

New Graduate Student Checklist 2015

Welcome to Rice University! The following information and resources will help you be prepared for the coming academic year and ease your transition into graduate school.

Save the Date

[Fall 2015 Graduate Orientation](#)

Mandatory

Wednesday, August 19, 2015

8:30 am - 7 pm - Alice Pratt Brown and various other locations

[International Graduate Student Orientation](#)

Mandatory for International Students

Monday, August 17, 2015 - Tuesday, August 18, 2015

Get connected

- Keep your department and graduate coordinator informed
 - Your graduate coordinator will be able to help you resolve any of the issues that may arise before and after your arrival.

- Meet other incoming graduate students
 - Keep up to date with the latest news, participate in chat sessions with incoming graduate students, find a roommate, and get answers to your questions about transitioning to graduate school. These and many more resources can be found on the [OWL-Space Group](#) for New Graduate Students.
 - To access the OWL-Space site for New Graduate Students, go to owlspace-ccm.rice.edu and log in with your Rice NetID.

- Get to know the [Graduate Student Association](#)
 - Check out the GSA website at gsa.rice.edu.
 - Look for GSA weekly announcements sent to your Rice email for resources to help you get ready for life at Rice.
 - Join the [GSA Facebook Group](#).
 - Add the [GSA Google Calendar](#) to track events just for graduate students.

- Stay connected with Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies
 - Bookmark GPS website for policies and procedures regarding your academic progress.
 - Keep up with deadlines and graduate student accomplishments by following [GPS on Facebook!](#)

Before you arrive

- Activate your NetID, ESTHER account, and Rice Email **as soon as possible**
 - You should receive an email from graduate@rice.edu that contains your [Esther login](#) and [Rice Email](#) information to the email address given on your application.
 - Use your student ID number and the unique link in the email to set up your Esther account and NetID. This link may only be used once, so be certain to remember your Esther pin after it has been reset.
 - Visit MyNetID.rice.edu to set your NetID password for email, OWL-Space, and Rice computers. Then set a different password for your Rice Google Apps like [Calendar](#) and [Drive](#). Visit [IT DIY](#) for how-to instructions.
 - If you have not received information regarding your Esther login by **May 31st**, please contact your department coordinator for assistance.

- Check your Rice Email **regularly**
 - Your Rice Email is your official means of communication with the university. Read all emails from your graduate coordinator and graduate@rice.edu regularly.
 - Access your Rice email online at webmail.rice.edu.
 - If you prefer another service, set your Rice email to forward to another email address using WebSieve at ricemail.rice.edu.

- Complete and submit the required [Student Health Forms](#) by **July 1st**
 - Complete the [Student Health Data Form](#) and return to Student Health Services to prevent registration delay. This form is due on July 1st for the Fall semester (December 1st for the Spring semester).
 - Note: A physical exam is **required** and must be recorded on the Rice Student Health Data Form.
 - Please be advised that new [students under the age of 22 will need to show proof of a meningitis vaccination](#) ten days before the semester starts.

- Register for or waive [Rice Student Health Insurance](#) by **September 4th**
 - All students are required to have health insurance.
 - Once you receive your Rice student ID number, log on to <http://studenthealthinsurance.rice.edu> and register for, or waive, Rice Health Insurance.
 - If you have questions about graduate student health insurance, please visit our website <http://graduate.rice.edu/insurance>.

- Complete [required online trainings](#) by **October 1st**
 - [Online trainings](#) must be completed before **October 1st** (Fall matriculants) and **February 15th** (Spring matriculants).
 - It is recommended that these be completed prior to arrival, if possible.
 - Students will not be able to register for a second semester until these trainings have been completed.

- Submit your final transcripts by **October 1st**
 - After your most recent degree is conferred, request your previous institution to send an official transcript showing degree conferred directly to your department coordinator by October 1st (Fall Matriculates) or February 15th (Spring Matriculants).
 - You will not be able to register for a second semester until your previous degree is verified.

Moving to Houston

- Plan on arriving by **August 18th** (Domestic Students) or **August 16th** (International Students)
 - Explore housing options
 - Visit graduate.rice.edu/housing.
 - Check out [where graduate students live!](#)
 - Review the [GSA's guide on living in Houston](#) for detailed information and advice for living on and off campus, getting around Houston, and getting settled.
 - Need help furnishing your apartment? Join the [Graduate Student Loan Closet](#).
 - Apply for [Graduate Housing](#) by **May 31st**
 - If you would like to register for the housing lottery for graduate students, please visit the website for the [Rice Graduate Apartments](#). The housing lottery usually occurs at the end of May for the following academic year.
 - Orient yourself with Rice University
 - Learn your way around [Rice Campus](#).
 - Download the [Rice iPhone App](#).
 - Take a [virtual campus tour!](#)
 - Familiarize yourself with the [Rice Shuttle System](#) or track the shuttles live at bus.rice.edu.
 - Apply for a [parking permit](#), if necessary
 - Visit parking.rice.edu to learn about parking options on campus.
 - To purchase a parking permit, log on to ESTHER.
 - Permits can be picked up after you arrive from the Parking Office, located in the Central Garage below the Jones School of Management. Hours are 7AM-5PM, Monday-Friday.
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After you arrive

- Check in with your department and attend your graduate program's orientation
 - Turn in your [I9 form](#) to your graduate coordinator and bring acceptable documents.
 - Contact your graduate coordinator for information regarding your program's orientation.
- Attend the required [Lab Safety training](#) on **August 20th**
 - [Lab Safety Training](#) is required for all new graduate students in the School of Engineering, School of Natural Science (except Mathematics and Statistics), and any student working in a laboratory.
 - Contact your graduate coordinator if you have questions about attending the training.
- Pick up your Rice ID
 - ID cards are obtained in the lobby of the Rice campus police department. Hours are 7AM-5PM, Monday-Friday.
 - Look for Orientation week graduate student ID processing hours on the [GPS Facebook page](#).
- Update your information in [ESTHER](#), including your W4 and setting up direct deposit
 - **W-4** – Enter your W-4 information in ESTHER (or you can submit the paperwork to Payroll upon arrival). Hard copies of W4 can be found on the [Rice Controller's website](#).

- **Direct Deposit** – Enter your direct deposit information in ESTHER (or you can submit the paperwork to Payroll upon arrival)
 - **Update Address** - Update contact information and emergency contact information.
 - **Affirm the Honor Code** - Review and sign the [honor code](#).
 - For more information about ESTHER, review [ESTHER FAQs](#).
- Register for classes on [ESTHER](#) beginning **August 20th**
- Registration for all new graduate students for Fall 2015 will take place on Thursday, August 20, 2015, after you have been advised by your department on your planned course of study.
 - The last day to add classes is September 4, 2015.
 - For information regarding the registration process using ESTHER, visit <http://registrar.rice.edu/students/registration>.
- Pay your bills via [ESTHER](#) by **September 10th**
- After you register for classes, you may receive an email notice of your new account statement.
 - If you have a balance, make arrangements for payment.
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Information for International Students

- Connect with [the Office of International Students and Scholars](#) (OISS) for guidelines and resources for International Students
- Contact OISS directly for questions regarding your VISA
- Review [Pre arrival information](#) for International Students
- Complete the [Financial Declaration form](#).
 - Download and review [checklists and flowcharts for New International Students](#).
- Check in with OISS upon arrival at Rice
- Attend [International Graduate Student Orientation](#).
 - Turn in your [I9 form](#) at Payroll and bring acceptable documents.
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Resources for Graduate Students

[Rice Administrative Offices](#)
[Professional Development for Graduate Students](#)
[GSA Resources for Graduate Students](#)
[IT Do It Yourself \(DIY\)](#)