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# RTA School of Media Student Handbook

Copies of this Handbook are available as a PDF on the RTA Student Handbook website: <http://www.ryersonrta.com/handbook>. The RTA website, [www.ryersonrta.com](http://www.ryersonrta.com), also provides information on the following topics:

- § faculty and staff email addresses
- § Ryerson University policies
- § RTA program policies
- § health and safety information
- § a brief history of RTA
- § articles on university life
- § scholarship information
- § Curriculum course flow charts

If you have any suggestions or comments about this Handbook, feel free to contact The RTA Student Affairs Coordinator.

# Communications

The RTA School of Media, herein referred to as RTA, strives to promote an efficient and hassle-free communications system for both faculty and students. These are some of the methods used:

## Email

All students in full time graduate and undergraduate degrees are required to activate and maintain a Ryerson University central Matrix e-mail account, which will be an official means by which they receive university communications. Details outlining Ryerson's email policy can be found at: <http://www.ryerson.ca/senate/policies/pol157.pdf> . Procedures for student activation and use, as well as the Ryerson Student Computing Guidelines, are available on the Ryerson University website at <http://www.ryerson.ca/ccs>.

Please note that you must regularly monitor your e-mail account. Every account has a quota that controls how much mail can be stored. If you allow mail to build up beyond your quota, the mail system will start rejecting additional mail anyone sends to you. To avoid this, check your mail regularly and delete any mail you no longer need.

## Academic Email Etiquette

Corresponding with faculty and staff is different than emailing casually and informally to your friends online. The following rules serve as a guide toward proper email etiquette.

Be concise and to the point.

Be detailed. Be professional and specific in your emails.

Include your student number and year when contacting the Student Affairs Coordinator.

Do not use "read now", "high priority" and other such options as email subjects.

Include the message thread.

Avoid long sentences. Email is meant to be a quick medium and requires a different kind of writing than letters.

Write calmly and professionally.

Re-Read all emails

Use a meaningful subject line.

## How to Email Groups in RTA

Should a mass email be required, please use the "Communication" tool in Blackboard. Emails to the entire program are generally discouraged.

## **File Folders**

Each student is provided one labeled file folder at the start of the year. The folders of all students are accessible during office hours in the RTA office. Faculty and Instructors use this system to send messages, letters, and to return graded assignments.

## **Faculty Mail Boxes**

Each faculty member has a mailbox located in the RTA office. Students may leave assignments or notes in faculty mailboxes during office hours. There is also a mail slot in the RTA office door for after-hours deposits.

## **Bulletin Boards**

Bulletin boards are located inside and outside the RTA office. Different sorts of information will be posted on these boards. Please do not remove notices from the boards. If you wish to post anything on the boards, please obtain permission from the office.

Walls in RCC: *no posters are to be put anywhere on the painted or wooden walls* in the Rogers Communications Centre. If you wish to put posters on glass windows, be sure to remove them *daily*. Banners may be hung from the railing in the atrium, but only with string (never tape), and *must* be removed after the event advertised has occurred. Any violation in this practice will result in a \$10 *per poster* fine levied by the RCC to the group involved.

## **Blackboard**

Blackboard is a software program that delivers online content and tools to students and other groups on campus. It has two major components:

The Blackboard Learning System contains the courses and organizations that allow for group communication and the delivery of common materials and features:

- § communication between instructors and students (both synchronous and asynchronous)
- § the ability to post course notes for 24-hour access by students
- § the ability to conduct assessments and deliver assignments online
- § the ability to maintain an online gradebook

Blackboard is an invaluable tool! Learn how to use it by logging on today at <http://my.ryerson.ca>

# Coursework Information

## Attendance and Class Participation

### RTA Policy

Please consult your course outlines for attendance and participation expectations. Attendance in all labs is *mandatory* and will be recorded due to the nature of the pre-assigned teams and rotations. Attendance at other regularly-scheduled university classes is not mandatory. The student has the right to determine whether or not to attend classes. The onus is on the student to use all opportunities to his/her advantage in each course. If the student chooses not to use these opportunities, it is his/her right, but is also his/her responsibility to accept the consequences of not using such opportunities. In some courses you will be graded for participation. Lateness to class is not only disruptive, but may also result in participation grade loss.

Students with prolonged illnesses are advised to inform the RTA Student Affairs Coordinator of the expected length of absence so that arrangements for assistance, advisement of other instructors, etc. may be made. A medical certificate or its equivalent will be required upon the student's return.

RTA School of Media discourages use of the following during all courses: Cell phones, Ipods, IPads, newspapers and magazines.

### University Policy

#### Is attendance mandatory?

Ryerson does not have a mandatory attendance rule. Some programs and/or some courses do have attendance regulations which you will be expected to comply with. In some courses you will be graded for participation. Usually, this includes regular attendance.

## **Group Work**

In some RTA courses, you will be required to work in teams throughout the semester. This means that the amount of group work for evaluation in RTA courses might be higher than it would be in other programs at Ryerson. It may vary from none (e.g., some lecture-based courses) to over 50 percent of the course material (e.g., some labs, Practicum). Instructors may require group members to identify their individual contributions to these projects to assign grades and address misconduct. If students experience serious difficulties with group members, they should contact the course instructor.

When undertaking any group work, students must be aware that all members of the group are responsible for the academic integrity of the entire project. If the project is found to contain, or be, in full or in part, the product of academic misconduct, the entire group may be penalized.

## **Medical Documentation**

Students must inform instructors, in advance, when they will be missing an exam, test or assignment deadline for medical or serious personal reasons. When circumstances do not permit this (e.g. in an emergency), the student must inform the instructor as soon as possible to make alternate arrangements. Alternate arrangements may include setting a make-up test, transferring the weight of a missed assignment to the final examination, or extending a deadline. Alternate arrangements are based upon the severity of the circumstances and the amount of work missed. Instructors will determine if medical documentation is required for an alternate arrangement based upon the length of the medical condition and the amount and type of the work missed and affected. All faculty and staff are required to exercise discretion and adhere to the principles of confidentiality regarding any documentation received.

If an appeal based on medical grounds is requested, a Ryerson Medical Certificate, or a letter on letterhead from a physician with the student declaration portion of the Ryerson Medical Certificate attached, is essential. The Ryerson Medical Certificate and guidelines can be found at:

*<http://www.ryerson.ca/senate/forms/medical.pdf>*

## Examination Policy

RTA adheres to the University policy on examinations and tests. The full policy can be found at: <http://www.ryerson.ca/senate/policies/pol135.pdf>

Students are personally responsible for presenting themselves at the place of examinations on the scheduled day and hour. Exam and test schedules take precedence over any travel bookings.

Exam schedules take time to be developed at Ryerson and RTA. Each year, especially during the December holidays, students find they have a conflict between their pre-booked tickets and the final exam schedule. RTA abides by the University policy and expects students to write the exam at the scheduled time. The teaching staff cannot prepare several exams of equal weight to be written at times more convenient to travelling students.

## Academic Integrity

Intellectual freedom and honesty are essential to the sharing and development of knowledge. In order to demonstrate Ryerson's adherence to these fundamental values, all members of the community must exhibit integrity in their teaching, learning, research, evaluation, and personal behaviour.

For more information, visit Ryerson's Academic Integrity website at [www.ryerson.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.ryerson.ca/academicintegrity) .

## Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined by the University as "claiming the words, ideas, artistry, drawings, images or data of another person as if they were your own" (Student Code of Academic Conduct, Ryerson University, 2006, p. 2). According to the Code, plagiarism includes:

- § copying another person's work (including information found on the Internet and unpublished materials) without appropriate referencing;
- § presenting someone else's work, opinions or theories as if they are your own;
- § presenting another's substantial compositional changes to an assignment as your own;
- § working collaboratively without permission of the instructor on an assignment, and then submitting it as if it was created solely by you; or
- § Submitting the same work, for credit, in two or more courses without the prior written permission of the instructor(s). (Student Code of Academic Conduct, Ryerson University, 2006, p. 2.)

Usually one associates plagiarism with written works but it can include any work such as photographs/artwork, Internet materials, video, audio, and digital media. The University penalties for plagiarism can be severe, ranging from getting zero on the assignment up to, in cases of prior academic dishonesty, suspension or expulsion. Please note that you may be required to submit some or all of your written assignments to [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com). Students who do not want their work submitted to this plagiarism detection service must, by the end of the second week of class, consult with the instructor to make alternate arrangements.

Useful links to help you understand and avoid plagiarism:  
Ryerson's Academic Integrity web site: <http://www.ryerson.ca/academicintegrity/>  
Student Code of Academic Conduct policy:  
<http://www.ryerson.ca/senate/policies/pol60.pdf>

## **Cheating**

Cheating is defined by Ryerson University as:

- § using materials or aids not expressly allowed by the instructor in an examination or test;
- § copying another person's answer(s) to an examination or test question; copying another person's answers to individually assigned projects;
- § consulting with another person or unauthorized materials outside of an examination room during the examination period (e.g. discussing an exam or consulting materials during an emergency evacuation or when permitted to use a washroom);
- § improperly submitting an answer to a test or examination question completed, in whole or part, outside the examination room unless specifically permitted by the examination format;
- § resubmitting altered test or examination work after it has already been evaluated;
- § presenting falsified or fabricated material, including research results; or
- § improperly obtaining, through deceit, theft, bribery, collusion or otherwise, access to examination paper(s) or set of questions, or other confidential information. (Student Code of Academic Conduct, Ryerson University, 2006, p. 2)

The University penalties for cheating can be severe, ranging from getting zero on the assignment or test up to, in cases of prior academic dishonesty, suspension or expulsion.

## **RTA Equipment**

The RTA program's own facilities and the Rogers Communications Centre together create a multi-million dollar production facility for your use while you are a student at Ryerson University. As such, there are a few simple rules regarding use of our equipment.

## **Thorough Understanding of Equipment**

The prerequisite for booking any piece of equipment or facility is a thorough knowledge of its functions and use, either through appropriate course labs or through workshops. This is a fundamental pillar of the way we operate, so that our students will maximize the benefit out of their experience with the equipment, and we experience minimal problems and/or broken equipment. In short - if a student has not been trained by RTA (regardless of any industry experience the student may already have), he/she cannot book RTA's equipment.

RTA does not allow equipment bookings so students can "practice" how to use the gear. The exception to this is when a student will be doing a major project *for a senior course*. This would involve, for example, extensive recording or shooting (days at a time) for which a short refresher day on the equipment could save them from potential problems while on location.

## **Outside Projects**

All equipment (e.g., cameras, audio recorders, microphones, lights, editing suites, studios, etc.) is available for the sole use of RTA students creating productions and projects for course-related work. Students are not allowed to use RTA equipment for independent productions, freelance work or any other productions outside the purview of courses.

## **Ryerson University, as a Location**

Contrary to popular belief, students are not allowed to record or shoot everywhere on the Ryerson campus. Classes, lectures and labs require reasonable peace and quiet in the adjoining corridors. The following is a list of locations where you are permitted to shoot. When in doubt, please ask your professor if a location is permissible.

## **Normal Decorum**

These spaces require you to be reasonably quiet during shooting or recording, trim all cables properly, be aware of "class change time" (every hour, on the hour), and avoid disrupting other students at Ryerson:

- § all corridors on campus
- § outdoor open spaces (the Quad, etc.)
- § the RCC Atrium and similar open areas
- § other public areas that belong to the University

## Special Permission

Students require *special permission* to shoot or record in these locations:

- § the Ryerson Library (filming permission form required, check with them about audio)
- § the RAC (they usually don't allow any shooting at all, check with them about audio)
- § *any* classroom on campus without proper permission (classroom booking required, ask your professor)
- § *any* public street (City of Toronto street shooting permit required for video, audio recording is okay)

# RTA Copyright Policy

## Copyright Policy for the RTA School of Media

### Copyright

This paper outlines the policy of the RTA School of Media at Ryerson University concerning the copyright of works produced for classes in its jurisdiction. In summary, this policy aims to provide students with copyright in their projects, and to ensure that students are aware of their obligations under copyright laws to comply with such laws. Students should be aware that they are legally responsible where they have not so complied.

### Background

- § Students in the RTA School of Media engage in many audio, transmedia, digital media, new media, video, writing and multimedia projects in their classes and for class assignments. Students may also engage in productions outside of traditional classroom assignments while still operating as RTA students (i.e. internships, Practicum, special student assignments).
- § Canadian copyright law is governed by the Canadian Copyright Act and the courts of law. A copy of the Canadian Copyright Act is available at <http://www.pch.gc.ca>.  
<http://laws.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/>
- § Most works created within RTA are produced with the subsidized facilities of the University. RTA will not use these facilities to unfairly compete with the private sector.
- § The School of Media encourages creative and original work and respects the copyright of individuals and corporations.

### RTA Copyright Policy

Students own all copyright and related rights in their original work produced within RTA except in courses (internships, etc.) where special circumstances may warrant exceptions to this Copyright Policy. Where appropriate, these special circumstances will be outlined at the beginning of a class.

Some student projects are created by a single "author" in the copyright sense. For example, copyright in a script written in a writing class or an installation by a single

student belongs to that student. Similarly, copyright in a sound or video project completed by one student belongs to that individual student. In the case of group projects, copyright belongs jointly to all students who participated in the creation of that project. While some students may contribute more to a project than other students, RTA will presume that ownership of a final group project rests equally with the entire group unless there is a written agreement to the contrary that is signed by all members of the group. This policy refers to completed projects. RTA policy states that copyright in individual elements and "drafts" leading to the final project remain with the creators of the drafts and individual elements, e.g., scripts, music, etc. In the event that students wish to exploit their completed group projects through sales, exhibition or broadcast, etc., outside of RTA and Ryerson facilities, all members of the group must agree to this arrangement before any individual student can enter into any agreement. Such agreement should be documented in writing and no student should unreasonably withhold his or her consent.

Students may show group work privately for demonstration purposes and include it in their portfolios unless there are legal considerations arising from the material produced e.g., the stock footage obtained has clearance for in-class use only. Students are responsible for all legal, ethical and financial issues related to their projects. This responsibility includes obtaining, when necessary, and complying with, written release forms, permissions, assignments and waivers regarding copyright, trademarks and related rights and permissions for the use of any performances (including re-use arising out of any contracts, collective agreements or union rules), and any other related rights whatsoever not otherwise indicated here. Students will sign a waiver releasing RTA from any and all legal, ethical and financial responsibility arising from such things as copyright infringement, libel and slander, etc. arising out of the production and distribution of their student work. The instructor reserves the right to refuse a student permission to engage in a course project if the instructor believes that the material may infringe on the rights of others and/or believes the material may not meet the technical, moral or ethical standards of the course. However, faculty members are not responsible for ensuring that all legal rights and obligations have been complied with; this is the responsibility of each student with respect to his or her own project.

Students who own copyrights in their works are responsible for taking any necessary steps to protect those rights, including any registration of their works and any monitoring and enforcing of illegal or non-authorized uses of their works. Students grant RTA the right to screen and display their projects for educational purposes, and to submit their works to festivals, etc., so long as the appropriate student/students are given credit for their work.

# Student Conduct Code on Subject Material

With direction from the Departmental Council of RTA, this policy will apply to all work produced in the Program.

This policy is in support of the Ryerson University Student Code of Non-Academic Conduct, which states, in part:

## *C1. Offenses against Persons*

*a. Assault/Threats/Bodily Harm - You have the RIGHT to an environment that is safe and free from unwanted attention. You have the RESPONSIBILITY to refrain from:*

*i. conduct and activities likely to endanger the health or safety of yourself or another person;*

*ii. assault or the threat of assault to another person; or,*

*iii. behaviour that would cause another person to fear bodily harm, or that may endanger personal wellbeing or may obstruct the teaching and/or learning process.*

*b. Respect for Others - You have the RIGHT to an environment, which is characterized by mutual respect. You have the RESPONSIBILITY to treat all members of the University with respect [on and off campus] and to refrain from:*

*i. unwelcome or persistent behaviour (e.g. personal harassment) that you know, or ought reasonably to know, would cause another person to feel humiliated, demeaned or intimidated or which may obstruct the teaching, learning and/or work process of another person...*

## *C2. Disruption*

*You have the RIGHT to an environment that, while safeguarding dissent, is free from interference and disruption. You have the RESPONSIBILITY to refrain from behaviour which you know, or ought reasonably to know, obstructs teaching and learning, evaluation, research, administration and other usual or authorized activities of the University.*

## **Background**

- § In the past, some students have created material that forced other students to perform acts and/or shoot productions that these students found distasteful.
- § Students differ in their tolerance for certain kinds of subject matter including religious, sexual and racial parodies.
- § Courses often replicate professional production situations in which certain types of offensive subject material may be tolerated by some stations, particularly in off peak

hours. It is acknowledged that the material some stations play or produce may not be appropriate for group work in RTA.

## **RTA Policy Regarding Offensive Subject Material in Productions**

Faculty will approve the subject material and production of all student group projects. While endeavoring to ensure that students are able to exercise their personal expression whenever possible, faculty will take into account the impact of certain types of subject material on the group. Students should recognize that, on occasion, they may not agree with the script material or the direction of the project. Under no circumstances, however, will students be asked to engage in the production of material or to act in a group that is presenting offensive material. Students have the right to speak with faculty to ensure that their contribution to a production is fulfilling and free of harassment. The faculty member responsible for the course will determine whether material is appropriate for the course. When content receives faculty approval, it may not be modified significantly without consulting the faculty member.

## **Weapons in Video Productions**

Ryerson University and RTA recognize that weapons and replicas thereof can cause fear, discomfort and danger, even if not used in a threatening manner. Previous cases of police confrontations with Ryerson students working on projects involving replica weapons in public areas have demonstrated the need for a policy to address the use of real weapons and props.

The University also recognizes the need to provide safety to its community members by ensuring that any weapons and replicas on and off campus are handled in a safe manner. Moreover, it recognizes that the failure of members of the Ryerson community to abide by government legislation can result in serious criminal charges.

Students must not engage in any unsafe activity. Disruptive activities (including the use of *any* weapon, *whether it is real or simulated*) will require discussion with your faculty member and written permission from the Head of Video, as well as the head of Ryerson Security, and may require a paid police officer and emergency task force personnel on duty.

## Course Management Procedures

The following is an excerpt from the Ryerson University Course Management Policy, which can be found at <http://www.ryerson.ca/senate/policies/pol145.pdf>. RTA adheres to this policy. It is recommended that students read the entire University policy. Some of the policy's highlights are included below.

**Students will be provided with a course outline** by or at the first meeting of every course that includes, as a minimum, information on the items specified below. The information in this outline should be discussed at that first class. Outlines may be supplemented by more detailed topical or project information that is provided periodically throughout a course.

**Timely and constructive feedback** in response to student work is an essential element of the learning process. Constructive feedback refers to any type of instructor response that serves to inform, guide, encourage, and/or instruct the student with respect to relevant course work and/or related aspects of her/his learning endeavour.

**Grades on assignments, tests and exams, including final exams, may be posted** by numerically sorted student identification number, provided the first two digits of the number have been removed. Instructors must inform students in all course management documentation of the method the instructor will use to post grades. Students who do not wish to have their grades posted must inform the instructor in writing. Students will receive their final course grades solely from the Registrar. Final course grades may not be posted or disclosed anywhere by an instructor.

During the semester, **it is sometimes necessary or desirable for a faculty member to revise the plan of student evaluation** contained in the course outline. When this is the case, the faculty member will discuss the changes with the class, make such revisions as early as possible in the course, and confirm the changes both orally and in writing (i.e., handout or posting to course website). When a change only involves the extension of a deadline, a minimum of one week's notice is generally required. In the case of other changes (e.g., in the number, mix, and/or weighting of methods of evaluation) students will be given as much notice as possible, generally at least three weeks, in order to adjust their course work plans.

In the fall and winter semesters, the **last week of classes and subsequent Saturday and Sunday before the examination period are to be free of all tests and examinations.**

## Course Outlines

Course outlines will include the following information:

### Basic Information

- § Name and number of course; semester and year, prerequisites, and exclusions, if any.
- § Faculty member's name; office location and scheduled student consultation hours; office telephone number; e-mail address; faculty/course web site(s) if available. (If any of these factors are unknown when the course outline is prepared, the information will be provided in writing at the beginning of the course. Student consultation hours may be posted or disseminated by other means.)
- § Method of posting grades and, if necessary, a statement of the process by which an individual student may request that his/her grades not be posted.
- § Any instructions or limitations on student use of e-mail for faculty contact.

### Course Description

- § Calendar course description
- § A synopsis that informs students of
  - i. the course's academic focus and scope;
  - ii. course objectives and/or intended learning outcomes; and
  - iii. topics with their tentative sequence and schedule.
- § Texts and reading lists
- § A description of the teaching method(s) that will be used (e.g., lecture, laboratory, studio, cases, problem-based learning, seminar, field work, in-class debates, oral presentations, un-graded journals, or combinations of these)
- § A schedule of any field trips or required activities outside of class time.

### Other Course Issues

In addition to any general statement required by the department/school policy, each outline must include a statement about specific academic issues related to the course. These may include, but are not limited to:

- § An indication of any requirement for the submission of work to an electronic plagiarism detection service. Instructors who choose to use an electronic plagiarism detection service that retains a copy of the submitted work in its database must include either:
  - i. the following statement: "Students who do not want their work submitted to this plagiarism detection service must, by the end of the second week of class, consult with the instructor to make alternate arrangements" or

ii. the details of alternate arrangements including the deadlines for consultation with the instructor concerning the use of these arrangements. When an instructor has reason to suspect that an individual piece of work has been plagiarized, the instructor will be permitted to submit that work to any plagiarism detection service.

§ Specific details on any Information Technology requirements for courses utilizing IT in coursework, assignments or exams.

§ Specific requirements for field placements, if appropriate.

### **Variations within a Course**

In cases in which there are multiple sections of the same course with consequent variations in course delivery methods, grading and/or methods of evaluation, etc., students will be provided with at least a brief section/instructor-specific description in addition to the generic course outline.

### **Departmental/University Policies and Course Practices**

§ Information on all department/ school policies must be provided. When relevant information is available in departmental handbooks and/or websites, course outlines will mention this.

§ Students should be reminded that they are required to adhere to all relevant University policies, such as the Student Code of Academic Conduct.

### **Evaluation**

§ A list, general description, and tentative schedule of all assignments, tests, exams, and other work to be graded will be included. (More specific information on each assessment will be provided by the course instructor as early in the course as possible.)

§ The weighting of each assignment, test, and/or other unit of evaluation

§ The inclusion of 'snap tests' or other unscheduled evaluations as part of the grading scheme, if applicable

§ An indication of approximately when the first test results/term work will be returned to students

# Appeals

RTA adheres to the University policies on appeals, which can be found at the following links:

- § the Student Code of Academic Conduct  
(<http://www.ryerson.ca/senate/policies/pol60.pdf>)
- § the Student Code of Non-Academic Conduct  
(<http://www.ryerson.ca/senate/policies/pol61.pdf>)
- § the policy on Undergraduate Academic Consideration and Appeals  
(<http://www.ryerson.ca/senate/policies/pol134.pdf>).

You will also find appeals forms at <http://ryerson.ca/senate/forms/index.html#appeals>.

## Thinking About an Appeal?

It is always recommended that you discuss your situation with your professor to see if an appropriate accommodation can be made before following the formal appeals process.

## Basis for Appeals

You may appeal a grade based upon one of the following grounds:

**Course Management:** You may appeal on this ground if you feel your academic performance was hindered by the professor's failure to adhere to the course outline or to general university course management guidelines. You should bring all course management issues to the attention of the instructor.

**Medical:** If you have a medical condition that has affected your academic performance, you may request an accommodation. A Ryerson medical certificate should be presented.

**Personal Crisis:** You may appeal on this ground if you experienced uncontrollable and unforeseen personal or family circumstances that affected your performance. Please be prepared to document your claims.

**Prejudice:** If you feel that you have been treated differently from other students, or if you feel that your grade was affected by prejudice (i.e. different treatment on the basis of a prohibited ground of discrimination as outlined in Ryerson's Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Policy, e.g. sex, race, ethnic origin, disability, sexual orientation, etc.). Please first contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment Prevention

Services (POD 254A, 416-979-5349). Appeals based on this ground will automatically be referred to that office before proceeding.

Procedural Error: You may appeal on this ground if there has been an error in the application of this policy or of any other University policy.

## **Guidelines for the Submission of Appeals**

- § Consult your instructor before submitting official claims.
- § Attempt to resolve issues directly with the professor.
- § Request to see all of your graded work, including your final exam (under appropriate supervision).
- § Document all of your claims.
- § Do not violate any conditions of your probationary contract, as this may have an adverse effect on your appeal. Remember that you may not change the conditions of a probationary contract without consulting your advisor.
- § File the appropriate forms, letters and documents at each level, and retain copies of all of these. Submit all materials from previous levels as your appeal proceeds.
- § Adhere to all of the deadlines for appeals. Late and incomplete appeals will generally not be accepted.
- § While you are in the process of appealing, you may continue to attend classes. If your appeal is successful, you will not have lost any class time. If you lose an appeal, you may be dropped from classes.

## Religious Observances

It is the policy of RTA to accommodate the religious beliefs of all students. Since religious observance commitments are highly individualized, it is possible that RTA students will have religious observance commitments which preclude them from participating in required course activities. While RTA respects the religious observance obligations of its students, the school might not be able to avoid scheduling activities that conflict with such observances. RTA recognizes that there will be situations in which a student's religious observance commitments may require an absence from the campus or his/her RTA activities.

Students and faculty have the option to address observance issues informally, by speaking to the faculty involved. Students also have the option of invoking the more formal process described below. The "Student Declaration of Religious Observance" form is available at <http://www.ryerson.ca/senate/forms/reobservforminstr.pdf> and students and faculty can be provided with a comprehensive description of some observance obligations at <http://www.ryerson.ca/equity/calendar/>.

At the start of each term, students who will miss class and other academic obligations due to religious observance should determine whether to notify the university informally or through the formal process. Faculty must accept at face value the sincerity of a student's religious beliefs.

To follow the formal process, please complete the religious observance form on the website. Present a copy of the form to the RTA Student Affairs Coordinator and to your professors within the first two weeks of classes. If the required observance occurs within the first two weeks of classes or the dates are not known well in advance, please submit the form as far in advance of the required absence as possible. The form will serve as a formal application for accommodation. Consult the professor to reach an agreement on a reasonable means to address the situation. When making alternative arrangements and/or rescheduling an examination or mid-term, the professor must ensure that the academic obligation be met as expeditiously as possible before the end of the term and is conducted in a suitable environment.

Professors have until the end of the fourth week of classes to confirm an arrangement to address the student request. When a mutually agreed upon accommodation cannot be made, or when the student's request has not been addressed by the deadline, the student may bring the matter to the Chair of the School within five working days after consulting with the professor, and/or no later than the fifth week of classes. If the matter remains unresolved, the student should consult the Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Officer.

## Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

RTA supports the use of the Access Centre for Students with Disabilities (RyeAccess).

What services are available to students with disabilities? Advice and co-ordination of the provision of services and adaptations - both in academic areas and in the physical environment on campus - are provided. The Centre staff work in co-operation with departments at Ryerson to ensure that students with disabilities receive the services they need, such as:

- \$ parallel tests and exams
- \$ audio taped books
- \$ testing for learning disabilities
- \$ hardware and software related to disability
- \$ TDD/TTY
- \$ personal attendants
- \$ note taking
- \$ taped lectures
- \$ sign language interpreting
- \$ use of equipped exam/study rooms
- \$ educational assistants

Students in need of assistance are invited to consult the Access Centre's website at <http://www.ryerson.ca/accesscentre> or visit the Access Centre's office, at POD 61B. The Access Centre can be reached at 416-979-5290, TDD/TTY 416-979-5274.

## **Groups and Organizations**

RTA students have established a tradition of extracurricular activities. Below is a sample of extracurricular opportunities.

### **CURTAS**

Wanted: high energy, spirited RTA'ers who want to make the most of their years at Ryerson. Do you want to make RTA the four most memorable years of your life? Want to be involved with the Ryerson Students' Union? Want to be part of the best parties on campus? Then CURTAS is for you. The Course Union for RTA Students is comprised of representatives from all four years. Each rep has their own duties that contribute to making CURTAS benefit everyone in RTA. There is responsibility and commitment involved, but that doesn't mean we can't have fun, too!

### **Departmental Council**

Departmental Council is made up of students and faculty. It is often an unseen entity, since it concerns itself with curriculum and not social activities. The Council, in fact, tends to go unnoticed by the student body. Many decisions are made by the Council concerning curriculum changes, evaluations and awards. Elections are held in September and there is one student representative for each year of RTA. Join us and be a part of RTA's program development legacy.

### **RIOT**

RIOT (Ryerson Institute of Technology) is a 65+ year tradition of annual sketch comedy. Riot is performed, produced, written and directed by RTA students. RIOT is viewed as a professional production by all of those involved. Preparations and rehearsals begin in October and the pace picks up near show-time in February or March. Auditions and interviews for cast and crew will take place in the fall. So, look for the posters! Auditions are open to all of you in RTA, so don't hold back. Let's have a RIOT!

### **Ambassadors**

RTA Ambassadors are the face of RTA to Ryerson and the wider community. Comprised of an expert group of upper-year students, the Ambassadors are an indispensable connection between the school and prospective students, alumni and industry professionals. Ambassadors welcome industry at events, offer tours to alumni, and serve as recruitment specialists to prospective students. Applications are accepted in the spring.

## **TARAs**

For over 35 years, Ryerson has rewarded the unique and creative talents of RTA students through the TARA Awards. The student-produced Television and Radio Achievement Awards are a year-end celebration that recognizes students for their outstanding productions created during the year. All entries are judged by industry professionals and awards are presented by industry personalities. The TARA Awards give RTA students the opportunity to be a part of a professional show, to put their talent and interest into practice by getting involved technically or creatively with the production of the show. In April, we will celebrate the best Ryerson has to offer. Further details are listed at [ryersonrta.com](http://ryersonrta.com).

## RTA Survival Tips

1. Save all receipts for fees paid, courses added or dropped, and any other transactions that you may have with the University and its' many departments.
2. Ask for the name of the person responding to your inquiries on the phone. It's professional and it holds those dispensing information accountable.
3. Be mindful of deadlines for dropping courses, submitting applications and so forth. Significant dates are listed in the forward section of the Ryerson calendar. Deadlines are also available online at <http://www.ryerson.ca/currentstudents/calendars/>
4. When you drop a course, ensure that you follow all the steps to do so. If you are still registered in a course and do not attend, you will receive an FNA (failure for non-attendance) which cannot be removed from your transcript.
5. Ensure that you are registered for the courses you are required to take to complete your degree. Always check your schedule online at RAMSS.
6. Keep an eye on charges to your tuition account - it's possible that anomalies may occur, such as library fines you forgot about, and so on.

### Who Can I Ask?

Start with the staff in the RTA office. The office has experience and contacts in Registration, Records, Academic Advising, Student Fees, Admissions, Financial Aid, Timetabling, Continuing Education, University Services, Housing, Counselling, the Ryerson Student's Union, the Library, the Bookstore and many other places on campus.

Ryerson Student Services was originally established because of a concern for student health and well-being. Today this focus on students' well-being has expanded to encompass the entire student experience: successful transitions, mastering new learning strategies, participation in the university community, developing career readiness and maintaining healthy life-styles. Ryerson Student Services ([www.ryerson.ca/studentsservices](http://www.ryerson.ca/studentsservices)) includes information on the following departments, and more:

- § The Access Centre: provides student-centered services and support to students with disabilities according to the Ontario Human Rights Code to facilitate academic success and access to the University.

- § Centre for Student Development and Counselling: provides a range of individual counselling and group programs in a professional and friendly environment. Counsellors are available to work with students on a one-to-one basis in relation to a variety of personal concerns and crisis situations. As well, the counsellors provide both group sessions and individual counselling for those experiencing confusion about their educational or career goals. All services are free, confidential and delivered by highly qualified staff.
- § Health Services: a medical clinic, which provides patients with a wide range of services that you would normally expect to receive from your family physician. This includes everything from the treatment of illnesses, such as colds or the flu, to routine examinations.
- § Learning Success Centre: helps students make the transition to university learning, develop sound learning strategies, and achieve their academic potential by providing professional services in both traditional and virtual learning environments.
- § Student Financial Assistance: provides financial assistance to enhance the quality of education and lifestyle to successfully complete one's academic career.

# Ryerson University Policies

## Ryerson University Student Code of Academic Conduct

*Excerpt:* Intellectual freedom and honesty are essential to the sharing and development of knowledge. In order to demonstrate Ryerson's adherence to these fundamental values, all members of the community must exhibit integrity in their teaching, learning, research, evaluation, and personal behaviour.

The Ryerson University Code of Academic Conduct applies to the academic activities, both on and off campus, of all students enrolled in courses at the University. Ryerson students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with this policy.

The Ryerson Student Code of Academic Conduct (the Code) defines academic misconduct, the processes the University will follow when academic misconduct is suspected, and the consequences that can be imposed if students are found to be guilty of misconduct.

The University recognizes the gravity of a charge of academic misconduct and is committed to handling the disposition of such charges in a respectful, timely and thoughtful manner. The University will apply this policy in a manner that is consistent with the principles of natural justice and the rights of students to a timely and fair assessment of their academic performance...

*Full policy can be found at <http://www.ryerson.ca/senate/policies/pol60.pdf>*

## Ryerson University Student Code of Non-Academic Conduct

*Excerpt:* The Ryerson Student Code of Non-Academic Conduct ("the Code") reflects an expectation that students conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the educational objectives of the University, in accordance with generally accepted standards of behaviour, and in accordance with published University regulations and policies. At the heart of accepted standards is respect for other members of the Ryerson community. The Code in its entirety is intended to identify behaviour, which the University considers to be inappropriate, to outline the procedures the University will use to respond to such behaviour, and to indicate the possible consequences of such behaviour.

In addition to requiring the highest standards of academic integrity, Ryerson expects its students to conduct themselves appropriately in other ways (e.g. their interaction with other students, staff and faculty). The University is concerned that inappropriate student behaviour may impair its capacity to carry out effectively its educational responsibilities

and to fairly serve all students. Accordingly, the Code concerns itself with student behaviour both inside and outside of classroom settings. The Code will also be enforced if a breach of the Code has occurred off-campus, which affects the right of the members of the University community to use and enjoy the University's learning and working environments.

*Full policy can be found at <http://www.ryerson.ca/senate/policies/pol61.pdf>.*