



Master of Science in Biomedical Sciences



**Academic Year  
2023-2024**

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# Introduction

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## A Message from the President



This year's Rocky Vista University Student Handbook and Catalog is published as we celebrate many successes as an institution. This past year, Master of Physician Assistant Studies (PA) program received a 10-year accreditation from ARC-PA, their programmatic accreditor. Additionally, the Montana College of Osteopathic Medicine went from a dream to a reality. The Master of Science in Biomedical Sciences (MSBS) program continues to be the largest feeder program to RVUCOM. Rocky Vista University College of Osteopathic Medicine achieved a record number of students (287) successfully entering residency programs. Finally, we added a new masters' program, the Master of Medical Science on our Montana campus. RVU students and faculty are helping us reach our vision of "Achieving New Heights in Medical Education"

By every measure, RVU faculty and students are delivering on the promises contained in our university Mission Statement: "Rocky Vista University provides quality healthcare education while inspiring students to serve with compassion, integrity, and excellence". RVU students are leaders in national organizations, and in student outcomes: whether it is acceptance into and performance in medical school by our MSBS students, Physician Assistant National Certifying Exam pass rate and job placement by our PA students, or COMLEX pass rate and residency match success, our students are leading the way.

The administration and faculty of RVU remains dedicated to the students and student experience. We know that healthcare education is challenging and at times overwhelming and we are committed to providing the support services that students need.

At Rocky Vista University we embrace core values of integrity, collegiality, compassion, diversity, equity, excellence, inclusivity, service, and innovation. You will find these values every day during your time at RVU. That are meant to be inspirational, aspirational, and living declarations of who we are.

Please take the time to carefully review the material presented in this *RVU Student Handbook and Catalog*, as it includes information every student is expected to be familiar with, in addition to being an excellent resource.

Wishing each of you a successful year ahead.

Sincerely,

Warm regards,  
**David Forstein, DO, FACOOG**  
President and CEO  
Rocky Vista University

## A Message from the Provost



Welcome back returning students, and a warm welcome to the entering classes for this upcoming Academic Year!

As I approach a full year as Provost and Chief Academic Officer at Rocky Vista University (RVU) I am filled with a sense of gratitude. I have been fortunate to

spend most of my career in higher education affiliated with universities that have vibrant colleges of osteopathic medicine along with outstanding graduate health science programs. I bring experience and expertise that will further contribute to the RVU mission, vision, and strategic plan.

The Office of the Provost directly oversees all academic programs along with many of the offices and departments that support the colleges, programs, and student services. Please feel free to engage with me on topics related to the academic environment. I meet regularly with student groups and attend events on all three of our campuses. I hope to talk with as many of you as I can. Please also rely on each other to not only help navigate the rigorous curricula, but to maintain your health and wellness. Utilize this peer network along with the variety of offices and services that are here to support you and your education. Be proactive and seek help and guidance from the faculty and staff.

RVU's core values initially attracted my attention, and our diverse community and dynamic educational programs solidified my decision to accept the position of Provost. One of the core values of the institution is Excellence and "the commitment to exceed expectations in education." The student success outcomes in each of RVU's established programs demonstrates the quality of the faculty and staff who work together to support your education and the attainment of your long-term career goals.

Compassion and Service are additional core values of RVU. I have been fortunate to observe first-hand the work our students do in the community. Various co-curricular and extracurricular activities contribute to experiential learning and hone your innate level of empathy and compassion towards fellow human beings. Our RVU community embraces diversity and understands the importance of inclusive excellence as we treat all members of our society with respect, equity, and dignity. Our three distinct campuses and the unique communities they serve further enrich the diversity of RVU.

The RVU educational experience has many innovative features, including tracks and electives that allow customization of your education, the use of cutting-edge technology that is integrated into the classroom and laboratories, and the ability to conduct original research and scholarship alongside faculty mentors. I encourage you to fully explore and contribute to the innovative culture of RVU.

Rocky Vista University is a dynamic institution, and you are witnessing the exciting growth of the campuses. We are further investing in existing programs while starting new ones that will contribute to the interprofessional education experience. In 2023, we launched a journal

(*Articulate*) in which you will have the opportunity to submit original scholarship that will go through a peer-reviewed process.

Our *RVU Student Handbook and Catalog* is a resource to help you navigate these services and work within the structure of the institution. Please familiarize yourself with the contents and utilize it as a resource when questions arise on a policy or procedure.

Wishing each of you a successful year ahead.

With respect and sincerity,

Ed Bilsky, Ph.D.  
Provost and Chief Academic Officer  
Professor of Neuroscience and Pharmacology  
Rocky Vista University

## About

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# Mission, Vision Statement and Core Values

## Mission

Rocky Vista University provides quality healthcare education while inspiring students to serve with compassion, integrity and excellence.

## Vision Statement

Achieving New Heights in Medical Education.

## Core Values

### Collegiality

Mutual respect, collaboration, and the open exchange of ideas advance mutual goals and facilitate individual growth.

### Compassion

The willingness to be engaged with the needs of others.

### Diversity

The recognition, reflection, and representation of individual differences within a community including, but not limited to culture, race, age, ethnicity or national origin, color, sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, spiritual practices, political beliefs, mental and physical ability, socioeconomic status, individual life experiences, or other ideologies.

### **Equity**

The implementation of unbiased policies and practices to ensure everyone has access to opportunities along with needs-based distribution of resources to obtain positive outcomes so that all individuals and groups may attain their full potential and no one is deprived regardless of identity, abilities, background, or socially determined circumstances.

### **Excellence**

The commitment to exceed expectations in education.

### **Inclusivity**

The dynamic process of creating a welcoming environment that increases awareness, knowledge, and empathetic understanding to enable individuals with diverse backgrounds, abilities, insights, and experiences to interact in an open, fair, respectful, equitable, and collaborative fashion.

### **Innovation**

Delivering new and creative ways to provide healthcare education while consistently demonstrating compassion, integrity, and excellence.

### **Integrity**

The quality of living a unified life in which one's convictions are well-considered and match one's actions, demonstrating fairness, honesty, sincerity, professionalism, and a consistent commitment to our mission, vision, and values.

### **Service**

Through active service, we support one another and seek to meet the needs of the larger community.

## **University Administration**

### **David Forstein, DO, FACOOG**

President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO)  
DO, Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine

### **Edward (Ed) Bilsky, PhD**

Provost and Chief Academic Officer  
PhD, University of Arizona

### **Kat Abernathy, MSOL, GPHR, PHR, CPA**

Vice President of Human Resources  
MSOL, Colorado State University Global

### **Heather Ferrill, DO, MS, MEdL**

Vice President of Faculty Affairs and Dean of RVUCOM (Colorado and Utah)  
DO, Michigan State University College of Osteopathic Medicine  
MEdL, University of New England College of Osteopathic Medicine

### **David Irons, CPA, MBA**

Vice President of Finance and Controller  
CPA, State of Colorado  
MBA, Colorado Technical University

### **Kayla Manning, MBA**

Vice President of Marketing and Enrollment Management  
MBA, University of Florida

### **Janna L. Oakes, PhD**

Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness  
PhD, University of Denver

### **David Park, DO, FAAFP, FACOFP**

Vice President and Founding Dean of MCOM  
DO, New York Institute of Technology College of Osteopathic Medicine

### **Julie Rosenthal, MS**

Vice President of External Relations and Development  
MS, Roosevelt University

### **Jesús Treviño, PhD**

Vice President of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion  
PhD, University of California Los Angeles

## **Accreditations**

### Institutional Accreditation

#### **Rocky Vista University (RVU) is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC).**

HLC accredits degree-granting post-secondary educational institutions in the United States. HLC is as an institutional accreditor, accrediting the institution as a whole. At its meeting on May 1, 2018, the Institutional Actions Council (IAC) of the Higher Learning Commission voted to continue the accreditation of Rocky Vista University with the next comprehensive evaluation to be scheduled for 23-24. HLC is an independent corporation that was founded in 1895 as one of six regional accreditors in the United States. For further information please contact the Higher Learning Commission at 230 South LaSalle Street, Suite 7-500, Chicago, IL 60604; or (800) 621-7440.

### State Authorizations

Rocky Vista University has full authorization from the state agencies listed below to operate its campuses in Colorado, Utah, and Montana.

#### **Colorado Department of Higher Education**

1560 Broadway, Suite 1600  
Denver, CO 80202  
303-862-3001

### Montana University System

560 N. Park  
Helena, MT 59620  
406-449-9124

### Utah Department of Commerce

160 East 300 South  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84114  
801-530-6601

## Specialized Program & Center Accreditations

Specialized program accreditation agencies accredit specific academic programs within an institution of higher learning. These program accreditations ensure that individuals who successfully complete an RVU degree program are eligible to sit for relevant licensure examinations. Rocky Vista University's programs and centers hold the specialized program accreditations listed below. Completion of

### Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine



The Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine program offered at RVU's Colorado, Utah, and Montana campuses have been granted Accreditation - Continued status by the Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation (COCA) of the American Osteopathic Association (AOA). For further information please contact COCA at 142 E. Ontario St., Chicago, IL 60611; or (800) 621-1773; email: [predoc@osteopathic.org](mailto:predoc@osteopathic.org)

### Master of Physician Assistant Studies



*Accreditation Review Commission on Education  
for the Physician Assistant, Inc.*

The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, Inc. (ARC-PA) has granted **Accreditation-Continued** status to the **Rocky Vista University Physician Assistant Program** sponsored by **Rocky Vista University**. Accreditation-Continued is an accreditation status granted when a currently accredited program is in compliance with the ARC-PA Standards.

Accreditation remains in effect until the program closes or withdraws from the accreditation process or until accreditation is withdrawn for failure to comply with the Standards. The approximate date for the next validation review of the program by the ARC-PA will be **March**

**2033.** The review date is contingent upon continued compliance with the Accreditation Standards and ARC-PA policy.

The program's accreditation history can be viewed on the [ARC-PA website here](#).

### Rocky Vista University Surgical Simulation Center



RVU has the distinction of being recognized as a **Comprehensive Accredited Education Institute (AEI) by the American College of Surgeons** and is the only osteopathic medical school to receive this prestigious accreditation. This consortium of high-quality programs around the world sets the standard for excellence and innovation in simulation-based education. Our designation includes both Colorado and Utah campuses. For further information please click on the link below or contact the ACS at 633 N. Saint Clair Street, Chicago, IL 60611; or (312) 202-5000.

## University Policies

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*Note: Individual program policies may differ from University policies. Please review policies listed under the specific programs.*

## Anatomy Laboratory Expectation for Participants

Cadaveric specimens that are used in Anatomy Labs are obtained from individuals who recognized the importance of human dissection in the training of future healthcare professionals. The donor bodies must always be treated with respect. Students are expected to follow all policies in the RVU Gross Anatomy Laboratory Policies and Procedures document. Students who break confidentiality of donor identity, disrespect donors, who purposefully destroy tissues in a manner inconsistent with the dissector, or who fail to maintain their donor by using wetting solution and maintenance procedures appropriately will lose their Gross Anatomy Laboratory privileges and may be referred to the Associate/Assistant Dean of Student Affairs for review and possible disciplinary action as indicated. If allowed to continue in the curriculum, these

students may be required to complete the remainder of Gross Anatomy Laboratory coursework for the academic year using alternative but equivalent learning and assessment materials.

### Colorado Campus

Rocky Vista does not currently operate its own body donation program. Those individuals interested in donating their bodies for the medical education of young doctors can donate through the [State Anatomical Board of Colorado](#).

State Anatomical Board  
Phone: (8 am–4 pm): [303-724-2410](tel:303-724-2410)  
[Website](#)

### Montana Campus

Rocky Vista does not currently operate its own body donation program. Those individuals interested in donating their bodies for the medical education of young doctors can donate through the [State Anatomical Board of Colorado](#).

State Anatomical Board  
Phone: (8 am–4 pm): [303-724-2410](tel:303-724-2410)

### Utah Campus

Rocky Vista does not currently operate its own body donation program. Those individuals interested in donating their bodies for the medical education of young doctors on our campus can donate through the [University of Utah's Body Donor Program](#) and request that your donation is sent to our campus.

For questions about body donation through the University of Utah please call, email, or write to:

Kerry Peterson  
Body Donor Program  
520 Wakara Way, SLC, Utah 84112

Phone: (8 am–4 pm): 801-581-6728  
Phone: (after hours, weekends, & holidays): 801-581-2121  
Email: [bodydonor@lists.utah.edu](mailto:bodydonor@lists.utah.edu)

[Website](#)

## CLERY Act

Rocky Vista University shares many of the same interests and concerns as other colleges and communities, including a concern about crime. The University has been fortunate not to have experienced a significant number of crimes, but one should not be misled into thinking the campus is crime-free. There is

always the possibility of a criminal act occurring against a member of the RVU community despite the best efforts of the Safety and Security Department and the administrative staff. A truly safe campus can only be achieved through the shared responsibility of all members of the RVU community.

The University is committed to maintaining a safe environment to support a healthy, learning-centered campus. This commitment includes making necessary physical improvements that promote safety and well-being; the revision and updating of policies, procedures, and rules; and an obligation to hold accountable those who choose to commit crimes or violate rules and regulations.

Every student, faculty, staff member, and visitor has an individual responsibility to be aware of their personal safety, to properly utilize college resources, to make positive choices, and to use common sense. Crimes, violations, hate crimes, suspicious persons or activity, and safety issues should be reported upon discovery through the appropriate channels as described in this Handbook. Please take the time to familiarize yourself with the emergency procedures and the important information on the website. Updates, timely warnings, and important information regarding safety on campus will be communicated by emails, fliers, TV monitors, and other presentations.

For more information, view the [RVU Annual Security Report](#).

To obtain a copy of the Daily Crime Log, please visit the Security Office on either campus.

## Disabilities and Academic Accommodations

Rocky Vista University recognizes disability as an integral part of diversity and is committed to creating an inclusive and equitable educational environment for students with disabilities. Students are required to meet the technical standards set forth by the college/program in which they are enrolled, with or without reasonable accommodations. RVU complies with federal and state law prohibiting discrimination against any applicant or enrolled student on the basis of race, color, religion, sexual preference, age, disability, or other protected status. In accordance with its obligations under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Section 5.04 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, RVU does not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities in admission or in access to programs and activities.

Students who may qualify for accommodations include those who have received accommodations previously or who have been diagnosed with a condition impacting



one or more major life activities (such as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, learning, walking, seeing, hearing, breathing, and working). Although students with temporary illness or injury are not considered disabled by law, every reasonable effort to accommodate their needs will be exercised.

If you feel you meet these criteria or would like to discuss your eligibility for accommodations, you are encouraged to complete our registration form.

Requests for accommodations and services are evaluated on an individual, case-by-case basis and are dependent on a student's functional limitations within a given environment. Through an interactive dialog facilitated by Disability Services, all relevant factors, including the impact of the disability on the student's access to a course or a program, supporting clinical or diagnostic documentation, and the relevant learning outcomes of the given program, will be considered. Requests for accommodations that would result in an alteration of the fundamental nature or learning outcome of a course or a program are not reasonable and will not be approved.

Clinical documentation or other diagnostic information submitted to Disability Services is kept confidential and is released to a third party only with the student's written permission or as required by law. General information about a student's disability and accommodation request/s, however, may be shared with other RVU officials or, in limited circumstances, with third parties who have a legitimate educational need to know. The student's disabilities file is maintained by the RVU Disability Officer and is held separately from the student's official academic record.

Students requesting accommodations must follow the process outlined below.

## **Accommodations Request Process**

### **Step 1: Complete the Initial Accommodation Request Form**

It is the student's responsibility to initiate the process with Disability Services as soon as possible after committing to attend RVU, in order to ensure timely approval and implementation of approved accommodations. While requests may be submitted at any point throughout the year, students should consider that the interactive process, including documentation review and eligibility notification, typically requires two (2) weeks. Incomplete documentation may delay the review process.

### **Step 2: Schedule an Appointment with Disability Services**

After submitting your Initial Accommodation Request Form, you will receive an email with a link to schedule your Welcome Meeting with Disability Services.

Meetings can be held virtually for students on either campus or in-person for students on the Utah campus.

Our first priority is meeting with you. Please do not delay submitting your request due to documentation concerns. The Disability Officer will discuss acceptable types of documentation during your Welcome Meeting, if you are initially unsure what you may submit.

### **Step 3: Welcome Meeting**

The Welcome Meeting is the beginning of an interactive process in which the Disability Officer will talk with you about disability-related barriers you may be experiencing, any history of accommodations you may have, as well as possible accommodations that may be reasonable and appropriate in your situation. You will also have the opportunity to ask questions, provide information and otherwise engage with the Disability Officer to understand how accommodations work within a medical education setting and what to expect relative to next steps in the process of establishing your eligibility.

### **Step 4: Documentation Review and Notification of Eligibility Determination**

Upon receipt of the Initial Contact Form-Request for Accommodations and other supporting documentation, the student's eligibility for accommodations will be reviewed and the student will receive a Notification of Eligibility Determination. The eligibility notification will specify the accommodations for which the student has been approved, and copies will be sent to the Office of Testing and appropriate RVU officials. Once approved for accommodations, the Testing Center will send out instructions for the administration and location of exams with accommodations.

Sometimes a student may be asked to provide additional comprehensive documentation/information if previous documentation is outdated or does not include sufficient relevant information to determine the impact of the disability. Last-minute submission of documentation may result in unavoidable delays in consideration of requested services.

Please note that accommodations granted by the University are not applicable retroactively and will not affect past administrative or academic actions, or past performance evaluations and examinations.

### **Annual Accommodation Renewal Process**

Students must request to renew their accommodations at the start of each academic year. Failure to request a renewal of accommodations may delay timely

implementation. In order to verify their intent to continue using accommodations in subsequent academic years, students should complete the Accommodation Renewal Request Form prior to the first day of Fall semester instruction.

### **National Board Accommodations**

Students seeking accommodations for licensure exams (USMLE, COMLEX, and PANCE) must directly petition the National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME), the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners (NBOME), or the National Commission on the Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA).

### **ADA Accommodation Review Request**

If you have concerns about the support provided by Disability Services or related procedures, or if you believe that you have been denied reasonable accommodations as requested, we recommend initiating a conversation with the Disability Officer to discuss your concerns. If the matter remains unresolved or if you disagree with a determination reached by the Disability Officer, you may appeal the decision by submitting an Accessibility Grievance Form. This form will be reviewed by the ADA Committee, and you will be contacted within seven (7) days of submission. You will then be given an opportunity to share additional details regarding your specific situation and the reason for your appeal request.

If a student is denied accommodations by the ADA Committee, the student can appeal the decision to the Associate/ Assistant Dean of Student Affairs.

## **Diversity Statement**

Rocky Vista University is committed to creating a diverse community: one that is inclusive and responsive, and is supportive of each and all of its faculty, students, and staff. The University seeks to promote diversity in its many manifestations. These include but are not limited to race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, disability, and place of origin.

Rocky Vista University (RVU) recognizes that we live in an increasingly interconnected, globalized world, and that students benefit from learning in educational and social contexts in which there are participants from all manner of backgrounds. The goal is to encourage students to consider diverse experiences and perspectives throughout their lives. All members of the University community share a responsibility for creating, maintaining, and developing a learning environment in which difference is valued, equity is sought, and inclusiveness is practiced.

## **Diversity and Non-Discrimination Policy**

It is RVU's policy to prohibit discrimination or harassment against any person because of race, color, religion, creed, sex, pregnancy, national or ethnic origin, non-disqualifying disability, age, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, unfavorable discharge from the military, veteran status, political beliefs or affiliations. Moreover, the University complies with all federal and state nondiscrimination, equal opportunity and affirmative-action laws and regulations, among these the Civil Rights Act; the Americans with Disabilities Act; the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

RVU's policy on non-discrimination can be found in its Student Handbook, as well as in its Employee Handbook and Faculty Manual. This policy applies not only to employment opportunities, but also to admissions, enrollment, scholarships, loan programs, participation in University activities, access to, participation in and treatment in all University centers, programs and activities.

RVU makes a concerted effort to recruit from diverse backgrounds for both enrollment and employment, not only in terms of ethnicity and gender, but also in terms of life experiences.

## **Dress Code**

RVU Students must follow the following dress code requirements while on campus during business hours (typically 8am – 5 pm).

The RVU dress code reflects the dignity of the health care profession and respect for other students, faculty, administration, staff, and particularly special visitors.

The dress code reflects a general minimum standard for the campus community. Students should refer to the course syllabi and program handbooks for further specific dress requirements (e.g., labs, lectures, rotation sites). The University has the right to require specific dress for specific occasions (e.g., special guests on campus, "casual Fridays") and students will be notified of any adjustments. Questions regarding appropriate attire may be directed to the Office of Student Affairs and setting-/program-specific leadership.]

The different learning and teaching environments at RVU may require different dress styles and what is appropriate for one setting may be inappropriate for other settings. (e.g., lab, lectures, lab, recreational activity). Regardless of the setting, all clothing should be neat, clean, and respectful of others. Everyone is expected to be well-groomed and wear clean clothing, free of holes, tears, or other signs of wear beyond normal functionality. Students are allowed to dress the

full day for the learning experience that they are engaged in; for example, if they are in lab they may wear lab attire for the entire day. However, lab attire that consists of shorts, sports bra, or bare chest should be covered by appropriate outerwear or clinically-appropriate scrubs while not in lab. Students practicing OMM skills outside of lab, may be permitted to wear lab appropriate clothing while practicing.

Appropriate attire *does not* include clothing with rips, tears or frays; or any extreme style or fashion in dress, footwear, accessories, or fragrances. Inappropriate attire also includes clothing having language or images that can be construed, based on societal norms, to be offensive or contribute to a hostile learning and working environment. Hats and headwear are not permitted other than for religious or cultural purposes.

All students are permitted to wear the clothing of their choice regardless of traditional gender norm conformity. Students may dress in accordance with their gender identity and gender expression, provided that such clothing does not violate other aspects of the university dress code.

Students should be open to feedback regarding their attire from peers, faculty, and staff, as the attire of any student can impact others and the RVU community. Questions or concerns regarding dress or dress-related feedback can be brought to the Assistant/Associate Deans of Student Affairs whose decision will be final in the event of an issue. Generally, students will be expected to self-monitor their own attire. However, egregious or repeated dress violations will be considered unprofessional behavior and may result in a disciplinary sanction. Students may be asked to leave campus to change if they are inappropriately dressed depending on the specific situation and case.

When uncertain, students should default to business casual attire or professional scrubs with a white coat on top. Business casual is generally characterized as: slacks/trousers, jeans, dresses, and skirts with modest lengths; collared shirts, sweaters, and blouses; clothing that covers the chest, back, torso, stomach, and lower extremities from armpit to mid-thigh when the body is standing straight and when bending over or reaching the hands above the head; tops that have shoulder straps; bottoms that fully cover an individual's buttock. Business Casual attire is not required after 5pm, but appropriate clothing is still expected.

Cultural and religious attire is welcomed as long as it is safe and appropriate for the specific learning environment. Students must wear their RVU ID at all times unless outlined differently in course or clinical syllabus.

When on location at clinical training sites, students must adhere to the training site's dress code. Students

are required to reach out to each of their training sites one week prior to the beginning of each clerkship rotation to learn the appropriate attire.

## Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)

The HIPAA Privacy Rule (Public Law 104-191) regulates the use and disbursement of individually identifiable health information and gives individuals the right to determine and restrict access to their health information. It requires that reasonable and appropriate technical, physical, and administrative safeguards be taken with electronic, individually identifiable health information. Specifically, we must ensure the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of all electronic protected health information we create, receive, maintain, or transmit.

All students at Rocky Vista University must complete a training course over the privacy laws that apply to the Health Professions to meet requirements of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). Annual refresher training is required as well. The HIPAA training is provided online, and information to access training will be provided at orientation. A score of 80% or better on the HIPAA training course is a requirement prior to entering RVU programs.

All RVU students are required to abide by all rules, regulations, and policies of HIPAA. RVU has a zero-tolerance policy for violation of patient privacy, and failure to adhere to the mandates of HIPAA is grounds for immediate dismissal from the program.

Students are further expressly prohibited from taking photographs or video of patients without proper preceptor and patient consent. Any and all photographs or videos properly obtained are to be used for educational purposes only and shall not be distributed in any fashion, including, but not limited to, email, hard copy, or social media. The improper acquisition, use, or dissemination of any patient photos or videos is considered a significant violation of both HIPAA and program policies and may result in immediate dismissal from the program.

## Non-Discrimination Statement

It is the policy of Rocky Vista University and all of its affiliated colleges and organizations not to engage in discrimination or harassment against any person

because of race, color, religion or creed, sex, gender, gender identity and expression, pregnancy, national or ethnic origin, non-disqualifying disability, age, ancestry, marital status, parental status, genetic information, sexual orientation, veteran status, political beliefs or affiliations, and to act in conformity with all applicable federal and state laws, orders and regulations, including the Civil Rights Act; the Americans with Disabilities Act; the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. This policy on non-discrimination applies to admissions, enrollment, scholarships, loan programs, participation in University activities, employment, and access to, participation in, and treatment in all University centers, programs, and activities.

Questions, comments, or complaints regarding discrimination or harassment may be directed to the Rocky Vista University Office of Compliance and/or the Title IX Coordinator (if discrimination is based on sex/gender-identity) by calling 720-874-2481. Another option is to file a complaint through the [RVU EthicsPoint system](#).

Complaints may also be filed with the U.S. Department of Education, [Office for Civil Rights \(here\)](#) or calling their Customer Service Hotline at (800) 421-3481.

## Needlestick and Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure

Students will potentially come into contact with, or be exposed to, blood and other infectious bodily fluids, whether by direct contact or respiration. Students are also at risk for clinical-related injuries, such as accidental needlesticks. Immediate attention and care of such exposures and injuries are vital to minimize any potential infection.

Upon matriculation and each year of program enrollment thereafter, all students are required to complete online training for prevention of exposures to infectious and environmental hazards. Additionally, prior to beginning clinical experiences, students are provided a quick-reference guide detailing appropriate procedures to follow in the event of an exposure or needlestick injury. Once a student has experienced an exposure or needlestick, the student shall seek immediate treatment in accordance with current and appropriate medical standards. The student shall immediately notify his/her preceptor and fill out any and all forms required by the clinical sites. Should an exposure incident occur, the student should contact RVU's Department of Human Resources, after following hospital or clinic protocol. Should students incur any costs related to evaluation and treatment of

an exposure or needlestick injury, the student should submit all claims to the Human Resources Department for processing with Worker's Compensation.

The full policy on Needlesticks and Exposure Incidents can be found on [DynamicPolicy](#).

## OSHA - Biosafety, Universal Precautions, and Bloodborne Pathogens

All students must complete a basic training course in biosafety, as required by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). Because patient contact and/or hands-on learning is a required part of the RVU curriculum, all RVU students must complete OSHA training annually. The avenue chosen for completion of this training is the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) online program.

Instructions for registering and logging onto the CITI website, and specific instructions on which courses are required, are provided annually by the Compliance Office.

## Pregnant and Parenting Students Policy

In accordance with the Pregnant and Parenting Student Civil Rights outlined by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights (OCR), RVU must excuse a student's absence because of pregnancy or childbirth for as long as the student's physician deems the absences medically necessary. In addition, when a student returns to school, the student must be allowed to return to the same academic and extracurricular status as before the medical leave began. Students enrolled in courses, fellowship, or clinical rotation during or after pregnancy may face unique challenges regarding attendance and the ability to be absent from the site. Pregnant and parenting students who are in the midst of courses, clinical rotation or fellowship should work with the Student Affairs Disability Officer to address challenges unique to the students' situation. Students on or entering clinical rotation should also contact their Program Director (PA) or the Associate Dean of Clinical Education (COM), as schedules can be rearranged.

For the full policy and how to make requests for accommodations, please go to [DynamicPolicy](#) or contact your campus Associate/Assistant Dean of Student Affairs or the Title IX Coordinator.

## Professional Liability and Workers' Compensation Insurance

Students are covered by RVU's professional liability and workers' compensation insurance for all RVU-sponsored curricular and co-curricular activities, including rotations, shadowing, health fairs, medical mission trips, etc. Any student who is injured while on clinical rotation must notify the Associate Dean of Clinical Education for the College of Medicine or the Director of Clinical Education for the PA program and must contact **Human Resources** immediately for direction about workers' compensation. Students are not covered for non-RVU activities.

## Reservation of Power

The *RVU Student Handbook and Catalog* is a reference guide to provide students with important information about policies, procedures, requirements, and services. The Handbook is available online at [www.rvu.edu/handbook](http://www.rvu.edu/handbook). This Handbook is not intended to be a contract nor part of a contractual agreement between the University and the student. Each edition of the *RVU Student Handbook and Catalog* supersedes all previous handbooks. Failure to read the Handbook and to be familiar with the rules, policies, and procedures contained in it does not excuse the student from being required to comply with the stated provisions.

Rocky Vista University reserves the rights to amend, modify, add to, or delete information contained within the *RVU Student Handbook and Catalog* at any time without notice. Such changes may include, but are not limited to, changes in tuition and/or fees, academic requirements, curriculum, policies, and responsibilities of the student.

Please note: at times, specific program policies will be more stringent than University policies. Students are required to follow program policies first. In the event the issue can't be resolved at the program level, it will be addressed at the University level by the Provost, whose decision is final.

### Disclaimer

This Handbook may not contain all policies applicable to RVU students. If you are searching for a policy that is not found in this Handbook, please contact the Compliance Office or Student Affairs for assistance or visit [DynamicPolicy](#) for a list of policies by category.

## Sexual Misconduct and Non-Discrimination Policy

Rocky Vista University (the "University") is committed to the principles of academic and professional excellence and to fostering a positive learning and working environment for its students and employees. Accordingly, the University does not discriminate on the basis of sex in the administration of or in connection with its educational and admission policies, scholarship and loan programs, or employment practices, and it is required by Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 to not discriminate in such a manner.

It is the intent of the University to provide its employees and students with an environment free of sexual discrimination, sexual harassment, and sexual violence (collectively "sexual misconduct"), and to respond appropriately to reports of sexual misconduct. The civil and respectful treatment of one another is a foundation of our principles, and the University will not tolerate any form of sexual misconduct. Persons found responsible for sexual misconduct are subject to disciplinary measures, up to and including dismissal or termination, consistent with this Sexual Misconduct Policy and Investigation Procedures ("Policy") and any other applicable disciplinary procedures.

Compliance with this Policy is a term and condition of student enrollment and employment at the University.

Questions about this policy or Title IX can be directed to Associate Dean of Students in Montana (406) 901-2708, or to the Title IX coordinator (720) 874-2481.

RVU's Sexual Misconduct and Non-Discrimination Policy and Procedures document is a working document that invites participation and input from the entire RVU community. Revisions will be made on an ongoing basis that reflect community feedback and participation in Title IX educational and prevention activities.

### Sexual Misconduct and Non-Discrimination Reporting, Investigating, and Hearing Procedures

Any individual who believes that an employee or student of the University, including themselves, has been subjected to sexual misconduct is encouraged to immediately follow the applicable reporting and investigation procedures and may also pursue criminal, civil, and/or administrative remedies provided by federal and state law. The University encourages all individuals to report possible sexual misconduct that they suffer or observe, and requires responsible employees of the University to do so.

For a full account of the University's reporting, investigation, and hearing procedures, please review the information on the RVU website at: <https://www.rvu.edu/about/title-ix/>. Questions about this policy or Title IX can be directed to (406) 901-2708 in Montana or the Title IX Coordinator at (720) 874-2481.

## Student Complaints

It is RVU campus policy that all students at all times have the right to lodge a complaint or grievance or appeal that they deem important without fear of retaliation of any sort or any other adverse consequence as a result of doing so.

RVU provides the opportunity for students to resolve conflicts and/or related complaints using two levels, informal or formal, or both. Students may elect the avenue that serves their specific needs most appropriately, although some matters may not be available via the informal process. The recommended general strategy is to first contact the specific individuals or units most directly connected with the issue at hand unless there are good reasons for not doing so, such as issues related to alleged sexual misconduct. The Associate/Assistant Dean of Student Affairs can provide guidance on complaint protocol and potential resolution.

The **informal** resolution process is designed to resolve problems for students having difficulty with other students, staff, or campus procedures short of written complaints, investigation, and disciplinary action. This process may involve mediation or discussion with the respondent and does not involve a written, formal complaint. This process should not be used for complaints involving academic, disability, discrimination, and/or racial or sexual harassment issues.

The **formal** complaint procedure is designed to resolve problems for students who are having difficulty with other students, faculty, staff, or processes **that cannot be resolved through the informal resolution process**, or for students who choose to have an investigation and adjudication in a formal setting. This procedure entails a complaint filing through EthicsPoint online via the web at [rvu.ethicspoint.com](http://rvu.ethicspoint.com) or by calling 844-936-2729. Complaints may be filed anonymously, but remaining anonymous may impair a resolution if your identity is needed to resolve a complaint.

Details on the Student Complaints and Grievance Procedures, as well as the complaint form, are available on the website and the student portal (MyVista). Assistance is also available from the Associate/Assistant Dean of Student Affairs.

### Student Complaints to Accrediting Bodies

Students may file a complaint with the University's accrediting bodies by contacting the following agencies:

#### Higher Learning Commission (HLC)

230 S. LaSalle Street; Suite 7-500; Chicago, IL 60604  
Phone: (800) 621-7440

#### Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies

1560 Broadway, Suite 110, Denver, CO 80202  
Phone: (800) 886-7675

#### Utah Department of Commerce, Division of Consumer Protection

P.O. Box 146704, Salt Lake City, UT 84114  
Phone: (801) 530-6601

#### Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation of the American Osteopathic Association

142 East Ontario Street, Chicago, IL 60611-2864  
Phone: (312) 202-8048  
[predoc@osteopathic.org](mailto:predoc@osteopathic.org)

#### ARC-PA

3325 Paddocks Parkway, Suite 345  
Suwanee, Georgia 30024  
Phone: 770.476.1224  
Fax: 470.253.8271

#### U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/index.html>

## Student Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest

In compliance with the COCA, HLC, and ARC-PA relevant accreditation regulations, RVU is committed to ensuring the prevention of potential conflicts of interest for student academic advancement and the protection of student confidentiality in the clinical setting. Students seeking healthcare will not be placed in a position in which they could potentially be treated by any faculty or staff that have authority over their educational pursuits. Authority over a student's educational pursuits at RVU is defined by those RVU personnel who, including but not limited to, determine grades, ongoing status of academic standing, and academic advancement within the Program, College, or University, such as Deans, Program Directors, Department Directors, Course Directors or any other faculty who may have grading authority. Medical providers in any of the aforementioned roles will be precluded from providing medical care for a student unless specifically requested by the student. Neither the principal faculty of the COM, MSBS, or PA program, the PA or MSBS program directors, nor the COM or PA program medical

directors will serve as healthcare providers for students. In all cases of emergency, care is provided by another faculty member or medical personnel. Further, RVU students participating in clinical training will not be involved in the medical care of other students, unless expressed permission is individually obtained from the student patient. Patient confidentiality will be guaranteed for all RVU students in all clinical settings.

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

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords eligible students certain rights with respect to their education records. (An “eligible student” under FERPA is a student who is 18 years of age or older or who attends a postsecondary institution.) The policy in its entirety can be found on [DynamicPolicy](#).

## Title IX Policy

All RVU employees and students are trained about Title IX Sexual Misconduct Laws on an annual basis. Students and employees are made aware of, and updated on, the Federal Title IX Act and RVU’s policies throughout each year.

RVU’s Title IX Coordinator manages the University’s response to complaints of sex-based discrimination, including sexual harassment, stalking, sexual assault, relationship violence, and other forms of sexual misconduct, as well as retaliation.

If you believe you or someone you know has been the victim of sexual misconduct or are aware of sexual misconduct and would like to find out about how the University can help you, contact the Title IX Coordinator at (720) 874-2481.

You may also want to make an appointment to talk with one of RVU’s Sexual Assault Advocate and Mental Health counselors. The counselor on the Colorado campus can be reached at (720) 875-2896 and the counselor on the Utah campus can be reached at (435) 222-1270. Your conversation will remain confidential and will not be shared with the Title IX Coordinator, unless you waive your right to confidentiality.

You may seek the assistance of a trusted faculty member; if you do so, please keep in mind that all University employees (other than medical or counseling professionals) are mandatory reporters and must report all information to the Title IX Coordinator.

For direct access to the current Title IX policy, visit the website at: <https://www.rvu.edu/about/title-ix/> .

## Student Financial Services

### Tuition Refund Policy

#### Purpose & Scope

The purpose of this policy is to make clear what circumstances may warrant a tuition refund.

Tuition and applicable fees vary according to the degree program in which the student is enrolled. Please refer to the section for each individual degree program for more information.

#### Policy Statement

Students will be billed for tuition and fees approximately 30 days prior to the beginning of each semester. Tuition and fees must be paid in full by the first day of class. Late tuition payments or failure to make arrangements to pay tuition will result in the student being removed from class and/or clinical externships.

Students who withdraw (either voluntarily or involuntarily) before the first day of class of a semester for which they have already paid their tuition and fees will receive a 100% refund for that semester, with the exception of any non-refundable deposits, which will be retained by the University. Students who matriculate into the University, begin classes or externships, and withdraw (including leave of absence) within the first 30 calendar days of a semester will be refunded according to the following schedule: 1st week: 90%; 2nd week: 75%; 3rd week: 50%; 4th week: 25%; After 4th week: 0%.

There are occasions when a recommendation and decision for Dismissal or Leave of Absence from a program’s Student Assessment or Performance Committee, or from an administrative entity, may occur within the first four weeks of a semester based on professionalism, performance, or other issues that occurred in the previous semester. These students are eligible for a 100% tuition refund for the current semester.

Exceptions to this policy due to extenuating circumstances must be first approved by the Assistant or Associate Dean of Student Affairs on the student’s primary campus, via the Tuition Refund Form located on the iNet. If approved, the exception form will be forwarded to the Senior Director of Student Financial Services for review. If approved, the student’s Dean or Program Director will review. If approved, the form will be forwarded to the Provost for final review and

approval. If seeking an exception to this policy, complete the online “Tuition Refund Form” (located on the iNet), and provide a detailed explanation.

## Roles & Responsibilities

<b>VP of Finance</b>	Oversight of this policy
<b>Campus Student Affairs Deans Officers</b>	Works with the student for initial review and possible first level approval/rejection of the tuition exception request.
<b>Deans, Program Directors</b>	Receives approved forms from Student Financial Services and, review and 3rd level approval/rejection of the tuition exception form
<b>Provost</b>	Receives approved forms from the Dean or Program Director and provides, review and final approval/rejection of the tuition exception form.. The decision of the Provost is final and not appealable.

**For Iowa Residents Only:** The State of Iowa For-profit Tuition Refund Policy can be found at <https://iowacollegeaid.gov/ForProfitRefundPolicy>.

## Voter Registration

### Colorado Voter Registration

RVU is required by the Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA) to distribute voter registration forms to its students. You will find all the information you need to register to vote or make any changes to your registration information (address, name change, etc.) at the Colorado Secretary of State website.

### Montana Voter Registration

To vote in Montana, you must

- Be registered to vote as required by law
- Be 18 years or older by the next election
- Be a citizen of the United States
- Have lived in Montana for 30 days

For more info, [How to Register to Vote - Montana Secretary of State - Christi Jacobsen \(sosmt.gov\)](#)

### Utah Voter Registration

RVU is required by the Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA) to distribute voter registration forms to its

students. You will find all the information you need to register to vote or make any changes to your registration information (address, name change, etc.) at the Utah Voter Registration website.

## Enhancing Your RVU Learning Experience By Successfully Interacting Across Cultural Differences

The curriculum at RVU is intended to expose students to cross-cultural and intergroup dynamics in the successful treatment of diverse patients or work contexts with people from many backgrounds. And while it is the responsibility of the faculty (not the students) to present material related to student's preparation for delivering services in diverse settings, the diversity present in the student body can also be a great source for acquiring cross-cultural information and learning about different groups.

Learning about your fellow Rocky Vista University (RVU) students who represent different group or social identities can add significantly and positively to your healthcare education experience. RVU is no different than many other educational institutions in that students encounter people from diverse backgrounds, including (but not limited to) race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, disability, veteran-status, nationality, religion, age, citizenship, and socio-economic status. Interacting with individuals who represent different cultural/social identity groups can be educationally beneficial, yet also challenging. That is, language, culture, worldviews, perspectives, customs, and traditions can be an asset in creating diverse learning environments and forming positive intercultural relationships, but can also become barriers that prevent students from creating conflict-free and productive learning and workplace climates.

The following are suggestions for enhancing your RVU intergroup learning experience via successfully interacting across cultural differences, easing the process of interacting across student individual and group differences, and maximizing the creation of positive and welcoming learning environments:

1. Go out of your way to interact with as many students as you can, in particular with those who are different than you. RVU presents a tremendous opportunity to accomplish this goal.



These interactions and dialogues will expand your knowledge about different individuals, identity groups, cultures, and backgrounds.

2. Communication across diverse groups and individuals is a learned skill that will be helpful in your work as healthcare practitioners. Learning to effectively communicate in culturally diverse environments can be both extremely challenging and rewarding.
3. Attempt to avoid microaggressions and try to use micro-affirmations instead when communicating with individuals. Microaggressions are defined as everyday verbal or behavioral insults directed unintentionally or intentionally against people from diverse backgrounds. Examples of insensitive microaggressions are saying “That’s so gay”, or “You are so Ghetto”. These also include behaviors such as “cat calls” directed at women or mocking Native Americans using the stereotypical “War Whooping”. Micro-affirmations, on the other hand are subtle validating, uplifting positive comments or clear acknowledgements about a person’s value and success. Examples include saying “Good morning”, referring positively to the work of a person, showing genuine interest in someone’s culture, or correctly remembering and pronouncing someone’s name

Thus, when interacting:

1. Be patient with other students and ask that they be patient with you as you try to learn about each other’s backgrounds.
2. In talking to someone who comes from a different background, try to ask questions in a respectful manner and at an appropriate time. Instead of asking, “Why don’t all Latinos speak Spanish?” try “I don’t know if you can answer a question for me. I’m not assuming that you can, but I was wondering if you could educate me a little bit on one aspect of Latino culture about which I have always been curious: Why do some Latinos speak Spanish and others do not?”
3. No matter how curious you are about someone’s physical characteristics or personal appearance, such as hair texture, color of skin, jewelry, or clothing, do not touch any of those personal items or characteristics unless you are given permission.
4. Allow each other to make mistakes as you develop your cross-cultural communication skills. Grant each other “redos” and use mistakes and unintentional insensitivities as learning moments. If you make a mistake, apologize for the error and commit to learning from your mistake in order to avoid the faux pas in the future.
5. If you are the person being asked about your cultural background, be patient with the people

who are doing the asking. In many cases, the other person does not know how or what to ask and is simply trying to learn.

6. Keep your assumptions and stereotypes in check. Don’t assume. Ask questions. Often, these assumptions are based on damaging stereotypes and can inhibit people from forming trusting, effective, and authentic relationships. Practice using social justice education communication techniques, such as calling-in (i.e., respectfully correcting the person) vs calling-out (i.e., attacking and embarrassing the person), active listening, cognitive empathy (i.e., perspective-taking), non-personalizing of issues, and other techniques that support the learning process during difficult conversations.
7. It is also important to keep intersectionality in mind when interacting with fellow students. From the perspective of intersectionality, we are all both members of ingroups and outgroups, depending on which social identities are being discussed. Thus, the old maxim of “treat others the way you want to be treated” is appropriate when interacting across differences.
8. Do not rely on your fellow students as the single source of all your diversity questions and education. Take responsibility for your own education by reading, researching, and talking to experts in the field.

For additional information on or help and support in practicing the guidelines above, contact the RVU Office for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at 720-875-2825

## Student Educational Records

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### Academic Records

The Office of the Registrar maintains all documentation placed in the matriculated student’s permanent record. Educational records include but are not limited to post-matriculation admission applications, registration in attempted and completed courses, grades, name and address changes, diplomas, transcripts, and residency/licensure paperwork.

### Administrative Holds

A student who fails to meet obligations to the University may be placed on administrative hold, during which time he/she may not be allowed to register, receive a diploma, or receive a transcript. The student must settle financial accounts with the Office of Student Financial

Services and determine with the Registrar which office placed the administrative hold in order to clear the obligation with that respective office.

## Background Check and Drug Screen

Upon acceptance of an offer of placement within any program within RVU, all RVU students are required to complete a criminal background check and a drug screen as outlined in their matriculation agreement. Information regarding this process is made available upon acceptance. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in the revocation of acceptance.

Students enrolled in the DO program will be required to complete an additional background check and 10-panel drug screen before they enter their third year and again before they enter their fourth year. PA students are required to submit to a criminal background check and drug screen prior to the start of the clinical rotation year. All students may be subject to additional background checks, drug screens, and security measures per clinical site requirements. In addition, the University reserves the right to require random and for-cause drug screenings at any time during a student's enrollment.

Admitted students charged with an offense prior to matriculation must notify the Director of Admissions and individual Program Directors immediately. Currently enrolled PA students charged with an offense must notify the the Program Director and the Associate/Assistant Dean of Student Affairs. Currently enrolled COM and MSBS students charged with an offense must notify the Associate/Assistant Dean of Student Affairs.

## Course Registration

The Office of the Registrar is responsible for managing all course registrations and open periods for registration. Students will have access to view their course registrations via the MyVista Student Portal.

## Degree Audits

The Degree Audit is an advising tool to assist students in determining their individual progress toward completing degree requirements. While it might include evaluative measures and achievement milestones, it is intended to be a resource but does not serve as a transcript.

Students can obtain information regarding their general program progress and requirements toward graduation, as follows:

- Pre-Clinical Students (OMS I and OMS II): see the campus Director of Pre-Clinical Education
- Clinical Students (OMS III and OMS IV): refer to New Innovations
- MSBS and PA Students: see faculty advisor of the program

## Diplomas

Diplomas are issued to students once it has been determined the student has completed all program degree requirements and the degree has been conferred. The Office of the Registrar issues all diplomas and processes requests for replacement diplomas.

## Grades

Please refer to the specific degree program's section of this catalog for information related to final grade reporting.

## Grade Point Average (GPA)

Please refer to the specific degree program's section of this catalog for information related to GPA calculation.

## Grade Reports

Students may view final course grades by logging into the MyVista Student Portal. Final grades are posted at the end of each semester.

## Grade Change Policy

Grades submitted by faculty and/or course or program directors at the end of a course or semester are final and not subject to change by reason of revision of judgment on the part of these individuals. A new exam or additional work undertaken or completed after the grade report has been recorded or retaking the course will not pose a basis for changing a grade. Faculty members are under no obligation to accept late or additional work - except for accommodations made for pregnant and parenting students or those with disabilities (temporary or permanent) as approved by the Student Affairs Disability Officer.

The grade change process may only be used to correct a grade due to:

- Correction of an error in grading;
- Grade appeal (please see individual program policies for grade appeals processes);

- An “incomplete” previously recorded for the course;
- Remediation of a course.

Students will have five (5) business days following the posting of final course grades, exclusive of institution-recognized holidays or breaks, to appeal a grade.

Grade changes may be submitted by the appropriate faculty member to the Office of the Registrar via the Grade Change Request form, found on the iNet under the Staff/Faculty Forms section. All fields must be completed correctly and the form submitted within thirty (30) business days following the event which necessitates the grade change (error found, appeal decision, resolution of an incomplete, or completion of a remediation). Upon receipt, the Registrar will review the request, consult with the requesting faculty member for any clarifications, as needed, and confirm once the change is made.

## Health Records and Immunizations

RVU follows the latest requirements set forth by the Centers for Disease Control and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practice. Therefore, students must satisfy all requirements for immunizations at the time of admission and throughout their tenure, as compliance is required on a continuous basis.

Failure to provide all required documentation may prevent matriculation or, in the case of a matriculated student, lead to dismissal. In addition, non-compliant students will be immediately removed from clinical experience and direct patient care until compliance has been achieved. Students are responsible for the expenses of all tests and must meet the conditions listed below (note that some immunization requirements may vary by clinical sites):

- **Measles (Rubeola), Mumps, and Rubella (MMR):** Serologic proof of immunity by Surface Antibody IgG titers for Measles (Rubeola), Mumps, and Rubella. Quantitative lab report including numerical result values and numerical reference range required. Only quantitative (numerical) results accepted.
- **Hepatitis B:** Serologic proof of immunity by Surface Antibody IgG titers for Hepatitis B. Quantitative lab report including numerical result values and numerical reference range required. Only quantitative (numerical) results accepted.
- **Varicella:** Serologic proof of immunity by Surface Antibody IgG titers for Varicella. Quantitative lab report including numerical result values and numerical reference range required. Only quantitative (numerical) results accepted.

- **Tetanus Diphtheria, Pertussis (Tdap):** Tdap or TD booster required every ten years after initial Tdap on file.
- **Two Separate Tuberculosis Skin Tests (PPD/Mantoux):** Upon entry into the program you must provide one of the following options:
  - Blood Draw: T-Spot or QuantiFERON TB Gold Blood draw that is negative and within 12 months.
  - Skin Tests: TB Two-step (Two TB skin tests within 21 days of each other and no more than 12 months old).
  - If a TB skin test is positive: a chest x-ray must be completed every 2 years.  
**Annual update required.** If TB is updated prior to the past TB expiring only 1 TB is required. If the TB expires a full two-step or blood draw is required.

Additionally, in order to minimize the risk of an influenza outbreak on campus or in affiliated clinical facilities, all students are encouraged to receive the annual influenza vaccination (except when medically contraindicated) while enrolled at RVU.

Documents related to immunizations and screenings are maintained and monitored through the Office of the Registrar. For information regarding specific Health and Immunization Requirements, please visit the Office of the Registrar's webpage.

### Requests for Exemptions

Any student who requests an exemption to any immunization, screening, and titer requirement due to a medical contraindication or religious mandate must contact the University in writing immediately upon acceptance into the program or immediately upon learning of a new medical contraindication. The request for exemption must include the reason(s) for the request and any applicable supporting documentation. If the request is prior to matriculation, PA students should contact the Chair of the PA Admissions Committee and the Director of Admissions. Incoming students of the COM or MSBS Programs should contact the Director of Admissions. If the request is after matriculation, the request should be directed to the Associate/Assistant Dean of Student Affairs or individual Program Directors (MSBS or PA).

If the request for exemption is approved, the student will be permitted to matriculate; however, the student may not be able to participate in all required educational activities, and the student will be required to acknowledge that not all educational activities or clinical sites may be available to them. Clinical sites maintain their own regulations and policies regarding immunizations, screenings, and titers, as well as any potential exemptions; therefore, students are expected to comply with the clinical site requirements. If a student is unable to maintain compliance with site

requirements due to medical contraindications or religious reasons, the student is responsible for notifying both the clinical site and the program immediately.

## Student Contact Information

Students must notify the Office of the Registrar of any changes in legal name, mailing address, phone number, or emergency contact via the Critical Student Information Form (accessible via the MyVista Student Portal). Students must complete this form upon matriculation and the start of each academic term throughout their career with RVU, as part of the process to be included in the roster count for each start of the term, as well as any time information has changed.

For the protection of the student identity, the safekeeping of confidential records, and in case of emergencies, notification of change of information must be within thirty (30) days of the change. Non-compliance may result in disciplinary action.

## Student Enrollment Status Changes

For all changes in status (unless appealing the decision or otherwise directed by the Administration), the student is responsible to work with the Associate/Assistant Dean of Student Affairs to process the change and submit the Change of Status form to the Registrar's Office within five (5) business days of receipt of the letter. Failure to do so may have negative impacts on the student's financial aid, enrollment status, course registrations and/or academic transcripts.

### Leave of Absence

A Leave of Absence (LOA) is an intentional separation between the student and the University to enable the student to have the fullest opportunity to remedy whatever circumstances resulted in the leave of absence. An LOA suspends all student activities associated with the University and may be voluntary or non-voluntary directed as described below. A leave of absence may not exceed one year either cumulatively or within a single leave during the student's enrollment, unless this requirement is waived by the Dean (DO program) or Program Director (MSBS and PA programs) and Associate/Assistant Dean of Student Affairs. If the student does not return within the timeframe approved, he/she will automatically be considered to have voluntarily withdrawn. The specific timeframe of the leave of absence is dependent on the

ability of the student to return to classes within the curricular framework and to complete the required course work in the time and sequence dictated by the faculty and the curriculum.

Any student who is granted or placed on a leave of absence is responsible for his/her own financial obligations. Therefore, all students taking a leave of absence are required to contact the Office of Student Financial Services to determine their status, as they may not meet the federal requirements for a leave of absence for Title IV financial aid.

Students going on leave will be directed to return at a specific starting point but may not be allowed to return in the middle of a course or semester. While on a leave of absence, students are not eligible to make up incomplete class work, remediate any examinations, or take any portion of any licensing or certification examinations without express permission from the Dean (DO program) or Program Director (MSBS and PA programs) and Associate/Assistant Dean of Student Affairs.

Students on a leave of absence are not allowed to come to campus (unless for specific business related to their return) or participate in university-related activities and course work, such as research, student organizations, or university events. However, some resources can be accessed on a limited basis, including use of Media Site, the MyVista platform, online library services, student RVU email, and student RVU health insurance (provided the insurance was already paid-in-full). Full use of RVU mental health and wellness services will be available for students on LOA for up to six weeks past the student's change-of-status date.

### Voluntary Leave of Absence

A voluntary leave of absence is one that is requested by a student to withdraw temporarily from classes for personal, financial, or medical reasons. The request for voluntary leave of absence must be submitted in writing to the Associate/Assistant Dean of Student Affairs. If approved and if the student is in good academic standing, the student may be allowed to re-enter the program at the end of the leave without any need for reapplication, remediation, or reevaluation; however, the student may be required to meet specific requirements in order to be allowed to return.

If a student is granted a leave of absence while current coursework is still in progress, he/she will discontinue further course work. In all such cases, an appropriate designation for each course in progress will be entered on the transcript. In the case of a withdrawal from a course, students will be required to meet the course requirements in entirety before being permitted to progress into the next academic year.

If a leave of absence is granted while the student is not in good standing, is under review for a disciplinary action, or has a disciplinary action imposed on them, then the student may not be reinstated to the University without a review by the program's student performance and/or progression committee. Upon completion of its review, the respective committee shall make a recommendation to the Dean or Program Director. If the student is denied reinstatement, their status will be changed to a withdrawal. If the student is granted reinstatement, special disciplinary action requirements may be imposed as a condition of their reinstatement, where appropriate.

Students granted a leave of absence for a medical reason must have a licensed physician certify in writing that their physical and/or mental health is sufficient to permit them to continue in their education. The physician providing the certification must either be designated by or approved by the Associate/Assistant Dean of Student Affairs or by the appropriate Program Director (MSBS or PA) for the certification to be accepted.

### **Non-Voluntary Leave of Absence**

A non-voluntary leave of absence is a mandatory, involuntary leave of absence imposed by the Dean (DO program) or Program Director (MSBS and PA programs) or Associate/Assistant Dean of Student Affairs that is related to academic matters. Please refer to the Academic Policies section of the corresponding program for further information.

A non-academic, non-voluntary LOA is a mandatory, involuntary leave of absence imposed by the Dean (DO program) or Program Director (MSBS and PA programs) or Associate Dean of Student Affairs that is unrelated to academic matters. During the leave, the Dean (DO program) or Program Director (MSBS and PA programs) and Associate Dean of Student Affairs will provide the student with the opportunity to rectify or seek rehabilitation/treatment for the problem that precipitated the directed leave.

To be reinstated after a non-academic, non-voluntary leave of absence, the student must be able to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Dean (DO program) or Program Director (MSBS and PA programs) and Associate Dean of Student Affairs that the pre-established requirements have been met and that he/she shows a reasonable likelihood that previous problems will not recur.

### **Sabbatical**

A sabbatical is a one-year leave of absence to allow RVUCOM students to pursue extended full-time training or studies at another institution that will lead toward an additional certificate, degree, or scholarly publication. Students are not required to pay tuition or attend

courses through RVUCOM during a sabbatical. Participating in this special program will delay graduation from RVUCOM by one year.

### **Withdrawal**

An involuntary withdrawal/dismissal is a University-initiated process that can occur for both academic (such as multiple course failures) and non-academic reasons (unprofessional conduct, violation of University policies, and/or violation of the Student Code of Conduct). In addition, students who fail to complete any academically related activity for ten (10) consecutive days without notifying the Associate/Assistant Dean of Student Affairs shall be considered withdrawn.

A voluntary withdrawal is a student-initiated resignation under which he/she surrenders all rights and privileges as a student of the University. Students must notify the Associate/Assistant Dean of Student Affairs of their request for a voluntary withdrawal verbally or in writing. To return to the University, students must initiate a new application through the Office of Admissions.

Students who voluntarily withdraw from the University are required to meet with or verbally notify their Dean or Program Director, the Associate/Assistant Dean of Student Affairs, and the Office of Student Financial Services.

### **Dismissal Policy and Right to Appeal**

Dismissal is the permanent termination (involuntary withdrawal) of a student's academic enrollment. The Program Director, Associate/Assistant Deans of Student Affairs, and/or the Dean are responsible for imposing this action. A student who chooses to appeal a dismissal must do so in writing to the Provost within five (5) business days of the date of dismissal. While appealing a dismissal, a student may continue to attend classes and take all examinations pending the results of the appeal. The reasons for which a student may be dismissed from the University include but are not limited to the following:

- Circumstances of an illegal, behavioral, ethical, or academic nature that warrant such action;
- Failure to meet the Academic Standards; and/or
- Determination of factors that would interfere with or prevent the student from practicing and meeting the professional and ethical standards expected of a healthcare professional.

### **Readmission**

If a student is dismissed or withdraws from any program within RVU, they may apply for readmission through each program's individual admissions process. In order to be considered for readmission, the student must provide adequate evidence that the conditions or factors that caused the prior dismissal or withdrawal

have changed significantly, so that there is a reasonable expectation that the student can perform satisfactorily if readmitted. If the student is readmitted, their prior academic record will remain part of their overall academic record and will be recorded on the permanent transcript.

## **Transcripts - Official and Unofficial**

Official transcripts are housed in the Office of the Registrar, and students may request a copy of their official transcript at any time, free of charge. Official transcripts issued directly to the student will bear the marking Issued to Student at the top of each page. Any outstanding obligations to the University (financial, academic, etc.) must be satisfied prior to the release of official transcripts.

RVUCOM fully complies with the AAMC guidelines for medical school transcripts. This includes an unabridged academic history of the student's enrollment.

Unofficial transcripts are not printed on security paper and are labeled Unofficial. Students can access unofficial transcripts via the MyVista Student Portal at any time during the student's enrollment.

## **Transfer of Credit**

Each degree program has specific requirements for the transfer of credit between another educational institution and the University. Please refer to the section on individual degree programs for more information.

## **Verification of Enrollment**

Students may request verification of their enrollment at Rocky Vista University at any time by writing to the Registrar via the MyVista Student Portal.

# General Information

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## A Message from the Program Director

Welcome to Rocky Vista University's Master of Science in Biomedical Sciences program. I am pleased that you have chosen to pursue your next academic and professional steps with us. At RVU, the success and well-being of our students, faculty, and staff has always been a top priority. The following pages describe our curriculum and the policies that will guide you on your path to receiving your MSBS degree.

The curriculum we have designed will give you a broad and deep exposure to scientific principles and precepts.

It will require you to think critically about how science is applied in the real world. It will make you reflect deeply about how science affects real people's lives. This includes learning about diversity, equity, and inclusion and preparing you for successfully working in diverse workplace settings with people from many backgrounds. Our dedicated, highly educated, award-winning faculty will challenge your ideas, inspire your curiosity, and develop your drive to enhance your learning.

All of these aspects culminate in an MSBS program that will enrich your academic background and improve the strength of your application to your future career, doctoral, or other professional program of your choice.

We are committed to your education and aim to set a positive example for you, the student, by conducting ourselves with the utmost level of professionalism, compassion, and integrity. And we will expect you to do the same, as these are the most respected characteristics of healthcare professionals, researchers, and people.

The path toward success is not always an easy one; however, those with dedication see obstacles as challenges and opportunities rather than hindrances and difficulties. I applaud you for embarking on this educational journey and joining the legacy of talented students who have come before you. I look forward to seeing what you will accomplish as part of RVU's next MSBS class.

Sincerely,  
Francina D. Towne, PhD  
Program Director of Master of Science in Biomedical Sciences  
Rocky Vista University

# Mission Statement and Vision Statement

## Mission Statement

The Rocky Vista University Master of Science in Biomedical Sciences program will provide an opportunity for students with diverse backgrounds and life experience to strengthen their educational foundation in the biomedical sciences, cultivate critical thinking skills, and prepare for careers in the health sciences.

## Vision Statement

The RVU MSBS program is a pivotal part of RVU's growth, and it contributes to RVU's mission and vision as a major health sciences center comprised of a diverse student population, serving the Rocky Mountain West region.

The RVU MSBS program offers resources for students to achieve personal and academic success, including a) interaction with quality educators and researchers; b) a rigorous curriculum consisting of the application of active learning by faculty and students; and c) the requirement of individual responsibility.

The RVU MSBS program promotes life-long learning and competency in its students via its emphasis on the development of educational skills and critical thinking, and through the encouragement of scientific inquiry.

The RVU MSBS program curriculum and learning environment integrates a strong foundation of biomedical knowledge with the professional, cultural, and ethical traits desired in its students and graduates.

# Academic Calendar

MSBS Orientation: August 9-11, 2023

## Fall 2023 Semester

August 14, 2023 - December 15, 2023

- Labor Day (no classes): September 4, 2023
- Thanksgiving Break (no classes): November 20-24, 2023
- Winter Break (no classes): December 18, 2023 - January 8, 2024

\*All dates are subject to change.

## Spring 2024 Semester

January 8, 2024 - May 10, 2024

- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (no classes): January 15, 2024
- President's Day (no classes): February 19, 2024
- Spring Break (no classes): March 11-15, 2024

- Commencement Ceremony: TBD

## Program Administration

### Francina Towne, PhD

Director of MSBS Program

Associate Professor of Immunology

- PhD, University of Colorado Denver
- BS, University of Arizona

### Elizabeth Moffett George, PhD

Assistant Program Director of MSBS Program - Colorado

Associate Professor of Anatomy

- PhD, University of Missouri
- BA, Louisiana State University

### Joel Roberts, MD

Assistant Program Director of MSBS Program - Colorado

Associate Professor of Physiology

- MD, University of Colorado
- BS, Azusa Pacific University

### Janée Terwoord, PhD

Assistant Program Director of MSBS Program - Utah

Assistant Professor of Physiology

- PhD, Colorado State University
- MS, The University of Texas at Austin
- BS, Northern Arizona University

## Introduction

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### Introduction

The MSBS is a 9-month (31 semester hours) degree program with a Colorado and a Utah cohort designed to prepare students to enter professional education and/or advanced degree programs in the biomedical disciplines. The MSBS program aims to enhance the student's academic record and competitiveness of their candidacy for a professional or graduate degree. The MSBS program in Colorado and Utah is distinct from the MMS program in Montana; please see the MMS handbook for questions about that program.

#### **Graduates of the Master of Science in Biomedical Sciences Program will:**

1. Apply biomedical principles to health-related disciplines

2. Solve problems utilizing evidence-based concepts
3. Communicate effectively
4. Cultivate compassion
5. Embody the core virtues of the Master of Science in Biomedical Sciences program

The MSBS program incorporates individualized mentoring that supports acceptance into doctoral or other health-related professional training programs along with academic advising geared toward a successful transition to other graduate degree programs or careers in the biomedical sciences.

Graduates of the MSBS program will possess a strong foundation and interdisciplinary academic training in biomedical sciences with a specific focus on applying these sciences to health professions. The curriculum is designed to enhance the likelihood of academic success in various graduate or professional school curricula. The primary goal of the RVU program is for students to matriculate into a graduate professional health or biomedical sciences degree program, and support is offered to students who decide to pursue other career tracks.

### Accreditation

The MSBS program has regional accreditation from Higher Learning Commission (HLC), a commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools:

#### **Higher Learning Commission**

230 S. LaSalle Street; Suite 7-500; Chicago, IL 60604  
Phone: (800) 621-7440

## Admissions

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### Requirements for Admission

To be considered for admission to the Master of Science in Biomedical Sciences (MSBS) program, you must meet the following minimum requirements:

- An earned bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college or university;
- Completion of all prerequisite coursework (see below) with a grade of 'C' or better
- A cumulative and science GPA of 2.6 or higher (on a 4.0 scale)
- Official standardized test scores: MCAT, GRE, PCAT, or DAT (other standardized exams may be considered on a case-by-case basis)
- Completed application via PostBacCAS\*\*



- Resume including all relevant volunteer and paid work experience, along with service and leadership activities
- Two letters of recommendation, including one from a healthcare professional and another from a pre-health advisor or committee who can attest to the candidate's suitability to attend a graduate program in the biomedical sciences. If a letter from a pre-health advisor or committee is unavailable, the candidate may substitute a letter from a basic science faculty member.

**International students:** RVUCOM may consider international applicants. Demonstrated English language proficiency is required; preference will be given to applicants who have previously attended a regionally-accredited college or university in the US.

**\*\*Prerequisites include:**

- Biology with lab: 8 semester hours
- General chemistry with lab: 8 semester hours
- Organic chemistry with lab: 8 semester hours
- Physics with lab: 8 semester hours
- English composition or Literature: 6 semester hours
- Social or behavioral sciences: 6 semester hours

Note: MSBS graduated accepted to RVUCOM will be exempt from the COM's biochemistry requirement.

**\*\*All prospective applicants must apply through PostBacCAS.**

## Transfer Policy

The MSBS program does not accept transfer credits from other programs. In addition, courses completed in the MSBS program will not transfer to other programs at RVU.

## MSBS Student Policies Regarding Application and Admission to RVU Programs

*(Applicable to the 2023-2024 academic year and subject to change for subsequent matriculating years.)*

### College of Osteopathic Medicine

MSBS students interested in applying to RVUCOM (Colorado or Utah location) will be evaluated by the MSBS faculty at the conclusion of each semester. A recommendation to the COM Admissions Committee will be made regarding the student's academic aptitude

for success in the COM and suitability to advance the mission and vision of RVUCOM. MSBS students recommended by the faculty of the MSBS Program will be evaluated by the RVUCOM Admissions Committee, which will make a recommendation to the Dean who will make the final decision regarding acceptance. Matriculation to the COM is contingent upon successful completion of the MSBS Program and all graduation requirements. RVU does not guarantee acceptance into any of its programs and will consider as many or as few MSBS students for admission as it deems appropriate.

Students recommended to the COM by the MSBS Program faculty will be required to submit an AACOMAS application prior to recommendation and will submit MSBS grades once the fall grades are posted. Candidates interested in RVUCOM's program should start their AACOMAS application as soon as possible and submit, at the latest, by the fall Thanksgiving break. Recommended students may not be required to submit a supplemental application or interview for the RVUCOM. RVUCOM minimum GPA requirements and exam scores may be waived for students recommended by the program. Students considering programs outside RVU are encouraged to become familiar with the admissions standards of those programs to ensure requirements are met.

Students interested in applying to the RVUCOM (Colorado and/or Southern Utah location) will be given the opportunity to designate their preferences via the application.

## Student Financial Services

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### Financial Aid

The Office of Student Financial Services is available to assist students with finding the financial resources needed to achieve their educational goals. While the primary responsibility for meeting educational costs rests with the student, the Office of Student Financial Services can help students bridge the gap between the cost of their education and their own financial resources.

The Office of Student Financial Services at RVU is committed to the highest standards of professional conduct. Their goal is to provide information and advice, determined solely by the best interests of our students. A copy of the Financial Aid Code of Conduct can be found on the RVU website.

Current students finance their educational costs with a combination of federal and private loans, scholarships,

and their own resources. The financial ability of applicants to complete their education at the University is important because of the limited number of seats available in each class. Applicants should have specific plans for financing each year of education, which include tuition; fees; living expenses; books; equipment; clinical clerkship travel; expenses related to taking COMLEX, or other professional examinations; and miscellaneous expenses.

## Types of Aid Available

RVU students may apply for Title IV federal loans, private loans, or scholarships.

Federal loans available to graduate medical students include the Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loan and the Direct Grad/PLUS Loan. Both of these loans have fixed interest rates and loan origination fees. The Grad/PLUS loan also requires that students have no adverse credit history. For more detailed information about federal loans, including the current interest rates, loan fees, and repayment terms, visit the Federal Student Aid website or contact the Office of Student Financial Services.

Private educational loans are also available to students. Private loans may have fixed or variable interest rates and may charge loan origination fees. All will require a credit check and many may request a cosigner to get a lower interest rate. Students will normally apply for a private loan online at the lender's site. Most private loans will require the school to certify your student status and will send loan funds directly to the school to be applied toward your tuition and fee costs. Private loan applicants should understand that they may qualify for federal Title IV loans, which may have more favorable terms than the provisions of a private educational loan. Students are strongly encouraged to review the interest rates, fees, loan terms, and repayment options described in the promissory note before making a decision to select a private loan.

Students receiving loans for the first time must complete loan entrance counseling and a Master Promissory Note before any funds will be disbursed. In addition, all first-year borrowers are required to complete internal loan counseling during their first year. Furthermore, there is a second-year loan counseling requirement for all students prior to entering their third year and residency. Enrolled students are encouraged to meet annually with a financial aid counselor to discuss their cumulative debt and repayment options. All students who have received any type of educational loan must participate in loan exit counseling during their last semester as a requirement for graduation.

The University participates in several scholarships for incoming students, including the Military Health Profession Scholarship Program (HPSP), GI Bill® Benefits, National Health Services Corp, and the

Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) scholarships. Each scholarship is described on the RVU website. Other federal, state, and local loan forgiveness and scholarship programs may be available for qualified students.

**Prior Credit Policy for GI Bill® Recipients:** In accordance with Title 38 USC 3675, all GI Bill® recipients or eligible dependents who use GI Bill® Benefits for this training are required to bring in documentation of all previous training credit and education. GI Bill® recipients are required to submit all prior training transcripts, including military transcripts, to the institution for review. This institution will review all prior credit, and maintain a record of such training in the students VA file. VA students' records must be kept for 3 years following the ending date of the last period certified to VA. Referenced law: Title 38 CFR 21.4209(f))

RVU and the RVU Alumni Association also award scholarships to each incoming class. Descriptions of the scholarship criteria and applications are posted annually, during the spring prior to matriculation, on the University website. Scholarship applicants must complete a separate application and supply all required supporting documentation for individual scholarships by the deadline. Award recipients will be announced in July. Please see the RVU website or contact the Office of Student Financial Services for more information.

## VA Pending Payment Policy:

"In accordance with section 103, Public Law 115-407, Rocky Vista University will not penalize or limit the participation of students covered under the Chapter 33 Post-9/11 GI Bill® or Chapter 31 Veteran Readiness & Employment (VR&E) while awaiting the payment of tuition and fees by the US Department of Veterans Affairs. The University will not drop covered students for non-payment.

1. To be a covered individual, RVU will require students to self-identify and provide the following documentation:
  1. Certification of Eligibility; or
  2. VA Form 28-1905; and
  3. Request for Extension of Tuition and Fees Deadline Form.
2. If a student fails to send, at a minimum their Certificate of Eligibility, they will not be certified for VA Educational Benefits and will be subject to the standard charges associated with the program they are attending.

*GI Bill® is a registered trademark of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). More information about education benefits offered by VA is available at the official U.S. government Web site at <https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill>.*

## How to Apply for Financial Aid

Students who wish to apply for a loan must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) each year. Students should complete the online FAFSA and use the RVU school code 042189. RVU students are strongly encouraged to complete their FAFSA prior to April 1st.

The Office of Student Financial Services will determine the financial aid eligibility for each student annually. RVU will receive FAFSA information directly from the Department of Education. In some cases, additional documentation may be required, based upon edits in the FAFSA system or information in the National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS). We may also request other information from students in order to ensure we award financial aid in compliance with federal rules and regulations.

The maximum amount of financial aid any student may receive is the Cost of Attendance (COA). The COA is an estimate of the cost of attending RVU and maintaining a modest but adequate standard living. The COA varies by year in school and is updated annually. Students are strongly encouraged to complete a personal budget and to only borrow the minimum amount needed to cover their actual costs. Many RVU students are able to live on less than the COA by budgeting carefully and reducing their expenses for room, board, personal, and transportation costs. The COA is posted on the RVU website and the MyVista Student Portal.

Students may request an adjustment to their COA for required dependent-care expenses or the cost of an approved study abroad clerkship, as long as the student will receive credit for the course. Please contact the Office of Student Financial Services for more information.

The Office of Student Financial Services will communicate financial aid information and awards to individual students by electronic means. Any student who wishes to receive paper copies of award letters or other financial aid correspondence may opt out of electronic communications by providing a written request to the Office of Student Financial Services.

Students should be aware that RVU will submit loan information to the NSLDS and this information will be available to guaranty agencies, lenders, and schools who are authorized users of the data system.

## How Aid is Disbursed

Most financial aid awards are equally split between the fall and spring semesters. Financial aid funds are usually sent to RVU near the beginning of each term and will be applied to the student's account. Institutional charges such as tuition, fees, and health insurance will

be paid first. If a credit balance remains after payment of the outstanding balance, a refund will be issued to the student within fourteen days of the creation of the credit balance. Refunds are normally disbursed through the RVU e-Refund process and are direct deposited into the student's personal bank account.

## Return of Title IV Policy

This policy shall apply to all students enrolled at Rocky Vista University (RVU) who are eligible to receive financial aid from Title IV funds and who totally withdraw, are dismissed, take an approved leave of absence, drop out or stop attending all classes in the semester.

Students who stop attending class (for any of the reasons listed above) before completing more than 60% of a semester will have their Title IV aid recalculated based on the percent of the term they completed. For example, a student who withdraws completing only 20% of the term will have "earned" only 20% of any Title IV aid that was disbursed or could have been disbursed. The remaining 80% must be returned. If the student withdraws after completing 60% of the semester the student would earn 100% of the Title IV aid. In determining the percentage of the semester completed for a student who withdraws, the school includes in the denominator the total number of calendar days in the semester excluding any scheduled breaks of at least five consecutive days. The school includes in the numerator the total number of days up to the date of withdrawal excluding any scheduled breaks of at least five consecutive days.

If the amount of Title IV aid disbursed to the student is less than the amount the student earned, and for which the student is otherwise eligible, the student may be eligible to receive a Post-Withdrawal Disbursement of the earned aid that was not received. If the unearned amount includes loans, the school must obtain permission from the student before making a Post-withdrawal disbursement. The student will have 14 days from the date of the notice to accept or decline some or all of the loan amount.

If the amount of Title IV aid disbursed to the student exceeds the amount of loan the student earned, the school must return a portion of the excess equal to the lesser of:

- The institutional charges multiplied by the unearned percentage of the Title IV aid; or
- The entire amount of excess Title IV aid.

If the school is not required to return all of the excess Title IV funds, the student must return the remaining amount. In the case of loans, the student must return

the loan amount in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Master Promissory Note. Unearned Title IV funds shall be returned in the following order:

1. Direct Unsubsidized Loan
2. Direct Grad-Plus Loan

“Title IV Funds” refers to the Federal financial aid programs authorized under the Higher Education Act of 1965 (as amended) and includes: Direct Unsubsidized Loans and Direct Grad-Plus Loans.

A student is not considered withdrawn for R2T4 purposes only, if:

- The institution obtains written confirmation that the student will attend a later module in the same payment period of period of enrollment;
- The student completes the requirements for graduation;
- [The student successfully completes one or more modules that, together, comprise at least 49% of the days in the payment period;](#) or
- The student successfully completes coursework equal to or greater than the coursework required for half-time enrollment.

When there is an official withdraw, a student’s withdrawal date is:

- The date the student began the institution’s withdrawal process or officially notified the institution of intent to withdraw; or
- The official date of an approved leave of absence, withdrawal or dismissal from the University as documented by Student Services.

When there is an unofficial withdraw, a student’s withdrawal date is:

- The last documented date of an academically related activity recorded by the college or, if no date is available, the midpoint of the student’s term of enrollment.

Any student intending to officially withdraw or requesting an academic leave of absence must notify the Associate Dean of Student Services either orally or in writing. All requests for an academic leave of absence will be approved or denied by the Dean or Provost. Link to RVU’s academic leave of absence policy: <https://www.rvu.edu/handbook/>. RVU does not have a financial aid leave of absence, students placed on an academic leave of absence will be withdrawn for the purpose of Title IV.

Refunds on all institutional charges (tuition and fees) will be calculated according to the RVU refund schedule. Please refer to RVU’s Tuition Refund Policy for more information.

When a student has withdrawn, any credit balance refund must be put on hold until R2T4 is calculated. Title IV credit balances will be refunded within 14 days of the date the R2T4 calculation is completed.

Students are responsible for any portion of institutional charges that are outstanding after Title IV funds are returned.

Deadlines:

- Within 45 days from the date RVU determined that the student withdrew, the college will return unearned funds.
- Within 30 days from the date RVU determined that the student withdrew, the college will offer a post withdrawal disbursement, if applicable. Students will have 14 days from the date of the notice to respond.

## Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards for Financial Aid Eligibility

Federal regulations require that Rocky Vista University (RVU) establish, publish and apply standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) which students enrolled in the MSBS program must meet. This document represents the satisfactory academic progress policy standards adopted by RVU for financial aid eligibility. This policy applies to all MSBS students including those applying for or currently receiving Federal, State, or institutional financial assistance.

Academic progress requires both quantitative and qualitative measurement. Academic records will be reviewed at the end of each term to determine if the student is making satisfactory progress towards their degree.

### **Time Frame for Completion (Quantitative Measures of Academic Progress):**

**Maximum Timeframe:** Students must complete their degree within a maximum number of attempted credits not to exceed 150% of the published program length. If at any point in time it is determined that a student cannot complete their program of study within 150% of the program length, the student will become ineligible for aid and will need to submit an appeal.

**Pace of Progression:** Students must complete at least 67% of their total attempted credit hours. To calculate the pace at which a student is progressing, divide the total number of hours the student has successfully completed by the total number they have attempted.

### **Grade Point Average (Qualitative Measures of Academic Progress):**

Students must maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0.

**Leaves of Absence:** Periods of approved Leaves of Absence will not count toward the maximum time frame. A student may not receive financial assistance during a Leave of Absence.

**Repeated Coursework:** Once passed a course may not be repeated unless recommended by the Program Director. The original grade received in a course will not count toward the student's GPA but will be included in the quantitative assessment. Students who repeat coursework must still complete their degree within the maximum timeframe.

**Withdrawal/Incomplete/In Progress:** Courses in which a student earned a grade of Incomplete (IN), Work In Progress (WIP), In Progress (IP) Withdrawal (W), or the equivalent, will count toward hours attempted but not earned for maximum timeframe and pace of progression but will not be included in the qualitative measure.

**Grade Changes:** Once an official grade is received for an Incomplete (IN), Work In Progress (WIP), or In Progress (IP) course, the student should notify the Office of Student Financial Services so SAP status can be reevaluated.

**Noncredit Remedial Courses:** RVU does not offer noncredit remedial courses.

**Transfer Students:** The MSBS program does not accept transfer credits from other programs.

**Summer Terms:** The MSBS program does not offer summer terms, therefore, it will not be included in the SAP assessment.

**Change in Program or Pursuit of a Second Degree:** If a student changes program of study or chooses to pursue a second degree, credits and grades that do not count toward the new program will not be included in the SAP determination.

### **Financial Aid Warning:**

Rocky Vista University will use the standardized definition of Financial Aid Warning which is defined by the U.S. Department of Education as follows:

*Financial Aid Warning is a "status a school assigns to a student who is failing to make satisfactory academic progress. The school reinstates eligibility for aid for one payment period and may do so without a student appeal."*

### **Financial Aid Probation:**

Rocky Vista University will use the standardized definition of Financial Aid Probation which is defined by the U.S. Department of Education as follows:

*Financial Aid Probation is a "status a school assigns to a student who is failing to make satisfactory academic progress and who successfully appeals. Eligibility for aid may be reinstated for one payment period."*

Note that the University may have a different definition of "academic probation or warning." Refer to the Student Handbook and Catalog for more information on academic probation.

### **Procedure:**

The Office of Student Financial Services will review the academic progress (qualitative and quantitative) of each financial aid recipient at the end of each term, prior to the disbursement of financial aid for the subsequent term. A student's entire academic record will be reviewed, which will include any periods of enrollment that the student did not receive financial aid assistance. SAP review is not complete until both the qualitative and quantitative measures have been reviewed.

Any student who fails to maintain satisfactory academic progress as defined by this policy will be placed on Financial Aid Warning for one term. During that term, the student will continue to be eligible for aid. At the end of a term during which a student is on Financial Aid Warning, if the student still fails to meet any of the requirements, the student will become ineligible for aid and may submit an appeal to the Office of Student Financial Services. The Office of Student Financial Services will send a written notice to students who have not made satisfactory academic progress.

### **Reestablishing Eligibility:**

**Appeals:** A student may submit a written appeal documenting mitigating circumstances (e.g., serious illness of student or family member, death of a relative), within seven (7) calendar days of the determination of their unsatisfactory academic progress.

Appeals should be sent to the Office of Student Financial Services and will be reviewed by the Financial Aid Appeals Committee within ten (10) calendar days of receipt of the appeal. The student will receive written notification of the committee's decision within seven (7) calendar days. Decisions of the Financial Aid Appeals Committee may be appealed to the Rocky Vista University Provost.

Appeals should be submitted to the Office of Student Financial Services and must include:

1. A written statement documenting the reasons for failure to meet the standards of academic progress for financial aid eligibility.
2. A written statement explaining what has changed in the student's situation that would allow the student to bring their academic progress up to the satisfactory standards.
3. Documentation supporting their appeal.
4. A written academic plan from the program director or their designee. The academic plan must ensure that the student is able to meet SAP standards by a specific point in time.

If the appeal is granted, and it is determined that the student should be able to meet SAP standards by the end of the subsequent payment period, they may be placed on financial aid probation without an academic plan. A student's progress must be reviewed at the end of their probationary period. If the student is meeting the SAP requirements, they will go back into good standing. If the student does not meet the SAP requirements, they will again become ineligible for financial aid with the opportunity to re-appeal.

If the appeal is granted, and it is determined that the student will require more than one payment period to meet SAP standards, they may be placed on probation with an academic plan in place. A student's progress will be reviewed at the end of each payment period as is required of a student on probation status. If the student is meeting the requirements of their academic plan, the student is eligible to receive financial aid funds as long as the student continues to meet those requirements. Students must appeal to change their plan. If the student does not meet the requirements of their academic plan, they will again become ineligible for financial aid with the opportunity to re-appeal.

Without Approved Appeal: Students who are not making satisfactory academic progress, who do not submit an appeal or have their appeal request denied, may regain eligibility only by taking action that brings them into compliance with RVU's satisfactory progress standards.

Any exceptions to this policy will be made on an individual basis and in compliance with federal, state and local regulations governing financial aid.

## Student Health Insurance

All students are required to obtain health insurance prior to matriculation and to maintain health insurance throughout their time of enrollment at the University. Students must participate in the University-sponsored health insurance program or submit an approved waiver with documentation of alternative equivalent coverage. If a student's insurance is scheduled to expire during the academic year, they must obtain a

new waiver form with proof of new insurance at least 30 days prior to the expiration of their old insurance. The current cost of the Student Health Insurance program may be obtained from the Office of Student Financial Services. Any student who has a lapse of health insurance coverage will be summarily removed from classes and/or clerkships and may be subject to dismissal.

## Tuition and Fees

Tuition for MSBS for 2023-2024 is \$30,070. The following annual fees will also apply to all MSBS students:

### Student Fees

Health Insurance: \$4,512

*\*All students are required to have health insurance. Students will be automatically enrolled in and billed for the RVU Student Health Insurance Plan unless they provide evidence of equivalent coverage prior to the waiver deadline date. Please contact the Office of Student Financial Services for more information.*

## Academic Standards, Guidelines, and Requirements

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### Academic Grievances Policy (Grade Appeal)

Matters regarding grading disputes of assessments within a specific course or other requirement shall include all concerns related to specific grades received or the processes by which grades are determined.

Except under unusual circumstances, all grades (including the final grade for cumulative course performance) will be determined by the Course Director. When extraordinary circumstances bring a student to seek an appeal of a decision regarding a course grade, the student must seek solutions through the following administrative channels, entering at the appropriate level and proceeding in the order stated below. All appeals and decisions must be in writing.

1. Course Director(s);
2. MSBS Program Director (who can send appeal to Student Performance Committee if deemed appropriate)
3. Provost

Students seeking to resolve a grading concern through the administrative channels above must initiate formal action in writing no later than five business days after the course has been finalized. The written appeal must state the circumstances surrounding the grade dispute, with specificity. Review of a student problem and complaint at each administrative level will be carried out as expediently as possible. If the student is not satisfied with the MSBS Program Director's decision, the student may appeal to the Provost. If the student chooses to continue the appeal, this must be done in writing within five business days of the date the decision was rendered at each level of the appeal, excluding weekends and official school holidays.

## Academic Probation

A student is considered on academic probation if the cumulative grade point average is 2.99 and below (calculated at the end of the Fall and end of Spring semester).

MSBS students on academic probation are not eligible to hold an office in an RVU student club or organization. Mid-semester grades may also be monitored to identify students that may be struggling and need assistance.

## Attendance

Attendance at all classes is mandatory unless otherwise stated in the course syllabus or granted accommodations through the ADA office. A student that misses more than 5% of classes will need to take a leave of absence or withdraw from the program, as the ability to be successful in the program is unlikely. Please refer to University policies on Pregnant and Parenting Students and Students with Learning Disabilities.

### Personal Days

Each student is granted one personal day per semester for which absences are excused. Personal days may not be utilized during block exams, quizzes, in-person group work, required labs, or exams/quizzes. Students do not need to provide rationale for taking personal days but must notify the Program Director in advance. Personal days cannot be divided across multiple days and will not carry over from the preceding semester.

## Employment During Enrollment

Employment during the MSBS program is strongly discouraged. The demands of the program are high, and the faculty feel strongly that complete dedication to

the program has a better outcome for the students' long-term goals. Students in the MSBS Program should contact the Office of Student Financial Services for help with budgeting or emergency loans rather than seeking outside employment.

## Excused Absences

An absence may be excused for the following reasons: student illness, death or illness of an immediate family member, or professional school interview. An absence may be considered unexcused for all other reasons, including but not limited to the following: attendance at a wedding, a non-emergency doctor's appointment, or an urgent meeting with another RVU employee. Every student who is unable to attend a required academic event (e.g. quiz, exam, lab, class) must fill out a digital Absence Notification and Approval Form. Students should complete the form, including a detailed explanation for the absence, and submit the form digitally through the appropriate platform. Students may be notified to meet with the Course Director(s) or the Program Director. Should a medical or another emergency (e.g. family crisis) occur that prevents a student from reporting to an examination or other required event on time, a student must notify (by email or phone call) the campus administrative assistant and Program Director as soon as possible, and preferably before the beginning of the examination/event. Students seeking an excused absence for a medical reason must provide a signed note from a licensed physician (DO or MD), PA, or NP indicating they were seen/treated. Family members, even those who are physicians, may not provide a note for excused absences. If a student is absent from a required event and does not provide an acceptable Absence Notification and Approval Form, the student may receive a grade of zero for that event.

The Absence Notification and Approval Form is available online on the RVU iNet.

## Explanation of Grades

See chart in the Final Grades section for explanation of grades.

## Final Grades

Grading for MSBS students is based on a scale of 0 to 100. The MSBS program requires a grade of 69.5 or above to pass all courses; any grade at or below 69.49 is considered unsatisfactory/fail. The chart on the following page explains each grade.

Grades Earned	Grade Printed on Transcript	Definition	Quality Points	Calculated into GPA
92.50 – 100.00	A	Course successfully completed	4.00	Yes
89.50 – 92.49	A-	Course successfully completed	3.67	Yes
86.50 – 89.49	B+	Course successfully completed	3.33	Yes
82.50 – 86.49	B	Course successfully completed	3.00	Yes
79.50 – 82.49	B-	Course successfully completed	2.67	Yes
76.50 – 79.49	C+	Course successfully completed	2.33	Yes
72.50 – 76.49	C	Course successfully completed	2.00	Yes
69.50 – 72.49	C-	Course successfully completed	1.67	Yes
00.00 – 69.49	F	Fail	0.00	Yes
AU	AU	Audit	0.00	Yes
IN	IN	Incomplete	N/A	Yes
W	W	Withdrawal	0.00	Yes
N/A	WIP	Work in Progress	N/A	Yes

## Good Academic Standing

A student is considered in good academic standing if the cumulative grade point average is 3.0 and above.

## Grade Point Average

RVU grade point averages (GPA) are based on a 100-point scale. The GPA is calculated by dividing quality points by GPA credit hours (pass/fail coursework is already excluded). The GPA will be a one-digit number with two decimal places and will not be rounded.

## Incompletes

Students may request an incomplete in one or more courses based on significant extenuating personal circumstances that prevent the student from completing the last assignments/exams in a course on schedule. Incomplete grades are not awarded for poor academic performance or as a way of extending assignment deadlines. Requests are submitted to the MSBS program director. The MSBS program director may or may not grant this request. Students who request an incomplete in a course must be passing the course in all work completed at the time the request is made. Incompletes may be granted for courses in which the student is not passing if the MSBS program director determines there are extenuating circumstances that warrant assigning an incomplete to the student. When an instructor assigns an "IN," the Program Director or course director shall specify in writing the requirements the student shall fulfill to complete the course as well as the reasons for granting an "IN" when the student is not passing the course. Individual course directors will work with students who have an approved incomplete in their course to develop a plan to make up missed assignments/exams. An appropriate deadline for completing all work and resolution of the incomplete grade will be determined when the incomplete is granted. This deadline will be provided to the student in writing (email) by the MSBS program director. All work not completed by this deadline will be scored as a "0," and final course grades will be calculated

accordingly. Incompletes must be resolved within four (4) weeks of the end of the following semester unless otherwise approved by the program director.

## Non-Academic Probation

A student is considered on non-academic probation if there is any significant violation of RVU MSBS non-academic criteria, honor code, or institutional code of conduct. Depending on the nature of the violation, students may need to meet with the program director, a student affairs representative, and/or the MSBS-SPC. Courses of action may range from a warning, being formally placed on non-academic probation, to being dismissed.

MSBS students on non-academic probation are ineligible to hold an office in an RVU student club or organization. Mid-semester non-academic performance may also be monitored more closely to assist with progress. Students currently on non-academic probation are ineligible for the MSBS-COM Tier system, although satisfactory progress in and/or resolution of non-academic concerns may restore eligibility.

## Quality Points

Quality points are the cumulative points used to calculate grade point average. Only courses with letter grades greater than a C- offer quality points. For example, a final grade of B+ earned in a four-credit course will award 13.32 quality points ( $3.33 \times 4 = 13.32$ ).

## Remediation of Courses

If a student fails an individual course, the MSBS-SPC may recommend that the student remediate that course, with a timeline determined by the MSBS-SPC and MSBS Program Director. The creation of remediation exams and/or remediation assignments will be up to the discretion of the individual course directors. Students who successfully remediate a course failure will receive a grade of a C- (minus). The grade achieved by remediation will be re-recorded on the transcript next to the original grade. No more than two courses may be remediated unless approved by the MSBS-SPC and/or MSBS Program Director.

Any student who fails a remediation will return to the MSBS-SPC. The SPC may recommend that the student repeat the course the following school year, that the student be dismissed from the program, or other appropriate course of action. The Program Director will issue a decision that may or may not align with the SPC recommendation. Decisions are subject to appeal to the Provost.



Students who remediate a course may be ineligible for the MSBS-COM Tier system.

## Repeating of Courses

If a student does not pass all courses or achieve a 3.0 cumulative GPA for the program, up to three courses (up to 8 credit hours) may be repeated the following year to achieve the minimum 3.0 for graduation. If more than three courses (up to 8 credit hours) must be repeated, then the student must repeat an entire semester course-load or apply for an exception from the MSBS Program Director. Students will be charged full tuition for repeated coursework. Courses may only be repeated once. A student who repeats courses may be deemed ineligible for the MSBS-COM Tier system. A student who takes a leave of absence and returns, or repeats an entire year, maintains tier eligibility.

If a student is directed to repeat a course, the grade for the repeated course will be recorded on the official transcript. The original grade received in a course will not count toward the student's program GPA, but the original grade will continue to be included in the transcript.

If the cumulative grade point average remains below 3.00 after the student repeats designated courses, the student will not qualify for graduation and will again be referred to the MSBS-SPC.

A course may not be repeated unless recommended by the MSBS Student Performance Committee and/or Program Director.

## Requirements to Progress from Fall to Spring

Students that achieve a Fall GPA of 2.90 and above will be allowed to proceed to the Spring semester. Students that achieve a Fall GPA between 2.70 and 2.90 will be required to meet with the SPC and may be allowed to proceed to the Spring semester. Those that do not achieve a 2.70 and above may be dismissed from the program.

## Student Enrollment Status Change

### Leave of Absence Policy

A student may make a formal request for a Leave of Absence (LOA) from the MSBS program to the MSBS Program Director and the Associate Dean of Student

Affairs or their representative. A leave of absence must occur before completion of the final block exam of the semester. A leave of absence requested after this time would be considered as an LOA for the following semester. To be considered for a leave of absence, the candidate must provide adequate evidence that current conditions warrant such. The Program Director will make all final decisions regarding approval or denial of requests. Prior to return from the leave of absence, the student must show that the conditions or factors that caused the initial request have changed significantly, so that there is a reasonable expectation that the student can perform satisfactorily upon resuming the program. The student may be reviewed by the MSBS-SPC prior to return at the discretion of the Program Director, and the MSBS-SPC may recommend alternative course(s) of action to the Program Director. The student's prior academic record will remain part of his or her overall academic record and will be recorded on the permanent transcript upon resuming the program.

### Readmission Policy

A student who withdraws or is dismissed from the MSBS program may apply for readmission. To be considered for readmission, the candidate must provide adequate evidence that the conditions or factors that caused the withdrawal have changed significantly, so that there is a reasonable expectation that the applicant can perform satisfactorily if readmitted. The student may be reviewed by the MSBS-SPC prior to readmission at the discretion of the Program Director. The student's prior academic record will remain part of their overall academic record and will be recorded on the permanent transcript upon readmission.

### Appeals

The MSBS program adheres to the University's policies and procedures for status change appeal procedures. Please refer to the University "Code of Conduct" section of the *RVU Student Handbook and Catalog* for more information.

## Student Performance Committee

Students who are on academic probation or non-academic probation, do not achieve a 2.90 Fall GPA, a 3.00 cumulative GPA, fail a course, fail the comprehensive exam, or demonstrate other academic or non-academic unsatisfactory performance as defined and determined by the MSBS Program may be required to meet with the MSBS Student Performance Committee (MSBS-SPC) to discuss options. In consultation with the Associate/Assistant Dean of Student Affairs, students may also be referred to the MSBS-SPC for violations of the RVU Code of Conduct. Students with a Fall GPA under 2.70 are automatically

dismissed. Students with a Fall GPA of 2.90-2.99 automatically progress to the Spring semester on an Academic Improvement Plan, but are encouraged to participate in a voluntary expedited SPC meeting with representatives of the committee to further help diagnose student barriers and make plans for success.

### **Procedure**

If requested to appear before the SPC, students must appear at the appointed time and place.

- The student shall receive notice of the time, place, and subject of the meeting and must confirm receipt of the notice. Such written notice may be in the form of an official University email, U.S. mail, or a hand-delivered written message.
- Appearance before the MSBS-SPC is mandatory. Lack of attendance at a required SPC meeting forfeits the student's opportunity to discuss circumstances with the Committee and may lead to dismissal from the program.
- Legal representation and/or other supporting persons is prohibited.
- The student will be given the opportunity to present a statement to the SPC in written and oral form and will answer questions posed by the MSBS-SPC.

Proceedings of the SPC are closed and confidential. Members of the SPC are not permitted to discuss issues brought before the SPC outside of a formal SPC meeting. SPC meeting minutes, recordings, and notes are not formally part of the student academic record and are, therefore, not accessible to students. The Program Director's decision is accessible to the student.

Where deemed appropriate, the MSBS-SPC may recommend any one of the following options:

- Remediation of a course or comprehensive exam;
- Repetition of a course;
- Non-academic probation;
- Dismissal from the University; or,
- Other appropriate course of action.

The final decision will be made by the MSBS Program Director and may or may not align with the recommendation of the MSBS Student Performance Committee. There is no guarantee that remediating courses, repeating courses, or remediating comprehensive exams, or other options will be offered. A student may appeal a Program Director decision for dismissal as per the section 'Student Education Records; Dismissal Policy and Right to Appeal' in the *RVU Student Handbook and Catalog*. Specific requirements regarding remediation and/or other

course of action will be made on an individual basis after considering pertinent circumstances, which may include, but are not limited to, the student's academic record, consultation with the course director, and consultation with the student involved.

Lack of attendance at a required SPC meeting forfeits the student's opportunity to discuss circumstances with the Committee and may lead to dismissal from the program.

## **Withdrawing from a Course**

Students may request withdrawal from a course for either academic or personal reasons. The request is submitted to the MSBS program director. Withdrawal from a course or the program must be requested no later than seven business days after the Block Exam 3 in any semester. Students may request withdrawal from a maximum of one individual course each semester. Students who perceive a need to withdraw from more than one course in a semester must request withdrawal from the entire semester (all courses). If approved, a course withdrawal will be shown on the student's transcript as a "W" and no credit for the course toward completion of the MSBS program will be given. Students must repeat the entire course (assignments, exams, attendance etc.) in order to earn credit and graduate. Students are responsible for understanding all academic, tuition-related and financial aid-related implications for their requested withdrawal from a course. Realistic options for repeating the course should be carefully discussed with the program director, Student Affairs, and relevant faculty prior to submitting the request. Students who request withdrawing from an entire semester (see above) must also request a leave of absence in order to be able to return and repeat an entire semester. Students who withdraw from the entire semester without receiving an approved leave of absence will be considered to have withdrawn from the MSBS program entirely and must reapply for admission

## **Professionalism**

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### **Academic Integrity**

The MSBS Program holds its students to the highest standards of intellectual integrity. Therefore, any attempt by a student to pass any examination by improper means, present work that the student has not performed, aid and abet another student in any dishonest academic act, or failure to report direct knowledge of such, will subject the offending student to a meeting before the appropriate body, (e.g., Student Performance Committee, Honor Code Committee,

Program Leadership, and/or Student Affairs representatives) for possible disciplinary action, which may include probation, suspension, or even dismissal.

All students are expected to commit to academic integrity by observing the standards for academic honesty. The following acts violate the academic standards:

- Cheating: intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise; copying and/or distributing protected assessment material, including but not limited to written exam questions, quiz questions, and standardized patient case information, through written form, audio recording, or video recording
- Fabrication: intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise;
- Facilitating academic dishonesty: intentionally helping or attempting to help another to violate any provision of this code;
- Plagiarism: the adoption or reproduction of ideas, words, or statements of another person or entity as one's own without proper acknowledgment;
- Misrepresentation;
- Bribery in an attempt to gain an academic advantage;
- Forging or altering documents or credentials;
- Utilization of position or power by a student for personal benefit or to the detriment of another student, faculty member, or member of the staff;
- Dishonesty in any form, including failure to report a violation of the code of conduct; and
- Behavior that does not meet the standards of the University, its affiliates, and the healthcare professions.

Students are expected to submit tests and assignments that they have completed without aid or assistance from nonpermitted sources. Students must avoid any impropriety or the appearance of impropriety in taking examinations or completing work in pursuance of their educational goals; failure to do so may subject students to an action by the Student Performance Committee or other appropriate body.

## Appeals Process for Code of Conduct Violations

Students found in violation of the Code of Conduct have the ability to appeal decisions within five business days in writing. Appeals decisions will be made within ten business days of receiving the request.

- If the Associate/Assistant Dean of Student Affairs made the conduct decision, the student can appeal to the Program Director.
- If the Program Director made the conduct decision, the student can appeal to the Provost.
- Honor Code Committee conduct decisions are sent as recommendations to the Associate/Assistant Dean of Student Affairs and the Program Director to make the decision. Students who are appealing this decision should appeal to the Provost or their designee. Appeal decisions made by the Provost are final.

### Appeal Considerations

- Requests for appeals must be made in writing on the above guidelines. The appeal must come in writing within five business days of receipt of the initial decision.
- The appeal must be based on one or more of the following: 1) a significant error in fact that materially impacted the outcome; 2) evidence of demonstrated prejudice by the initial decision maker or the Honor Code Committee that affected the outcome; 3) new material information or evidence that was not available at the time of the consideration of the matter or was not available and could not be made available to the decision maker at the time of their decision; 4) the sanction imposed is extraordinarily disproportionate to the offense committed; and 5) errors of process under the Student Handbook involving your rights that materially affected the outcome of this matter. Any new material or evidence must be submitted with the appeal.

### Prohibition of Retaliation

The University prohibits retaliation against any employee or student who, in good faith, reports, rejects, protests, or complains about a Code of Conduct violation. Retaliation is a violation of University policy. The University will not tolerate discrimination, recrimination, or reprisal against any employee or student who reports or participates under this policy in good faith in a related investigation or hearing.

Complaints of retaliation should be reported to the Associate/Assistant Dean of Student Affairs or the Title

IX Coordinator if related to sexual misconduct or Title IX. Such complaints will be investigated and handled in a prompt and equitable manner. Any individuals who are determined to have made knowingly false statements during the course of an investigation may be subject to discipline, which may include termination or dismissal.

## Classroom Behavior

The virtual and in-person classroom is a shared learning environment, and students in the classroom are required to conduct themselves in a professional manner. Any activities that distract from the learning environment, including but not limited to playing computer games, updating social media, shopping, intoxication, or talking, may be considered disruptive activity.

A faculty member, instructor, or proctor may dismiss any student from class who is considered to be disruptive. Any student dismissed from class for disruptive or unprofessional behavior will be reported to the Program Director for appropriate disciplinary action and may be required to appear before the Honor Code Committee, Student Performance Committee, or other appropriate body.

## Code of Student Conduct and Professional Responsibility

The Code seeks to promote the highest standard of behavior and academic integrity by setting forth the responsibilities of students as members of the University community. Abiding by the Code ensures a climate wherein all members of the University community can exercise their rights of membership.

The University is a community of scholars in which the ideals of freedom of inquiry, thought, expression, and the individual are sustained. However, the exercise and preservation of these freedoms and rights require a respect for the rights of all in the community to enjoy them to the same extent. Willful disruption of the educational process, destruction of property, interference with the rights of other members of the University community, and interference with the orderly process of the University as defined by the administration will not be tolerated. Students enrolled in the MSBS Program assume an obligation to conduct themselves in a professional and ethical manner compatible with the expectations of their peers, administration, and future profession. The University retains the power to maintain order within the University

and to exclude those who are disruptive to the educational process or the ethical standards of healthcare professionals.

Any violations of the Code of Student Conduct and Academic Responsibility or University policies and procedures may result in disciplinary action and/or criminal prosecution where applicable. These disciplinary actions may include a variety of administrative actions up to and including dismissal. Admission candidates found to have not met the Code of Student Conduct and Academic Responsibility as outlined may be subject to rescindment of the offer of admission.

### Conduct Standards

Students will not interfere with the rights, safety, or health of members of the University community, nor interfere with other students' rights and privileges in pursuit of their educational goals. Students are expected to abide by all University and Program rules and regulations, and all local, state, and federal laws and regulations affecting their education and profession.

Failure to abide by rules and regulations at the University, Program, local, state, and federal levels may lead to a meeting before the Honor Code Committee, Student Performance Committee, or appropriate body and disciplinary actions up to and including dismissal from the University. Markedly egregious violations of the Code of Conduct by a student, including violent acts, crimes, or behaviors such that there is a perceived real or potential threat to University personnel or property may be referred directly to the Program Director for investigation and action without Committee involvement.

Violations include but are not limited to:

- Theft, robbery, and related crimes;
- Vandalism or destruction of property;
- Disruptive behavior/disorderly conduct on the campus, at University-affiliated sites or at any University- or club-sponsored events, on- or off-campus;
- Physical or verbal altercation, assault, battery, domestic violence, or other related crimes;
- Possession, transfer, sale, or use of illicit and/or illegal drugs, or in the case of a minor, alcohol;
- Illegal possession of or use of a firearm, fireworks, weapons, explosives, or other dangerous substances or items on campus, at University-affiliated sites or at any University- or club-sponsored event, on- or off-campus;
- Impairment due to the use of drugs or alcohol in class or on campus, at University-affiliated sites, or at any University- or club-sponsored events;
- Any act or conspiracy to commit an act that is harassing, abusive, or discriminatory or that

invades an individual's right to privacy, including but not limited to sexual harassment; discrimination and abuse against members of any racial, ethnic, national origin, religious group, or on the basis of sex/gender, sexual orientation, marital status, or cultural group and/or any other protected group or as a result of an individual membership in any protected group;

- Sexual misconduct;
- Stalking;
- Unacceptable use of computing resources as defined by the University;
- Impeding or obstructing a University investigatory, administrative, or judicial proceeding;
- Threats of or actual physical harm to others, or damage or vandalism to property;
- Any activity that may be construed as hazing or engaging in, supporting, promoting, or sponsoring hazing of another student, faculty, or staff member;
- Embezzlement or misuse of University and/or student organizational monies or resources;
- Failure to comply with the directives of a University official;
- Violations of the terms or conditions of a disciplinary sanction imposed by the administration;
- Violation of state or federal law, rule, regulation, or ordinance;
- Violation of HIPAA privacy requirements; and
- Fraud, misrepresentation, forgery, alteration, or falsification of any records, information, data, or identity.

## Disciplinary Sanctions

Any violation of the conduct standards may result in a complaint being filed against the student. The Provost, Assistant/Associate Deans, or Program Director, may, at their discretion, immediately suspend a student pending a hearing on the charges. Violations are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including, suspension or dismissal from the University. Students found in violation of the codes of student conduct and/or University policies and procedures may have one or more sanctions as described below. The list does not exclude other actions that may be directed by the decisional body.

Students may be asked to participate in a Conduct Investigation as the respondent or possible witnesses. Students who are asked to participate should keep all related matters and conversations confidential throughout the investigation. Violation of confidentiality is a breach of the student code of conduct and may result in disciplinary action.

### Reprimand

A reprimand is an oral or written notification to the student that continuation of wrongful conduct may result in more severe disciplinary penalties. Whether oral or written, the reprimand may be included in the student's official file with Student Affairs. The Student Non-Professional Conduct Report may be used to document violations of behavioral conduct and may impact Program Non-Academic Criteria and Tier Status. A reprimand may also include the following sanctions:

- **Verbal Warning:** A verbal admonition to the student by a University faculty, administration, or staff member that the student's behavior is inappropriate. A verbal warning may be noted in the student's official file with Student Affairs for a designated time period and expunged, at the discretion of the Associate/Assistant Dean of Student Affairs, if no further violations occur;
- **Disciplinary Warning:** Formal notice to a student that the action and/or behavior does not comply with Program standards. This sanction remains in effect for a designated time period and may be expunged from the official student file at the discretion of the Associate/Assistant Dean of Student Affairs;
- **Restitution:** Payment made for damages or losses to the University directed by an adjudicating body; or
- **Restriction or Revocation of Privileges:** The temporary or permanent loss of privileges, including, but not limited to, the use of a particular University facility, visitation privileges, and parking privileges.

### Disciplinary Probation

Disciplinary probation is a period of time during which a student has the opportunity to demonstrate that they can effectively cease behavioral misconduct. Probation can be for any period of time.

While on probation, the student is prohibited from:

- Holding office in any University organization, club, or student government;
- Attending international medical mission trips;
- Being elected to any honorary position.
- Participating in other activities as determined by the MSBS Program Director and/or Student Affairs
- Additionally, a student holding leadership office may be removed from the position.

During probation for disciplinary reasons, the student must show appropriate behavioral, professional, and personal conduct as defined in the conditions of his or her probation. The student may be required to seek professional behavior modification, education, or counseling. Additionally, the student is required to refrain from any further violation of the code and may be required to comply with any other requirements

intended to rehabilitate the student. If, while on probation, the student violates the terms of their probation, actions may be taken up to and including dismissal from the University.

### **Suspension**

Suspension bars a student from attending school for a defined period of time with revocation of all other privileges or activities, including the privilege of entering the campus and University-affiliated sites without specific approval. Suspension is included in the calculation of the time limit for completing all graduation requirements.

Readmission will not be entertained until the suspension period is completed and is subject to approval of the Program Director or Provost.

### **Other Appropriate Actions**

Other disciplinary action not specifically outlined elsewhere in Program policies may be approved through the Program Director or the Associate/Assistant Dean of Student Affairs or their designee.

## **Student Dress Code Policy**

**Purpose and Scope:** This policy outlines basic dress code requirements students must follow while on campus during business hours (typically 8am- 5pm).

**Policy Statement:** The RVU dress code reflects the dignity of the health care profession and respect for other students, faculty, administration, staff, and particularly special visitors.

The dress code reflects a general minimum standard for the campus community. Students should refer to the course syllabi and program handbooks for further specific dress requirements (e.g., labs, lectures, rotation sites). The University has the right to require specific dress for specific occasions (e.g., special guests on campus, “casual Fridays”) and students will be notified of any adjustments. Questions regarding appropriate attire may be directed to the Office of Student Affairs and setting-/program-specific leadership.]

The different learning and teaching environments at RVU may require different dress styles, and what is appropriate for one setting may be inappropriate for other settings. (e.g., lab, lectures, simulations, recreational activity). Regardless of the setting, all clothing should be neat, clean, and respectful of others. Everyone is expected to be well-groomed and wear clean clothing, free of holes, tears, or other signs of wear beyond normal functionality. On lab days when alternative attire is required, students should dress as

directed by professors/preceptors and can do so for the day, with the exception that shorts, sports-bras (and equivalent), and bare chests should be covered by professional scrubs or other dress-code-appropriate attire.

Inappropriate attire includes clothing with rips, tears or frays and any extreme style or fashion in dress, footwear, accessories, or fragrances. Inappropriate attire also includes clothing with language or images that can be construed, based on societal norms, to be offensive or contribute to a hostile learning and working environment. Hats and headwear are not permitted other than for religious or cultural purposes.

All students are permitted to wear the clothing of their choice regardless of traditional gender norm conformity. Students may dress in accordance with their gender identity and gender expression, provided that such clothing does not violate other aspects of the university dress code.

Students should be open to feedback regarding their attire from peers, faculty, and staff, as the attire of any student can impact others and the RVU community. Questions or concerns regarding dress or dress-related feedback can be brought to the Assistant/Associate Deans of Student Affairs whose decision will be final in the event of an issue. Generally, students will be expected to self-monitor their own attire. However, egregious or repeated dress violations will be considered unprofessional behavior and may result in a disciplinary sanction outlined in the Code of Conduct. Students may be asked to leave campus to change if they are inappropriately dressed depending on the specific situation and case.

When uncertain, students should default to business casual attire or professional scrubs. Business casual is generally characterized as: slacks/trousers, dresses, and skirts with modest lengths; collared shirts, sweaters, and blouses; clothing that covers the chest, back, torso, stomach, and lower extremities from armpit to mid-thigh when the body is standing straight and when bending over or reaching the hands above the head; tops that have shoulder straps; bottoms that fully cover an individual’s buttock. Business casual attire is not required after 5pm, but appropriate clothing is still expected.

Cultural and religious attire is welcomed as long as it is safe and appropriate for the specific learning environment. Students must wear their RVU ID at all times unless outlined differently in course or clinical syllabus.

When on location at clinical training sites, students must adhere to the training site’s dress code. Students are required to reach out to each of their training sites one week prior to the beginning of each clerkship rotation to learn the appropriate attire.

Questions or concerns regarding dress or dress-related feedback can be brought to the Program Director whose decision will be final in the event of an issue.

**Additional Information:** Nothing in this Policy limits the authority of the university to issue, amend, or withdraw a policy.

Additional resources can be found in the University Policy Repository, currently entitled "DynamicPolicy" at: <http://policies.rvu.edu>.

**Contact Information:** Compliance Department, (720) 874-2481; [ldement@rvu.edu](mailto:ldement@rvu.edu)

## Ethics Point Complaint Reporting Hotline

EthicsPoint is an anonymous or confidential tool for reporting serious violations of law, regulation, code of conduct, or policies which may include compliance issues, discrimination, fraud, waste and abuse, or serious misconduct.

**Phone Reporting (844-936-2729):** EthicsPoint has a toll-free phone reporting system that is available 24-hours per day, seven days per week, every day of the year. It is available to all RVU students. Calling EthicsPoint connects the student with a third-party service provider that is completely independent of RVU. A specialist will answer the call and make a detailed summary of the question or concern raised. The caller's voice is never recorded, and the caller has the option to remain anonymous if they wish; however, it may be difficult to resolve an issue if the complainant does not provide their name. All calls are given a special reference number, and the complainant will be encouraged to call back within a specified time to check on the status of their case.

**Web Reporting ([rvu.ethicspoint.com](http://rvu.ethicspoint.com)):** The web-based version of EthicsPoint is made available to students who are more comfortable asking questions or raising concerns through the web. When accessing the EthicsPoint website, RVU's network system is left entirely, and the case is recorded on an independent third party's system. As with the EthicsPoint phone line, the complainant can remain anonymous; however, it may be difficult to resolve an issue if the complainant does not provide their name. All reports entered through the EthicsPoint website are given a reference number, and the student is encouraged to follow up within a specified time to check on the status of their case.

## Failure to Report a Violation

Every member of the University community has the duty to file a complaint with the Office of Student Affairs if they feel a violation of the Honor Code has occurred. Failure to report a violation of the Honor Code or Code of Conduct is itself a violation. All members of the University community have an affirmative duty to participate in the inquiry or investigative process.

## Honor Code

RVU students follow this credo: "As a student of Rocky Vista University, I will be ever vigilant in aiding in the general welfare of the community, sustaining its rules and organizations, and will not engage in practices that will in any way bring shame or discredit upon myself, my school, or my profession."

## Honor Code Committee

The Honor Code Committee is composed of student representatives from the DO program (first year, second year, and clinical years), the MSBS program, and the PA program. All student representatives are elected by their respective classmates. The Associate/Assistant Dean of Student Affairs chairs the Honor Code Committee and may ask any student to appear before the Honor Code Committee for cause. For more egregious violations, the student may be required to meet with the Student Performance Committee (SPC).

- The student shall receive adequate notice of the time, place, and subject of the meeting. Such written notice may be in the form of an official University email, U.S. mail, or hand delivery.
- Appearance before the Honor Code Committee is mandatory.
- In cases with alleged egregious actions, as determined at the sole discretion of the Chair, legal representation at the hearing may be allowed. This is not a formal legal hearing; thus, rules of civil procedure and evidence do not apply. Counsel may not proffer statements or questions, although notes to the client are permitted. The University reserves the right to have its own legal counsel present.
- The names of all witnesses must be provided to the Associate/Assistant Dean of Student Affairs in advance of the hearing. Any witnesses will be called to speak to the Committee individually. Witnesses may be asked to remain outside the meeting room for later recall. The student will not

be present during the questioning of any witnesses. The Chair of the Committee reserves the right to call additional witnesses.

- The student will be given the opportunity to present statements to the Committee and to respond to any questions. The student will only be present during their statement unless otherwise approved by the Chair.
- The Program Director shall review the Honor Code Committee's recommendations and may either accept, reject, or modify the recommendations. The student shall be notified of the Program Director's decision within ten business days.
- The student can appeal based on the process outlined under the section "Appeals Process."

## Impaired Student Policy

The safety and welfare of patients demands that all healthcare providers perform at the highest level of cognitive ability. The illegal use or abuse of drugs or alcohol impairs the ability of a healthcare professional to provide optimal care and may impact the student's future ability to be licensed as a healthcare provider, at a state's discretion. Please check applicable state laws. Although recreational use of marijuana is legal in some states, it is listed as an illegal drug by the U.S. Federal Drug Enforcement Agency. As such, the use of marijuana in any form that has not been prescribed by a licensed provider for medical purposes is a violation of University policy.

All students, as a condition of enrollment at Rocky Vista University, must agree to abide by the University's Impaired Student Policy. Under this policy, students who are identified as suffering from substance abuse or addiction or who exhibit symptoms suggestive of impairment, either on campus or at one of its affiliates, are subject to immediate drug and alcohol screening and may be referred for further evaluation and treatment. Students undergoing further evaluation and treatment as indicated are protected by confidentiality of services. Refusal of a mandatory drug and alcohol screen will be grounds for immediate dismissal.

Any member of the University community who observes a student with symptoms suggestive of impairment, substance abuse, or addiction must report the matter to the Associate/Assistant Dean of Student Affairs or on EthicsPoint immediately.

## Policies and Procedures for Alleged Code of Conduct Violations

Any member of the University community may file a written complaint with the Office of Student Affairs.

During the period of time of any disciplinary action, except dismissal, the student may be directed to comply with specific requirements including counseling, auditing one or more courses, medical treatment, preparing scheduled reports, or other requirements intended to rehabilitate the student and/or to ensure that the student is able to continue with their education without further monitoring.

Records of dismissal or leave of absence (administrative or voluntary) and the date of each determination shall be placed in the student's permanent records. The Honor Code Committee shall have non-exclusive authority to evaluate all alleged student violations of misconduct, whether academic, professional, or ethical. Exceptions to this authority include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Nothing shall limit the right of the University or a University-affiliated institution to immediately remove a student who poses a threat, has been accused of a violent act or threat, appears impaired, or any act that constitutes a violation of state, local, or federal law. A student who has been removed from the University shall not return until given permission to do so by the Provost;
- Complaints of sexual misconduct or sexual discrimination must be handled by the University's Title IX Coordinator;
- The Provost is authorized to take whatever action is deemed necessary, including removing a matter from the Honor Code Committee's consideration, whenever in the judgment of the Provost such action may prevent harm to the health, safety, and welfare of any individual, to school property, or to the integrity of the educational process;

## Preponderance of Evidence in Investigations

As a general policy standard, a Preponderance of Evidence standard will be applied to all University investigations. Under the preponderance standard, the burden of proof is met when the party with the burden convinces the fact-finder that there is a greater than 50% chance that the claim is true.



# Privacy of University Communications

There is no expectation of privacy of information stored on or sent through University-owned information services, resources, and communications infrastructure. FERPA regulations are followed in regard to student records.

The University reserves the right to preserve or inspect any information transmitted through or stored in its computers, including e-mail communications and individual login sessions without notice when:

- there is reasonable cause to believe the user has violated or is violating University guidelines or procedures;
- an account appears to be engaged in unusual or excessive activity;
- it is necessary to do so to protect the integrity, security, or functionality of the University's information technology resources or to protect the University from liability; and/or
- it is otherwise permitted or required by policy or law.

The University is not liable for the loss or misappropriation of any private or personal information that may be stored on University resources.

# Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities

The University upholds the highest standards of academic excellence. Each student has certain rights and responsibilities, including the following:

- Personal and intellectual freedom;
- Respect for the equal rights and dignity of all University community members;
- Dedication to the scholarly and educational purposes of the University;
- Participation in promoting and ensuring the academic quality and credibility of the institution; and
- Responsibility to comply with the legal and ethical standards of the University, and the professional organizations and institutions with which it has partnered with the ethical standards of healthcare professions, as well as those of the local authorities, state and national laws, and applicable rules and regulations.

- As a general policy standard, a Preponderance of Evidence standard will be applied to all University investigations. Under the preponderance standard, the burden of proof is met when the party with the burden convinces the fact-finder that there is a greater than 50% chance that the claim is true.

## Program Policies

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### Student Dress Code Policy

**Purpose and Scope:** This policy outlines basic dress code requirements students must follow while on campus during business hours (typically 8am- 5pm).

**Policy Statement:** The RVU dress code reflects the dignity of the healthcare profession and respect for other students, faculty, administration, staff, and particularly special visitors.

The dress code reflects a general minimum standard for the campus community. Students should refer to the course syllabi and program handbooks for further specific dress requirements (e.g., labs, lectures, rotation sites). The University has the right to require specific dress for specific occasions (e.g., special guests on campus, "casual Fridays") and students will be notified of any adjustments. Questions regarding appropriate attire may be directed to the Office of Student Affairs and setting-/program-specific leadership.

The different learning and teaching environments at RVU may require different dress styles and what is appropriate for one setting may be inappropriate for other settings. (e.g., lab, lectures, simulations, recreational activity). Regardless of the setting, all clothing should be neat, clean, and respectful of others. Everyone is expected to be well-groomed and wear clean clothing, free of holes, tears, or other signs of wear beyond normal functionality. On lab days when alternative attire is required, students should dress as directed by professors/preceptors and can do so for the day, with the exception that shorts, sports-bras (and equivalent), and bare chests should be covered by professional scrubs or other dress-code-appropriate attire.

Inappropriate attire includes clothing with rips, tears or frays, and any extreme style or fashion in dress, footwear, accessories, or fragrances. Inappropriate attire also includes clothing with language or images that can be construed, based on societal norms, to be

offensive or contribute to a hostile learning and working environment. Hats and headwear are not permitted other than for religious or cultural purposes.

All students are permitted to wear the clothing of their choice regardless of traditional gender norm conformity. Students may dress in accordance with their gender identity and gender expression, provided that such clothing does not violate other aspects of the university dress code.

Students should be open to feedback regarding their attire from peers, faculty, and staff, as the attire of any student can impact others and the RVU community. Questions or concerns regarding dress or dress-related feedback can be brought to the Assistant/Associate Deans of Student Affairs whose decision will be final in the event of an issue. Generally, students will be expected to self-monitor their own attire. However, egregious or repeated dress violations will be considered unprofessional behavior and may result in a disciplinary sanction outlined in the Code of Conduct. Students may be asked to leave campus to change if they are inappropriately dressed depending on the specific situation and case.

When uncertain, students should default to business casual attire or professional scrubs. Business casual is generally characterized as: slacks/trousers, dresses, and skirts with modest lengths; collared shirts, sweaters, and blouses; clothing that covers the chest, back, torso, stomach, and lower extremities from armpit to mid-thigh when the body is standing straight and when bending over or reaching the hands above the head; tops that have shoulder straps; bottoms that fully cover an individual's buttock. Business casual attire is not required after 5pm, but appropriate clothing is still expected.

Cultural and religious attire is welcomed as long as it is safe and appropriate for the specific learning environment. Students must wear their RVU ID at all times unless outlined differently in course or clinical syllabus.

When on location at clinical training sites, students must adhere to the training site's dress code. Students are required to reach out to each of their training sites one week prior to the beginning of each clerkship rotation to learn the appropriate attire.

**Additional Information:** Nothing in this Policy limits the authority of the university to issue, amend, or withdraw a policy.

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**Contact Information:** Compliance Department, (720) 874-2481; [ldement@rvu.edu](mailto:ldement@rvu.edu)

## Exams

The majority of MSBS exams are administered in a block format, meaning that multiple courses schedule exams on the same day. Some courses also use written exams and practicals for assessment.

Students must arrive on time for examinations. All instructions and corrections will be made at the beginning of the examination period and will not be repeated. Any student arriving late for a written or practical examination may be denied entry at the discretion of the proctors or course director(s).

No allowances will be made for an exam being missed, other than documented illness or emergency. Nervousness and/or stress do not qualify for an excused absence from an exam. To be considered for an excused absence, the student must complete the "MSBS Excused Absence Form" on iNet prior to the exam. If permission is granted to delay an exam, the nature of the make-up will be at the discretion of the course director (oral, written, increased weighting on the final, etc.). Student transcripts may reflect an incomplete (IN) pending the completion of any missed exams. An unexcused absence from an exam or make-up exam may result in a grade of "zero" for that exam. Please see the "Excused Absences" section for further clarification.

Any exceptions to this policy will be made on an individual basis and in compliance with all program and university policies.

## Post-Exam Reviews

Post-Exam Reviews (PERs) are typically held for block exams. Students will receive access to their exam results, which cannot leave the classroom. No writing tools of any kind are allowed in the PER. Students are never allowed to copy questions or take notes at a PER. No laptops or cell phones are permitted at the PER. Leave bags, backpacks, etc. outside the classroom. PERs are scheduled for various lengths of time, depending on the length of the exam(s) to be reviewed. Students who arrive more than 15 minutes after a PER starts may not be admitted. PERs constitute a learning opportunity designed to help students review concepts they may have found challenging. PERs are a privilege. Students are expected to be respectful to faculty conducting PERs. PER format is subject to change, including cancellation, at the discretion of the MSBS Curriculum and Assessment Committee or the Program Director. If circumstances require remote format, PERs will be modified to best provide feedback to students while maintaining exam item security.

## Make-Up Examinations

Please see the "Exams" section of the MSBS Student Handbook for information on applying for an Excused Absence and make-up examination scheduling and format.

## Comprehensive Final Exam

There will be a comprehensive final exam at the end of the program, which will include material from all courses in the program and will assess mastery of previously discussed concepts. The comprehensive final exam will not be factored into the student's overall GPA. The student must pass this exam with a 70% or higher to graduate. If a student does not pass this exam, they will meet with the MSBS Student Performance Committee (SPC), which will make a recommendation to the Program Director, who will make the final decision on an appropriate course of action. If remediation exams and/or remediation assignments are offered, creation will be up to the discretion of individual course directors, the SPC, and/or MSBS Program Director. If a student needs to remediate or repeat coursework, they will still be required to take the comprehensive exam at the end of the Spring, but only the portion of the exam that corresponds to the courses they have completed successfully; the comprehensive exam section that corresponds to the remediated/repeated course(s) may be administered at a later date upon successful completion of the remediated/completed course(s). Format of the comprehensive exam may be changed at the discretion of the MSBS Curriculum and Assessment Committee or the Program Director.

## Graduation Requirements

A student who has fulfilled all the academic requirements may be granted the MSBS degree provided the student:

- Is not on probation or suspension and has completed all prescribed academic requirements with a cumulative grade point average of 3.00 or higher and has no grade below C- and no outstanding grade of "IN," or "WIP;"
- Has passed the comprehensive final exam with a 70% or higher;
- Has met the MSBS Non-Academic Criteria;
- Has complied with all curricular, legal, and financial requirements of the University; and,
- Has attended in person and participated in the Commencement ceremony at which time the Master of Science in Biomedical Sciences degree is conferred. Unless the Program Director has granted special permission, each student must

participate in the commencement ceremony. Requests for excusal will only be granted for extenuating circumstances, such as a prior military commitment, or death in the family.

Matriculation and enrollment does not guarantee the issuance of a degree without satisfactorily meeting the aforementioned curriculum and degree requirements.

## Reference Letters

### MSBS Program Letters

The reference letter distributed by the MSBS Program is the MSBS Program Letter. It is a formal letter of evaluation issued by the Program that serves as an evaluation tool in the application process for professional training programs. At the end of each semester, the MSBS Faculty will submit evaluations of all MSBS students to the MSBS Program. The MSBS SPC reviews this data and other data on students non-academic and academic performance and determines a recommendation category (e.g. "Recommend with Enthusiasm", "Recommend", "Recommend with Reservation", "Do not Recommend"). Upon a student's request, in writing, the MSBS Program will use the non-academic and academic data and the SPC's recommendation to compose a Program Letter, which is analogous to a Committee Letter at many other institutions. The letter summarizes the level of accomplishment a student has achieved during the MSBS program. This includes information regarding a student's entry and progress through the program, the academic record, involvement in extracurricular activities, compliance with academic policies, demonstration of professionalism and ethical understanding, and comments from some or all of the MSBS Faculty. The Program Letter attempts to represent each student as positively as feasible, but academic or non-academic concerns may be included if necessary to accurately represent the student's performance with integrity. Requests for program letters may be denied if academic or non-academic performance is unsatisfactory or insufficient.

The following criteria must be met for the MSBS Program to issue a Program Letter.

- Student has completed at least one semester and is in good academic standing
- MSBS SPC recommendation category is higher than "Do Not Recommend"
- Letter is issued for applications for professional training programs only and will be submitted directly to the institution or application platform used

- Waiver of Access to the letter signed by the student and submitted
- Letter is requested in writing at least four weeks prior to desired submission

### Personal Letters

If the above criteria are not met or if the student desires for other reasons, then a student may request a Personal Letter. This is ideal for students applying for jobs or scholarships and is written by an individual member of the MSBS team, typically a faculty member. This letter represents the individual author's perspectives, does not include formal MSBS Program recommendation, and does not represent the thoughts and opinions of the MSBS Program as a whole. While a letter may be requested prior to the completion of the first semester, these are often denied due to inadequate time and experience to represent the student accurately. The MSBS Program encourages authors of the Personal Letter to represent the student as positively as feasible, but to include academic or non-academic concerns if necessary to accurately represent the student's performance with integrity.

The following criteria must be met to issue a personal letter.

- Student has attempted or completed credits in the MSBS Program
- Letter is submitted directly to the organization or application platform for which the letter is being requested
- Waiver of Access to the letter signed by the student and submitted
- Letter is requested in writing at least four weeks prior to desired submission

## Curriculum

### Master of Science in Biomedical Sciences

#### Curriculum

The MSBS program's innovative curriculum is designed to graduate competent students who are prepared for success in a graduate, professional training program in a health sciences field. The curriculum emphasizes

interdisciplinary collaboration and correlates foundational science information with clinical application. The MSBS program defines one credit hour for every 15 contact hours.

### Semester I - Fall

Item #	Title	Credits
BMS 5012	Foundations of Success	1
BMS 5011	Evidence-Based Medicine	2
BMS 5008	Medical Humanities	1
BMS 5021	Molecular Basis of Medicine I	2
BMS 5041	Physiology I	4
BMS 5051	Anatomy I	2
BMS 5060	Microbiology and Infectious Diseases	3

### Semester II - Spring

Item #	Title	Credits
BMS 5002	Biomedical Pharmacology	3
BMS 5010	Journal Club	2
BMS 5022	Molecular Basis of Medicine II	2
BMS 5042	Physiology II	4
BMS 5052	Anatomy II	2
BMS 5070	Immunology	3
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>31</b>

## Course Descriptions

### BMS 5002: Biomedical Pharmacology

Biomedical pharmacology presents an overview of the basic concepts and principles of pharmacology. Students explore mechanisms of drug action, pharmacokinetics, pharmacodynamics, pharmacogenomics, and toxicology. Additional classroom sessions highlight the basic and clinical pharmacology of agents that exert effects on a variety of physiologic systems including the heart and vasculature, the neuromuscular junction, and the autonomic and central nervous systems. Students will be required to complete a drug capstone project demonstrating their ability to work on a team, appropriately review and synthesize recent medical literature, and deliver an oral presentation. Successful completion of this course will prepare students for doctoral level study of pharmacology.

**Credits** 3

**Prerequisites**

None

## **BMS 5004: Scientific Methodologies**

This course introduces students to fundamental concepts of research design in health and disease. Principles of evidence-based medicine are discussed as they relate to key areas of disease prevention, health promotion and therapy. Community-based issues, problems, and solutions are addressed. Students who complete the course will be able to understand and apply basic statistical terms and applications as well as various research design models that appear in current medical literature. Students will learn to assess the quality of medical literature research designs, create a research poster, write a mock grant application and teach peers using team-based approaches and clinical trial studies. Students will also learn to describe the relationship between the medical literature and evidence-based medicine and interact with industry SME's.

**Credits** 2

**Prerequisites**

None

## **BMS 5008: Medical Humanities**

The Medical Humanities course examines the relationships between the humanities and biomedical sciences. Topics vary by year and include, but are not limited to, communication, implicit bias mitigation, human subject research history and ethics, professional identity formation, illness narratives. This course is grounded in a variety of literary and textual sources and involves small and large group discussions, collaboration, written analyses, service-learning, and critical reflection, all of which are intended to foster self-examination and compassionate behavior.

**Credits** 1

**Prerequisites**

None

## **BMS 5010: Journal Club**

The goal of this course is to provide MSBS students the opportunity to evaluate and investigate evidence through critically reading, interpreting and presenting research from the primary literature. This course helps students stay abreast of current knowledge in various fields and develop skills in critical analysis of research in the biomedical sciences. Topics will include advances across biomedical and clinical research. Emphasis is placed on developing skills in critical review, presentation and teaching skills, and in communicating scientific studies in a seminar format.

**Credits** 2

**Prerequisites**

None

## **BMS 5011: Evidence-Based Medicine**

The role of Introduction to Evidence-Based Medicine (EBM) is to foster students' information literacy and develop an understanding of evidence-based medicine to leverage, create, use, and connect information to patient scenarios. The course is organized around the five elements of evidence-based medicine: ASK, ACQUIRE, APPRAISE, APPLY, ASSESS. Each of those components will be explored in-depth to increase the students' awareness, understanding, and skills. EBM is a semester-long course that encourages information literacy and evidence-based practice and enables student doctors to access, evaluate, and present medical information. Designated student assignments and clinical integration sessions introduce standards, resources, and strategies for understanding and presenting clinical cases.

**Credits** 2

**Prerequisites**

None

## **BMS 5012: Foundations of Success**

This course is designed to introduce students to the foundational skills necessary to be a successful graduate student. This course will focus on a variety of techniques to increase student confidence and develop graduate level study skills, and professionalism. It will cover principles of learning strategies, problem solving, note-taking, test-taking, critical listening and thinking, self-assessment, goal setting, and time management.

**Credits** 1

## **BMS 5021: Molecular Basis of Medicine I**

This course is the first semester of a two-semester course that incorporates a multi-disciplinary approach to investigate fundamental biomedical concepts. The objective of the course is to promote student learning of the biochemical, molecular, and cellular mechanisms underlying normal physiology and metabolism, thus providing a foundation for understanding disease processes. The course provides a foundation in cellular and molecular biology, including cell structure, cellular macromolecules, DNA and RNA structure and function, protein synthesis, genetics and regulation of gene expression, flow of genetic information, energetics, metabolism, and the regulation of selected cell activities.

**Credits** 2

**Prerequisites**

None

## **BMS 5022: Molecular Basis of Medicine II**

This course is the second of a two-semester course that incorporates a case-based approach to investigative fundamental biomedical concepts. The objective of the course is to promote student learning of the biochemical, molecular, and cellular mechanisms underlying normal physiology and metabolism, thus providing a foundation for understanding disease processes. The course provides a foundation in cellular and molecular biology, including cell structure, cellular macromolecules, DNA and RNA structure and function, protein synthesis, and regulation of gene expression, energetics, metabolism, regulation, organization and function of cellular organelles, flow of genetic information, and the regulation of selected cell activities.

**Credits** 2

**Prerequisites**

None

## **BMS 5041: Physiology I**

This course is the first of two one-semester courses which together provide a complete, systems-based curriculum to enable the student to build a cognitive framework and knowledge base necessary to understand and medically apply normal human physiology and pathophysiology. Systems covered in the first semester include cellular physiology, homeostatic mechanisms, basic neuromuscular physiology, cardiovascular physiology, respiratory physiology, and renal physiology. Basic clinical skills, clinical reasoning, and physical exam skills are integrated throughout. This curriculum combines lecture with small group discussions, clinical correlations, case studies, independent study, projects, and simulation activities.

**Credits** 4

**Prerequisites**

None

## **BMS 5042: Physiology II**

This course is the second of two one-semester courses which together provide a complete, systems-based curriculum to enable the student to build a cognitive framework and knowledge base necessary to understand and medically apply normal human physiology to pathophysiology. Systems covered include the gastrointestinal system, endocrine system, reproductive system, neurophysiology, biomedical ethics, and other advanced topics. Basic clinical skills and clinical reasoning are integrated throughout. This curriculum combines lecture with clinical correlations, case studies, independent study, projects, simulation activities, and a cumulative capstone.

**Credits** 4

**Prerequisite Courses**

[BMS 5041: Physiology I](#)

## **BMS 5051: Anatomy I**

This is the first of a two-semester course encompassing all aspects of human functional anatomy and clinical gross anatomy. This course will focus on the gross anatomy of all systems in the human body. In addition, imaging techniques such as x-ray radiography, CT scans, and MRI emphasizing structural relationships will introduce students to a clinical perspective of the structure of the human body. Course objectives include the acquisition of anatomical structural knowledge, the development of oral presentation and written communication skills, as well as the development of critical assessment of biomedical literature. Students will experience hands on learning with cadavers dissection. Learning is facilitated through lecture, team problem based learning, and clinical case presentations.

**Credits** 2

**Prerequisites**

None

## **BMS 5052: Anatomy II**

This is the second of a two-semester course encompassing all aspects of human functional anatomy and clinical gross anatomy. This course will focus on the gross anatomy of all systems in the human body. In addition, imaging techniques such as x-ray radiography, CT scans, and MRI emphasizing structural relationships will introduce students to a clinical perspective of the structure of the human body. Course objectives include the acquisition of anatomical structural knowledge, the development of oral presentation and written communication skills, as well as the development of critical assessment of biomedical literature. Students will experience hands on learning with cadaver dissection. Learning is facilitated through lecture, team problem based learning, and clinical case presentations.

**Credits** 2

**Prerequisite Courses**

BMS 5051: Anatomy I

## **BMS 5060: Microbiology and Infectious Diseases**

This course introduces graduate students to fundamental principles of microbiology including microbial structure/diversity, microbial metabolism and pathogenicity, and classes and actions of antimicrobial drugs. This overview includes discussions of the interaction between pathogen and host during the infectious process and adaptations by the pathogens to overcome or evade the immune system and cause human disease. Representative microorganisms belonging to each class of pathogen (bacterial, viral, fungal, and parasitic) are discussed. Other topics will include emerging diseases, public health epidemiology, vaccines, antimicrobial resistance, and eradication of disease. A combination of methods will be used to deliver material including, but not limited to, didactic lectures, small group work, and case studies/applications.

**Credits** 3

**Prerequisites**

None

## **BMS 5070: Immunology**

This course is designed to introduce students to the foundational knowledge necessary to understand the normal and abnormal functions of the immune system. Immunological principles involving innate and adaptive immunity, host responses to pathogens, blood groups, immunopathology, immunodeficiencies, autoimmunity, vaccines, transplantation, classes and actions of immunologically active drugs, and targeted immunotherapies will be discussed. Didactic lectures, small group discussions, clinical case studies, designated reading assignments, flipped classroom and application sessions will be utilized in this course. In addition, there will be an interdisciplinary component to this course in the form of service learning and critical reflection.

**Credits** 3

**Prerequisites**

None

## **Student Services**

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### **Administration/Faculty Office Hours**

The University administration endorses an open-door policy and encourages students to meet regularly with the administration and faculty. Regular office hours are established by the administration and faculty for student appointments.

### **The Office for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

The Rocky Vista University Office for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) is a resource for students, staff, and faculty regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion opportunities and challenges in healthcare education across the Colorado, Utah, and Montana campuses. Our goal is the promotion and practice of DEI throughout every sector and dimension of the University to the benefit of the entire RVU community. Contact us for more information or services at 720-875-2825.

### **The Frank Ritchel Ames Memorial Library**

The Frank Ritchel Ames Memorial Library fosters information literacy by providing students with access and the skills necessary to use the most current and impactful medical information for the health of their

future patients. Students, faculty, residents, and staff—in Colorado, Utah, Montana, or elsewhere—share access to the same digital collection, which contains books, journals, and databases necessary to learn and practice healthcare. All physical library locations provide access to print copies of required and recommended textbooks, as available. Library users can enjoy a warm and collegial space staffed by highly-trained information professionals who play a significant role in the development of future healthcare providers learning to practice medicine with compassion, integrity, and excellence.

## IT Help Desk

The Information Technology (IT) Help Desk is available to assist students both on- and off-campus with technical issues they may encounter throughout enrollment. The IT Help Desk is generally available Monday through Friday from 8:00 am until 5:00 pm.

Students enrolled at the Colorado campus can email [cohelpdesk@rvu.edu](mailto:cohelpdesk@rvu.edu) for assistance; students enrolled at the Utah campus can email [uthelpdesk@rvu.edu](mailto:uthelpdesk@rvu.edu) for assistance; students enrolled at the Montana campus can email [mthelpdesk@rvu.edu](mailto:mthelpdesk@rvu.edu).

## MyVista Student Portal

Students are provided access to the MyVista Student Portal upon acceptance. MyVista provides students with access to unofficial transcripts, the academic calendar, the ability to add and drop courses, run a degree audit, view financial information, receive important news and alerts, and access the Learning Management System, which houses online content for courses, including lecture notes for courses, syllabi, video lecture links, and additional course material, as determined by course faculty. Grades for exams, quizzes, and other course assignments are also available on the MyVista Student Portal, as well as final course grades.

## Office of Simulation in Medicine and Surgery

The Office of Simulation In Medicine and Surgery (SIMS) serves all programs at RVU to provide dynamic, hands-on learning opportunities. Simulation events and workshops occur regularly and are popular with students. Offerings include high-fidelity electronic manikins, human-worn task trainers, virtual reality simulated patients, live actor standardized patients, ultrasound, and surgery courses. SIMS is involved in significant research in the healthcare simulation field and holds the prestigious status as a Comprehensive

Accredited Education Institute by the American College of Surgeons. In the Office of SIMS resides the Division of Clinical Medicine and Surgery, with a cast of engaged and enthusiastic faculty specialists.

## Office of Testing

The Office of Testing (OOT) is in charge of preparing, administering, and processing scores for all written exams, quizzes, and rubrics-scored essay assignments, providing score reports to faculty, and administering post-exam reviews. The OOT is available to answer student questions about testing, provide technical assistance with testing software, arrange make-up exams and reviews for excused absences, and work with the Directors of Preclinical Education, Program Directors, Deans, and Course Directors to ensure the quality and security of evaluation material.

The OOT designs the proctoring and administration of exams to meet the highest standards of academic integrity. With student cooperation, the Office of Testing seeks to provide the most secure, consistent, and low-distraction exam environment possible, modeled after the environment of NBME Board exams.

RVU uses ExamSoft™, a secure item banking and electronic testing software platform, to create and administer all written exams and quizzes. Students are required to own and maintain a laptop that meets the minimum requirements of Exemplify™, the exam taker application of ExamSoft. Those requirements are here: [Exemplify MSRs](#)

Requirements are subject to frequent change, so the OOT recommends that students check them before purchasing or updating a laptop for use at RVU. If a student has a last-minute issue with their personal laptop, the OOT has loaner laptops available to borrow. OOT asks that students limit use of this option to emergencies, and no more than five times per student, per semester.

Please contact [officeoftesting@rvu.edu](mailto:officeoftesting@rvu.edu) for the Colorado and Utah campuses, or [MTOOT@rvu.edu](mailto:MTOOT@rvu.edu) for the Montana campus, with any questions, testing concerns, or to notify OOT of unexpected absences from testing events.

Detailed exam day instructions, best practices, and testing protocol for each program can be found on the [Office of Testing tab](#) under Students on MyVista.

## Print Center

The Print Center streamlines the University's print needs. It reduces outsourcing and incorporates additional services, including business card production, poster printing, lamination, binding, and more. RVU



departments and students are able to send their print jobs directly to the Print Center through an online system and can pick them up at their convenience.

The Print Center is located at the Colorado campus on the second floor inside the library and is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm MST. RVU Utah and RVU Montana print jobs are ordered online, processed in Colorado, and then shipped to the appropriate campus for pick up. The Print Center may be contacted through email at [printcenter@rvu.edu](mailto:printcenter@rvu.edu) or by phone at (720) 874-2459.

## Writing Center

The Rocky Vista University Writing Center assists writers in the development of effective written communication, assignments, and professional documents, offering guidance from start to finish—from brainstorming and outlining to revising and editing. Through audience- and genre-centered instruction, specific feedback, and access to resources, the RVU Writing supports faculty and students alike.

One-on-one and small-group sessions are tailored to support students and build more accomplished writers in any type of written work, including:

- Reflective writing;
- Proposals, reports, and reviews;
- Abstracts and manuscripts;
- Personal statements; and,
- CVs, resumes, and other professional writing documents.

Sessions are designed to help students:

- Understand assignment expectations;
- Generate, organize, and develop ideas;
- Analyze, synthesize, and argue;
- Summarize, paraphrase, and document sources; and,
- Recognize and revise issues with grammar and syntax.

## Campus Safety & Security

### Campus Safety and Security

The Campus Safety and Security has several ways to ensure that the campus community remains a safe and secure learning environment, including CCTV surveillance cameras, an access-controlled facility, advanced fire control system, RAVE Emergency

Notification systems in Colorado and Utah, as well as officer patrols and escorts. The Campus Safety and Security team is committed to providing safety and security services in a professional and consistent manner. RVU strives to provide these services with integrity, timely communication, and problem-solving. The Campus Safety and Security Department serves 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. They provide patrols, escorts, investigations, crime prevention, and many other services. Students, staff, or faculty who witness a crime, accident, emergency, or suspicious person should promptly call the Campus Safety and Security Department at (720) 875-2892 in Colorado or (435) 222-1300 in Utah or 911. The Campus Safety and Security Department should be informed of any 911 calls so assistance can be provided to the local law enforcement or fire personnel.

Students, staff, and faculty will receive emergency notifications, including campus closures and weather delays via SMS text messages and email notifications. In the event a Timely Warning Notice is issued, the campus community will be notified as soon as possible through our RAVE Emergency Notification Systems in the form of SMS text messages, email, audible announcement beacons, and/or bull horn/public address system. Students, staff, and faculty will receive a text message notification of RVU campus closures or emergencies.

## CLERY Act

Rocky Vista University shares many of the same interests and concerns as other colleges and communities, including a concern about crime. The University has been fortunate not to have experienced a significant number of crimes, but one should not be misled into thinking the campus is crime-free. There is always the possibility of a criminal act occurring against a member of the RVU community despite the best efforts of the Safety and Security Department and the administrative staff. A truly safe campus can only be achieved through the shared responsibility of all members of the RVU community.

The University is committed to maintaining a safe environment to support a healthy, learning-centered campus. This commitment includes making necessary physical improvements that promote safety and well-being; the revision and updating of policies, procedures, and rules; and an obligation to hold accountable those who choose to commit crimes or violate rules and regulations.

Every student, faculty, staff member, and visitor has an individual responsibility to be aware of their personal safety, to properly utilize college resources, to make positive choices, and to use common sense. Crimes, violations, hate crimes, suspicious persons or activity, and safety issues should be reported upon discovery

through the appropriate channels as described in this Handbook. Please take the time to familiarize yourself with the emergency procedures and the important information on the website. Updates, timely warnings, and important information regarding safety on campus will be communicated by emails, fliers, TV monitors, and other presentations.

For more information, view the [RVU Annual Security Report](#).

To obtain a copy of the Daily Crime Log, please visit the Security Office on either campus.

## Firearms, Weapons, and Other Prohibited Items Policy

The purpose of this policy is to establish restrictions regarding the possession, carry, transportation and storage of firearms and weapons and other dangerous items on Rocky Vista University properties or areas of responsibilities. This policy applies to all RVU students, faculty, staff, guests, visitors and contractors.

Possession of firearms, ammunition, explosives, fireworks, and/or other dangerous weapons, which may cause fear, alarm, or threat to another person within or upon the grounds, buildings, or other facilities of RVU or at any RVU-sponsored or supervised functions or events is prohibited.

However, if the individual is legally permitted to transport, possess, purchase, receive, transfer, or store the firearm in the state of the RVU location where they are working, studying, or visiting, it is allowable for the firearm(s) to be stored in the individual's private vehicle in the University parking lot. The firearm must be locked securely in the motor vehicle or in a locked container attached to the motor vehicle while the motor vehicle is not occupied; and the firearm is not in plain view from the outside of the motor vehicle. Any employee or student who intends to have a permitted firearm in their vehicle while in the University parking lot must complete a disclosure form, available at the Department of Campus Safety and Security. If the weapon is a loaded handgun, employee or student must provide proof on the form that the employee or student has a concealed carry permit valid in the state of the RVU location where they are working or attending school. In no event may a person store or possess a loaded rifle, shotgun, or muzzle-loading rifle in a vehicle in the University parking lot.

### **Purpose and Scope:**

The purpose of this policy is to establish restrictions regarding the possession, carry, transportation and storage of firearms and weapons and other dangerous

items on Rocky Vista University properties or areas of responsibilities. This policy applies to all RVU students, faculty, staff, guests, visitors and contractors.

### **Policy Statement:**

Possession of firearms, ammunition, explosives, fireworks, and/or other dangerous weapons, which may cause fear, alarm, or threat to another person within or upon the grounds, buildings, or other facilities of RVU or at any RVU-sponsored or supervised functions or events is prohibited.

However, if the individual is legally permitted to transport, possess, purchase, receive, transfer, or store the firearm in the state of the RVU location where they are working, studying, or visiting, it is allowable for the firearm(s) to be stored in the individual's private vehicle in the University parking lot. The firearm must be locked securely in the motor vehicle or in a locked container attached to the motor vehicle while the motor vehicle is not occupied; and the firearm is not in plain view from the outside of the motor vehicle. Any employee or student who intends to have a permitted firearm in their vehicle while in the University parking lot must complete a disclosure form, available at the Department of Campus Safety and Security. If the weapon is a loaded handgun, employee or student must provide proof on the form that the employee or student has a concealed carry permit valid in the state of the RVU location where they are working or attending school. In no event may a person store or possess a loaded rifle, shotgun, or muzzle-loading rifle in a vehicle in the University parking lot.

Any person(s) in violation of this policy shall be subject to University disciplinary action and/or criminal charges.

*Exception to this policy would be granted to city, state, or federal law enforcement officers on RVU property for official business.*

### **Other Prohibited Weapons or Dangerous Items:**

RVU disallows the following items within its facilities due to existing RVU policies, fire safety laws, as well as federal, state, and local laws. Possession of any of the following items may result in seizure and/or destruction of the items by an RVU representative and may result in disciplinary action:

- Rifles, weapons, ammunition and related paraphernalia, BB guns and air guns.
- Narcotics, recreational or illicit drugs and drug-related items.
- Explosive materials.
- Realistic replicas of firearms or other weapons.
- Gasoline, kerosene and other fuels.
- Firecrackers and fireworks.
- Combustible decorations.
- Candles, lanterns, incense, etc. (No open flames).
- Toxic and hazardous chemicals, except cleaning chemicals and approved lab chemicals.

- Unauthorized cooking equipment (i.e., grills, toaster ovens, hot pots, hot plates, fry pans, etc.).
- Immersion heaters.
- Any other items that may affect the safety or security of the University.

**Additional Information:**

Employees or students who are aware of violations of this policy are required to report such violations to the Department of Campus Safety and Security.

**Clinical Rotations:**

Students on Clinical Rotations must learn and adhere to the policy of the facility in which they are rotating, as RVU policy does not supersede any outside facility's policies in this regard.

## Lost and Found Policy

This policy is intended to ensure that items reported lost or found are properly accounted for and, in the case of items found, returned to their rightful owners, donated, recycled, or disposed of.

The Department of Campus Safety and Security (CSS) Utah Campus will receive and collect lost and found items and store them in the property room until claimed by the owner or for a period of 90 days. After 90 days, any unclaimed property will be donated, recycled, or destroyed.

The Department of Campus Safety and Security (CSS) Colorado Campus will receive and collect lost and found items and store them in the property room until claimed by the owner or to the end of the school academic year. After the school ends, any unclaimed property will be donated, recycled, or destroyed.

All found Property must be logged into the Lost and Found property book. All items are tagged and stored in the Lost and Found Cabinet. When an item is claimed, a release of property waiver must be completed and signed before any item is returned to the owner. The waiver is to be filed in an appropriate folder and the ARMS entry must be updated. Items turned in will be held for a period of 90 days from date of intake. At the determination of the CSS Manager or designee, all remaining unclaimed items will be purged from the inventory by one of the following methods: donated, recycled, destroyed, or returned to the finder. Cash money turned in to CSS will be turned over to finance immediately, CSS will not hold money.

Security will not hold the following items: Clothing, notes, notebooks, coffee mugs, thermoses, water bottles, plates, bowls, eating utensils, food, or drinks.

Any items collected as evidence will be given to the CSS Manager or designee, to be stored in a secure location until handed over to law enforcement for further investigation.

## Parking Permits

Parking permits are required to park on campus and must be properly displayed. They are issued on an individual basis and may not be transferred. Permits are only valid when obtained through the RVU Security Office and they remain the property of RVU. The owner of a permit is responsible for any/all citations issued to any vehicle displaying their permit. Students are to park in specified areas only.

## Personal Safety and Security

Rocky Vista University, together with the clinical site and the student, share the responsibility for ensuring that adequate policies and procedures are in place regarding the safety and security of the students and faculty in all locations where instruction occurs. This includes sites where clinical rotations occur, as well as off-site training locations for University-sponsored events.

The Physician Assistant Program will provide information on best practices for personal safety and security during the student's initial orientation and again prior to the beginning of clinical rotations. Students will be encouraged to become familiar with all safety and security policies in effect at all sites and off-campus events. Finally, all preceptors will be expected to communicate their site-specific policies and safety considerations with students and faculty involved at their location.

RVU as an educational institute falls under the jurisdiction of the [Clery Act](#). (*The annual security report can be found on the Clery Act*).

## Student ID Badge Policy

University policy requires all students obtain and carry their RVU Student ID Badge while on campus. It is primarily used for identification, entry into the RVU buildings, for verification of RVU status, and for using University services, such as access to the building. The badge may be obtained at the Security Office on the Colorado campus and Security Front Desk on the Utah campus.

Completion of the Critical Student Information Survey is required to obtain the RVU Student ID Badge. Use of the badge by anyone other than the person to whom it

was issued is strictly prohibited. The cardholder is responsible for any and all losses associated with their card. RVU Student ID Badges are the property of RVU and must be returned on request.

It is the responsibility of the University to ensure the safety and security of all its students and employees. All students are expected to wear their RVU ID Badge at all times in a visible location above the waist when in RVU buildings. Current students may request the replacement of ID badges according to the following information.

Campus Safety and Security will replace one (1) issued ID badge at no charge to current employees and students; however, subsequent requests to replace additional ID badges may result in a fee of \$10 each. Replacement for ID badges will be referred to the Safety and Security Department and payment will be made through the Finance Department prior to the creation of a new ID badge.

## Marketing and Communications

### Marketing and Communications

The RVU Marketing Department provides many services for members of the RVU community:

#### Hometown News Program

Upon matriculation and graduation, students will be given the opportunity to have a press release written about their accomplishment and sent to their hometown newspaper of choice. Students will receive information on the Hometown News program via email. It can also be accessed by sending an email to [marketing@rvu.edu](mailto:marketing@rvu.edu).

#### Press Releases

If students, faculty, or staff would like to have a press release created and distributed about an event, accomplishment (either individually or departmentally), please contact [marketing@rvu.edu](mailto:marketing@rvu.edu).

#### Vista View Newsletter

The Vista View is a quarterly publication that is produced by the Marketing Department with the intention of communicating news, events, and accomplishments to the entire RVU community. Students and employees are encouraged to send in

information about any accomplishments (such as posters, presentations, publications) and milestones (engagements, marriage, births) to [marketing@rvu.edu](mailto:marketing@rvu.edu).

#### Event Marketing

When students or clubs are holding events, they can contact Marketing for assistance in planning, materials (such as fliers), and/or social media and regular media marketing.

#### Photography

The Marketing Department will be happy to provide photography services for student events. Please notify Marketing of the event at least two weeks in advance to ensure adequate coverage.

#### Apparel and Products

Marketing approval is required for any apparel or merchandise that students or employees would like to produce that uses the RVU logo, wordmark, mascot, or any other reference to the University or its programs. The Marketing Department will ensure compliance in several areas:

- The RVU logo or wordmark, if used, has not been tampered with, distorted, or changed in any way. This policy is true for fliers and graphics created by students as well.
- If a one-color logo or wordmark is used, it must be one of six colors: black, white, gray, RVU red, RVU tan, or RVU cream.
- If one of the following words/phrases appear—Rocky Vista University, RVU, Rocky Vista University College of Osteopathic Medicine, RVUCOM, RVUCOM-SU, RVU PA, Physician Assistant Program, MSBS—that it be one of the following fonts: Michaelangelo, Arial, Palatino Linotype, or Bell MT. If none of these choices are available, similfont options will be considered and must be approved by the Marketing Department.
- Additionally, if any of these phrases are used, they must be one of the six official colors (listed above).
- If using RVU, RVU PA, MSBS, RVUCOM, they must be in all capital letters.
- When using RVU abbreviation, COM or PA must also be abbreviated. Likewise, when writing out "Rocky Vista University" in full, "College of Osteopathic Medicine" or "Physician Assistant Program" must also be written out in full.

#### Website

The Marketing Department is responsible for maintaining and updating the RVU website. If a student or employee has suggestions or revisions for the

website, they should contact [marketing@rvu.edu](mailto:marketing@rvu.edu). Any revisions or suggestions is subject to the Website Policy, which can be accessed at [DynamicPolicy](#)

## Email Signature Policy

RVU utilizes a standardized email signature for students and employees, in order to maintain consistent branding for the University, to exhibit professionalism, and to identify spam emails. The Marketing Department is responsible for maintaining and enforcing this policy, as well as ensuring the appropriate branding and representation of the University. Examples of the signature and instructions for setting it up are located in [DynamicPolicy](#) under "Email Signature Policy and Instructions".

## Social Media Policy

The Marketing Department is responsible for maintaining and enforcing this policy, as well as ensuring the appropriate branding and representation of the University. The Marketing Department reserves the right to make changes to the social media policy at any time.

### Affiliated User Sites

Affiliated user sites are defined as accounts or pages that are officially associated with and approved by RVU. These accounts or pages may be run by student clubs or interest groups, tracks, departments, or fellows. Any accounts or pages that bear the RVU name or branding must receive approval or action will be taken to close the account or page. To become an affiliated user site, the administrator should contact [marketing@rvu.edu](mailto:marketing@rvu.edu). Any existing account or site that bears the RVU name or branding must receive approval through the above process or action will be taken to close the account/site.

Posts must be service- or education-based or should further the objective of the student club, interest group, track, or department. It is the responsibility of the account or page administrator to ensure that posts accurately reflect RVU's core values. Communications on social media sites must comply with all applicable University policies.

### Official Class Groups on Facebook

Facebook groups offer a place for students to talk, share information, post advertisements or requests, and support one another. Every year, a representative of the Marketing Department will create a Facebook group for each new matriculating class. As this is an official RVU account, it will be subject to the Code of

Conduct. Students may not create other groups for the class, though they may create personal groups that are not linked to RVU by name or branding.

Membership is open to students who have matriculated into or plan to matriculate into the cohort for the group page they are requesting membership for. Students from other classes may also join if they are representatives from the following student organizations: Student Government Association (SGA); Class Council; Peer Mentor; Tutor; or Ambassador. Students from other classes who do not meet that criteria and who wish to promote events, housing opportunities, or other appropriate content to the page are welcome to reach out to the Marketing Department or to student leadership to have the content posted to the page on their behalf.

### Posting on Personal Sites

Members of the RVU Community are encouraged to share University news and events that are a matter of public record with their social networks. However, despite the site or account being personal, if there is a violation of RVU's Code of Conduct or Appropriate Conduct and Discipline, students or employees may still face disciplinary action, particularly if RVU is tagged or mentioned in the post.

### Confidentiality

Proprietary information about RVU should not be posted on social media. This includes, but is not limited to, personal information about students, alumni, employees, contractors, or partners. Information obtained from internal or confidential meetings—such as financial, legal, or operational information, strategies, and forecasts—should not be posted on social media or affiliated user sites.

Patients and their right to privacy is protected by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Never disclose a patient's name or identifiable information on social media, nor use their image without their permission (or that of a guardian, if the patient is a minor).

Protected information must not be disclosed through social media. This includes information about students' personal or educational records, and all other sensitive information outlined in the US federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Violations of FERPA or HIPAA via social media will be referred to the Office of Student Affairs (students) or Human Resources (employees). Additionally, violations may result in an official site or account being deactivated. To view the Social Media Policy in full, it can be found on [DynamicPolicy](#).

### Professional Communications

Students and employees are expected to abide by the Code of Conduct and behave professionally in all types of communication—whether in public or private conversation. Online forms of communication include but are not limited to forums, gaming platforms, messaging apps, and social media platforms. The following communication is specifically prohibited:

- Personal attacks on any RVU community member, including fellow students, faculty, or staff.
- Any language which can be described as vulgar, obscene, threatening, abusive, intimidating, or harassing.
- Discriminatory comments, hate speech, or hostility towards others on account of race, religion, sex, ethnicity, nationality, citizenship, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity.
- Any posts which are derogatory, disrespectful, demeaning, or disparaging.
- Content determined to be inappropriate, including offensive, obscene, racist, homophobic, sexist or sexually explicit language or photos.

Inappropriate communication should be referred to the Office of Student Affairs and may result in disciplinary sanctions, including reprimand, probation, suspension, or even dismissal. Refer to the section in this Handbook "Disciplinary Sanctions" for additional information.

## Student Affairs

### Career and Professional Development

The Career and Professional Development team is dedicated to setting RVU students up for success during and after their time at RVU by providing resources to guide students in making informed decisions and successfully planning their careers through professional development. The team encourages students to cultivate their professional skills including, but not limited to, resiliency, service, innovation, and collegiality. Information is provided on an individual or group basis, as well as through a variety of programs, workshops, and specialty interest groups. The team provides a variety of services including but not limited to ePortfolio creation, start-to-finish CV support, professional profile planning, specialty exploration, career and residency information, advice on specialty competitiveness and attaining letters of recommendation. Students are encouraged to make an appointment with a team member once per semester throughout their entire educational career.

## Disabilities and Academic Accommodations

Rocky Vista University recognizes disability as an integral part of diversity and is committed to creating an inclusive and equitable educational environment for students with disabilities. Students are required to meet the technical standards set forth by the college/program in which they are enrolled, with or without reasonable accommodations. RVU complies with federal and state law prohibiting discrimination against any applicant or enrolled student on the basis of race, color, religion, sexual preference, age, disability, or other protected status. In accordance with its obligations under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Section 5.04 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, RVU does not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities in admission or in access to programs and activities.

Students who may qualify for accommodations include those who have received accommodations previously or who have been diagnosed with a condition impacting one or more major life activities (such as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, learning, walking, seeing, hearing, breathing, and working). Although students with temporary illness or injury are not considered disabled by law, every reasonable effort to accommodate their needs will be exercised.

If you feel you meet these criteria or would like to discuss your eligibility for accommodations, you are encouraged to complete our registration form.

Requests for accommodations and services are evaluated on an individual, case-by-case basis and are dependent on a student's functional limitations within a given environment. Through an interactive dialog facilitated by Disability Services, all relevant factors, including the impact of the disability on the student's access to a course or a program, supporting clinical or diagnostic documentation, and the relevant learning outcomes of the given program, will be considered. Requests for accommodations that would result in an alteration of the fundamental nature or learning outcome of a course or a program are not reasonable and will not be approved.

Clinical documentation or other diagnostic information submitted to Disability Services is kept confidential and is released to a third party only with the student's written permission or as required by law. General information about a student's disability and accommodation request/s, however, may be shared with other RVU officials or, in limited circumstances, with third parties who have a legitimate educational need to know. The student's disabilities file is maintained by the RVU Disability Officer and is held separately from the student's official academic record.

Students requesting accommodations must follow the process outlined below.

## **Accommodations Request Process**

### **Step 1: Complete the Initial Accommodation Request Form**

It is the student's responsibility to initiate the process with Disability Services as soon as possible after committing to attend RVU, in order to ensure timely approval and implementation of approved accommodations. While requests may be submitted at any point throughout the year, students should consider that the interactive process, including documentation review and eligibility notification, typically requires two (2) weeks. Incomplete documentation may delay the review process.

### **Step 2: Schedule an Appointment with Disability Services**

After submitting your Initial Accommodation Request Form, you will receive an email with a link to schedule your Welcome Meeting with Disability Services.

Meetings can be held virtually for students on either campus or in-person for students on the Utah campus.

Our first priority is meeting with you. Please do not delay submitting your request due to documentation concerns. The Disability Officer will discuss acceptable types of documentation during your Welcome Meeting, if you are initially unsure what you may submit.

### **Step 3: Welcome Meeting**

The Welcome Meeting is the beginning of an interactive process in which the Disability Officer will talk with you about disability-related barriers you may be experiencing, any history of accommodations you may have, as well as possible accommodations that may be reasonable and appropriate in your situation. You will also have the opportunity to ask questions, provide information and otherwise engage with the Disability Officer to understand how accommodations work within a medical education setting and what to expect relative to next steps in the process of establishing your eligibility.

### **Step 4: Documentation Review and Notification of Eligibility Determination**

Upon receipt of the Initial Contact Form-Request for Accommodations and other supporting documentation, the student's eligibility for accommodations will be reviewed and the student will receive a Notification of Eligibility Determination. The eligibility notification will specify the accommodations for which the student has been approved, and copies will be sent to the Office of Testing and appropriate RVU officials. Once approved

for accommodations, the Testing Center will send out instructions for the administration and location of exams with accommodations.

Sometimes a student may be asked to provide additional comprehensive documentation/information if previous documentation is outdated or does not include sufficient relevant information to determine the impact of the disability. Last-minute submission of documentation may result in unavoidable delays in consideration of requested services.

Please note that accommodations granted by the University are not applicable retroactively and will not affect past administrative or academic actions, or past performance evaluations and examinations.

## **Annual Accommodation Renewal Process**

Students must request to renew their accommodations at the start of each academic year. Failure to request a renewal of accommodations may delay timely implementation. In order to verify their intent to continue using accommodations in subsequent academic years, students should complete the Accommodation Renewal Request Form prior to the first day of Fall semester instruction.

## **National Board Accommodations**

Students seeking accommodations for licensure exams (USMLE, COMLEX, and PANCE) must directly petition the National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME), the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners (NBOME), or the National Commission on the Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA).

## **ADA Accommodation Review Request**

If you have concerns about the support provided by Disability Services or related procedures, or if you believe that you have been denied reasonable accommodations as requested, we recommend initiating a conversation with the Disability Officer to discuss your concerns. If the matter remains unresolved or if you disagree with a determination reached by the Disability Officer, you may appeal the decision by submitting an Accessibility Grievance Form. This form will be reviewed by the ADA Committee, and you will be contacted within seven (7) days of submission. You will then be given an opportunity to share additional details regarding your specific situation and the reason for your appeal request.

If a student is denied accommodations by the ADA Committee, the student can appeal the decision to the Associate/ Assistant Dean of Student Affairs.

## Educational Support

Educational support is available to all students. Services are provided to all students who may be experiencing academic difficulty and wish to enhance the efficiency and the effectiveness of their study and test-taking strategies. Support is offered through individual consultation tailored to identify potential problem areas and provide strategies and resources which meet each student's specific needs and are integrated with the course curricula.

### Individual Consultation

- Confidential, individualized consultation regarding learning styles, time management, test-taking strategies, and academic performance;
- Diagnostic evaluation of study practices and their effectiveness;
- Structured intervention strategies to increase learning productivity and efficiency;
- Individual preparation for courses, clerkships, and licensure examinations;
- Referrals to on- and off-campus professionals;
- Information about resources to enhance learning, and
- Learning disabilities and ADA Accommodations.

### Workshops and Group Sessions

- Effective study strategies, test taking, and time management; and
- Strategy and resource preparation strategies for comprehensive examinations (such as COMLEX and USMLE)
- Small and large group sessions available

### Tutoring

Tutors are a vital part of RVU and a valuable resource for all students. The tutoring program provides support for students within each course. Student tutors have a strong level of understanding/ and competence of the course content and are available at no charge. Tutoring sessions are available in one on one, small group, and large group sessions. For questions about the tutoring program or assistance with scheduling, please contact the Office of Student Affairs.

Educational Support Services are free of charge for RVU students. Students may contact the Office of Student Affairs to request educational support services.

## Mental Health and Wellness Services

All students and their household have access to a variety of mental health and wellness services, including:

- 24/7 access to a mental health clinician by calling 866-640-4777;
- Individual counseling/therapy;
- Couple counseling;
- Group counseling/therapy driven by need and interest;
- Legal consultation;
- Health coaching;
- Financial Coaching;
- Help finding resources such as housing, childcare, and health services; and
- Psychoeducational and mental health outreach programming to support mental health and wellness.

Information about mental health and wellness services is maintained on the RVU website [www.rvu.edu/mentalhealth](http://www.rvu.edu/mentalhealth). Some services are provided through RVU's contract with WellConnect. All services provided by RVU Mental Health and Wellness and WellConnect are available at no cost, and all treatment services are confidential, in accordance with applicable law, and not part of the student academic record. For concerns outside the scope of practice of RVU Mental Health and Wellness and WellConnect, individuals can receive a referral to services in the community. When receiving community services, individuals and their personal health insurance are responsible for all fees that are incurred through the utilization of such services.

### Colorado Physician Health Program

(303) 860-0122; [www.cphp.org](http://www.cphp.org)  
899 Logan Street, Suite 410, Denver, CO

The Colorado Physician Health Program (CPHP) is a nonprofit organization, independent of other medical organizations and the government. CPHP provides peer assistance services for licensed physicians and physician assistants of Colorado as well as medical students and physician assistant students in Colorado. CPHP clients have assured confidentiality as required by law or regulation. Peer assistance services aid individuals who have any health problems such as emotional, psychological, or medical problems. For example, CPHP assists its clients with medical and/or psychiatric conditions (e.g. Alzheimer's disease, HIV infection, depression or substance abuse) as well as psychosocial conditions (e.g. family problems or stress related to work or professional liability difficulties). CPHP provides diagnostic evaluation, treatment referral, and treatment monitoring and support services. CPHP believes that early intervention and evaluation



offer the best opportunity for a successful outcome and preventing the health condition from needlessly interfering with medical practice.

## Office of Research and Scholarly Activity

Rocky Vista University is committed to producing high-quality basic, clinical, and educational research and scholarly works to achieve new heights in medical education and be a thought-leader in healthcare research. As such, the institution supports research and scholarly activities both financially and with support services available through the Office of Research and Scholarly Activity.

In order to achieve this, all students participating in research or scholarly activity agree to follow all policies and procedures outlined by the Office of Research and Scholarly Activity as found in DynamicPolicy and linked to the University's website (<https://www.rvu.edu/academics/office-of-research-and-scholarly-activity/>). Additionally, students will be able to find a quick-start guide on the website that will walk them through the steps of starting at research project at RVU.

RVU's Institutional Review Board (IRB) must review and approve all human subjects research. Information about the IRB can be found at: <https://www.rvu.edu/academics/office-of-research-and-scholarly-activity/irb-and-human-subjects-research/>.

## Appendix: Student Resources

### Student Services Quick-Reference Guide

Questions or concerns regarding...	Refer to...
Academic Standing/Class Rank/GPA	Director of Preclinical Education (DO); Program Director (MSBS and PA); Registrar (all programs)
ADA Accommodations	Educational Support/Student Affairs
Background Checks/Drug Screening/Health Records	Registrar
Career Advising	Advisor/Student Affairs/Clinical Education
Clinical Clerkships	Clinical Rotation Coordinator/Clinical Education
Coursework Grades	Course Director/Faculty
Enrollment Verification/Letter of Good Standing	Registrar
ExamSoft	Office of Testing
Financial Aid	Student Financial Services

Questions or concerns regarding...	Refer to...
Health Insurance (student)	Student Financial Services
Leave of Absence	Associate/Assistant Dean of Student Affairs (DO); Program Director (MSBS and PA)
Library Holdings/Databases/Collections	Library
Medical School Performance Evaluation (MSPE)	Registrar
Mental Health Counseling	Counselor/Student Affairs
MyVista Student Portal	IT Help Desk
Name Changes (legal)	Registrar
Organizing Events	Student Life/Student Affairs
Parking Pass	Security
Peer Mentors	Student Life/Student Affairs
Printing on Campus	Print Center
Scholarships	Student Financial Services
Student Clubs/Organizations	Student Life/Student Affairs
Student ID	Security
Transcripts	Registrar
Tuition and Fees	Student Financial Services
Tutoring/Study Resources	Educational Support/Student Affairs
VSLO/ERAS	Registrar/Faculty Advisor
Wireless Internet Access	IT Help Desk
Withdrawals	Associate/Assistant Dean of Student Affairs (DO); Program Director (MSBS or PA)
Sexual Misconduct	Title IX Coordinator
Complaints (of a Serious Nature)	RVU Website Under Student Complaints

## Frequently Used Terms

Acronym or Term	Meaning
AAMC	Association of American Medical Colleges
ACLS	Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support (certification)
AACOM	American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine
AACOMAS	The centralized online application service for US colleges of osteopathic medicine
AOA	American Osteopathic Association
ARC-PA	Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant
BLS	Basic Life Support (certification)
Basic Science Curriculum (BSC)	A required classroom session in which faculty stress application of previous basic science material to clinical case scenarios. The emphasis is on application, integration, and interaction between faculty and students versus passive learning.
Careers in Medicine	AAMC program that provides students with access to information about medical specialties, preparation for residency and practice options to maximize career potential.
Class Rank	A measure of how a student's performance compares to other students in the same class/program. Class rank is calculated based on total number of quality points earned.
Clinical Integration Session (CIS)	A required classroom session in which faculty stress application of previous material to clinical case scenarios. The emphasis is on application, integration, and interaction between faculty and students versus passive learning.

Acronym or Term	Meaning
COCA	Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation
COMLEX	Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Licensing Examination
CV	Curriculum Vitae; a short account of one's career and qualifications
DEIB	Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging
DSA	Designated Student Assignment; a "self-study" assignment created by an identified faculty member consisting of a specific reading assignment, learning objectives, and examination questions that will not be accompanied by a lecture of laboratory session. Students are held responsible for DSA assignments during a CIS, quizzes, and examinations.
ECE	Early Clinical Experience
ERAS	The Electronic Residency Application System is an AAMC application that offers a centralized online application service used to apply to residency programs.
Examination	A summative evaluation of student learning outcomes delivered via proctored written format, computerized format, or practical format.
ExamSoft/Exemplify	Exam software used to provide a secure and stable testing environment for students.
Exxat	New software portal used to manage clinical clerkship rotations throughout the PA program and clerkships through the third and fourth years of the DO program.
Fellowship	The fellowship program is a 12-month training program integrated within the DO student's third and fourth clinical clerkship years. An additional year is added to the student's osteopathic medical training to accommodate his/her clinical clerkship and fellowship obligations. The fellowship program affords students the opportunity to teach the science and art of osteopathic principles and practice, simulation or anatomy.
FERPA	Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, which is a federal law that protects the privacy of and access to personal student educational information
Global Block Schedule (GBS)	Basic schedule of when courses in the DO program run each semester. This schedule does not provide detailed information regarding start and end times or assigned classroom
GME	Graduate Medical Education
Grade Point Average (GPA)	An indication of a student's academic achievement while enrolled at RVU. GPA is calculated as the total number of quality points received over a given period divided by the total number of credits attempted
HIPAA	Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 is United States legislation that provides data privacy and security provisions for safeguarding medical information.
HLC	The Higher Learning Commission; RVU's current institutional accreditor
IPE	Interprofessional Education; occasions when two or more professions learn with, from and about each other to improve collaboration and the quality of care
IRB	Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects Research
Laboratory	A minimum 50-60-minute session in a laboratory or clinical setting that requires "hands on" instruction
Lecture	A standard didactic presentation involving direct faculty instruction in a classroom setting, lasting a minimum of 50 minutes. Each hour of lecture (50 minutes) assumes a minimum of two (2) hours of out-of-class student work.
LMS	Learning Management System; a software application for the administration, documentation, tracking, reporting and delivery of educational courses. RVU currently utilizes an integrated LMS that can be accessed directly through MyVista.
LOR	Letter of Recommendation, typically written by a faculty member or preceptor (author). Used when applying for clinical clerkship clerkships and/or residency applications.
Lottery	Managed by the Department of Clinical Education, the Lottery is the Distribution of Clerkship Assignments

Acronym or Term	Meaning
MODS	process in which current OMS II student doctors are assigned a geographical region to complete core clinical clerkships during OMS III and, if necessary, OMS IV. The Medical Operational Data System used to complete the initial electronic portion of the Military GME application
MSPE	Medical School Performance Evaluation; can also be referred to as a Dean's Letter. Honest and objective document summarizes a student's personal attributes, experiences, academic accomplishments, and summative evaluation. All fourth-year medical students will have their MSPE composed and finalized before October 1st of each year and uploaded into ERAS by the Office of the Registrar.
MyVista	RVU's online portal where students, faculty, and staff can log into and access important program, financial, campus, and educational information, as needed.
NBME	National Board of Medical Examiners (administers the USMLE exams)
NBOME	National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners (administers the COMLEX exams)
New Innovations	System used to manage clinical clerkship clerkships throughout the third and fourth years of the DO program.
NMS	National Matching Services; service that manages the osteopathic match (among others)
NRMP	National Resident Matching Program; service that manages the allopathic match
OMM	Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine
OPP	Osteopathic Principles and Practice
OSCE	Objective Structured Clinical Examination
Post-Exam Review (PER)	Faculty-led review of examination questions and results following a major examination.
Preceptor	A practicing physician who gives personal instruction, training, and supervision to a medical student or young physician (assigned for each clinical clerkship clerkship).
Quality Points	The cumulative points earned in a given program for coursework completed and grade(s) earned. Points are calculated by multiplying the numeric grade (in the DO program) or the assigned quality points based on the letter grade (MSBS program) by the number of credit hours for the course.
Remediation	The opportunity to remedy a previously-failed attempt
Rocky the Fighting Prairie Dog	RVU's mascot for the Colorado campus
Rocky the Roadrunner	RVU's mascot for the Southern Utah campus
RVUCOM	Rocky Vista University College of Osteopathic Medicine
RVUCOM-SU	Rocky Vista University College of Osteopathic Medicine - Southern Utah
San Francisco Match	Residency and Fellowship matching service for select specialties.
Semester Credit Hour (SCH)	A credit hour is an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally-established equivalency that reasonably approximate no less than 45 hours of instructional/non-instructional time for every one (1) credit.
Shadowing	Opportunity available to students to observe the daily life of a doctor and obtain insight from professionals about their experiences and how they view their field
Shelf Exam	Required exam administered by the Office of Clinical Education after the completion of each Core Clerkship.
SOAP Notes	An acronym for subjective, objective, assessment, and plan, a SOAP note is a method of documentation employed by healthcare providers to write out notes in a patient's chart
Standardized Patient (SP)	Someone who has been trained to portray, in a consistent, standardized manner, a patient in a medical situation

Acronym or Term	Meaning
Titer/Titer Lab Report	A titer (pronounced TIE-der) is a laboratory test that measures the presence and amount of antibodies in blood. If the test is positive (above a particular known value) the individual has immunity. If the test is negative (no immunity) or equivocal (not enough immunity) you need to be vaccinated. A Titer Lab Report is generated by the lab that tested the blood sample. The Titer Lab Report must include the test type, exact values (reference range), signature, and date to be acceptable.
Tracks	Extracurricular admission-based concentrations within the DO program that invite students to explore and experience a particular area of medicine closely.
Transcript	An official record of a student's work, showing courses taken and grades achieved
Urology Match	Residency match program for medical students seeking residency in Urology
USMLE	United States Medical Licensing Examination
Visiting Student Learning Opportunities (VSLO)	The AAMC VSLO program merged two existing visiting student programs: the Visiting Student Opportunities (VSLO) Application Service (VSAS®) program that focused exclusively on U.S. domestic (formerly VSAS) away electives and the Global Health Learning Opportunities (GHLO®) program that facilitated international mobility into the U.S., from the U.S. to electives abroad, and from one non-U.S. location to another.