

OPPORTUNITY IN EVERY MOMENT

RARITAN  
VALLEY  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE



## 2020-2021 STUDENT HANDBOOK

[www.RaritanVal.edu](http://www.RaritanVal.edu)

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### COVID-19 Information

RVCC is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all students, faculty and staff. The College is following state and CDC guidelines including requiring face masks, practicing social distancing, requiring health screenings and implementing enhanced cleaning protocols. Office hours for student services may be limited and appointments required. In-person classroom instruction is limited. Dining services are restricted. Please check [www.raritanval.edu/reopening](http://www.raritanval.edu/reopening) for the latest information. Stay safe and well!



## **Dear Students:**

Welcome to Raritan Valley Community College. I hope you continue to remain safe and well during these unprecedented times. Whether you have chosen to start your academic year in online learning, virtual classes, or in-person instruction, I'm delighted that you've made the decision to attend our College and I'm honored to welcome you to our exciting and dynamic community.

As you'll soon discover, you're joining a campus community that is dedicated to your success. We want you to realize your goals and your dreams, and we are all committed to helping you in any way we can. We believe that Raritan Valley Community College transforms lives—we know that it will transform yours.

At RVCC, learning takes place both within and outside the classroom. In class, you'll quickly discover an innovative and passionate faculty, a faculty that will ask you to engage in active, collaborative learning. You'll have many opportunities to engage in small group work and to develop your critical thinking skills. We'll help you to solve problems, to write with clarity and purpose, to practice ethical reasoning, and to recognize the importance of civic engagement.

Whether you plan to transfer to a four-year institution or whether you plan to begin your career, the RVCC faculty will prepare you for that future.

You'll soon discover that RVCC offers you just as exciting opportunities outside the classroom. The College is home to endless student clubs and organizations, and there will be many opportunities to participate in virtual programs such as special events, conversations with speakers, timely roundtables, and numerous cultural activities.

We're also a national leader in service-learning. Here, you can make a real difference in the life of your community.

RVCC is a special place. Everything is here for you to "seize the day." Jump right in. Take advantage of these rich opportunities; test yourself; try something new; say "yes" to that new invitation. Discover who you are—discover that potential, that passion—there's no telling where this journey ends.

You've already taken that first step, and we're ready to join you as you move forward.

I wish you every success and I wish you a wonderful year.

**Best wishes,**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael J. McDonough". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Michael J. McDonough, President**

## **Raritan Valley Community College Mission Statement**

Raritan Valley Community College is an educational community that works to develop critical thinking, foster intellectual curiosity, promote leadership, encourage social responsibility, support personal growth, and sustain engaged citizenship within a diverse population of students and community members.

## **College Diversity Statement**

Raritan Valley Community College values all aspects of diversity including but not limited to race, sexual orientation, religion, age, sex, national origin, disability, socioeconomic status, and political and philosophical perspectives. We rely on diversity to enrich the intellectual environment for students and employees. We support educational access and opportunity by recruiting and retaining a diverse college community. We foster diversity by developing and maintaining curricular and social programs that infuse the contributions of all people, and by preparing students to excel in a global society. Our commitment to diversity is reflected in the College's Mission Statement and Strategic Goals, all of which support excellence in teaching, learning and professional development in a welcoming and respectful climate.

## **College Affirmative Action/EEO Statement**

Raritan Valley Community College is firmly committed to a policy of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, and will implement the policy to assure that the benefits, services, activities, programs and employment opportunities offered at the institution are available to all persons regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, pregnancy, marital status, religion, affectional or sexual orientation, gender identification and expression, atypical hereditary cellular or blood trait, genetic information, liability for service in the Armed Forces of the United States, disability, or political affiliation and in accordance with the state and Federal Laws: Title IX, Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964; Executive Order 11246, as amended; Title IX, Educational Amendments of 1972; section 503 and 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; Veteran's Assistance Act of 1972; as amended.

## **Are you on a path to reach your goals?**

All students need a semester-by-semester academic plan. Raritan Valley students are able to use the degree audit tool called DegreeWorks to create a report called an Academic Plan. Be sure to ask your academic advisor to review your Academic Plan. Careful planning will save you time and money. You can reach an Academic Advisor at [ACS@raritanval.edu](mailto:ACS@raritanval.edu).



# Academic Calendar 2020-2021

## Fall Semester 2020

September 2 .....	First Day of Semester Classes Full-term & First 7-Week Session (Wednesday)
September 7 .....	Labor Day – College Closed
September 16 .....	First Day of 12-Week Session (Wednesday)
September 29 .....	First Day of 10-Week Session (Tuesday)
October 20 .....	Last Day of First 7-Week Session (Tuesday)
October 21 .....	First Day of Second 7-Week Session (Wednesday)
November 25 .....	College Open – No Academic Classes (Wednesday)
November 26-29 .....	Thanksgiving Recess – College Closed (Thursday-Sunday)
December 12 .....	Last day of Second 7-Week, 10-Week & 12-Week Sessions (Saturday)
December 14 .....	Last Day of Full-term Semester Classes (Monday)
December 15 .....	Reading Day (Tuesday)
December 16-22 .....	Final Exams (Wednesday-Tuesday)
December 24-January 3 .....	Winter Recess – College Closed

## Winter Session 2020-2021

December 23 .....	First Day of Classes (Wednesday)
December 25 .....	Holiday, No Classes (Friday)
January 1, 2021 .....	Holiday, No Classes (Friday)
January 15, 2021 .....	Last Day of Classes (Friday)

## Spring Semester 2021

January 19 .....	First Day of Spring Semester Classes Full-term & First 7-week Session (Tuesday)
February 1 .....	First Day of 12-Week Session (Monday)
February 15 .....	First Day of 10-Week Session (Monday)
March 6 .....	Last Day of First 7-Week Session (Saturday)
March 8-13 .....	Spring Recess – No Academic Classes (Monday-Saturday)
March 12 .....	Spring Recess – College Closed (Friday)
March 15 .....	First Day of Second 7-Week Session (Monday)
May 1 .....	Last day of Second 7-Week, 10-Week & 12-Week Sessions (Saturday)
May 3 .....	Last Day of Classes Full-term Semester (Monday)
May 4 .....	Reading Day (Tuesday)
May 5-11 .....	Final Exams (Wednesday-Tuesday)
May 15 .....	Commencement (Saturday)

## Summer Sessions 2021

Session I (6 weeks) .....	May 17 (Monday)-June 25 (Friday) (College closed May 28-31 for Memorial Day Holiday)
Session II (6 weeks) .....	July 6 (Tuesday)-August 16 (Monday)
Session III (9 weeks) .....	June 7 (Monday)-August 16 (Monday)
Summer Break .....	June 28 (Monday)-July 8 (Monday) – No Academic Classes. College closed July 2-5 (Friday-Monday)





# The ABC's of Raritan Valley Community College

## Academic Departments

### **Arts and Design**, Arts Building, Room 09

Vandana Nadkarni, Co-Chair, (908) 526-1200 ext. 8937

John Sichel, Co-Chair, (908) 526-1200 ext. 8813

### **Business & Public Service**, Hunterdon Hall, Room 314

T. Tracy Rimple, Chair

(908) 526-1200, ext. 8321

### **Communication & Languages**, Somerset Hall, Room 252

Richard Treut, Chair

(908) 526-1200, ext. 8429

### **English**, Somerset Hall, Room 333A

Susan Arvay, Chair (Fall 2020)

(908) 526-1200, ext. 8603

Ronald Tyson, Chair (Spring 2021)

(908) 526-1200, ext. 8309

### **Health Science Education**, Hunterdon Hall, Room 218

Linda Romaine, Chair

(908) 526-1200, ext. 8290

### **Humanities, Social Science, Social Work & Education**, Somerset Hall, Room 331

Brandyn Heppard, Chair

(908) 526-1200, ext. 8530

### **Mathematics & Computer Science**, Somerset Hall, Room 236

Lori Austin, Chair

(908) 526-1200, ext. 8576

### **Science & Engineering**, Whitman Science Center, Room 111

Marianne Baricevic, Chair

(908) 526-1200, ext. 8535

**Due to COVID-19 office hours may be limited and appointments required.**

**Go to [www.raritanval.edu/reopening](http://www.raritanval.edu/reopening) for latest information.**



## Academic Support Center (Tutoring)

**Location:** Bateman Student Center, 3rd Floor

**Email:** [asctutor@raritanval.edu](mailto:asctutor@raritanval.edu)

**Phone:** 908-526-1200 ext. 8393 or 8549

The Academic Support Center (ASC) offers academic support to students as they become independent, successful, life-long learners. Services offered include free tutoring, open areas for studying/homework, computer stations with educational software, reference materials, manipulative learning tools, and online tutoring. Services are free of charge and available to all RVCC students on a drop-in basis.

## Academic Advising

**Location:** College Center, First Floor C-165

**Phone:** 908-526-1200 ext. 8336

Students are encouraged to see an academic advisor for assistance with academic planning, advice on course selection, program choice, and change of program, transfer planning, and consultation regarding academic difficulties. Students can meet with an academic advisor during Drop-In hours; schedule an appointment by calling, or email us at [acs@raritanval.edu](mailto:acs@raritanval.edu).

## Art Gallery

**Location:** Lower Level, College Center

**Phone:** 908-218-8876 (Arts & Design Department)

The gallery offers a variety of art exhibitions throughout the year.

## Athletics & Recreation

**Covid-19 Update:** Check website for sports being offered for the Fall semester

**Location:** Second Floor, Physical Education Building

**Phone:** 908-218-8868 (Athletics Department)

**Email:** [rvccathletics@raritanval.edu](mailto:rvccathletics@raritanval.edu)

**Website:** [RVCCAthletics.com](http://RVCCAthletics.com)

Both competitive intercollegiate athletic programs and non-competitive recreational opportunities are being offered. Intercollegiate teams compete as a member of the Garden State Athletic Conference and NJCAA Region XIX. Scholarship sports include Baseball, Men's Basketball, Softball and Women's Basketball. Non-scholarship sports include Men's and Women's Soccer, Women's Volleyball and Golf. Various recreational intramurals can be offered throughout the Fall and Spring Semesters for all students based on interest. Indoor athletic facilities include a fitness room, six-lane heated pool, and gymnasium. Outdoor athletic facilities include three basketball courts, baseball and softball fields, a soccer field and a six-lane asphalt track.

## Bookstore

**Location:** Lower Level, College Center

**Website:** [bkstr.com/raritanvalleyccstore/home](http://bkstr.com/raritanvalleyccstore/home)

**Phone:** 908-231-8808



The Golden Lion Bookstore provides a wide array of choices for students' academic and everyday needs. Students can purchase or rent most books in either digital or hard copy format. There is a great selection of Golden Lion gear, including t-shirts, hats, and sweatshirts. Gift items, art supplies, school supplies, snacks, and beverages are also available instore or online. Check the website for updates on textbook buy back days and store hours.

## Career Services

**Location:** First Floor, College Center Suite C-116

**Career Counseling Appointments:** 908-526-1200, ext. 8334, [carrie.rafanello-bazar@raritanval.edu](mailto:carrie.rafanello-bazar@raritanval.edu)

**Internship and Cooperative Education Learning information:** 908-526-1200 ext. 8213, [alicia.hermo-weaver@raritanval.edu](mailto:alicia.hermo-weaver@raritanval.edu)

**Job Search Assistance:** 908-526-1200 ext. 8338, [wendy.schnall@raritanval.edu](mailto:wendy.schnall@raritanval.edu)

Career counseling, internship, and cooperative education learning opportunities, and job search assistance are available for current students and alumni. Students are encouraged to begin their career planning early by completing the FOCUS online career planning program located in the Lion's Den-Student Services tab and meeting with a Career Counselor. Career planning programs are offered throughout the school year and include career decision-making; resume writing; interviewing; networking for the job search, preparing for internships, and more. Check Transfer & Career Services in Lion's Den and RV Connect, and our social media channels (RVCC Career Services) for announcements and online events. Appointments are also available and strongly encouraged for career counseling, job and internships search assistance, resume writing, and mock interviewing. Information on majors, careers, internships, and employment opportunities (including virtual/remote positions) can be found in Lion's Den on the career services webpage.

### Career Planning Tips

- Planning early for the future helps people stay motivated!
- Take advantage of career planning to discover occupations that fit best.
- Learn more about careers through the FOCUS program, campus career workshops, and the Career Services web page.
- Get real-world experience and explore career paths by participating in a paid or unpaid internship/co-op.
- Use the College Central Network jobs and internships database to upload a resume and locate a job or internship and/or a cooperative education experience.
- Design a resume that gets noticed! Have a resume reviewed by the appropriate contact (jobs/ internships) above.

## Children's Campus (Child Care Center)

**Location:** Adjacent to Parking Lot 4

**Contact:** [childcare@raritanval.edu](mailto:childcare@raritanval.edu) or call 908-231-8807

The Children's Campus, a child and professional development center, is open 12 months a year for children from 3 months to 5 years old. The Children's Campus uses Creative Curriculum to promote cognitive, language, social-emotional, and physical growth of young children through

developmentally appropriate activities. Head Teachers are certified in early childhood education and are assisted by experienced assistants and RVCC student assistants. Priority registration is given to RVCC students, employees, and faculty. Children from the surrounding communities are accepted on a space-available basis once the priority registration period for each semester has been concluded. Tuition is charged based on the number of half or full days the children attend. Appointments to see the center are recommended.

## Counseling Services

**Location:** First Floor, College Center C-165

**Phone:** 908-526-1200 ext. 8336

**Email:** [personalcounseling@raritanval.edu](mailto:personalcounseling@raritanval.edu)

Counselors are available to provide short-term counseling for personal problems. If you are feeling depressed or anxious or just need additional support, we encourage you to talk with a counselor. When appropriate, referrals will be arranged with mental health centers and other community resources. Do not hesitate to ask for help when you need it, schedule an appointment, or if it's an emergency, walk-in and one of our counselors will assist you. If there is an emergency outside of College hours, please contact security or 911.

## Credit Union

**Location:** Second Floor, College Center C-208, across from the cafeteria

Affinity Federal Credit Union is a member-owned, not-for-profit, full-service financial institution and the largest credit union headquartered in NJ. We are a community providing financial education and financial solutions to our members. At Affinity, we do not pay shareholders, and our profits go back to members in the form of better rates, fewer fees, and friendly service. As a student of RVCC, you are already eligible to join Affinity and begin taking advantage of all the benefits membership has to offer. Once you are an Affinity member, your immediate family and household members are also eligible. Join today and learn more about our full range of products and services, including checking and savings accounts, loans, online and mobile banking, and much more.

## Disability Services

**Location:** First Floor, College Center C-124

**Phone:** 908-526-1200 ext. 8534

The College provides services and accommodations in accordance with federal and state legislative guidelines and RV Policies and Procedures. If you are a student with a disability and/or have questions or want to request accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services. Instructions regarding the registration process and documentation requirements are available online at [raritanval.edu/student-life/student-services/disability-services](http://raritanval.edu/student-life/student-services/disability-services).

## Eating Places on Campus

**Dining Hall:** Second Floor, College Center

**Covid-19 Update: Dining Hall closed for the Fall semester**

The dining hall is located on the upper level of the College Center. Selections include a variety

of hot entrees, a grill menu, soup and salad bar, deli counter and hand-tossed pizza. We offer something for everyone—whether you are looking for a quick, grab it-and-go salad or wrap or have the time to wait for a fresh veggie burger. RVCC and CulinArt encourage you to maintain a healthy lifestyle, one that incorporates wholesome, balanced food choices, regular exercise, and an overall attention to living well.

**The Brew Ha Ha Café:** Lower Level, Somerset Hall

The Brew Ha Ha Café, a snack bar featuring nationally branded Starbucks coffee and limited food choices, is available on the ground floor of Somerset Hall by the Mannheimer Welcome Center.

**Fall & Spring Semester Hours:**

Dining Hall: Monday through Thursday 7:30 am – 6:30 pm; Friday 7:30 am – 2:30 pm

Café: Monday through Thursday 8 am – 8 pm; Friday 8 am – 2:30 pm

Summer hours as posted

## **Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF)**

**Location:** First Floor, College Center C-124

**Phone:** 908-526-1200 ext. 8950

EOF is a state funded program that provides additional economic support and academic assistance to students who meet the financial guidelines.

## **Emergency Alert System**

The College employs a voice, email & text messaging emergency alert system called Rave. It is used as one means of providing information to the College community in the event of a campus shut-down for weather or other reasons. Please make sure your personal information is updated to ensure you are notified. Sign up at the *Campus Closings* tab in the Lion's Den.

## **Employment On-Campus**

There are a limited number of federally funded work-study (FWS) positions on campus for students during the Fall and Spring semesters. Please apply online at [raritanval.edu/general-information/employment-at-rvcc](http://raritanval.edu/general-information/employment-at-rvcc). Students can confirm Federal Work Study eligibility with the Financial Aid Office C-143.

## **Enrollment Services Office**

**Location:** First Floor, College Center C-160

**Phone:** 908-218-8864 or 908-526-1200 ext. 8861

**Fax:** 908-704-3442

**Email:** [registrar@raritanval.edu](mailto:registrar@raritanval.edu)

Here you can:

- Register for classes
- Add, drop and withdraw from classes
- Request enrollment verification (see on-line instructions)
- Apply for graduation (Check for deadlines)



- Submit official college transcripts

## **Finance Office (Location for paying tuition)**

**Location:** First Floor, College Center Service Counter

**Email:** [bursar@raritanval.edu](mailto:bursar@raritanval.edu)

**Phone:** 908-526-1200 ext. 7006

Provides student assistance with the following services:

- Account balance and billing inquiries
- Credit card payments
- Employer affidavits that support out-of-county tuition waivers
- Financial holds on student accounts
- Process approved out-of-county chargeback forms for students that do not reside in Somerset or Hunterdon County
- Refund checks
- Student schedules and bills
- Tuition and fee payment options and processing

## **Financial Aid**

**Location:** First Floor, College Center C-143

**Phone:** 908-526-1200 ext. 8273

Financial aid is available to full-time and part-time students. The office assists students in securing financial aid from the federal government, the State of New Jersey and scholarships.

- The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is the first step in applying and can be completed online at [fafsa.gov](https://fafsa.gov). Staff is available to assist you in completing the FAFSA if you have questions.
- June 1st is the deadline for state aid for continuing students for the 2020-21 academic year only, usually it is April 15th. Applications are accepted year round but the earlier you submit the FAFSA the wider range of aid is available to you. Students must reapply each academic year by submitting a new FAFSA form.
- Changes during the semester in the number of credit hours of enrollment must be reported to the Financial Aid Office for any student receiving financial aid. Students should check with the Financial Aid Office before dropping classes or totally withdrawing. Doing this after the semester begins could result in the loss of some or all financial aid.

The Financial Aid Office is mindful of the effect the struggling economy has had on students. If your family's financial situation has changed in the past year please come visit or contact the office to learn about your options, which could include an Income Appeal.

## **Satisfactory Academic Progress for Financial Aid Recipients (SAP)**

It is important to understand that eligibility for Financial Aid requires that you make progress towards your degree each semester. Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) qualifications for Financial Aid Recipients standards are detailed on the Financial Aid website. Appeal forms for

exception to SAP must be discussed with and signed by an Academic Advisor and submitted to the Financial Aid Office. More information about this College Policy is in the College Catalog.

## **Fitness Center**

### **Covid-19 Update: Closed for the Fall semester**

**Location:** Second Floor, Physical Education Building:

Open to all enrolled students. Complete the Athletic Facilities Waiver form on the Lion's Den to get started. You must have your RVCC ID with you to enter.

## **Honors Programs**

**Phone:** 908-526-1200 ext. 8966

**Contact:** Greg DeSanctis, First Floor, College Center C-166

The Honors Program consists of The Honors College and Honors Courses. Both are intended for motivated students who wish to have an exceptional academic experience.

### **The Honors College**

Open to primarily students enrolling from high school to RVCC. Select transfer applicants will also be considered. Admission is competitive and involves a separate application process that consists of an interview, recommendations, and the submission of a high school transcript and SAT scores. Students should have at least a 3.5 GPA and be in the top 20% of their high school class. Students who don't meet either the GPA or class rank criteria may be considered if they have a SAT score of 1100 (or higher) or an aggregate ACT score of 26 (or higher) or are highly recommended by their high school counselor. Those selected for admission will become part of a community of highly motivated students who collectively pursue a 2-year curriculum of honors courses. Honors College students will also be invited to partake in co-curricular, leadership, and cultural enrichment activities. Being a member of the Honors College can enhance a student's chances of transferring to a selective four-year college or university.

### **Honors Courses**

The College offers many honors courses each semester for students who want to take academically rigorous classes. Entrance to these classes requires a 3.5 GPA from either RVCC, the most recent college previously attended, or high school. Students can also gain entry to an honors class by getting the instructor's approval. Honors classes are noted on student transcripts and may enhance the chances of being accepted to a competitive four-year college. Students who complete 15 or more credits of honors courses are eligible to receive the Honors Achievement Award.

## **Institute for Holocaust & Genocide Studies Resource Center**

### **The Morris and Dorothy Hirsch Research Library of Holocaust and Genocide Studies**

**Location:** Second Floor, Library

Phone: 908.526-1200 ext. 8735

**Website:** [raritanval.edu/community-resources/holocaust-institute](http://raritanval.edu/community-resources/holocaust-institute)

The Morris and Dorothy Hirsch Research Library of Holocaust and Genocide Studies is located on the second floor of the Evelyn S. Field Library at Raritan Valley Community College.

Established in 1999, the library offers a place for quiet study and reflection. Teaching materials, reference materials, a multi-media collection, and wifi are available. This Resource Room serves as an instructional center for classes, workshops, lectures, and presentations.

## **Internships & Cooperative Education (Also see Service Learning)**

**Location:** College Center C-116

**Phone:** 908-526-1200 ext. 8213

An internship is considered a highly important criterion when employers seek to hire a new employee. Internships provide an opportunity for you to explore career choices, gain work experience in your current field of interest and apply your classroom learning to real work situations. In addition, an internship makes you a more marketable candidate when you enter the world of work on a full-time permanent basis.

Similar to an internship, a cooperative education experience, commonly known as a “co-op,” provides academic credit for a structured job experience which is supervised by a Faculty Co-op Coordinator. The Co-op is a course where one must be approved to register. Students cannot register on-line. Locating an internship is the student’s responsibility, the Coordinator of Internship & Cooperative Education will provide you with assistance to prepare for your internship search process.

Participating in either an internship or “co-op” will help students gain a greater degree of confidence about their choice of academic major and when entering professional employment. Please contact the Coordinator of Internship & Cooperative Education for assistance when seeking either an internship or Co-op. Students are encouraged to start the preparation process early.

## **Kids & Teens Programs & Community Education**

**Location:** First Floor, Somerset Hall S-147

**Phone:** 908-526-122 ext. 8404

Offers personal enrichment courses for all ages including youth and adults throughout the year. Special summer youth programs available.

## **Evelyn S. Field Library**

**Location:** Library Building

**Phone:** 908-218-8865

**Website:** [library.raritanval.edu](http://library.raritanval.edu)

Your Student ID card serves as your library card. The library offers a collection of books, leisure reading, journals, newspapers, magazines, DVDs, videos, audio books and electronic materials. Over 50 computers are available for use and include printing capabilities. Other services include: laptops for loan; email and chat reference service during business hours; group study rooms (reservations recommended); new and popular book displays; photocopiers/ scanner; and off-campus access to databases.



## Lion's Den - the website for all your academic information and notifications

**Website:** [raritanval.edu](http://raritanval.edu) (Select RVCC Login)

The Lion's Den is the place to find College announcements and all your personal student information. The RVCC email (Lion Mail) is the official communication method with the College. Most important College communications, including bills and grade reports, are directed to students through the Lion Mail. It is important to become familiar with your Student ID number (G number), initial password, password maintenance and self-service password reset.

## Lion Mail/Office 365

The College's email system is your official communication channel with the college. Your email can be accessed in Lion's Den through the upper menu bar under Mail, and the Office 365 box under College Central. You are expected to check your email account on a frequent and consistent basis in order to stay current with all college-related communications.

## Optical Clinic

**Location:** Lower Level, College Center C-009

**Phone:** 908-231-8817; ext. 8261

High-quality prescription eyeglasses and contact lenses are offered to students at a very substantial discount from the retail price. In addition, eyewear repairs and adjustments are available along with non-prescription sunglasses.

## RV Commons

**Website:** [commons.raritanval.edu/](http://commons.raritanval.edu/)

The internal website for the RVCC community where you can find out about activities on campus, student support services, registering for classes and so much more. Your RV Commons user name is academic/your-G-number and your password is your network password.

## RV Connect Mobile App

RV Connect, RVCC's newest Mobile App, is your tool to help you get connected with the College. This mobile app is free, intuitive, user friendly, and customizable so that you can select which services, clubs, or departments to "follow." You can see current events and even post questions to the campus wall to get responses from other students.

When you are on your mobile device (android or iOS) click below to download and get "RVConnect"ed.

- Apple: [Link](#)
- Google Play: [Link](#)

## Planetarium & Observatory

**Covid-19 Update:** Check website for information on Fall programs

**Location:** East Building

**Astronomy Shows and Laser Concerts:** As posted on website: [raritanval.edu/planetarium](http://raritanval.edu/planetarium)

**Phone:** 908-231-8805

The RVCC Planetarium is an interactive experience in which the audience learns about astronomy, constellations, and the Universe around us. In addition to astronomy shows for visitors as young as 3 years old and as old as the Universe, there are musical laser concerts for adults and children, as well as professional development for teachers. Features include 100-seat planetarium, gift shop, exhibition space, and the 3M Observatory with multiple telescopes.

## Safety and Security

**Location:** Ground Level, Somerset Hall S-010

**Hours:** 24 hours per day, seven days per week

**Phone:** 908-231-8800

**Confidential TIPS hotline: 908-231-8806** (Call to report suspicious people, behavior or packages, someone in distress or threats of violence. All calls are confidential. You do not need to give your name.)

The Department of Campus Safety seeks to ensure a safe and secure environment for everyone. Campus Safety provides a variety of services regarding medical and fire emergencies, pedestrian and vehicular safety, property protection, parking enforcement, vehicle jump starts, lost and found property and informational assistance. Campus Safety conducts walking and mobile patrols throughout the campus. Security cameras are strategically located inside all campus buildings and exterior parking areas.

Red Emergency Phones located within campus building hallways, and Emergency Call Boxes located in parking lots **1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8**, the **walkway behind the West building** and the **outside basketball courts**, all connect directly to the Campus Safety Office.

Crime, medical and fire emergencies, motor vehicle accidents, threatening behavior, suspicious activity and safety hazards should be reported to Campus Safety immediately. Contact Campus Safety by responding to the Campus Safety Office, calling the direct telephone line, 908-231-8800, or by use of Red Emergency Phones and Emergency Call Boxes.

In case of emergency for Fire or Smoke in a building, a Threatening Person on Campus, Environmental Emergencies or a Power Outage, follow direction provided by Campus Safety staff and College staff members. Students should familiarize themselves with Emergency Procedures listed in this handbook.

## Service Learning

**Location:** Somerset Hall Room S-147

**Phone:** 908-526-1200 ext. 8284

Service Learning enables you to use community service as part of your academic studies and to receive credit for the experience. You will serve at various non-profit organizations, government agencies and public schools doing an activity that relates to the course content. Upon successful completion of the service learning activity, you can receive a Student Engagement Transcript documenting your participation in the program, which is used to enhance your resume and transfer applications. Service Learning offers many advantages to students. Among the top reasons why you should participate are the opportunities to: explore a career or academic major, develop job contacts and occupational skills for future employment, apply academic knowledge in a practical way, form realistic ideas about the world of work, improve communication skills, time

management and self-motivation, gain satisfaction from helping others, build good leadership skills and meet people of different ages and diverse backgrounds.

## Student Engagement Transcript (SET)

Student Life will assist you in creating a Student Engagement Transcript (SET) to track your co-curricular learning experiences. An official SET, printed by Student Life, may be requested by involved students to accompany their resume and academic transcript for transfer applications, scholarships, and job applications. Begin your SET as soon as you start at RVCC! Contact Student Life for additional information.

## Small Business Development Center

**Location:** Workforce Training Center

**Phone:** 908-526-1200 ext. 8516

Offers no-cost small business counseling services and a variety of no-cost and low-cost training workshops to residents or small business owners in Somerset and Hunterdon counties.

## Student Life (See listings in Clubs & Activities section)

**Location:** First Floor, Bateman Student Center BC 100

**Email:** [studentlife@raritanval.edu](mailto:studentlife@raritanval.edu)

**Phone:** 908-526-1200 ext. 8873

The classroom experience is only one segment of your experience at RVCC. The cultural, recreational and governmental activities and functions at the College are equally important. By sharing in these activities, you have the opportunity to develop many personal and career skills.

## Technology Services

**Location:** Somerset Hall S-118 and West Building W-206

Provides comprehensive, quick, courteous computing support to academic departments, faculty, staff and students. Technology Services self-service support is available online 24 hours a day and walk-in and live phone support is available during posted hours.

## Testing Center

**Location:** Lower Level, Somerset Hall

**Phone:** 908-526-1200 ext. 8401

Student services include the College Level Examination Program (CLEP); departmental exams for students interested in credit by examination (must consult with the appropriate academic department first); technological competency; makeup exams with faculty permission, approved accommodated testing, and course placement for math, English, ESL, and foreign language.

## Theatre

**Covid-19 Update:** Temporarily closed. Check website for future programs.

**Location:** Box Office, Outer Theatre Lobby

**Website:** [RVCCArts.org](http://RVCCArts.org)

**Phone:** 908-725-3420



Offers the best in professional performances, from around the world, for all ages. Students may purchase up to four tickets for each show at half price. Bring your student ID to the box office or purchase by phone or online and present your ID at will call.

## Transfer Planning and Services

**Location:** First Floor, College Center C-116

**Phone:** 908-526-1200 ext. 8333

Transfer information and counseling are available for students who are planning to continue their education at another college after RVCC. Information about transfer workshops, college transfer fairs, transfer articulation agreements, dual admission programs, transfer scholarships, international transfer, and other transfer-related events are posted on the Transfer Services website and on Lion's Den.

This office arranges visits from other colleges who are looking to admit RVCC students. Check the Lion's Den and the Transfer website for Transfer Information Sessions, Instant Decision Days, and Visiting Colleges Information Sessions. Make an appointment with a transfer counselor to discuss your individual transfer concerns.

### Transfer Tips:

- Start your transfer planning early. The choice of a college is an important decision. Become aware of transfer application deadlines, admission requirements, prerequisites and other information critical for a successful transfer. Learn about transfer scholarship opportunities.
- Attend a How to Transfer Information Session, offered several times each semester.
- Use [njtransfer.org](http://njtransfer.org), the statewide transfer database system, each semester before registering for classes. See the courses recommended for particular colleges and academic majors and note the transfer event calendar for open house and other transfer events. Read details about the transfer law in NJ that governs transfer to public colleges, also available on the NJ Transfer website.

## Transportation

**Phone:** 908-526-1200 ext. 8612

**More info:** [raritanval.edu/general-information/getting-to-rvcc](http://raritanval.edu/general-information/getting-to-rvcc)

Due to the coronavirus, transportation schedules may be modified. Visit the link above for the latest information. Note that buses may not run on Veteran's Day (11/11), President's Day (2/15), and Good Friday (4/4), though RVCC has classes those days.

Hunterdon County's LINK 23 bus stops on campus. Cost is \$2 for a day pass on this route and the Flemington Shuffle routes. \$2 rides to LINK stops are available. See [ridethelink.com/](http://ridethelink.com/) or call 1-800-842-0531 for more information.

Somerset County runs three bus routes to campus: CAT-1R, CAT-2R, and CAT-3R. Schedules are available at the Welcome desk and [RideWise.org](http://RideWise.org). RideWise.org also has interactive maps of each route.

Full-time students taking NJ Transit are eligible for a 25% discount through the Student Pass program, though the online signup for this at <http://banflex.raritanval.edu/njtransit/> may not be working yet. See a NJ Transit ticket agent to get a Student Pass.

Find out about a new RVCC student-only rideshare app and website, CarpoolWorld, by emailing [rideshare@raritanval.edu](mailto:rideshare@raritanval.edu). The College also promotes a ride-matching service through [NJRideshare](#). Fill out the online form and be matched with other carpool-seekers.

People who [register their carpool](#), take public transit, or bike two or more times a week can register with RideWise's [Ticket Home](#) program and are eligible to be reimbursed for their ride home in case of emergency. Visit <http://www.ridewise.org/ridesharing/carpooling> for more information.

Carpoolers and ride-sharers are eligible receive a placard to park in the carpool-only parking spaces in front of the West Building. Contact Sue Dorward at [susan.dorward@raritanval.edu](mailto:susan.dorward@raritanval.edu) for parking placard information.

The College has four electric vehicle charging stations in front of the West building. The cost is 60¢ per hour.

## **Tutoring (See Academic Support Center)**

### **WIFI Access**

**Phone:** 908 526-1200 ext. 7887 or 908-231-8811

The College's wireless network is available in all buildings on the main campus and several outside areas. Visit Technology Services in the Somerset or the West Building for access information.

### **Withdrawal from Classes**

You are responsible for withdrawing from any course for which you register. If you cannot attend class, you must withdraw prior to the deadline or you will receive a grade in the course. Financial aid may be recalculated depending on the last day you attend, so check with the Financial Aid Office first. It is recommended that you speak to an academic advisor before withdrawing from a course.

### **Workforce Training Center**

**Location:** Workforce Training Center

**Phone:** 908-218-8871

The facility is home to career training programs including auto technology, advanced manufacturing, environmental control technology, welding, cosmetology and esthetics. The Center also offers professional development courses for individuals, customized training for industry and the Small Business Development Center.

# Clubs & Organizations

Every student is encouraged to get involved and participate in a variety of activities including Student Government, leadership development seminars, fine arts and entertainment programming, and membership in student organizations and clubs.

Co-curricular clubs and organizations provide a valuable opportunity for students to develop leadership skills, budgeting, communication, team-building, goal setting, and organizational skills. Student organizations cover a wide spectrum of interests to meet the needs of students. Involvement also gives you the opportunity to build your Student Engagement Transcript (SET).

- **Student Life Activities and Planning Board (SLAP Board):** The SLAP Board is the primary event planning organization at RVCC. The SLAP works closely with Student Life to plan a variety of events every semester ranging from educational lectures to campus wide picnics. The Program Board is comprised of students who are interested in bringing culture, fun, and excitement to the out of classroom experience. Get involved and make a difference, join the Program Board!
- **Student Government Association:** The Student Government Association (SGA) is the student governing body for all enrolled students. As an elected member, a student has the opportunity to apply leadership skills and to work on programs and activities that contribute to college life. SGA members play an important role in college-wide governance as members of college standing committees, including the College-wide Forum. The student government is responsible for the allocation process of distributing student activity funds to student clubs.

## Honor Societies

- Alpha Beta Gamma – International Business Honor Society
- Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) – International Honor Society for students of all majors with at least a 3.5 GPA
- SALUTE- Veterans
- Sigma Alpha Pi – National Society for Leadership & Success (NSLS)

## Academic

- American Sign Language Club
- Animation Club
- Astronomy Club
- Biology/Chemistry Club
- Business Club: Enactus
- Campus Fitness Club
- Communities of Tomorrow (supporting the RVCC Resource Center)
- Computer Science Club
- Criminal Justice Club

- Dance Club
- Debate Club
- Education Club
- Enactus (Entrepreneurial Organization)
- Engineering Club
- Environmental Club
- Feminist Coalition
- Film Makers Club
- Game Creation Club
- Improv Club
- Math Club
- Newspaper, Online: The Record
- Noteworthy (A Cappella Group)
- Paralegal Club
- Philosophy Club
- Poetry Club: (Run on Sentences)
- Pre-Med Club
- Psychology Club
- Raritan Valley Radio Station – RVR
- Sci-Pod Club
- Society of Women Engineers
- Student Occupational Therapy Assistants (SOTAA)
- Student Nurses Association (SNA)

## Cultural

- Alliance, The (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning, and ally group)
- African Student Association
- Black Students Association (BSA)
- English as a Second Language Club
- Filipino Pride Engagement Awareness & Cultural Empowerment (P.E.A.C.E.) Club
- International Students Club
- Muslim Student Association
- Orgullo Latino/Latin Pride Club



- United Caribbean Students Club

## Special Interest

- Animé Club
- Dreamers Club
- Gaming Club
- No Limit: Hip Hop Dance Club
- H.O.P.E. (Health Oriented Peer Educators)
- Cru (formerly Campus Crusade for Christ)
- LaCrosse Club
- Lifelong Educational Opportunity Students (L.E.O.S.) Club – Non-Traditional Adult Student Club
- Rotaract
- To Write Love on Her Arms (TWLOHA)
- Student Veterans of America
- Ultimate Frisbee Club
- Young Democratic Socialists of America
- Young Republicans

# Academic Programs, Policies and Procedures

## Degree Programs

The College awards Associate of Arts degrees, Associate of Science degrees, Associate of Fine Arts degrees, Associate of Applied Science degrees and certificates to students who have completed approved programs. The programs are listed in the College catalog and on the website.

### Transfer Programs (A.A., A.S., A.F.A.)

In general, transfer programs are designed for students who are planning a career that requires at least four years of college preparation. Upon completion of a transfer associate degree program at RVCC, students are prepared for transfer into the junior year of baccalaureate study at a four-year college.

### Career Programs (A.A.S.)

Career programs are designed to prepare students for entry into a career field upon completion of studies. Although the career programs are not designed for transfer to four-year schools, it is possible to do so. The number of credits acceptable for transfer depends on the program taken at the College and the individual four-year college involved.

## Workforce and Certificate Programs

The College offers a number of certificate programs that provide specialized training for occupational preparation. Some certificate programs earn college credit and some are designed only for workforce training. Most certificate offerings can be completed by full-time students in one year.

## Adding and Dropping Courses

**Do not just stop attending your class! It is important to officially withdraw if you are not able to continue the course. Failure to officially withdraw may result in an “F” grade on the permanent record and may have an impact on your financial aid award. Speak with a financial aid officer before dropping if you are a financial aid recipient.**

After initial registration is completed, students may add or drop courses using the **Lion’s Den** during specified periods. Just log in with your college ID and password, and click on the Student Services tab! Students may also add or drop courses by submitting a [Registration \(Add/Drop\) Form\(.pdf\)](#) to the Student Enrollment Center. Add/Drop transactions will be processed in accordance with the RVCC Semester Refund/Withdrawal Schedule, which can be found on the [RVCC Finance Department](#) page. **Students who fail to officially withdraw from a class may be subject to the full cost of that class. It is imperative that students verify that they are withdrawn from a class if they do not intend to attend.**

Because developmental courses build essential skills for college success, students are not permitted to withdraw from those developmental courses without speaking with an Academic Advisor in Advising and Counseling Services, College Center C-163. Exceptions may be granted only by consultation with an Academic Advisor or Counselor.

## Advanced Standing

RVCC will accept up to 45 transfer credits for coursework completed with a grade of C or better at regionally accredited post-secondary institutions toward an associate degree or 75 percent of the required credits for a certificate program. The course requirements of some selective programs may limit the application of transfer credits to degree requirements.

## Break in Enrollment and Catalog Year

A student who interrupts his/her studies for more than three years must fulfill the requirements in place upon re-enrollment. A student with a break of more than three years may use requirements in place during initial enrollment only if he/she had earned 50 credits prior to the break in enrollment and if the degree is still being offered.

A student whose program has been discontinued will be permitted two years to complete the program; RVCC will not award degrees for programs that have been discontinued for more than two years.

## Changing Majors

Students who wish to change degree or certificate programs must meet with an Academic or First Year Advisor in the First Year Experience Office (College Center, C-124) or Advising and Counseling Services (College Center, C-165). A student who wishes to enter the Nursing program, or change from non-degree-seeking to degree-seeking must complete an Information Update Form in the Admissions Office (Lower-Library, L-032).

## Credit Limit

Both Degree-seeking & Visiting students may enroll for a maximum of 19 credit hours during the Fall or Spring semesters, 12 credit hours during the Summer semester and up to 5 credits during the Winter Intersession, unless permission is granted by an Academic Advisor or Counselor. Non-degree students are limited to 9 credits per semester.

## General Education Courses

All Associate Degree programs include a broad distribution of courses contributing to the student's general education. In order to choose appropriate general education courses for the degree or certificate program, you can look at the list of General Education Courses on the College website.

## 'G number' or Student ID Number

It is important that you learn your college-assigned student identification number, identified in your acceptance email. The nine-digit number begins with a 'G' and should be included on all forms and correspondence. This G Number also serves as the username for access to Lion's Den for online services and transactions. **You need your G Number for just about everything you do at RVCC so make sure to memorize it!** If you ever have trouble logging in you can visit the Technology Services Helpdesk via email at: [helpdesk@raritanval.edu](mailto:helpdesk@raritanval.edu), via phone at: 908.231.8811 or in person with a photo ID and your G Number to get it resolved.

## Registration

Registration for Fall Semester courses generally begins in April. Registration for spring and summer courses generally begins in early November. You are encouraged to meet with an Academic Advisor prior to registration and register early for the best selection of classes.

### Three Ways to Register for Classes:

1. **Web:** [commons.raritanval.edu/](https://commons.raritanval.edu/) – If you have Lion's Den access and no registration holds you can register and add or drop courses online during specified periods.
2. **In-Person:** Complete the registration form, including your G number, and bring it to the Office of Enrollment Services, located on the First Floor of the College Center C-160
3. **Mail:** Office of Enrollment Services, Raritan Valley Community College, P.O. Box 3300, Somerville, NJ 08876. Complete the registration form, including your G number, and mail it with a check or money order. Credit card information must be handled separately.

A student's registration is not official unless class registrations have been recorded by the College and payment has been accepted. Otherwise, the registration is subject to possible cancellation. Students should refer to the published class schedule to confirm payment due dates. It is ultimately the student's responsibility to withdraw from their classes. **Students who fail to officially withdraw from a class may be subject to the full cost of that class. It is imperative that students verify that they are withdrawn from a class if they do not intend to attend.**

## Registration Holds

You may be restricted from registering online or from registering at all due to a Registration Hold. This may be the result of admission status, academic standing, required developmental studies courses, required admission or financial aid documents, outstanding library books or athletic equipment, an outstanding bill, or other requirement. Check for messages in Lion Mail, view holds through the Lion's Den Student Services tab, and contact the Originator of the Hold for clarification and assistance.

## Transcripts

All official transcripts must be ordered online through Parchment at [raritanval.edu/transcript](https://raritanval.edu/transcript). With Parchment, students can send an electronic transcript which is a certified PDF of an official transcript to any valid email address. Fees for transcripts are as follows: Electronic transcript \$10.00, Paper transcript mailed \$12.50 and Paper transcript-Pick-up \$12.50. Check your Lion's Den for updates on when transcripts will be available for currently enrolled students at the end of each semester. Students may view and print unofficial transcripts through the Lion's Den Student Services, under Registration and Records Tools select View Academic Transcripts.

## Tuition & Payment

Check the website to make certain you pay your bill on time. Tuition and payment information is available on the College's website under the Paying for College option. Students are encouraged to become familiar with payment due dates for each semester, as well as the refund period. A copy of your student bill will be emailed to your official college email account. Bills can be paid online through the Lion's Den, or in person at the Finance office. Taking classes at night after the office is closed? Drop your tuition payment in the drop box located on the outside of the Finance Office.



# Classes, Exams & Grades

## Class Attendance

Students are expected to attend all classes, laboratories, and clinical sessions for every course in which they are enrolled. To accommodate students' reasonable, personal situations that might prevent them from attending classes, each student is entitled to excused absences amounting to the equivalent of one week's class time in a semester. Any absences in excess of this standard can prevent students from achieving the course learning outcomes as evaluated by the instructor.

## Early Alert & Midterm Warning

Students who are struggling in one or more of their courses may receive an early alert notice. Students who receive early alerts are strongly encouraged to meet with their instructor to discuss the instructor's recommendations, an academic advisor to discuss additional tips and strategies for improving their academic performance, and to use the resources of the Academic Support Center.

At midterm, students in academic difficulty may receive a midterm warning. Students doing unsatisfactory work at this time should consult their instructor to determine ways to improve their academic performance. Academic Advisors are also available to provide support. In cases where additional studying, tutoring, or changes in study habits cannot improve the student's grade, withdrawal may be recommended to prevent a failure from being recorded.

## Final Examinations

Students are not expected to take more than two final examinations on any given day. If a student has more than two final examinations scheduled on a single day, he/she may appeal to have one of the examinations rescheduled. The line of appeal is first to the faculty member(s) and then to the appropriate Divisional Dean. Students are expected to take final examinations when they are scheduled or rescheduled. Missed examinations may be rescheduled at the discretion of the faculty member.

## Grade Reports

Students may view final semester or summer session grades by using the Lion's Den or the RV Mobile App. Grades become viewable as the instructors report them to the Office of Enrollment Services. Approximately two weeks after the end of the semester or summer session, grade point averages are calculated and grade reports are emailed to the Lion Mail address.

## Grade & Academic Appeals

Student grievances of an academic nature should initially be discussed between the student and the instructor. Failing a satisfactory resolution of the problem at this level, the student should consult with the appropriate department chairperson. Should the student still feel that a satisfactory resolution has not been achieved, the student may request the appropriate Divisional Dean review the matter. Students wishing to initiate a grade appeal must do so within four weeks of the beginning of the following semester, excluding Summer sessions. Other than in cases

of computational or clerical error, grades may only be changed by following the grade appeal procedure.

## Grade Appeal Procedure

A student who wishes to appeal a final grade shall proceed as follows:

1. Submit a written request for a grade change along with the rationale for such a request to the faculty member who assigned the grade. The appeal must be filed by the fourth week of the following semester (Summer sessions not included). Within two weeks of filing such a request for a grade change by the student, the faculty member shall respond in writing rendering a decision about the request for change of a grade.

If the student wishes to further challenge the decision of the faculty member as described above, he/she shall follow the following procedure:

- A petition for a grade change should be filed, in writing, with the appropriate chairperson after conferring with the instructor. The petition shall include a description of the student's rationale for challenging the recorded grade with supporting documentation.

The chairperson shall:

- Interview the student.
  - Interview the faculty member who assigned the grade.
  - Review written material submitted by the student and faculty member. The chairperson shall also consult with senior faculty members familiar with the discipline involved with respect to the graded material under challenge.
  - The chairperson shall render a written recommendation to the student and faculty member involved within one month from the date the chairperson received the petition.
3. If the grade was not changed through the above process, the student may further appeal to the appropriate Divisional Dean. The Dean will review all materials and determine whether or not a grade change shall be approved, and shall advise the involved student and faculty member in writing of the decision. The decision of the Divisional Dean shall be final.

## Repeating a Course

Students may repeat any college-level course once without specific authorization. To repeat a college-level course more than once, a student must have the approval of the Dean of Student Services or their designee. Courses in which students have received grades of W, AU, or P are not included in counting repeated courses.

When a college-level course is repeated, all enrollments in the course are included on the student's permanent academic record, but only the highest grade earned at RV will be included in the student's grade point average (GPA). Developmental courses (course numbers below 100) are not governed by this policy.

Students receiving financial aid should consult with the Financial Aid office before repeating a course, since some financial aid programs do not pay for repeated courses.

## Academic Renewal Program

The Academic Renewal Program is designed for students who previously attended RVCC, compiled an unsuccessful academic record, and subsequently left the College for five or more years. Students may now return to college to pursue a program of study and not have their prior RVCC coursework included in their overall RVCC grade point average (gpa). To qualify for the Academic Renewal Program, a student must:

- Be matriculated into a degree or certificate program
- Have been away from RVCC for a minimum of three years (36 months)
- Upon returning to RVCC, complete a minimum of twelve credit hours, earning a GPA of 2.4 or better
- Be currently enrolled in classes

Under the Academic Renewal Program all grades earned prior to the three-year period are eliminated from the student's GPA calculation. Only the GPA is affected by this program. All other previous academic records will remain on the transcript. Grades earned after returning to RV will be included in the new GPA calculations, including the 12 credits required to qualify for this program. All courses taken prior to the three-year absence in which a grade of C or better was earned may be used to meet graduation requirements. More information about this College Policy is in the College Catalog.

## Academic Standing

Academic Standing is recorded on the academic transcript at the conclusion of each term. Students whose comprehensive semester grade point average or cumulative college level grade point average falls below 2.00 will receive a Lion's Den e-mail letter indicating their academic standing. Students should check final grades and academic standing on Lion's Den and Lion's Den e-mail each term.

## Grade Point Averages Used to Determine Academic Standing

**Comprehensive semester grade point average:** The grade point average for the term, including developmental studies, English as a Second Language Studies, and all other college-level coursework

**Cumulative grade point average:** The cumulative grade point average for all college-level coursework at Raritan Valley Community College

## Good Standing

Students must maintain a comprehensive semester grade point average of 2.0 or better and a cumulative college level grade point average of 2.0 or better to be in Good Academic Standing.

## Academic Alert

Academic Alert is an initial warning to students whose comprehensive semester grade point average or cumulative college level grade point average falls below 2.00 that they are not making satisfactory academic progress and that they may be placed on Academic Probation if their record does not improve.

## **Academic Probation**

Students on Academic Alert whose comprehensive semester grade point average or cumulative grade point average is below 2.0 in their next enrollment term are placed on Academic Probation.

Students on Academic Probation whose comprehensive semester grade point average in their next enrollment term is 2.0 or higher, but whose cumulative grade point average remains below 2.0, remain on Academic Probation.

Academic Probation is a serious warning to students that they are not making satisfactory academic progress and that they may be placed on Academic Suspension if their record does not improve. Students on Academic Probation must have the approval of an Academic Advisor or Counselor for subsequent enrollments or enrollment changes while on Academic Probation. Students' enrollment may be restricted to certain courses, or to a limited number of courses, as a condition of Academic Probation status.

## **Academic Suspension**

Students on Academic Probation whose comprehensive semester grade point average in their next enrollment term is below 2.0 are placed on Academic Suspension.

Students on Academic Suspension are prohibited from enrolling in the next semester. A student may petition for permission to enroll part-time to the Academic Standards Committee or to an Academic Advisor or Counselor authorized by the Academic Standards Committee to hear such petitions. If a student's petition is approved, the student is placed on Suspension Probation.

## **Suspension Probation**

Students returning to the College after a period of Academic Suspension or Academic Dismissal, and students who successfully petition to enroll from Academic Suspension are placed on Suspension Probation. Students on Suspension Probation must meet with an Academic Advisor or Counselor before re-enrolling. These students' enrollment may be restricted to certain courses, or to a limited number of courses, as a condition of Suspension Probation status.

## **Academic Dismissal**

Students on Suspension Probation whose comprehensive semester grade point average in their next enrollment term is below 2.0 are placed on Academic Dismissal and are prohibited from enrolling for two calendar years. Students are subject to Academic Dismissal each enrollment term the comprehensive semester grade point average is below 2.0, until achieving Good Academic Standing. Academic Dismissal is final and cannot be appealed.

## **Re-enrollment Following Academic Dismissal**

A student returning to the College after a period of Academic Dismissal must petition the appropriate Divisional Dean in writing by letter or email. If reinstated, the student will be placed on Suspension Probation.



# Commencement & Academic Honors

## Commencement

The College holds Commencement Exercises in May of each year. A student may participate in Commencement Exercises if he/she meets any of the following criteria:

- Completed all program requirements at the end of the previous Fall Semester or at the end of the previous Summer session.
- Will have completed all program requirements at the end of the current Spring Semester.
- Has three or fewer courses remaining to be completed to fulfill all program requirements and is enrolled in those courses in the following Summer session.

## Selection of Student Commencement Speaker

The College believes it is fitting and appropriate to have a representative of the graduating class speak at Commencement as a way of showcasing the accomplishments of our students. A College committee is responsible for recommending a student speaker to the President. In selecting a speaker consideration is given to a student's grade point average, academic achievements and personal accomplishments.

## Academic Honors

Graduation-with-honors designations for the Commencement Ceremony are based on the student's Grade Point Average (GPA) as follows:

- Summer and Fall Graduates – GPA at the end of the Graduation term.
- Spring Graduates – GPA at end of the previous Fall Semester.

The College recognizes the academic achievement of students in the following ways:

### Dean's List

The Dean's List of outstanding students is compiled and published at the end of each Fall and Spring semester. To be included on the Dean's List a student must meet all of the following requirements.

- Have earned a minimum of 12 cumulative credit hours at RVCC in college-level courses.
- Earn a minimum of six college-level credit hours in the current Fall or Spring semester.
- Achieve a minimum semester GPA of 3.5 in college-level courses.
- Receive no grade lower than a "C" in any course for the semester.
- Not be eligible for inclusion on the President's List of outstanding students.

### President's List

The President's List of outstanding students is compiled and published at the end of each Fall and Spring Semester. To be included on the President's List a student must meet all of the following requirements:

- Earn a minimum of 12 credit hours in college-level courses in the current Fall or Spring semester.

- Earn “A” grades in all courses for the semester.
- Have no “W” or “I” grades for the semester.

### **Degrees with Honors**

Students completing Associate degree requirements and meeting all of the following additional requirements receive degrees with honors:

- Achieve a minimum total cumulative RVCC GPA of 3.5.
- Achieve a minimum cumulative RVCC GPA of 3.5 on all courses applied toward the awarded degree.
- Receive no grade lower than a “C” in any college-level course applied toward the awarded degree.
- Complete, at RVCC, a minimum of 30 credits hours in courses applied toward the awarded degree.

### **Certificates with Honors**

Students completing Certificate requirements and meeting all of the following additional requirements receive certificates with honors:

- Complete a certificate requiring at least 30 semester credit hours.
- Achieve a minimum total cumulative RVCC GPA of 3.5.
- Achieve a minimum total cumulative RVCC GPA of 3.5 on all courses applied to the awarded certificate.
- Receive no grade lower than a “C” in any college-level course applied toward the awarded certificate.
- Complete, at RVCC, a minimum of 15 credits hours in courses applied toward the awarded certificate.

Honors are awarded on the basis of the student’s cumulative RVCC GPA on all courses applied to the awarded degree or certificate as follows:

1. 3.50 – 3.79: Cum Laude (with honor)
2. 3.80 – 3.99: Magna Cum Laude (with high honor)
3. 4.00: Summa Cum Laude (with highest honor)

### **Honors Achievement Award**

To receive the Honors Achievement Award a student must meet all of the following requirements:

- Complete at least 15 credits of honors-level coursework.
- Earn a ‘B’ or better in each course counted towards the award.

# Rules & Regulations

A full listing of college policies is available on the RVCC website's Policies & Consumer Information page. The following, is a brief overview of some key student related college policies. Students should be knowledgeable of all college policies and are encouraged to review the website's policy page.

## Alcohol & Illegal Drugs

The use, possession and sale of alcoholic beverages is forbidden. The use, possession, sale or being under the influence of drugs unless prescribed by a doctor is forbidden. Raritan Valley Community College adheres to all local, state and federal laws and statutes pertaining to the possession, use and distribution of alcohol and illegal drugs and expects its students to do the same. If the student is found to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, the Department of Campus Safety will contact the local police. Persons violating these policies will be subjected to all applicable civil and criminal penalties and the College disciplinary procedure.

New Jersey's "Opioid Antidote and Overdose Protection Act" (P.L.2013, c.46) is a law that encourages individuals to report a drug overdose/seek medical assistance by granting immunity from arrest and prosecution for use or simple possession to both the caller and the person experiencing an overdose. It also grants immunity to those who administer the overdose antidote, Naloxone to revive a person. Similarly, the "9-1-1 Lifeline Legislation" (N.J. P.L. 2009, c.133) lets underage drinkers report alcohol poisoning without fear of prosecution. These laws are designed to save lives.

Through the office of Advising and Counseling Services, you can receive assistance dealing with substance abuse and referrals for community resources. All contacts are confidential.

## Address Required

A student is required to maintain a current address of residence. Please come to the Enrollment Services Office: First Floor, College Center C-160 to complete the Personal Information Change form. If you currently reside outside of Somerset or Hunterdon County, **the following documentation is required to report the change:**

1. Photo ID – This can be a Photo Driver's License or a Photo ID issued by the Division of Motor Vehicles, official government agency or accredited educational institution. An identification providing your current address is preferred.
2. Any **two** of the following valid documents with your **current address** listed:
  - Photo Driver's License
  - Current lease or deed
  - Utility bill, bank statement, credit card bill, postmarked correspondence
  - Voter registration card

## Animals on Campus

Persons may not bring animals onto campus, or any other location where the College offers courses or sponsors events, with the exception of service animals used by individuals with

disabilities. A service or guide dog trainer, while engaged in the actual training process, shall have the same rights, privileges, and responsibilities with respect to access to public facilities as are applicable to a person with a certified disability. For more information, contact the Office for Students with Disabilities in College Center, C-124.

### **Appeals of College Policy: Academic Concerns and Complaints**

Students with complaints and concerns about the classroom should first attempt to resolve the matter with the instructor. Failing a satisfactory resolution, the student should consult with the appropriate department chairperson. Should the student not be satisfied with the results of that discussion, the student may request that the appropriate Divisional Dean review the matter. The decision of the Dean is the final appeal.

Tuition appeals should be submitted to the Dean of Academic Support after completing the appropriate paperwork.

### **Appeals of College Policy: Non-Academic**

The College establishes policies and procedures for all students. However, there may be times when a situation is unique or different from other students and an exception should be made. This may be particularly true for students with an extended illness or serious family event. If you have a situation you feel warrants an exception, submit a RVCC Tuition/Withdrawal Appeal Form which is available online, or from the Office of Enrollment Services on the first floor of the College Center. This form should be submitted with a letter of explanation and any supporting documentation to the Office of Enrollment Services. A College Appeals Committee meets monthly and will respond to you in writing once the decision is made.

If the appeal relates to a grade, please see the previous academic appeals section of this handbook. There is a separate procedure for grade appeals and academic complaints.

### **Bullying and Intimidation**

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying in gesture; or any written, verbal or electronic communication that is motivated by actual or perceived characteristics such as race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct and may be a violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and/or Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments. Students should report bullying to the Assistant Dean of Student Services in C-143.

### **The Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA)**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 protects the privacy of education records, establishes the right of students to inspect and review their education records, and provides guidelines for contesting information in these records that is believed to be inaccurate or misleading.

Students have the right to inspect and review all of their education records maintained by the College. The College is not required to provide copies of records unless it is not reasonably convenient for students to inspect their records.

Students have the right to request that the College correct records believed to be inaccurate



or misleading. If the College decides, in response to such a request, not to amend a student's record, the student has the right to a formal hearing before the Dean of Student Services. After the hearing, if the College maintains its position that the student's record should not be amended, the student has the right to enter a statement into his/her records commenting on the contested information.

The College will not release any confidential information from a student's record without the written consent of the student, except for releasing information to:

- College officials with a legitimate educational interest
- Other institutions at which a student intends to enroll
- Certain government officials for the purpose of carrying out their lawful functions
- Appropriate parties involved with the awarding of financial aid to a student
- Organizations conducting appropriate research for the College
- Accrediting agencies
- Individuals who have obtained appropriate court orders or subpoenas
- Persons who have need for the information in cases of health and safety emergencies

The College may disclose Directory Information without the written consent of the student. Directory Information includes the following:

- Name, address, telephone number, and email address
- Date and place of birth
- Dates of attendance
- Enrollment status
- Previous institutions attended
- Major field of study
- Awards and honors
- Degrees and/or Certificates awarded including date of conferral
- Past and present participation in officially recognized College activities
- Height and weight of student athletes

Students may request the withholding of Directory Information. To ensure that such a request is properly processed, it must be submitted on the official "Request to Withhold Directory Information" form, which is available in the Office of Enrollment Services. The request to withhold information will remain in effect until the student submits a signed authorization for the release of Directory Information.

Students have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning an alleged failure by the College to comply with the requirements of FERPA. For further information regarding the filing of complaints, students should contact the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202.

## Firearms, Weapons, Explosives, Dangerous Knives, Hazardous Materials

Firearms, weapons, ammunition, knives, explosives, destructive devices, fireworks or any item that imitates or is reasonably capable of being mistaken as these items whether operable or inoperable are not permitted on College property. This includes antique weapons, air guns capable of launching a projectile and components that can be assembled into a weapon. Items included in the weapons policy are also not permitted on College property. Violation of this policy can result in legal prosecution and College administrative action.

## Identification (Student ID) Card

All students are required to have a valid RVCC identification (ID) card in their possession at all times. This includes times when on College property or at any other location where the College offers courses. A student is required to present their identification card when requested to do so by College personnel and Security staff. Failure to provide a student ID card upon request will result in verification action by the Office of the Dean of Student Affairs or the Security Department. If a person's identity cannot be verified, the unidentified persons may be asked to leave campus property.

A student's ID card is used for access to various College facilities and community services such as the public libraries in Somerset and Hunterdon Counties, the fitness center and RVCC athletic facilities. The student ID card includes a bar-code that is required for use of the College Library. The Theatre at RVCC offers discounted tickets to students with a valid ID card. Student ID cards will be distributed from the Athletic Department and Enrollment Services starting during the 2020-2021 academic year.

## Immunization

RVCC is committed to creating a safe and healthy environment for our students. We comply with all state laws regarding immunizations for students.

All full-time students must submit proof of compliance with the State of New Jersey requirements for immunization for

- 2 doses of MMR (Measles, Mumps & Rubella)
- 3 doses of Hepatitis B
- 1 dose of MenB (Meningococcal disease)
- 2 doses of MenACWY (Meningococcal disease)

You can download the Immunization Record Form and bring it to your doctor to fill it out. Once completed send the signed to the Admissions office, fax: 908-429-4314 or email: [admissions@raritanval.edu](mailto:admissions@raritanval.edu)

Learn more about the State of New Jersey laws regarding immunizations.

## Parking and Traffic

Students may park in lots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9. Students are not allowed to park in the Visitor's lot, Faculty lots 2 and 8, and Workforce Training Center parking lot. Parking in spaces designated for disabled individuals is reserved for vehicles authorized under laws of the State of New Jersey, and is monitored by the Branchburg Police Department. Parking is prohibited on all roadways, lawns, medians, crosswalks, loading zones, marked emergency fire lanes, emergency phone access lanes or any other areas designated by the College unless authorized by Campus Safety.

Overnight parking is prohibited anywhere on campus. Parking overnight may be permitted only after notifying the Campus Safety Office and filling out a "Waiver of Responsibility" regarding your vehicle. Drivers must adhere to all posted speed limits on campus and must yield to pedestrians in crosswalks at all times. Persons in violation of these regulations are subject to towing, citations, and fines. The College is not responsible for any damage to the vehicle during towing. The College is not responsible for any injury, property damage, or loss sustained by a vehicle's owner/driver while on College property.

## Handicap Parking Permits

Under New Jersey law, a disabled person may obtain either a special license plate or vehicle placard that provides special parking privileges. To park in a designated disabled area on campus, you must have handicap license plates or the placard, which is only provided by your local police department. Temporary placards can be issued to a person who has temporarily lost mobility as certified by a physician. Placards must be displayed in full view. Any person without a placard properly displayed, may receive a parking summons and fine, at the discretion of the Branchburg Police Department.

## Sales & Solicitation

The College bookstore and food service are the only agencies on campus authorized to sell or solicit on campus. Any others wishing to do so should contact the Director of Student Life or the Executive Director of the Foundation.

## Smoking and Tobacco Use

To provide a healthy working environment for the College community, RVCC is a tobacco-free and smoke-free environment. Persons in violation of this policy are subject to citations, fines, and/or other disciplinary actions. Citations may be issued without prior warnings. This policy includes vaporizers and/or electronic cigarettes as well as chewing tobacco products.

### Fine Process

- 1st offense: Warning
- 2nd offense: \$25 fine
- 3rd offense: \$50 fine
- 4th and subsequent offenses: \$75

### Appeals

Students who appeal a fine may go to the Office of Student Affairs.

## **Weather Closings and Other Delayed Openings**

If the College announces a delayed opening at any location due to inclement weather or other emergency situation, all offices will be closed and all College classes and/or other activities will be suspended at that location until the delayed opening time.

Classes scheduled to begin before the delayed opening time that have 60 minutes or more of instruction time remaining at the delayed opening time will begin at the delayed opening time and conclude at the regularly scheduled ending time. Classes scheduled to begin before the delayed opening time that have fewer than 60 minutes of instruction time remaining at the delayed opening time will be canceled. Classes scheduled to begin at or after the delayed opening time will meet as scheduled. Sign up for Campus Closing Notifications in the Lion's Den.

## **Computer & Network Use Policies**

The College provides all registered students with email accounts (Lion Mail) through Office 365. This account is used by the college for all official communications with the student. The account is available for 13 months for student use after they have left the College.

### **Duration of Network Accounts**

1. RVCC credit students' accounts will remain active for 13 months from the last semester they registered for a class.
2. Community Education students' Internet accounts will last the duration of their classes and for whatever additional time the Community Education administrators determine the course content requires Internet access. This will be determined in consultation with Technology Services. Fees for these courses will reflect the costs of the required Internet access.

### **Internet Code of Conduct**

Students are held to a Code of Conduct which governs use of technology at RVCC. Use of technology includes physical technology as well as wireless resources and the various computer networks which are used by the college. Details of the Internet Code of Conduct can be found on the College's website.

### **College Provider Code**

As an Internet provider and an institution of higher education, RVCC is committed to the principles of personal privacy and the free and open discussion of ideas. RVCC, therefore, pledges that it will follow industry best practices to ensure the confidentiality of user files and individual usage information.

### **College Computer Laboratory Users' Agreement**

Computer use is restricted to currently enrolled RVCC students. Priority is for academic use in the following order: 1. computer course assignments; 2. other academic assignments; 3. general research. Users must relinquish their computers to students needing them for a higher priority use. All users of RVCC's computers acknowledge a full awareness of an agreement to RVCC Computer Users' Regulations. Violations of these, including tampering with the equipment or the

software, may result in campus or civil prosecution. For further information or to report a violation, contact Technology Services at ext. 7887.

## Civil and Criminal Penalties for Violation of Federal Copyright Laws

Copyright infringement is the act of exercising, without permission or legal authority, one or more of the exclusive rights granted to the copyright owner under section 106 of the Copyright Act (Title 17 of the United States Code). These rights include the right to reproduce or distribute a copyrighted work. In the file-sharing context, downloading or uploading substantial parts of a copyrighted work without authority constitutes an infringement.

Penalties for copyright infringement include civil and criminal penalties. In general, anyone found liable for civil copyright infringement may be ordered to pay either actual damages or “statutory” damages affixed at not less than \$750 and not more than \$30,000 per work infringed. For “willful” infringement, a court may award up to \$150,000 per work infringed. A court can, in its discretion, also assess costs and attorneys’ fees. For details, see Title 17, United States Code, Sections 504, 505. Willful copyright infringement can also result in criminal penalties, including imprisonment of up to five years and fines of up to \$250,000 per offense. For more information, visit the U.S. Copyright Office website at [copyright.gov](https://copyright.gov), especially their FAQ’s [copyright.gov/help/faq](https://copyright.gov/help/faq).

## Student Code of Conduct

The college, as part of its response to COVID 19, has instituted several new safety protocols to comply with the state of New Jersey’s pandemic response and to ensure the overall safety of the college community. General Violation 1 of the code of conduct prohibits any act that violates any college policy, regulation, or law. As part of the RVCC reopening plan, the college has instituted new rules such as wearing appropriate face coverings, practicing social distancing, truthfully completing pre-screening forms, and other regulations to promote our safety on campus. Students who fail to comply with these regulations may be charged with violating the code of student conduct and be subject to serious ramifications including being banned from campus or dismissed from the college in the most severe cases. We hope that all students will be able to use the campus and these rules have been put in place in the attempt to provide the entire campus community with a safe and secure environment.

One of the core values of Raritan Valley Community College is fostering an environment of mutual respect, responsibility, and collaboration. The Student Code of Conduct (Code) establishes expectations of behavior for all students regardless of enrollment status or campus location. The provisions of the Code govern the actions of all students whether at a College-owned or managed location or at a College-sponsored or supervised function or event. This Code applies to behavior directed toward any member of the College Community as well as a student’s conduct during Academic Placements.

Upon admission to the College, a student incurs the responsibility for becoming familiar with and abiding by, the provisions of the Code. Violations of the Code may result in a student receiving a failing grade on an assignment or in a course, required community service, Disciplinary Warning, Disciplinary Probation, Disciplinary Suspension, Dismissal, or other appropriate penalty.



The following is a portion of the Raritan Valley Community College Code of Student Conduct. The entire document and relevant policies can be found online. If you have questions about the Code of Conduct or Academic Integrity Policy, contact the Dean of Student Affairs in College Center, C-143.

## **Violations of the Code for Academic Dishonesty, Cheating and Plagiarism**

Raritan Valley Community College defines academic integrity as a commitment to independent, original, and honest work. Students are expected to conduct themselves with scholarly integrity. Each suspected incident of academic dishonesty, cheating, or plagiarism will be reported to the Divisional Dean. Upon confirmation of the student's offense by the appropriate Divisional Dean, the student will be subject to warnings and penalties up to and including suspension or dismissal from the College.

The selling, purchasing, or contributing of homework assignments, lab reports, quizzes, essays, and papers from another person or from online sites is dishonest and illegal (see New Jersey Statute 18A:2-3) and will be addressed accordingly.

### **Academic Dishonesty and Cheating**

Examples of cheating violations include, but are not limited to:

- Copying graded and ungraded homework assignments from another student.
- Working together on a graded assignment that the faculty member has indicated is an individual assignment.
- Looking at another student's paper during an exam.
- Copying another student's computer program, class project, or assignment, and submitting it as one's own.
- Stealing or borrowing all or part of an exam's questions or answers.
- Entering a computer file without authorization.
- Giving someone answers to exam questions before an exam or while the exam is being given.
- Giving or selling an assignment, term paper, report, drawing, or computer program to another student for submission to the faculty member.
- Deceiving a faculty member to improve one's grade.
- Falsifying data or a source of information.
- Unauthorized use of any technology to gain access to test answers, test questions or prohibited materials such as notes, online databases and websites during a test.
- Submitting work for a grade that the student already submitted in another class or previous semester without the current faculty member's permission.
- Submitting work from one course into a second course without permission from the current faculty member.
- Copying quiz questions from Canvas-administered quizzes for private use or for distribution to other students.
- Making up information and citations.
- Using information from study websites (such as Course Hero, Chegg, or Study Buddy) for

assignments and submitting it as one's own work.

- Uploading or sharing an item to a study website (such as Course Hero, Chegg, or Study Buddy)

## **Plagiarism**

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- Copying answers from a textbook, website, or any other print/digital source, to submit for a grade without citations and presenting them as their own.
- Using the instructor edition of a textbook for assignment answers without faculty authorization to do so.
- Quoting text or other works without appropriate citations.
- Submitting a paper paraphrased from sources without citations.
- Submitting work obtained from a term paper service or taken from the Internet.
- Submitting work written by someone else (including another student) as one's own.
- Submitting a paper paraphrased from source material, splicing together sentences from scattered segments of the original.
- Reproduction of visual media and multimedia materials (videos, etc.) without permission from the artist or appropriate citation and distributing the materials as independent.
- Writing an essay using Google Translate (or any other translation tool).

Students who wish to challenge an accusation of Academic Dishonesty should speak to the appropriate Divisional Dean and may request a formal Disciplinary Review to adjudicate the matter.

## **Disruptive Behavior in the Classroom**

Faculty members have the authority to take actions which may be necessary to maintain order and proper conduct in the classroom. Students whose behavior disrupts the class will be subject to removal and may be charged with a violation of the Code of Student Conduct. Code of Conduct charges will be investigated by the Dean of Student Affairs. If the student behavior presents a concern for immediate safety of the student or members of the community, the student may be suspended until a Disciplinary Review is held.

Raritan Valley Community College requires independent, honest work on the part of its students, and students are expected to conduct themselves with scholarly integrity. Each confirmed incident of academic dishonesty, cheating or plagiarism must be reported by the faculty member, in writing, to the appropriate Divisional Dean. Specific examples of academic dishonesty and cheating can be viewed within the student conduct section of the College website.

## **For classroom violations, the following additional penalties may apply:**

### **1. Academic Dishonesty**

Penalties for confirmed cheating and plagiarism are as follows:

First Offense: The faculty member will have the authority to issue a failure on the paper, exam, assignment or course on which cheating or plagiarism was established. In general, plagiarism that the faculty member considers to be serious and proven shall result in failure

for the course. The faculty member must report the violation in writing to the appropriate Divisional Dean.

Subsequent Offense(s): As with the first offense, the faculty member will have the authority to issue a failure for the paper, exam, assignment, or course about which cheating or plagiarism was established and must report the violation. Upon confirmation of the student's subsequent offense by the appropriate Divisional Dean, the student will be subject to suspension or dismissal from the College.

## **2. Disruptive Behavior in the Classroom**

Faculty members have the authority to take actions which may be necessary to maintain order and proper conduct in the classroom. Students whose behavior disrupts the class will be subject to removal and may be charged with a violation of the Code of Student Conduct. Code of Conduct charges will be investigated by the Dean of Student Affairs. If the student behavior presents a concern for immediate safety of the student or members of the community, the student may be suspended until a Disciplinary Review is held.

## **Sexual Harassment and Discrimination**

It is the policy of RVCC to provide an environment that is free from harassment and discrimination. Students are encouraged to report any incidents of discrimination, harassment, sexual violence, and bullying which cause physical or emotional harm; or create a hostile environment which interferes with your education or your rights as a student. This includes any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act, or electronic communication, whether it be a single incident or a series of incidents, which you perceive as motivated by race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory disability which substantially disrupts or interferes with the operation of the college or the rights of a student. If you believe you are being harassed report the situation immediately. If immediate attention is needed, always contact Campus Safety by picking up a red phone in the halls or calling 908-231-8800.

Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 specifically prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in education, programs and activities. Discrimination under Title IX includes sexual harassment or sexual violence, such as rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, and sexual coercion. Confidentiality will always be maintained insofar as it does not interfere with the college's legal obligation to investigate allegations of misconduct when brought to the college's attention, and the ability of the college to take corrective action consistent with rights of due process.

**All inquiries and complaints** should be addressed to Cheryl Wallace, Executive Director of Human Resources, Compliance & Security, 908-526-1200, ext 8260. Personal counselors are available for assistance in the Advising and Counseling Office, College Center C-163.

## **Sexual Misconduct and Violence**

Raritan Valley Community College affirms the rights of its students, faculty, and staff to live, work, and study in an environment free from violence and sexual misconduct (sexual assault, sexual harassment, dating/domestic violence, and sexual exploitation). Sex offenses; violate college regulations and criminal law. Any reported violation will be treated swiftly through established

college disciplinary procedures and/or legal avenues. Reports of Sexual Misconduct and Violence can be reported to Campus Safety and/or The Office of the Dean of Student Affairs. Confidential support services can also be obtained from our team of counselors within the Office of Advising and Counseling Services and from outside agencies.

**Contact Information for the Title IX Coordinator:**

Cheryl Wallace, Title IX Coordinator

Executive Director of Human Resources, Compliance & Security

[cheryl.wallace@raritanval.edu](mailto:cheryl.wallace@raritanval.edu)

Additional resources, including a form to report incidents, may be found at on the College's website.

The following can be expected for all cases/investigations that are designated a Title IX incident:

- The college will provide a timely and thorough investigation and will treat all parties with respect before, during, and after the student conduct process.
- Cases of sexual misconduct or sexual harassment shall be resolved within 60 days once the incident has been reported.
- Once a decision has been rendered all of the involved parties will be informed of the decision.
- All involved parties have 5 Business Days to appeal the decision.
- If any involved party appeals, all other parties will be informed and will have the opportunity to review the appeal materials. The other involved parties, if they choose to do so, can submit a statement of response within 5 Business Days of receiving notice of the appeal.

## Sexual Consent

Consent is defined as giving explicit permission to participate in any sexual act. Consent must be active, not passive; it cannot be implied or assumed. Each partner must knowingly give permission each and every time they engage in a sexual act.

Consent cannot be given if either participant is:

- under the legal age of consent
- incapacitated
- mentally handicapped/impaired
- asleep
- being threatened, forced or coerced

## Code of Student Conduct Violations

All students shall obey the law, show respect for properly constituted authority, and observe correct standards of conduct in the classroom, college offices and on college property. Violations will be reported to the Dean of Student Affairs. In addition to activities prohibited by law or identified under the academic violations, the following types of behavior shall be prohibited and considered violations of the Code of Conduct:

## **General Violations**

1. Violation of any College policy or regulation. This includes violations of state, local or federal law.
2. Repeated violations of established college rules and regulations regardless of the seriousness of the individual offense involved.

## **Interpersonal Violations**

3. Physical or verbal abuse or harassment that injures another person or threatens another person and/or creates a hostile environment for any member of the College community. Subcategories included under physical abuse and harassment also include the following:
  - a. Domestic violence, which includes asserted violent misdemeanor and felony offenses committed by the victim's current or former spouse, current or former cohabitant, person similarly situated under domestic or family violence law, or anyone else protected under domestic or family violence law.
  - b. Dating violence, which means violence by a person who has been in a romantic or intimate relationship with the victim. Whether there was such a relationship will be gauged by its length, type, and frequency of interaction.
  - c. Rape, which is defined as the penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the victim.
  - d. Stalking, which is defined as a person who purposely and repeatedly engages in a course of conduct directed at a specific member of the campus community that would cause a reasonable person to fear bodily injury or death to him or herself or a member of his or her family.
4. Harassment, intimidation or bullying in gesture; written, verbal or electronic communication that is motivated by actual or perceived characteristics such as race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability as well as violations of the RVCC policy on Student Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying by students.
5. Any non-consensual physical contact of a sexual nature; voyeurism or making, attempting to make, transmitting, or attempting to transmit audio or video of any person(s) where there is an expectation of privacy with respect to nudity and/ or sexual activity without the knowledge and consent of all participants subject to such recordings.
6. Intentionally and substantially interfering with the freedoms of movement or expression of others on College premises or at College-sponsored activities.
7. Any form of retaliation against an individual who in good faith makes a complaint raises a concern provides information or otherwise assists in an investigation or proceeding regarding any conduct that the individual reasonably believes to violate the College's Code of Conduct or policies, or applicable laws, rules or regulations. Retaliation can take many forms, including sustained abuse or violence, threats, coercion, discrimination, and intimidation.
8. Acts of violence against employees, students, or visitors on Raritan Valley Community College property will not be ignored, condoned, or tolerated. Acts of violence may result in a



student's ultimate separation from the College.

9. Any student who hosts a person on campus (including but not limited to friends, partners, significant others, parents, and other legal guardians) is responsible for ensuring that such person is aware of all policies and procedures in the RVCC Code of Student Conduct. Students are responsible for the behavior of their guests and may be held accountable for violations committed by said guests, including repayment for damage to campus property. Responsibility under the Code of Conduct may occur even if the host is not a participant in the activity or has left the guest(s) alone.

### **Disruptive Behaviors**

10. Disruption of any College class by engaging in conduct that renders it difficult or impossible to maintain the learning environment of the class or violating the standards of classroom decorum set out by an instructor in the course outline/syllabus.
11. Intentionally or recklessly disrupting normal College or College-sponsored activities, including but not limited to, studying, teaching, tutoring, research, college administration, or fire, security, or emergency services. This includes violating any established or published College policy.
12. Causing or participating in disorderly, disruptive, or inappropriate behavior.

### **Acts of Dishonesty**

13. Initiating or causing to be initiated any false report, warning or threat of fire, explosion, or other emergency on College premises or at College-sponsored activities.
14. Failure to comply with the direction of College officials, including campus security/safety officers, acting in the performance of their duties; or making false statements to College officials.
15. Alteration or misuse of College documents, records or identification or knowingly submitting false or altered documents to the College.
16. Bribery or attempted bribery of any College official or entity with a direct relationship with the College community.
17. Violation of the Code for Academic Dishonesty, Cheating, and Plagiarism.

### **Theft or Damage of Property**

18. Intentionally or recklessly destroying or damaging College property or property of others on college premises or at College-sponsored activities.
19. Theft of College property or any individual's private property located on the College campus or College-sponsored activities.

### **Improper Use of Property/Facilities**

20. Unauthorized use of computer hardware or software, including intentionally developing programs that harass others or infiltrate the system to damage or alter the system. This also includes the use of RVCC networking resources for any illegal purpose such as unauthorized Peer to Peer file sharing and the unauthorized distribution or downloading of

copyrighted material. Violators may also be subject to civil and criminal liabilities.

- 21. The unauthorized presence on or use of College premises
- 22. Gambling on the College campus or any College function

### **Possession of Prohibited Items and Substances**

- 23. Unauthorized possession, consumption or transfer of any alcoholic beverage on the premises of the College or at a College-sponsored activity. Students found on campus grounds noticeably intoxicated may also be disciplined under the Code of Student Conduct regardless of age.
- 24. The possession or use of controlled dangerous substances, marijuana, steroids, or narcotics, including, but not limited to, opium (morphine, codeine, heroin), prescription drugs in possession of someone other than the prescribed individual, misuse of prescribed drugs, and every other substance not chemically distinguishable from them (i.e. imitation/synthetic products such as bath salts and/or K2) as well as any drug paraphernalia, on-campus or during any college-sponsored event is prohibited.
- 25. Possession of weapons, ammunition, explosives, or other dangerous items on College property without the expressed authorization from Campus Security. The policy applies to items that appear to be weapons, ammunition, explosives, or other dangerous items as well as non-prohibited items that are used to endanger or cause fear. Persons may be turned over to the local police.

### **Distribution or Sale of Prohibited Items and Substances**

- 26. The distribution or sale of controlled dangerous substances, marijuana, steroids, or narcotics, including, but not limited to, opium (morphine, codeine, heroin), prescription drugs in possession of someone other than the prescribed individual, misuse of prescribed drugs, and every other substance not chemically distinguishable from them (i.e. imitation/synthetic products such as bath salts and/or K2) as well as any drug paraphernalia, on-campus or during any college-sponsored event is prohibited.

### **Smoking**

- 27. RVCC is a smoke-free environment. This includes all tobacco and electronic smoking/vaping devices. This policy extends to all RVCC property, including but not limited to buildings, outdoor areas, and parking lots. Persons in violation of this policy are subject to disciplinary actions as well as citations and fines.

### **Automobile Misuse**

- 28. Reckless or dangerous operation of a motor vehicle on campus
- 29. Parking in a non-designated parking spot or area

### **Sanctions & Penalties for Violations**

Violations to the Code of Student Conduct, either in the classroom, on campus, or with College-sponsored activities, may result in specific sanctions including the following: written or verbal warning; probation; suspension; dismissal; or the imposition of such penalties as are found to be

appropriate. Students who wish to challenge an accusation of Academic Dishonesty should speak to the appropriate Divisional Dean and may request a formal Disciplinary Review to adjudicate the matter.

### **Interim Suspension**

When it is determined that a student's continued presence at the College poses a significant risk of substantial harm to the safety or security of themselves, others, or to property, a student may be suspended pending resolution of the disciplinary process.

An interim suspension means that the student cannot attend classes and must leave college property and remain off College property. The student may, within three (3) working days of the imposition of the suspension, petition the Vice President for Student Affairs and Outreach for reinstatement. The petition must be in writing and must include supporting documentation or evidence that the student does not pose, or no longer poses, a significant risk of substantial harm to the safety or security of themselves, others, or to property. A decision on such a petition will be made without undue delay by the Vice President for Student Affairs and Outreach or their designee.

### **Disciplinary Procedures for Violations of the Code of Conduct**

Pending College actions or violation of College regulations and civil or criminal laws, the right of a student to be present on the campus can be suspended for reasons related to the student's physical and/or emotional safety and the well-being of the College community. The College reserves the right to take disciplinary action where off-campus offenses are involved and where the interests of the College as an educational community are threatened.

Accused student(s) are presumed to be not responsible for violations. Responsibility must be established by a preponderance of evidence. This standard requires that the Disciplinary Review Board or Conduct Officer must be persuaded that it is more likely than not that the allegations brought against the accused student are true.

Where there is an alleged breach of the Code of Conduct by a student, the Office of the Dean of Student Affairs follows specific procedures to process Student Conduct incidents. Please visit the Student Affairs section of the College website under Student Conduct for additional information. Mid-year changes to the Code of Conduct will be reflected within college's policy library and online.

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Where there is an alleged breach of the Code of Student Conduct by a student, the following procedures will be followed as part of the formal disciplinary process. Mid-year changes to the Code of Conduct will be reflected within the Student Conduct RVCC website.

1. In all cases, the dean or his/her designee shall ascertain whether the alleged breach of conduct is one that occurred inadvertently. If so, the breach may be resolved informally with

no further action necessary.

2. After discussing with the student, if the dean or his/her designee determines there is a violation the Dean shall advise the student that there has been a breach in the Student Code of Conduct.
3. The Dean and the student may meet and agree to a resolution and resolve the matter without a Disciplinary Review.
4. If there is no mutually agreeable resolution, the matter will be referred to the Code of Conduct Disciplinary Review Board. The Disciplinary Review Board is comprised of five members of the campus community. It is made up of three students and two College employees either from the faculty, administration or staff.
5. Incidents involving Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence or other sensitive matters where a high level of privacy must be maintained, may be comprised of specially trained College employees only. The Dean will inform the student in writing that the matter has been forwarded to the Disciplinary Review Board.
6. At least five (5) business days prior to the Disciplinary Review before the Code of Conduct Disciplinary Review Board, the Chair will notify the student and Disciplinary Review Board members of the date, time and place of Disciplinary Review, and general procedures to be followed. The Dean will advise the student and any witnesses.
7. Proceedings before the Code of Conduct Disciplinary Review Board shall be private and are not intended to be formal legal proceedings. The student may request that one support person be allowed with them in the Disciplinary Review but they shall not participate. A representative from within the College community shall be permitted to advise and assist students. The student may either seek out that representative or request assistance finding that representative at least five (5) business days prior to the Disciplinary Review. The Disciplinary Review shall provide a fair inquiry into the charges, with both parties afforded the opportunity to ask and respond to questions. The decision shall be based on the preponderance of the evidence.
8. After the Disciplinary Review, the Chair shall summarize the proceedings and the outcome in writing along with the Board's decision and sanction(s) imposed to all parties involved and forward this to the Dean of Student Affairs who will review and officially inform the student. This report will be placed on file in the office of the Dean of Students. Inquiries about the student's conduct from transfer colleges and employers may include confirmation of a code violation.
9. Within 5 business days of the notification of the sanction, a student may submit a written appeal of the Disciplinary Review Board's decision to the Dean of Student Affairs. See Appeals section of the Code of Student Conduct for additional information. The decision of the dean is the final appeal.
10. If a student fails to respond to disciplinary correspondence within a specified time frame a decision of responsibility may be made based on the information available. Students will have the opportunity to appeal any such decisions.

## Appeals

Any student found responsible of a violation and any complaint party in cases of sexual misconduct, violence or other Title IX designated incidents, will have one appeal of the finding and/or sanction.

Students and complaint parties will be given 5 business days, from the date of their decision letter, to submit their appeal. Appeals are to be submitted to the Dean of Student Affairs. Failure to submit an appeal by the appropriate deadline will render the decision final and conclude the process.

### Appeals can be made on the following grounds:

1. **Unsupported Conclusion:** The decision made is not supported by the facts of the case.
2. **Procedural Error:** The disciplinary process was conducted unfairly and not in conformity with prescribed procedures. The error committed must be determined to have substantially impacted the fairness of the disciplinary process.
3. **Disproportionate Sanction:** The sanction imposed against the student was not appropriate for the offense committed.
4. **New Information:** There is new information available that was not available at the time of the disciplinary process and that is sufficient to alter the original decision.

### Appeal Procedures:

During the appeal process the Dean of Student Affairs will review the written sanction appeal and may or may not request an in-person meeting. A decision letter will be sent to all necessary parties at the conclusion of the appeal process. The Dean of Student Affairs will do one of the following.

1. Affirm the finding and sanction originally determined.
2. Affirm the finding and modify the sanction if it is found to be clearly disproportionate to the gravity of the violation, precedent for similar offenses, and/or the accused student's prior disciplinary record.
3. Remand the case for a new Disciplinary Review only if the appeal demonstrates an issue that was so substantial it effectively denied the accused student or the complaint party a fair disciplinary process.

## Disciplinary Files and Records Retention

The State of New Jersey's Records Retention Policy requires that disciplinary records be kept for a specific length of time after the conclusion of the case. Records may be kept for a minimum of one year up to an indefinite period, depending on the characteristics of the case. Disciplinary records may only be reported to third parties in accordance with college regulations and are subject to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974.



# Emergency Procedures

The College Administration regards your continued safety as one of its highest priorities. In the event you need to speak with someone in the Campus Safety Office, it is located on the Ground level of Somerset Hall, Room S-010, near the Welcome Center. The College has an Emergency Management Plan, and regularly coordinates emergency activities with local law enforcement and other emergency responders.

**To report an on-campus emergency, requiring immediate attention, call 908-231-8800; for an off-campus emergency, call 911.**

**Phone:** 908-231-8800 (direct line)

**Confidential TIPS hotline:** 908-231-8806 (Call to report suspicious people, behavior or packages, someone in distress or threats of violence. All calls are confidential. You do not need to give your name.)

## In Case of Emergency – Follow These Procedures

### Fire or Smoke in a Building

In the event of an activation of the fire alarm system all persons on campus will be notified by the sound of a fire alarm horn, flashing strobe lights, and the following message will be broadcast over the fire alarm speaker devices, “**EMERGENCY ALERT! FIRE ALARM, EVACUATE THE BUILDING IMMEDIATELY.**” Fire doors throughout the campus will automatically close. Some areas of the campus have a water suppression system that may activate in an effort to contain or extinguish a fire. In the event of a fire alarm activation, take the following actions:

- Remain calm – Exit the building using the most direct route
  - **DO NOT** use elevators.
  - **DO NOT** evacuate to or assemble in the center courtyards, or within 250 feet of any structure.
  - Close, but do not lock, windows and doors.
- Follow instructions of College Evacuation Marshals and Campus Security Officers and proceed to the nearest assembly point.
- Warn others to evacuate, and if possible, help others requiring assistance.
- **IF UNABLE to Evacuate or for Person(s) with Disabilities, DO Not use Elevators.** Move away from danger, move to a place of safety or move to the nearest stairwell (which are designated areas of refuge), seek shelter on the stairwell landing. Contact Campus Safety at 908-231-8800 and provide your location (building, floor and room number or stairwell location).
  - **IF UNABLE** to contact Campus Safety, call 9-1-1.
- Once assembled at an evacuation assembly area, await further instructions
  - **DO NOT** re-enter any buildings unless instructed to do so by Campus Security Officers or College Evacuation Marshals.
- Keep roads and fire lanes clear for emergency responders

Evacuation Assembly Areas	
Arts Building	Athletic Field
Bateman Student Center	Athletic Field
Childcare Center	Parking Lot 4 (Follow Internal Procedures)
College Center	Athletic Field Parking Lot 1
Conference Center	Parking Lot 1
Hunterdon Hall	Athletic Field
Interior Design & Theater Lab	Athletic Field
Physical Education Building	Athletic Field Parking Lot 2
Planetarium & East Building	Parking Lot 9
Science Building	Athletic Field Parking Lot 2
Somerset Hall	Parking Lot 1
Theater & Library	Parking Lot 2
West Building	Parking Lot 2 Lower Tier
Workforce Training Center	Faculty Lot Top Tier Parking Lot 3

**Do Not Assemble in the Center Courtyard.  
Always evacuate to a point of safety.**

## **Threatening Person on Campus**

If you see anyone on campus carrying a firearm or other weapon, immediately call Campus Safety at 908-231-8800

- Move to a safe area away from the threat
- If unable to move away from the threat, stay in your classroom/office and secure the area by locking doors, closing blinds and staying away from windows
- If needed, barricade the doors with desks and chairs
- If you are walking in the hallways or between buildings, enter the nearest open classroom or office and secure the area
- Do not confront anyone with a weapon
- An RVCC Alert may be broadcast by phone, text or email message.
- Wait for further instructions, or the “All Clear” to be communicated by the Campus Safety Department or the Police

## **Weather/Environmental Emergency**

- An RVCC Alert may be broadcast by phone, text or email message.
- Stay in your classroom/office until the situation can be assessed
- If outside, proceed into the closest building and take shelter inside an interior room, stay away from windows, vents and overhead objects
- After the condition subsides, further instructions may be communicated through, the RVCC Alert System

## **Power Outage**

- Emergency lights may activate
- Follow the instructions of Campus Safety Officers and College Evacuation Marshals
- Stay in your classroom/office until the situation is assessed
- Do Not use elevators
- A determination to close the campus will be made
- An RVCC Alert may be broadcast by phone, text or email message.

## **Campus Closings & Delayed Openings**

In the event of inclement weather, check to see if the College is open or has a delayed opening.

- An RVCC Alert may be broadcast by phone, text or email message
- Check the College website at [raritanval.edu](http://raritanval.edu)

## **Suicide Prevention Information**

### **24-Hour Mental Health Support and Psychiatric Emergencies**

In the event of any life threatening situation such as suicidal thoughts/attempts to harm oneself, alcohol or drug overdose, or serious mental health crisis, utilize the following resources for assistance:

#### **On Campus Resources**

- Counselors are available in College Center C-165, during normal business hours Monday through Friday. See the Counseling Services section for specific operating hours or call 908-526-1200 ext. 8336
- Campus Safety Office located on the ground level of Somerset Hall, Room S-010 or call 908-231-8800

#### **Off Campus Resources**

- Call 911
- Go to your local emergency room immediately
- New Jersey Hopeline 855-654-6735
- National Suicide Prevention Hotline 800-273-8255

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