# New Graduate Student Checklist

*Before you arrive*

- Log onto ESTHER (http://esther.rice.edu) for your personalized matriculation information.  Your Esther Login letter will be sent from graduate@rice.edu to the e-mail address provided on your application.  In some cases this letter may be filtered to your email's spam.  After May 31st, please contact your department coordinator if you have not received this email.
- The mandatory Graduate Student Orientation will be held August 20, 2014.  Students who receive fall stipends that begin on August 15th (first paycheck August 31st) are expected to attend all mandatory orientation and training sessions.
- International student orientation is scheduled for August 18th and 19th.
- Contact your department coordinator for information regarding your department's orientation.
- Go to https://MyNetID.rice.edu to set your NetID password for email, OWL-Space, and using Rice computers.  Then set a different password for your Rice Google Apps like Calendar and Drive.  Helpful how-to links include:
    - Rice Google Calendar -  university-wide calendar system
    - Docs.rice.edu - Do It Yourself instructions for VPN, Rice email in Thunderbird, Outlook, etc.
    - Map to your U: Drive - Individual Storage Space
    - Box Collaboration - for use in supporting faculty research
- Your RICE EMAIL is your official means of communication with the university.  If you prefer another service, set your Rice email to forward to another email address using WebSieve.  Be wary of phishing scams and NEVER reveal your Rice passwords.
    - https://webmail.rice.edu - Read and work your Rice email
    - https://ricemail.rice.edu/  - Set up email forwarding, vacation messages, and DSPAM filters

- ○ Read all e-mails and updates from your department coordinator and graduate@rice.edu.
- ○ Visit http://graduate.rice.edu/training to complete the ONLINE TRAININGS required of all graduate students.  It is recommended that these be completed before arrival if possible.  Each training must be completed before September 15th.
- ○ Complete the HEALTH DATA FORM (http://www.rice.edu/health/hdf.html)and return to Student Health Services by July 1 to prevent registration delay.  Please make note of your required vaccinations needed and take care of them early.
- ○ Over the summer log on to http://studenthealthinsurance.rice.edu/ and register for or waive Rice HEALTH INSURANCE (all students must have health insurance).
- ○ AFTER YOUR MOST RECENT DEGREE IS CONFERRED, request an OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT showing degree conferred from all previous institutions if these were not included in your original application.  Have the transcript sent directly to your department coordinator.
- ○ Complete the IT expectations survey here.
- ○ Print a Rice University Map (http://www.rice.edu/maps) for your future reference.  If you have an iPhone, download the free Rice app at http://iphone.rice.edu/.  An app for Android devices is coming soon.
- ○ Pay your bills via your ESTHER account (the Fall down payment is due August 15th).
- ○ Log on to OwlSpace for additional information regarding life at Rice!

## After You Arrive

- ● LAB SAFETY TRAINING for ALL STUDENTS WORKING IN LABS
  Time and Location to be announced.  This is typically scheduled the week before classes begin.
- ● Stay in touch with your department coordinator.
- ● Attend the GENERAL ACTIVITIES FAIR
  Time to be announced, check for this and other news and resources at https://www.facebook.com/RiceGradStudies and OwlSpace
- ● Students receiving a stipend must turn in your W-4 to your department coordinator or the Payroll Office to be paid.
- ● Register for DIRECT DEPOSIT through ESTHER.
  You'll need your routing and account information to complete this process.
  The Payroll Office is located on the 26th Floor of the Memorial Hermann Medical Plaza, located at MacGregor and Main Street outside Campus Entrance 3.

- UPDATE CONTACT INFORMATION, EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION and SIGN HONOR CODE in ESTHER.
- REGISTER FOR CLASSES beginning August 21st (last day to add classes is August 30, 2013). New students are not allowed to register until they have met with an advisor during orientation week.
- Rice ID CARDS
  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.
- REGISTER FOR PARKING
  The parking office located in the Central Garage below the Jones School of Management. Hours are 7AM-5PM, Monday-Friday.

## General Announcements

Review the General Announcements section related to Graduate Students: ga.rice.edu
Academic calendars for each semester are available from The Office of the Registrar:
   registrar.rice.edu

**REGISTERING, DROPPING, and ADDING COURSES:**
- Full-time students must be registered for a minimum of 9 credit hours. Part-time students must be registered for a minimum of 3 credit hours.
- August 29, 2014 – Last day of registration period
- September 5, 2014 - Last to add classes in Fall 2014 (late registration fees may apply).
- October 10, 2014 – Last day to drop courses in Fall 2014

**TIME BOUNDARIES**
Master's students -
- Completion of degree: 5 years
- Time to candidacy: before the beginning of 5th semester of enrollment
- Time to thesis defense: before end of 8th semester of enrollment
Doctoral students –
- Completion of degree: 10 years
- Time to candidacy: before the beginning of 9th semester of enrollment
- Time to thesis defense: before end of 16th semester of enrollment

**APPROVAL OF CANDIDACY**

Candidacy marks a midpoint in the course of graduate education.

Achieving candidacy for the doctoral degree implies that a graduate student has:

- completed required course work,
- passed required exams to demonstrate his/her comprehensive grasp of the subject area,
- demonstrated the ability for clear oral and written communication, and
- shown the ability to carry on scholarly research in his/her subject area.

Petitions for candidacy can be found at graduate.rice.edu.

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF THESIS DEFENSE** made via events.rice.edu/rgs.

- Doctoral defenses must be announced two weeks in advance.
- Master's defenses must be announced one week in advance.

## Other Information

- For other all other inquiries, ask your department coordinator.