

Spring 2021

Dear Incoming Student,

Welcome to the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers! We are writing to you to introduce you to the *Bloustein Graduate Student Association* (BGSA) and to give you our advice about how to make the transition for the spring semester a little easier.

To get started, all new students must notify us through the [online admissions portal](#) that you will be coming to the Bloustein School. Completion of this step acts as the trigger mechanism to activate your student record at the University.

**BGSA.** First, who are we? BGSA is the student governance and advocacy group within the school. We have bi-weekly meetings, weekly social events, and elected officers. BGSA provides a forum for student opinion and a means for collective action to improve academic and student life in the school.

**Orientation.** Orientation will be held **remotely this spring beginning January 6th**. For the most up to date information on scheduled events for orientation, please visit:  
<https://bloustein.rutgers.edu/students/orientation-spring/>

**NetID.** All Rutgers University students are required to create a NetID and password for use during their time as a student. Your NetID will allow you to log into course sites on Sakai, Blackboard or eCollege, see your final grades, obtain your transcript, register for additional courses, use computing facilities and access library materials from home.  
[Activate your NetID Here](#)

**Registration.** Registration is processed each term through the Rutgers Registrar and the online portal WebReg. New students are recommended to register for one or two of their required core courses. You can change your registration throughout posted add/drop periods. Registration changes done after the add/drop period may involve a late fee penalty. Changing your registration is done via the web or in person at the Registrar's Office. Registration will not begin until **November 30<sup>th</sup> at 9:00AM**. Tuition and fees are due after registration. It is only after you have registered for one or more classes that you are able to apply for computer accounts (email), receive your RUConnection/ID access card and get access to a parking permit.  
<http://webreg.rutgers.edu>

**ID Cards.** There is no charge to obtain your first Rutgers student ID card, also known as the [RU Connection](#) card. However, you are required to be registered for at least one course at all times in order to receive your RU Connection card or keep it active. Aside from serving as your student ID, the RU Connection card is used to take out books from the library, doubles as your meal card at the dining halls, serves as your access key card to get into the Bloustein School, computer labs and Civic Square building parking deck after hours and on weekends. If you are a new student, you may wait until your arrival here in the spring to obtain your ID card, or you

can also stop by any of the RU Connection offices on campus to obtain one. A listing of all RU Connection offices, their locations and hours of operation can be found on their [website](#). You will receive your RU Connection card on the spot, after your photo is taken. The whole process takes mere minutes to complete.

**University Calendar.** The [University's on-line academic calendar](#) lists all breaks, observed holidays, exam periods, registration add-drop deadlines, etc. In addition, many classes during the first week of school are moved to different start times to accommodate new student orientations.

**Finances.** The first month of graduate school will be costly. Even if you have financial aid, fellowships or alike, often it takes weeks before you receive your first aid payment. Even with full aid, the various fees and textbook expenses can add up to \$500 or \$1,000 dollars very quickly. It can also take a week or so to open a local bank account. Banks located in close proximity to the school include: The Bank of New York, PNC Bank, Wells Fargo, Bank of America and TD Bank.

**Health Insurance.** In keeping with Federal mandates, all graduate full-time and part-time students must maintain adequate health insurance coverage. If you already have health insurance benefits with an outside carrier, you must provide documentation of such [here](#). Students who do not have such benefits, can purchase a plan through the University. More information on purchasing such plans can be found [here](#):

All international students who are in the US on a visa must direct all their health insurance related questions to Eirinn Jones at the Center for International Faculty and Student Services at 848-932-7015 or via email at [eljones@gaiacenters.rutgers.edu](mailto:eljones@gaiacenters.rutgers.edu).

All other students with health insurance questions should speak with Angela Logan 848-932-9053.

**Immunizations.** By law, the University requires students to have received their MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella) vaccine before coming to Rutgers. You are required to submit proof of MMR vaccination to the University health office. Failure to provide proof of vaccination will result in a hold on your Rutgers transcripts, etc. For any questions regarding the University's vaccination requirements, please contact 848-932-7402 ext. 268 or via email at [vaccine@rci.rutgers.edu](mailto:vaccine@rci.rutgers.edu). The list of required immunizations can be found here: <http://health.rutgers.edu/who-are-you/incoming-students/pre-entrance-immunizations>

**Parking.** Parking for students is available throughout the city, by either parking curbside, metered, or in a municipal parking garage. During weekday evenings, students are able to park in the deck underneath the Bloustein School – but will need a Rutgers commuter or resident parking permit to do so. Night Commuter permits can access the deck beginning at as early as 4pm. Students with all other commuter permits (Zone A, B, C, D, & L) will be permitted to park beginning at 6pm and students with resident permits can park beginning at 8pm. During the day, there is parking available at the New Street Parking Deck, located on the corner of New Street and Joyce Kilmer Avenue, approximately 1 block from the school and the Rockoff Hall / Morris Street parking garage located at the corner of New and George Streets. These parking decks are hourly rated and options for the daytime hours. Finally, there is commuter and on-campus student parking, and for this, you should contact the University Parking Office for a

semester student rates. You can apply for all your parking permits only AFTER you have registered for one or more classes. Visit <http://parktran.rutgers.edu> for more information.

**Campus Buses.** The Bloustein School is located in the Civic Square Building on the College Avenue Campus. The EE bus route services our location. [Bus routes and schedules can be found online.](#)

**Bike Racks.** All students should explore green alternatives in their commute to the school. The Bloustein School has bicycle racks available for student use located by the front and back entrances of the building, as well as in the covered deck below. Please provide your own bicycle locks.

**Transit.** The Bloustein School is a 5-10 minute walk from the [New Brunswick Train station](#). Monthly discount student passes are available for [NJ Transit](#), the state's mass transit train system. The discount is 25% off the regular price for a monthly commuter pass. Student discount rail tickets may be purchased one-month in advance [via the web](#).

**Computers and E-mail.** The computer labs in the Civic Square Building have their own separate registration and account creation process. Pertinent forms will be distributed at Orientation for the creation of your student lab account. There will be a specific info session on Orientation day dedicated to email and computer lab access. Information on your student ScarletMail email accounts and NetID can also be found at [The Office of Information Technology](#).

**Housing.** Rutgers has offices for both on-campus and off-campus housing. Their contact information is as follows:

- Graduate Housing Office - Phone: (848) 445-0750 | <http://ruoncampus.rutgers.edu>
- Off-Campus Housing Office - Phone: 732-445-5737 | <http://ruoffcampus.rutgers.edu/>

Most students find their own housing off-campus during their second year. Some students live nearby in the New Brunswick, Highland Park, East Brunswick, or Franklin Township, while others commute to school from Hoboken, Jersey City, Newark, Trenton, Princeton, etc. Be prepared for the relatively high costs of housing characteristic of the greater New York Metropolitan Area. Realtors may charge up to a 15% fee over and above the security deposit, and first and last months rent.

**NJ Residency.** [Establishing NJ residency](#) may reduce your tuition bill. Proof of residency includes employment in NJ (verified by a NJ W-2), a NJ license and motor vehicle registration and/or voter registration. Contact the State Motor Vehicle Department at (609) 292-6500 to find out the location of the nearest license bureau. Voter registration is done at the Middlesex County Clerk's office. To declare residency, fill out the residency analysis form available at the [Registrar's office](#). All questions regarding NJ residency must be directed to the Registrar at (848) 445-3556.

**Athletic Facilities.** Athletic facilities are available on each campus. The nearest facilities to our school are the Easton Avenue Gym (a.k.a. Rutgers Fitness Center) or the fitness center at the Cook Douglass Recreation Center. All University athletic facilities require a valid RU Connection / ID card for entry. They also require that you first pass a fitness test (a.k.a. Fit

Check) before you can use any cardio vascular equipment. There is a small fee for the testing. <http://www1.recreation.rutgers.edu/>

**Student Mailboxes.** Student mailboxes are located on the second floor in the student lounge and are used only for school-related correspondence. You are encouraged to check your mailbox regularly for incoming mail, announcements about graduation, your program requirements, etc. All personal mail must be sent to your home address.

**Student Lockers.** Lockers are available on a first-come, first-serve basis in the student lounge on the second floor of the Bloustein School. When you arrive at the Bloustein School, you will need to sign out a locker key from Marie O'Brien ([marieo@rutgers.edu](mailto:marieo@rutgers.edu)) in room 192. At the end of each June, the lockers are cleared out so you will need to remove your materials by then. All students are asked not to store any perishable food items in their lockers.

**Student Services.** Our staff is committed to helping students and alumni achieve their professional goals, and conduct individualized career advising sessions to navigate career decisions, job and internship searches, and employment preparation. For questions about **internships and job placement for MCRP, MPP, and MPI students, please contact Andrea Garrido.** For MHA students, please contact Cheryl Egan. Their office is located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the Bloustein School in room 184.

**Business Cards.** Graduate students are permitted to purchase business cards at their own expense. Students interested in purchasing cards must go through the contracted University vendor [Dupli Online by following these instructions.](#)

**For queries on financial aid** please contact Asst. Dean Steve Weston. His office is located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor, room 190. He may also be reached via email at [sdweston@rutgers.edu](mailto:sdweston@rutgers.edu) or via phone at 848-932-2728.

All other **student life, student services concerns and housing questions** can be directed to Courtney Culler, Assistant Director for Graduate Student and Academic Services. Her office is located in room 183. She may be reached via email at [courtney.culler@rutgers.edu](mailto:courtney.culler@rutgers.edu) or 848-932-2727.

If you have additional questions, please feel free to contact us. When possible, contact BGSA with any general questions about the School, Rutgers, or New Brunswick. We look forward to meeting you.

### Continuing Students

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