

**Graduate School - Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute**  
**Teaching Assistant Training for New International Graduate Students**

**PLEASE READ CAREFULLY**

**1. Program Dates for International Students:**

- **Teaching Assistant Training** – Wednesday, August 19 through Monday, August 24.
- **Microteaching Assignment** – Monday, August 24 -- all new TAs.
- **Department Orientation Dates** – Tuesday, August 25 & Wednesday, August 26
  - Please check with your department for scheduled activities.
- **General Graduate Orientation** - Thursday, August 27
  - All new students must attend the program in its entirety.
- **International Student Orientation** – Friday, August 28.

**2. Travel, Housing, and Employment Verification**

Rensselaer is located in the city of Troy in New York State. Troy is about twenty minutes by car from the city of Albany. Albany is about one hour from New York City by plane or 3 hours by bus, train or car.

**Please Note** --You must report to the **Office of International Services for Students and Scholars (ISSS)** within 48 hours of arrival. The ISSS Office is located on the Rensselaer Campus in Academy Hall. Please be sure to check out the ISS&S homepage [http://www.rpi.edu/dept/doso/ISSS/public\\_html/](http://www.rpi.edu/dept/doso/ISSS/public_html/). Their homepage answers some of the most frequently asked questions.

**Travel**

Students coming by air can usually arrange for a direct connection to Albany with a short stop over in New York City's John F. Kennedy International Airport. It is more cost effective to book your international flight all the way to Albany, rather than buying a ticket after you get to New York City.

**Housing**

**ON-CAMPUS:** On campus housing is available to matriculated full-time students. If you have not applied for on-campus housing and would still like to, you can contact the Residence Life Office at 518-276-6284 or by e-mail at [res\\_life@rpi.edu](mailto:res_life@rpi.edu). Residence halls will open August 26, at 11 a.m. Check-in for housing assignment will take place from 11 am – 7 pm, Wednesday through Friday (location to be determined – monitor <http://reslife.rpi.edu> for updated check-in locations and times), and 11 am-7 pm on Saturday and Sunday at Residence Life in the Commons West building. Beginning on Monday, August 31, check-in will be in Residence Life from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Please notify your department, the Office of Residence Life, and Dennis Gornic if your arrival on campus is delayed.

**OFF-CAMPUS:** Plan an earlier arrival so you can find housing. An off campus apartment list, updated biweekly, can be accessed through Rensselaer Union Student Services located on the Rensselaer homepage at <http://offcampus.union.rpi.edu/>

**Employment Verification - The Reform and Control Act of 1986**

As a Teaching Assistant you are considered by the United States government to be an employee of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. In 1986, a new Employment Verification System (EVS) was passed by the Congress of the United States and signed by the President. Under this law, Rensselaer (as an employer) will be required to examine original documents needed to establish, identify and authorize employment. You must present the originals to your department; photocopies will be retained for University records. Therefore, it is necessary that you arrive in Troy with the acceptable

documentation. An "EVS" Documentation Acceptability List is enclosed. The department must certify that they have reviewed these documents before we can pay your approved stipend.

### 3. Microteaching

The "Microteaching" assignment, for all new Teaching Assistants, will be Monday, August 24. You will need to present a five minute "mini-lecture" to your group. Please be sure **not to exceed 5 minutes**. A portion of your presentation will be videotaped replayed in the classroom for group review. This exercise will give you a sense of how effective you are as a teacher and of what you like or dislike about your communication style.

We suggest that you select a topic that you know in depth, preferably of academic interest. Blackboards and overhead projectors will be available for your use; however, computer projectors will not be available.

These sessions are a popular and constructive part of the TA training program. Although you may feel somewhat anxious about your presentation at first, once you've completed it, you will almost certainly feel that you've benefited by the experience.

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#### Contact us with any questions:

*The Graduate School*

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