

## Dear Parent of a New Student:

Welcome to the Rhode Island College Community. We hope you and your young adult's experience with Rhode Island College is both educational and rewarding.

To that end, we have compiled this Parents' Guide. This brochure was designed as a companion piece for the New Student Guide your young adult received at Orientation. Between the two publications, most of your questions about the College should be answered.

However, if additional questions or concerns come up and they are not answered by either publication, please feel free to call us at the Office of Academic Support and Information Services (OASIS) at (401) 456-8083. OASIS is located in Craig-Lee Hall, Room 154.

Again, welcome to the Rhode Island College Community.

Sincerely,

Dolores A. Passarelli, Director  
Office of Academic Support and Information Services

## *Welcome to the Next Challenge*

Parents of college students face as many challenges as do their students; they just don't have to study as many subjects! Both worry about finances, security, making good choices, the future, and trying to maintain a healthy adult-adult relationship. This new frontier is an exciting time for both parents and students as they forge another dimension of their relationship. As in the past, good listening skills, patience and perspective help make for a successful transition.

This guide is designed to provide some realistic information about what can be expected at Rhode Island College and how to plan ahead. We have attempted to address the topics of interests that parents have mentioned at previous Orientation programs and hope that you will find this Guide helpful. We welcome questions from students and parents, and indeed answer many every day.

So let's start.

*What is a normal load of courses for a freshman?*

Many students at Rhode Island College attend school as full-time students, that is, they have registered for at least 12 credit hours. We encourage new freshmen to start slower and pick up the pace later. But it is important for the student to realize his or her own abilities. Some freshmen are able to take a heavier load without any adverse effects. College students will earn grades in courses listed on a transcript, which is a comprehensive grade report of all college level work. A cumulative grade point average (GPA) will be posted each active semester to reflect the student's grades.

**-Sample-**

Grade	Quality Points	Credits	Total Q.P.
B	= 3.00	x 4	12.00
B-	= 2.67	x 3	8.01
C+	= 2.33	x 3	6.99
B	= 3.00	x 3	9.00
B+	= 3.33	x 3	9.99
TOTAL	= 45.99	(divided by) 16 credits	equals 2.874 GPA

### *How do I find answers to questions about Rhode Island College?*

The **Rhode Island College General Catalog** is the basic manual for nearly all questions. It is the most comprehensive resource for academic policies and procedures. The catalog is distributed to all incoming students, and it is also available on-line at [www.ric.edu](http://www.ric.edu). We encourage students to keep a separate notebook of general advising information, college forms and other items of documentation useful to their college experience. This method keeps students organized as they select their coursework. First year students generally find that keeping in touch with the Office of Academic Support and Information Services (OASIS) or with an assigned academic advisor is a very good way to keep up with changes and for planning ahead.

### *How much time will the freshman student spend studying?*

The time commitment for classes and for necessary preparation will be different for every course and at different times within every course. A course syllabus, presented by the instructor at the beginning of the semester, outlines requirements and timeliness. A rough estimate for students to use in their planning is 3 hours of preparation time for each hour spent in the class. Preparation time may include pre-reading before an assignment, reading an assignment, reviewing a reading assignment, solving math problems, time spent in the computer labs, researching a topic in the library, working with a study group from class, writing several drafts of a paper, observing or participating in a community service project, learning a new computer program, studying for test and exams, or working with a subject area tutor. So this is where the time goes for full-time students.

Building a workable schedule takes some self-knowledge on the part of the student as well as the ability to sometimes say yes to an option and to sometimes say no. A workable academic schedule is ideally built around class offerings and the student's natural study habits. Many students at Rhode Island College need to keep part-time jobs in addition to a full-time course load, which is a difficult task. However, this prepares the student for the demands of the real world where the juggling of responsibilities and problem solving are important skills. We consider college to be the student's real job and first priority, and support good strategies which lead to success.

### ***What to do about missing classes, illnesses etc.?***

Attending class is very important, but illnesses happen. Prompt notification of instructors is very helpful particularly for illnesses of a short duration (1-2 classes missed). Illnesses of over one week's duration need to be reported to the Office of Student Life (456-8061).

### ***How does a student know what courses are needed to graduate?***

Requirements for graduation include: a Writing requirement, a Mathematics competency requirement, completion of the General Education program and the successful completion of all curriculum, major, minor and elective courses. In many programs new students begin with their college requirements and the General Education program, picking up major requirements in subsequent semesters.

Course selection occurs well in advance of each semester, in November for the Spring and in April for the Fall. Students register

for courses using RConnect, the same web registration system employed during Orientation. Careful planning coupled with advisement in the student's major and in OASIS is very helpful to keep on track.

### **Some quick academic policies...**

Students may add courses during the first two weeks of each semester (add period) and may withdraw from courses during the first six weeks. One-hundred percent of tuition and fees is granted for courses dropped during the add period. Course withdrawals after this period will not be eligible for a refund of tuition or fees. Students who officially withdraw from all classes (as first time RIC students) shall be entitled to a refund of tuition, fees, room and board charges based upon their official date of withdrawal.

### **What if your student has or thinks they might have a disability?**

Students need to notify (or register) at the Office of Student Life, Craig-Lee 127, 456-8061. In addition, students with learning disabilities may wish to consult the Academic Development Center (located in OASIS, CL 154). Students may also wish to register with the Office of Student Life for adaptive technologies and extra strategies for meeting with success.

### *What about the college bill?*

Paying the bill on time is a very important consideration for all parties. Students who are timely in their payments retain proposed course schedules, delayed payments will mean that the student will be dropped from their next semester's courses. This will create problems, as other students will move in to take that seat in the class. Rhode Island College offers a tuition payment plan available through the Bursar's office located in Building #4 (East Campus). Payments may also be made through VISA, MASTERCARD, and DISCOVER. Financial aid is also available to qualified students through the Office of Financial Aid. A computerized program of financial aid options may be helpful to the student as well. Many students continue to work part-time and pursue loan options to complete their financing package.

### *Parking the Car*

As with many colleges and universities with a healthy commuter population, parking is at a premium. Students are advised to park in specially designated lots as the parking tickets that they might receive are State of Rhode Island tickets costing \$40.00 or more. All drivers are reminded that getting to campus 30 minutes early, keeping an umbrella in the car, watching out for pedestrians, and parking carefully solves a lot of problems.

## *Security on Campus*

Theft happens everywhere; therefore all students are advised to keep expensive personal belongings at home. Books, coats, backpacks, etc. should be watched, as they may be as attractive to someone else as well as to their owner. Rhode Island College has well trained and experienced security staff on campus 24 hours a day, 7 days a week both on foot and in patrol cars.

## *Helping the Faltering Student*

College courses and schedules are different than in high school; the semester is 15 weeks in length and is very intensive during those weeks. Students are advised to consult with the Office of Academic Support and Information Services during the first few weeks of the semester just to see how the adjustment to college life seems to be going along. Through the Academic Advisement Information Center of OASIS, students can talk about their program of study and course-related concerns. OASIS sponsors tutorial services and will try to link tutors and tutees. OASIS acts as official advisor to freshmen who have not declared a major and to those not yet formally admitted into the Feinstein School of Education. However, all freshmen are always welcome.

OASIS is also home to several learning centers (described below) which support the academic life of a student. Satellite learning centers are offered in biology, chemistry and physical science/physics as well.

**The Academic Development Center (ADC)** offers assistance to students who want to study smarter and more efficiently. The learning skills advisors and peer tutors are prepared to work with students individually and in groups. Study strategies are developed in areas such as time management, concentration, note-taking skills, reading comprehension, vocabulary and test preparation. The Center schedules workshops that address some of these topics including textbook reading, time organization and standardized exam preparation. Additionally, College Course 125: College Learning Strategies, offers hints and tips for achieving academic success. Students who have a diagnosed learning disability or believe that they may have one should visit the ADC and talk with an advisor.

**The Mathematics Learning Center** helps Rhode Island College students who are entering with a weak background in math. The Center has designed a program to help students attain the necessary basic arithmetic and algebraic skills to be successful in their college courses. The Center administers a Mathematics Placement Exam and provides a program for those students who were deficient in specific arithmetic/algebraic skills. Students may also obtain assistance on specific topics included in math courses. There is no fee involved; students work primarily one on one with an instructor. Others work in a group or take home materials to be done at their convenience. For some students, a program will be prescribed using diagnostic procedures developed by the staff.

**The Writing Center** is a resource for everyone in the College community. The Center is staffed by students who, in addition to being experienced writers, have been trained to help others at any stage in their writing. They have strategies for getting started, for organizing and developing ideas, and for proofreading. In addition

to individual sessions, the Center also provides space and support for writers' groups - students who simply want to share personal and/or creative writing. No matter what the project, students find a friendly student-centered place to work.

### *Selecting a Major*

Choosing a major can be a hair-raising experience for both parents and students, as both have notions about the curriculum and about career prospects after graduation. This is a particularly difficult decision when the future world's economy and the careers needed to be competitive are ever changing.

Students typically change majors as they understand more about the curriculum, the job market and their own abilities and preferences. OASIS acts as official advisors for undeclared majors and provides reference points for students thinking of changing their minds. Parents can be helpful by listening and by encouraging the student to find out as much as possible about both major and career prospects before making a commitment. On campus resources are available in OASIS, the Career Development Center, the Counseling Center and certainly in conversation with faculty in a wide array of fields.

The Career Development Center located in Craig Lee 054, offers a computerized career guidance/interest inventory program (SIGI Plus) which enables college students to explore known and unknowns in their career choices. Individual career consultations are available with staff for students seeking to talk over their selection of a career field.

The Counseling Center located in Craig Lee 130, offers a paper and pencil interest inventory specifically geared for college students and their choices. Also, making follow-up appointments with staff affords students the opportunity to discuss the results of the test and subsequent decisions.

### **Making and Keeping to a Budget**

Expenses come in many forms, anticipated and otherwise. Budgets need to include lines for expenditures on such items as textbooks, clothes, food, car-related bills for commuter students and some spending money. The Financial Aid office has published a good guide to estimating your typical annual expenses at Rhode Island College, available in Craig-Lee 050.

Textbooks are required items, and can be costly especially in hard cover. The Rhode Island College Bookstore is well stocked with textbooks and daily items necessary for the student. Every semester students will need to acquire the appropriate texts for that term.

### **Residential Life at Rhode Island College**

Letting someone go who has been living under your roof all their lives and sending them off to live with other young adults in a residence hall is a scary prospect. Many parents just get nervous thinking about all of the unknown factors and many decisions that will confront the new student.

The constant factor is that Rhode Island College employs a very experienced professional residence hall staff member who lives in the residence hall with the students. Maybe the students have not had college residential experiences before but we have. A [Guide to Residential Life at Rhode Island College](#) answers many questions about residential life from window dimensions to policies and procedures.

### *Working on campus*

A part-time job on campus during the freshman year can be a great way to learn about how the offices on campus function. Students are not allowed to work more than 20 hours per week on campus during the academic year, thus inviting them to spend more time on their studies. On-campus jobs are considered very desirable, new students are encouraged to make early contact with the Student Employment Office in the Career Development Center for best choices.

### *Getting insurance, what is offered?*

Parents and students are encouraged to explore health insurance plans available through Rhode Island College. Current program brochures describe specific coverage plans for full and part-time students.

### *What dining services are offered to students?*

The Donovan Dining Center offers meal plans to both commuter and residential students. The Center sponsors several different, healthy options for students each day as well as theme events of interest to students. Students are encouraged to visit the Dining Center between classes. In addition, the College has opened a new café; students are encouraged to visit the café as well.



*Directory Assistance*

*Where to Go, Who to Call*

Important Numbers (456 – prefix for all phone numbers)

**A**

Academic Advisement	8083
Academic Development	8071
Academic Support & Information Services	8083
Accounting\Computer Information Systems	8036
Admissions	8234
African\Afro-American Studies	8679
Anthropology\Geography	8005
Art Department	8054
Arts and Sciences	8107
Athletics	8007

**B**

Bachelor of General Studies	9781
Bilingual\Bicultural Education	8173\8573
Biology Department	8010
Bursar	8130

**C**

Campus Card	8394
Campus Center	8034
Campus Store	8025
Career Development	8031

Central Desk	8143
Chaplain's Office	8168
Clinical Laboratory Science	8480
Communications	8270
Computer Center	8050
Continuing Education	8091
Counseling Center	8094
<b>D</b>	
Dance Department	9791
Dining Services	8207
<b>E</b>	
Economics\Finance	8036
Elementary Education	8016
Educational Studies	8170
English Department	8028
<b>F</b>	
Feinstein School of Education and Human Development	8110
Financial Aid	8033
<b>H</b>	
Health, Physical Education and Recreation	8046
Health Promotion	8061
Health Services	8055
History Department	8039

<b>I</b>		
International Students		8649
<b>J</b>		
Justice Studies		8026
<b>L</b>		
Labor Studies		8039
Library		8126
<b>M</b>		
Management & Technology		8009
Math Learning Center		9763
Mathematics\Computer Science		8038
Minority Affairs		8791
Modern Languages		8029
Music		9883
<b>N</b>		
National Student Exchange		8083
Nursing Department		8013
<b>O</b>		
Office of Academic Support and Information Services (OASIS)		8083
<b>P</b>		
Performing Arts		8194
Philosophy		8012

Physical Sciences	8049
Political Sciences	8056
Preparatory Enrollment Program	8237
Psychology	8015
Public Administration	8056

## R

Records	8212\8213
Recreation Center	8400
Residential Life and Housing	8240

## S

Secondary Education (Educational Studies)	8170
Security and Safety	8201

Social Work	8042
Sociology	8026
Special Education	8024
Student Community Government	8088
Student Employment	8032
Student Life	8061
Student Payroll	8111
Student Support Services	8237

## T

Theatre	9883
Tutorial Services	8183

**U**

Unity Center 8791

Upward Bound 8081

**W**

Women's Center 8474

Women's Studies 9511

Writing Center 8141

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