of eligibility or successful appeal of the decision.

### 3.17.1 Appeals

In the event a student wishes to appeal the decision of the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics, the request should be directed to the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs. Upon receipt of the request, the Vice President for Student Affairs will convene a hearing committee comprised of the Vice President for Student Affairs or designee, the Director of Intercollegiate Athletics or designee, and the Chair of the Committee on Athletic, Intramural, and Recreational Policy.

## 3.18 WEB POLICY

The purpose of the Rhode Island College Web is to provide information about the College, its mission and services, its faculty and students, and its events and programs. In addition, the World Wide Web provides access to local and global scholarly resources. In accordance with its mission of teaching, research, and public service, the College supports the use of the World Wide Web by the College community.

The Rhode Island College presence on the World Wide Web is identified by the Universal Resource Locator (URL) [www.ric.edu](http://www.ric.edu) and is an official publication of Rhode Island College. Accordingly, all publishers on [www.ric.edu](http://www.ric.edu) must conform to College policies, ethical codes, rules and regulations, and standards of conduct. Pertinent statements of such policies and rules are found in the *College Handbook of Policies, Practices, and Regulations*, the *Student Handbook*, *The Policy for Responsible Computing at Rhode Island College*, the *Collective Bargaining Agreements*, and *College Catalog*, as well as other sources. There are also federal, state, and local laws governing many interactions that occur on the Internet. Publishers need to be aware of their responsibilities and of the process for adjudicating violations. They are responsible for ensuring that their page content is appropriate and accurate.

### 3.18.1 Governance

The Web Advisory Committee is a standing Presidential Committee and acts as an advisory board to the President for web policy. Decisions on areas and departments permitted on [www.ric.edu](http://www.ric.edu) are made by the Web Advisory Committee, based on conformance to College mission and goals and considerations of space and design.

Members of the Web Advisory Committee shall be appointed by the President to three-year terms that shall begin on July 1; the membership shall be appointed in a manner so as to ensure that the terms of approximately one-third of the membership shall expire each year. There are no restrictions on re-appointment of members. The President shall select one member to serve as Chair. The Special Assistant to the President for Web Services shall serve as a member of the Committee, *ex officio*.

The Special Assistant to the President for Web Services is responsible for implementing and enforcing web policy, managing web services, and coordinating campus web publishing.

In order to achieve consistency and coherence between the Homepage and subsequent pages, the College Web Manager will have authority over matters of design, format navigation, and organization. Content is the responsibility of the department, office, or organization to which the web page pertains, and shall conform to College Web Publishing Guidelines [see 3.18.6 (c)]. Every department, office, or organization that maintains a presence on the College Web shall identify a contact to the Special Assistant to the President for Web Services for this purpose.

### **3.18.2 Right to Publish**

Pages may be published on the Rhode Island College Web by

- (a) officially constituted academic departments, programs, or centers
- (b) administrative departments
- (c) student organizations officially recognized by the College
- (d) officially recognized College committees and affiliates

Faculty and staff may publish pages related to their work at the College. For example, faculty members might publish their *curriculum vitae*, research findings, or course syllabi.

Because the College Web is an official publication of Rhode Island College, and in recognition of the need to protect the integrity of the College's internet technology as well as the privacy of student work, student-produced web-based assignments or other coursework shall be directed to servers other than those on which [www.ric.edu](http://www.ric.edu) resides.

Faculty and staff access to College web publishing resources requires sponsorship by an official unit as defined in Section 3.18.6. Faculty and staff pages are to be linked from their department or office pages. The linking of faculty and staff pages is at the discretion of the department or office which in so doing assumes responsibility for these pages. Faculty and staff may not use the College Web to engage in any commercial activity not related to the College. For example, a faculty author may post a link to an on-line bookseller's page displaying the author's work for sale; however, an individual may not use the College Web to advertise rental property.

Normally, when a faculty member, staff member, or organization ceases to be associated with Rhode Island College, their web page or pages shall cease to be published on the College Web. The Special Assistant to the President for Web Services may forward any such files to the owner, if contact information is available. Upon request of the owner, the Special Assistant to the President for Web Services, in consultation with the Web Advisory Committee, may continue to publish such page or pages if it is deemed in the interest of the College. However, maintenance of the page or pages, including any updates, shall be the sole responsibility of the owner and not the College.

Other Rhode Island College entities and affiliates may request inclusion on the College Web. The Web Advisory Committee will consider each request on a case-by-case basis.

### **3.18.3 Enforcement**

The College reserves the right to remove any information or links to information published on the College Web in violation of these policies.

Alleged violations of this policy shall be addressed according to applicable College policy. Rhode Island College treats access and use violations of computing facilities, equipment, software, information resources, networks, or privileges seriously and may also prosecute abuse under the General Laws of Rhode Island, Title 11, Chapter 52: Computer Crime, the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act of 1986, or other appropriate laws (from *The Policy For Responsible Computing At Rhode Island College*, 9 May 1997).

### **3.18.4 Implementation**

The Special Assistant to the President for Web Services, in consultation with the Web Advisory Committee, will develop guidelines for the implementation of this policy and publish these guidelines as appropriate.

### **3.18.5 Disclaimer**

A link to the following language, which shall serve as a disclaimer, shall be posted on the top page:

*The Rhode Island College web site is comprised of pages of officially constituted academic departments, programs, or centers, administrative offices, student organizations that are officially recognized by the College, and officially recognized College committees and affiliates. While every effort is made to maintain current and accurate information on the College Web, all materials maintained on the Rhode Island College web servers are provided “as is” with no warranties of any kind.*

*These pages were prepared on the basis of the information available at the time of publication. Therefore, specific statements, including but not limited to fees, dates, course offerings, admission requirements, financial aid practice and policies, graduation requirements, and other procedures or policies may be subject to change without notice.*

*Any individual views or opinions appearing on the College Web are strictly those of the individual author and do not necessarily reflect the views of Rhode Island College.*

### **3.18.7 Web Publishing Guidelines**

The Web Advisory Committee and the Special Assistant to the President for Web Services shall be responsible for the ongoing review and revision of these guidelines, as appropriate.

- (a) Responsibilities of College Entities Seeking Inclusion on the College Web

Before a departmental, office, or organizational web site is published on the College Web, the department, office or organization must identify a contact who is responsible for maintaining the accuracy and currency of information on that site.

(b) Web Producers

Normally, the Office of Web Services shall be responsible for the production of departmental, office, and organizational web sites within the [www.ric.edu](http://www.ric.edu) domain. However, with the approval of the Special Assistant to the President for Web Services, such entities may employ or assign individuals or contract with outside vendors, in accordance with established College policy, to produce and/or maintain web sites that reside on or are directly linked to [www.ric.edu](http://www.ric.edu). Such individuals or vendors, for the purpose of this policy, are to be known as “Web Producers.”

To obtain a Web Producer account, a completed Web Producer contract, including the signature of the person in charge of the department, office, or organization requesting the account, shall be submitted to the Special Assistant to the President for Web Services. Representatives of student groups must obtain the signature of the Director of Student Activities.

If the request conforms to web policy and guidelines, a Web Producer account will be created and space on a server will be assigned. Web Producers will be notified via e-mail when an account has been established.

Web Producers must abide by all rules and conditions that govern the College Web, including those stated in official policy as well as those promulgated by the Special Assistant to the President for Web Services.

These rules and conditions include but are not limited to the following:

- i.* Established page guidelines must be observed [see 13-18-6 (c)].
- ii.* All U.S. and international copyright and licensing laws and acceptable practices related to those laws must be observed.
- iii.* Information presented shall be limited to that which furthers the College’s mission of teaching, research, and service, or otherwise serves the public of Rhode Island College.
- iv.* Prior to initial publication, all pages or collections of pages developed by Web Producers shall be reviewed and approved by the Special Assistant to the President for Web Services. Such review shall also apply to instances of significant changes to pages or collections of pages; however, review shall not be necessary for the updating of content.

The College reserves the right to amend or to remove any information or links to information published on the College Web in violation of these policies, including inaccurate or dated information. The Special Assistant to the President for Web Services may also revoke any and all permissions granted to a Web Producer in such instances.

(c) Page Guidelines

- i.* All pages or related collections of pages must have a clearly identifiable College "owner" -- an organization or individual who will be held accountable for that information; *e.g.*, its timeliness, accuracy, reliability, and adherence to national, local, and College policies and guidelines. "Owners" must be clearly identified, including specific names, e-mail addresses and other contact information.
- ii.* Each web page should indicate the date when it was created or last revised.
- iii.* Pages shall contain navigation aids consistent with standards established by the Web Manager. Departmental, office, and organizational homepages must include a link to the Rhode Island College homepage. Other departmental, office, and organizational pages shall include links to the homepage of the respective department, office, or organization.
- iv.* Generally, the College Web shall not be used for commercial purposes or link to commercial sites that are unrelated to the mission of the College.
- v.* Each page must contain meaningful text in the html title field.
- vi.* Pages shall be designed in such a manner so as to respect the technical limitations of the College's resources as well as those of internet consumers. Such issues may include bandwidth, CPU time, disk space, page loading time, accessibility, security, confidentiality, and other factors specified periodically by the Special Assistant to the President for Web Services.
- vii.* Audio content is permitted; however, the page default in all such cases shall be in the "off" mode.
- viii.* Video or other dynamic visual content is permitted; however, the user shall have a clear option to close any such content.
- ix.* The use of any "plug-in" program for the operation of any portion of a web page must be approved in advance by the Special Assistant to the President for Web Services, who shall have full discretion in this regard.
- x.* Prior to publication, all pages on the College Web shall be tested to ensure that they are compatible with all browsers and platforms supported by the College.

- xi. All pages shall be designed for a standardized screen resolution as determined by the Special Assistant to the President for Web Services.
- xii. All elements on a page that are designed to be active, such as buttons, links, or plug-ins, shall be functional.
- xiii. The Special Assistant to the President for Web Services reserves the right to post changes or updates to departmental, office, or organizational web sites if necessary; however, the responsibility for providing accurate content remains with the department, office, or organization. Failure to maintain accurate and timely information may result in the revocation of access and removal of the page or pages from the Rhode Island College Web.
- xiv. The use of all College logos, symbols, and other design elements shall be consistent with design standards established by the Office of Publishing Services.