

 **RESPECT** | GRADUATE
SCHOOL

Faculty Handbook

RGS Faculty Handbook

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Introduction

The Respect Graduate School (hereafter RGS and/or School and/or Institution) Handbook has been prepared solely for informational purposes. It does not create an employment contract or terms of employment or any legally binding obligations.

The Faculty Handbook describes the provisions of the legal documents and corporate policies that govern the School's policies, programs and benefit plans in plain language, so that they may be readily understood. Although particularly applicable to full-time faculty members, many of the provisions and policies are also applicable to adjunct faculty, administrators and staff. The Handbook does not cover every situation and is not intended to replace planning documents or institutional policies or practices, nor can it be construed to change their meaning. In the event that the descriptions in this Handbook disagree with those in other documents, policies, or practices, those documents, policies, or practices will govern the administration of plans and programs.

RGS is committed to reviewing its policies and benefits continually. Accordingly, the Institution expressly reserves the rights to review, change, interpret or terminate any of these policies, programs or benefit plans, at any time and without prior notice, including the terms of participation and any coverage offered to its retirees.

The Faculty Handbook may be amended through the following procedure:

1. proposals for amendments and their rationales may be made to the Vice President by students, faculty, administrators or Board members;
2. the Vice President shall present the proposals and rationales to the student body and to full-time faculty and administrators for discussion and possible revision;
3. upon a majority, positive vote by two of the constituencies, the recommended amendment shall be considered by the Board; and
4. upon the approval by a majority of Board members, the amendment shall be incorporated into the Faculty Handbook.
5. RGS is committed to providing equal educational opportunities. It is an inclusive institution where people treat each other with dignity and respect. Therefore, it will not discriminate against persons on the basis of race, gender, age, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or veteran status.

The Institution's policies, programs and staff benefits will be administered without discrimination due to race, gender, age, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation or veteran status.

1. About the Respect Graduate School

The Plan of Organization and Administration

RGS is a legally incorporated professional graduate school in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. It is independent of any other entity, organization or movement. The Institution is governed through its Board of Trustees (hereafter the Board). The Board's authority, duties and functions are indicated in the Respect Graduate School's Bylaws. To accomplish its mission and vision, RGS offers a graduate program leading to the Master of Arts degree in Islamic Studies (MAIS).

The Institution functions through an administrative organization consisting of the President, Vice President, Dean of Academics, and Dean of Student Affairs. Each is responsible to the President for the administrative functions required by the educational programs of an institution of higher education. Each of these officers also serves in a staff capacity for the Board, as determined by the Board.

The Fiscal Year and the Academic Calendar

The fiscal year (hereafter FY) and the academic calendar (hereafter AC) begin on July 1 and end on June 30 of the calendar year.

Semesters

There are two semesters of thirteen weeks each. Normally, the First or Fall Semester begins on the last Monday or Tuesday of August, and the Second or Spring Semester begins on the last Monday or Tuesday of January. At the discretion of the Board, the President, Dean of Academics and involved faculty, RGS may offer summer session(s) and a January session. The President, in consultation with the Board, Dean of Academics, Dean of Student Affairs and Vice President, sets the schedules for the timing of school closings and re-openings related to religious observances, breaks, reading periods, final examinations and deadlines for the submission of semester grades by the faculty. The schedule for the AC is to be made public by July 15.

In the event of concerns related to weather conditions or emergencies, the President is to make the final decision on whether or not to close the School and to determine when classes are to resume. Due notification is to be given on RGS website, through telephone answering facilities and over local television and radio stations.

2. Institutional Statements and Mandates

The Mission of RGS is to be an institution where students and faculty engage in research, teaching, learning and service with an emphasis on Islamic Studies for the public good. In addition to offering students and faculty academically excellent and stimulating opportunities, RGS will promote engagement with, and service to, the local and wider communities, and will provide essential and mutually beneficial connections with academic institutions and social agencies.

RGS is committed to providing equal educational opportunities. It is an inclusive institution where people treat each other with dignity and respect. Therefore, it does not discriminate against persons on the basis of race, religion, color, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation or disability.

The Vision of RGS is to serve society by educating men and women for scholarship, especially in Islamic Studies, and for leadership in Muslim communities and for society in general, developing knowledge and putting it into practice with excellence in the nation and the world.

To accomplish its vision and mission, RGS offers a graduate program leading to the degree of Master of Arts in Islamic Studies (MAIS).

Mandates that RGS seeks to fulfill are as follows:

- a) RGS encourages and expects the use of inclusive language in all academic and organizational communication, whether written or spoken. Inclusive language involves areas such as gender, race, class, age, physical differences, ethnicity, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status and disability.
- b) RGS students, faculty, administrators and staff are free to examine and discuss all questions of interest to them and to express opinions publicly and privately. Academic freedom involves respecting the views of others and submitting one's own positions to scholarly critique. Students, faculty and staff are free to express their positions in public media with the provision that they speak as individuals whose positions do not necessarily express the stance of RGS. They are always free to support causes by orderly means, i.e., those that do not disrupt the regular and

essential operations of RGS. The President, the Board chairperson, and the Director of Communications may speak publicly on behalf of RGS.

The RGS community is to be free from all forms of conduct that can be considered harassing, coercive, or disruptive. Sexual harassment, including sexual violence within the community, is unlawful, as is harassment based upon race, color, religion, national origin, disability, age, or membership in any other protected group.

3. The Faculty

Academic Freedom

Faculty members shall perform their duties in a climate of academic freedom and moral responsibility and in view of the Institution's mission and vision.

Full-Time Faculty Appointments

Full-time appointments to RGS faculty are made by the Board, upon the recommendation of the President. In the process of developing the recommendation, the President consults with the Dean of Academics. Initial offers for appointment are made for three (3) academic years unless so noted in the proposed contract. Full-time faculty contracts may be renewed on the recommendation of the Dean of Academics and the President to the Board, for periods approved by the Board. Recommendations for renewal are based on overall academic performance, student evaluations, observation of the faculty member's instructional abilities, service to the RGS, and service to the wider community. Changes in the conditions of employment, such as salary increases or promotions, are announced in writing by a Board resolution, whenever appropriate, usually during the spring.

Duties, Compensation and Remuneration

The Board, in consultation with the President and the Dean of Academics, shall establish the faculty members' duties, compensation and remuneration, within the limits, if any, set by express written agreements or contracts that may change such duties, compensation and remuneration.

Faculty Classifications

Full-time faculty members shall be classified and ranked according to the following titles: Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, and Instructor.

Part-Time Faculty Members

Part-time faculty members shall be appointed and removed by the President. These persons may be designated as adjunct faculty, lecturers, or visiting professors. At the discretion of the President, part-time faculty may be granted seats, but not votes, at faculty meetings and may be appointed to committees and/or task forces.

Administrators with Faculty Rank

Upon recommendation by the President, made after the President consults with the faculty, the Board of Trustees may elect to enter into term contracts with the faculty. The Vice President and Deans Dean of Academics may be such administrators with faculty rank. The renewal of full-time faculty term contracts and promotions shall be recommended by the President, after consultation with the faculty, and submitted to the Board of Trustees for its approval. Officers of Instruction who serve under term contracts shall be reviewed regularly, as required by, and in accordance with, Board policy and procedures, if any.

Full-Time Faculty Teaching Load

The normal teaching load is six courses per academic year. Supervision of student theses will be assigned in addition to the teaching load, unless alternate arrangements are made through the Dean of Academics. RGS emphasizes that teaching is enriched by research and service in support of the goals of graduate education.

Concerning Full-Time Faculty Teaching, Research and Service

Teaching encompasses all aspects of the educational process as it relates uniquely to each discipline, reflects changing pedagogies, and responds in service to our students and their thesis research and writing.

Research involves ongoing learning within one's field of study, the development of new knowledge, the expression of new skills, publication and active commitment to, and participation in, one's affiliated national and international professional societies.

Service involves the giving of time, talent and energy for the greater good of the community and reflects an awareness of the responsibility to give back to the community from the fruits of one's scholarship and practice.

Faculty Development

RGS expects each full-time faculty member to submit a proposal for each academic year, outlining ongoing learning within his or her field of study, the creation of new knowledge, and active commitment to, and participation in one's affiliated research. Proposals are to be submitted to the Dean of Academics.

In addition to the faculty development program mentioned above, RGS offers a faculty research initiative grant program to support excellence in scholarly work, by providing funding for selected faculty research projects, particularly to those that involve graduate students. As resources permit, the Office of the Dean of Academics, working with a review committee, will make awards of up to \$15,000 in response to the research proposals submitted. The guidelines are available through the Office of the Dean of Academics. Faculty and student applicants for the awards are to submit to the Dean of Academics a narrative detailing an explanation of the trip and expected outcomes or deliverables, a budget indicating how the money will be spent, and any supporting documents that can support the application.

RGS recognizes and encourages both faculty and student research efforts by establishing a faculty and student awards program. As resources permit, this program will provide grants for fieldwork and for travel and accommodations to both faculty and students, in support of attendance and presenting at conferences. RGS will endeavor to provide its students with global credentials through experiences abroad, international studies, and domestic and international internships.

Faculty Compensation and Benefits

Upon consultation with the President, the Vice President and the Dean of Academics, the Board has constructed a grid that indicates the range of salary compensation for the several faculty rankings, from Professor to Instructor. The grid will be considered for revision following the first semester of each FY.

The grid for Fiscal Years 2016-2017, 2017-2018 is:

Full Professor: \$30,000 – 60,000

Associate Professor:	\$24,000 – 55,000
Instructor:	\$24,000 – 35,000
Adjunct, Lecturer	\$3,000 – 4,000 (min. enrollment of 5 full time students per course)

The President and the Dean of Academics will provide the Board in executive session with recommendations for the next FY salary of each faculty member (Note Bylaws, Article 10, Section 1, v). Normally, letters of contract renewal will be tendered to faculty members prior to the end of the First Semester and will include the amount of salary and other benefits, as well as other contractual arrangements. If they accept the terms, faculty members are expected to return signed contracts before the start of the Spring Semester.

In accordance with federal, state, county and city laws, the institution pays towards mandated employer contributions such state and local taxes as well as Social Security, Medicare, Unemployment Compensation, and Workers' Compensation benefit programs.

Payment of salaries for all faculty shall made on the first (1st) business day of the month through automatic direct deposit in the faculty member's bank checking account. The salaries of full-time faculty will be paid for the twelve- (12-) month FY in equal installments each month. Adjunct faculty salaries will be calculated in equal installments for each semester during which the person is teaching at the RGS. Normally, the adjunct faculty will receive one-half of their salaries at six weeks into the semester and the other half when final grades are submitted to the registrar.

Faculty Responsibilities

All faculty members shall inform the Dean of Academics, include in their syllabi, and post on their office doors the days and times during which they will be available to consult with their advisees or any other students. Faculty members are expected to maintain these times.

Every faculty member shall prepare a syllabus for each course listed in the RGS Catalog that the faculty member is scheduled to teach, in accordance with a schedule established by the Dean of Academics. The Dean may suggest and/or request changes in the syllabus in the interest of clarification.

The syllabus for each course shall include the following elements:

- a course description, based on the listing in the RGS Catalog, or for a course not yet listed in the Catalog but approved by the Faculty,
- a list of required and recommended texts or resources, with full titles, publishers and sources, and ISBN numbers, as appropriate,
- a statement of the learning objectives or goals to be achieved by the students by the conclusion of the course,
- a set of requirements to be met or other activities to be fulfilled by students, with due dates, instructions for formatting written work and anticipated penalties for late submissions, together with the weighting of the requirements and activities in arriving at a final grade; note that no single factor shall count more than 33 percent of the course grade,
- a roster of readings and projected topics for class sessions as part of the class session schedule,
- the Institutional Policy Concerning Course Grades, appended below,
- a clear statement of the faculty member's policies regarding student attendance, excused and unexcused absences, and the late submission of required materials, and
- the faculty member's telephone number(s), email address(es) and office hours.

Faculty who cannot attend class for any reason should notify the Dean of Academic or his/her designee as soon as possible. The Dean will seek a temporary replacement for the faculty member, as needed. Appropriate causes for an absence from teaching duties may include: illness on the part of the faculty member, illness or causes covered by the federal Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, jury duty, the death of a family member and funeral leave, and attendance at a previously Dean-approved academic professional meeting.

Any faculty member proposing to resign his or her office is responsible for giving at least three (3) months written notice to the President, unless relieved by the President from giving such notice. Normally, the resignation is to be effective at the end of the FY. The President is authorized to accept resignations and shall report resignations to the Board. No faculty member shall be deprived of his or her office without at least three (3) months written notice. The President is authorized to suspend any faculty member from the active duties of office. In the event that the President suspends a faculty member, the President shall notify the Board.

Grades

Academic achievement is designated by letter grades, modified by pluses and minuses, to which numerical grade points are assigned. For graduation, as an example, the cumulative grade-point average (GPA) must be no less than 3.00. The quality points and requirements assigned for each grade are as follows:

A = 4.00 points

A- = 3.67 points. These grades are given for achievement of the highest caliber. They reflect independent work, original thinking, and the ability to acquire and effectively use knowledge.

B+ = 3.33 points.

B = 3.00 points.

B- = 2.67 points. These grades are given for higher-than-average achievement. Evidence of independent work and original thinking is expected.

C+ = 2.33 points.

C = 2.00 points.

C- = 1.67 points. These grades are given when the student has demonstrated familiarity with the content of the course, familiarity with the methods of study of the course, and active participation in the work of the class.

D+ = 1.33 points.

D = 1.00 point;

D- = 0.67 point. These grades are given for work below the standards expected by the RGS. They indicate work that in one or more important aspects falls below the average expected of students for graduation. The work is, however, sufficient to be credited for graduation.

F = 0 points. This indicates failure.

W, WF = 0 points. These designations indicate withdrawal from a course before completion. W is assigned for all withdrawals prior to the official withdrawal deadline, normally before the last

four weeks of a term; WF is assigned if the withdrawal takes place after the official withdrawal deadline, except in cases of illness or other extenuating circumstances, as authorized by the Dean of Academics.

P = Pass. Indicates Pass in courses taken on a Pass/No Credit basis. Does not affect the GPA.

NC = No points. Indicates failure in courses taken on a Pass/No Credit basis. Does not affect the GPA.

AUD = No points. The designation Audit is used for students granted permission to attend classes for the benefit they can derive from lectures and discussions but who are not taking the course for credit. An audit designation indicates attendance at a minimum of two-thirds of the class meetings of the course.

INC = 0 points. The designation indicates an Incomplete for the course. It is a temporary grade granted by the Dean of Academics only with the recommendation by the faculty member and on the student's presentation of compelling reasons, such as immediate health issues, bereavement, or similar major reasons for not completing the course's requirements. The student's petition to be granted an incomplete grade is to be accompanied by the course's instructor positive recommendation. The petition is to include a date for the completion of the required work. The Dean for Academics will inform the Registrar that a temporary designation of INC has been granted to the student for a course. The student is to complete the requirements within one calendar year after the Dean of Academic's approval of the petition. Failure to complete the requirements will result in the awarding the grade of F for the course. A student who has an outstanding Incomplete may not register for an Independent Study until the Incomplete is satisfied and a regular grade is registered. Normally, a student may have only one incomplete grade in a semester. Exceptions may be made due to extenuating circumstances on a case-by-case basis by the Dean of Academics in consultation with the Dean of Students and the President.

Note: A grade earned in a final examination will not be weighted more than one-third in computing the final grade for a course.

Every faculty member is to submit to the Registrar and Dean of Academics final grades for each course he or she teaches, on or before the date scheduled by the Dean of Academics. Students shall be informed of their grades through RGS electronic system. Unless agreed to by the Dean of Academics, faculty members who do not meet that schedule shall have their salary payments delayed until the grades are submitted.

Once a faculty member submits a final grade to the Registrar, it cannot be changed by the faculty member unless the faculty member informs the Dean of Academics in writing that he or she has miscalculated the factors that went into calculating the final grade. A student appeal process concerning a grade is indicated below:

Procedure for Student Appeals Concerning Grades

In the event a student believes that an instructor has improperly evaluated a test, paper and/or course grade, the following steps constitute the process to be undertaken:

1. The student is to confer with the faculty member who gave the evaluation. That discussion is to be a face-to-face opportunity unless circumstances warrant a mutually agreed upon exception;

(a) If the discussion results in the student's accepting the faculty member's evaluation(s), the evaluation(s) will be sustained;

(b) In the event the faculty member agrees that the evaluation was not proper and merits a change, then s/he makes the appropriate changes. If the issue involves a change of an already submitted course grade and the faculty member agrees to an adjustment in the course grade, the faculty member is to inform the Dean of Academics and to state the reasons for requesting such a change. The Dean of Academics will inform the Registrar of such a change;

(c) If the faculty member decides that the original evaluation(s) is to stand, and the student contests that decision, the student is to submit a written appeal to the Dean of Academics;

2. The student's appeal is to include the course syllabus, a clear statement of the assignment(s), reasons for appealing the instructor's decisions, and presentation of any paper(s), and tests that are relevant to the appeal. In order for reviewers of the appeal to come to appropriate conclusions, the paper(s) are to be both un-annotated copies by the instructor's comments and annotated by the instructor;

3. Following the submission of the materials indicated above, the Dean of Academics will appoint a Review Committee that will consist of two RGS faculty members (full time or adjunct), and a non-RGS faculty/staff member who is conversant with the appropriate academic field and research techniques. The members of the Review Committee will review the submitted materials;

4. Upon completion of its examination of the materials, the Review Committee will interview both the student and the faculty member to discuss the evaluation(s) and the materials as these relate to the evaluation(s);

5. Within 14 days after the interview(s) the Review Committee will inform the student, the faculty member and the Dean of Academics in writing of its decision to either sustain the evaluation(s) or grant the appeal; and

6. If the student contests the Review Committee's decision, s/he may petition the President for a decision. The student is to furnish the President with the same materials given to the Review Committee and reasons for rejecting the decision of the Review Committee. The President's decision will be final.

* If an appeal involves an evaluation(s) by the Dean of Academics, the Vice President shall step into the roles noted above for the Dean of Academics.

Faculty Engagement in Student Advising

The quality of education that graduate students receive is greatly enhanced if students receive good academic advising at all stages of their program. Their advising needs vary depending on the type of program they are pursuing and their situation as they progress through it. These needs can be met either by one or by several advisors.

The basic task of faculty members as academic advisors is to develop a thorough knowledge of RGS programs, policies and services that are available to students, while attempting to perceive and understand the needs of students. The advising process will provide students with specific and

accurate information, advice and counsel, and will enable students to develop a personal relationship with their advisors. Faculty advising duties at RGS can be classified as follows:

Advising before Enrollment: Through the Registrar and the Dean of Students, RGS will provide accurate, up-to-date information to prospective students about their academic programs, the research interests of the faculty, and degree requirements. Information on the following should be made available: the average time it takes to obtain a degree, the average amount of financial aid available, and employment opportunities after graduation

Advising of New Students: The Dean of Academics will assign to each graduate student a faculty advisor, who, in consultation with the student, will plan a program of study and research in accordance with RGS guidelines. Students will be provided with advice on courses to be taken during the first year; clear maps of the requirements they must meet, including those involving course work, languages, research tools, examinations, internships, and thesis writing; and a delineation of the amount of time expected to complete each step.

Advising of Continuing Students: Faculty advisors shall evaluate student progress and performance on a regular basis (i.e., no less than once per semester) and in an informative and supportive manner. In these evaluations, advisors should inform students about their performance in relation to the expectations of normal progress and to the norms associated with successful degree completion and placement after graduation.

Advising of Thesis Students: The thesis advisor should take reasonable measures to ensure that each graduate student initiates thesis research in a timely fashion; to schedule regular meetings with the advisee to discuss the project; to return comments on written work in a timely fashion; and to clarify co-authorship publication practices; and should take primary responsibility for ensuring that the student receives proper academic advising.

Faculty Responsibilities Concerning Advising Students Engaged in Writing Theses

Degree Candidates in the Academic Track are required to write a Masters level thesis in an area of Islamic studies. The indicated basic points and procedures are to be followed in the preparation and presentation of the thesis.

Basic Points About the Thesis

1. The thesis is a substantial research paper up to 50 pages in length that may be a new research project for the student or a major reworking of an earlier paper by the student.
2. The thesis is to demonstrate the student's ability to locate information, conduct research, analyze sources and synthesize arguments effectively and clearly in proper English.
3. The final version of an accepted thesis is to be deposited in a written format and in an electronic format with the Librarian of the RGS.
4. The written final version is to be put in a black binder. The thesis' pages are to have one-inch margins. As agreed upon by the student, the thesis advisor and Dean for Academics, the thesis may use either endnotes or footnotes. Bibliographical references are to follow the latest edition of the *Chicago Manual of Style*.

Procedures for the Preparation and Presentation of the Thesis

1. Students normally take "MAIS 644 Islamic Studies Methodology" course to be offered in the Fall prior to writing their theses. The course is to assist students in developing methodological skills in research and academic writing. The course culminates in the student's developing a proposal for the thesis. Students who have demonstrated their abilities to undertake graduate level research in other institutions or in their

courses at the RGS, may opt not to take MAIS 644 with the approval of their academic advisors and the Dean for Academics.

2. Prior to the start of the Spring semester students intending to write their theses are to:
 - a. Consult with their academic advisors concerning the topic of the proposed theses and possible theses advisors and two members of the theses committees.
 - b. Gain the consent of a faculty member and Dean for Academics to serve as the thesis advisor and committee members. One member of the committee may be from outside of the RGS.
 - c. Develop a thesis proposal that is approved by the thesis advisor and the Dean for Academics. The proposal is to:
 - i. Include a statement of the issue or argument that will be addressed in the thesis;
 - ii. The importance of the thesis in the field of Islamic Studies;
 - iii. The methodology that the student intends to employ;
 - iv. A survey of relevant literature on the topic;
 - v. A draft outline of the thesis' structure; and
 - vi. A preliminary bibliography

4. Students who are writing theses are to enroll in the course "MAIS 697 - Master's Thesis" and are expected to complete and have their theses approved by the end of the semester. In the event that an individual's theses is not completed and/or approved, the student will receive a grade of Incomplete and is expected to complete the thesis and gain approval according to the conditions stipulated for Incompletes.

5. Students are to consult frequently with their theses advisor and, as appropriate, members of their committees during their research and writing. When the student, thesis advisor, and one other member of the thesis committee consider that the thesis is ready for presentation and defense, the thesis advisor is to notify the Dean for Academics. The Dean will schedule a date, time and place for the defense.

6. While the defense is open to all persons affiliated with the RGS, the student may invite others to be present. The defense itself is to center on the thesis and is to be an opportunity for the student to gain as well as to share insights on their topic specifically, and Islamic studies generally.

7. If the thesis is approved conditionally so that changes and corrections are to be made, the thesis advisor is responsible for ensuring that such changes are made before certifying that the theses is officially approved.

8. A thesis that is accepted without conditions may be deposited directly with the RGS Librarian.

9. The thesis advisor may consult with members of the committee, yet they are responsible for awarding a grade for MAIS 697. The grade is to include consideration of the student's work up to and including the thesis and its defense.

Faculty Responsibilities Concerning Development of Competency Examinations

A. CONCERNING COMPETENCE IN THE RECITATION AND MEMORIZATION OF THE QUR'ĀN

Competence in the Recitation and Memorization of the Qur'ān may be satisfied in one of the following manners:

1. In keeping with the transfer policy described above, students may transfer a course in the recitation and memorization of the Qur'ān taken at another institution. That course will be considered one of the three acceptable for transfer credit. The student will then be exempt for taking the recitation and memorization of the Qur'ān offered at the RGS.

OR

2. The RGS Faculty will prepare and administer a competence examination on the recitation and memorization of the Qur'ān one week prior to the start of the Fall and Spring semesters. Students who pass the examination are exempt from taking the course in the recitation and memorization of the Qur'ān. Exemption does not provide credits toward satisfying the 36 hours of course work to earn the MAIS degree. Students who pass the examination are to take an elective course in their program.

B. CONCERNING COMPETENCE IN THE ARABIC LANGUAGE

Competence in the Arabic Language may be satisfied in one of the following manners:

1. In keeping with the RGS' transfer policy, students may transfer a course in Arabic taken at another institution. That course will be considered one of the three acceptable for transfer credit. The student will then be exempt for taking the Arabic I course offered at the RGS.

OR

2. The RGS Faculty will prepare and administer an Arabic Language Competence examination one week prior to the start of the Fall and Spring semesters. Students who pass the examination are exempt from taking the course in Arabic I. Exemption does not provide credits toward satisfying the 36 hours of course work to earn the MAIS degree. Students who pass the Arabic I examination are to take an elective course in their program. Students who do not satisfy the examination may retake examinations until they meet the requirement.

OR

3. Students who neither transfer an Arabic language course from another institution nor pass the RGS examination are to take and pass the Elementary Arabic I course offered by the RGS.

4. Respect Graduate School Community Standards

Respect Graduate School's Mission and Vision statements, as well as its Mandates and its name indicate that RGS expects and promotes respect in regard to the expression of opinions, security for personal safety and well-being, fairness in all its dealings, and acceptance of persons without regard to an individual's or a group's race, religion, color, ancestry, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability in its relationships with all members of the Institution and in its relationships with the wider community, both secular and religious, as well as in scholarly contexts. RGS' commitment to excellence and service, locally and in the world, is to be measured by who we are and how each person affiliated with RGS acts on and off campus.

Safe and Productive Work Environment

RGS promotes a safe and productive work environment. Irresponsible and/or illegal behaviors include, but are not limited to, acts such as stealing; dishonesty; harassment of any kind; possession, use and sale of drugs and alcohol while on campus; working while under the influence of drugs or alcohol; physical violence; verbal insults; and deliberate violations of safety practices. The Institution will discipline faculty and staff members when they exhibit behaviors that need correction. Discipline may include oral or written reprimands, demotion, transfer, suspension and/or termination, according to processes to be determined by the Board on the recommendation of the faculty, Student Association and administration.

Charges of Misconduct

Charges of harassment or discriminatory behavior, as well as any questions or problems concerning this policy, should be directed to the Dean of Academics (if in regard to Faculty), the Dean of Student Affairs (if in regard to students) or the Vice President (if in regard to staff).

Harassment consists of unwelcome conduct, whether verbal, physical or visual, that is based on a person's protected status, such as race, color, sex, national origin, religion, disability, or age, or based on any other characteristic protected by local, state or federal law; and which has the effect of interfering

unreasonably with another's work or academic performance, or creating an intimidating, offensive or hostile environment.

Harassing conduct may involve, but is not limited to, slurs; negative stereotyping; ethnic jokes; offensive written or graphic material; displaying offensive objects; or threatening or intimidating acts that denigrate or show hostility or aversion towards an individual because of membership in a protected group.

Sexual harassment is prohibited. This includes unwelcome or unwanted sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; and other verbal, physical or visual conduct of a sexual nature, when:

- submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of a community member's employment, education or other participation in the community;
- submission to or rejection of such conduct by a community member is used as the basis for decisions affecting the community member's employment, education or other participation in the community; or
- such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a community member's work or academic performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive working or academic environment.

RGS will respond promptly to complaints of harassment. In keeping with this, the Institution strongly encourages any member of the community who believes he or she has been the target of harassment or inappropriate conduct to promptly report, in writing, the harassing or improper conduct. In addition, every member of the community is strongly encouraged to report, in writing, any harassment or inappropriate conduct he or she observes, whether or not he or she is the target of the harassment. A prompt written report will enable the institution to respond rapidly in investigating the allegations and, where it is determined that harassment or inappropriate conduct has occurred, to take the necessary steps to eliminate the objectionable conduct or condition and to impose corrective action where appropriate.

As an initial matter, if any community member believes that he or she is being harassed or subjected to inappropriate conduct, the community member may directly and immediately notify the offender that the behavior is unwelcome and offensive, and must stop. However, if for any reason a community member does not wish to discuss the matter directly with the offender, or if the discussion does not successfully end the harassment or inappropriate conduct, it is the community member's duty to report the conduct immediately to the appropriate RGS officials. The institution is committed, and may be required by law, to take action if it learns of potential harassment or inappropriate conduct, even if the aggrieved community member does not wish to formally file a complaint.

Depending on the identities of the complaining community member and the individual alleged to have engaged in prohibited conduct, a report should be made to the Vice President. If for any reason a community member is not comfortable reporting the conduct to the designated individuals, he or she may contact another member of the administration.

A complaint of harassment will be investigated promptly in a fair and expeditious manner. To the extent practicable, care will be taken to protect the identity of the complaining party and of the accused party or parties, consistent with a thorough and appropriate investigation.

The institutional investigation will include a private interview with the person reporting the complaint and any witnesses. It will also include an interview with the person alleged to have engaged in the harassment or inappropriate conduct. It is vitally important that all community members and others refrain from discussing any and all aspects of the investigation, whether on or off campus. If, after the

investigation, it is determined that harassment and/or inappropriate conduct has occurred, the institution will act promptly to eliminate the offending conduct and, where appropriate, will impose corrective action. The institution will, to the extent appropriate, inform the person filing the complaint and the person alleged to have engaged in the harassment or inappropriate conduct, of the results of the investigation and what corrective actions will be taken. The complaining party may not be informed of the specifics of any discipline imposed, to the extent that revealing this information might constitute an invasion of the privacy of the alleged perpetrator.

False statements made in connection with a complaint of harassment or inappropriate conduct, or during the course of an investigation, whether by a complaining party, a person alleged to have engaged in harassment or inappropriate conduct, or any other community member, will constitute the basis for appropriate corrective action, up to and including termination of the individual's relationship with the institution.

This policy includes, but is not limited to, full-time and part-time faculty, staff and students; and independent contractors, consultants, visitors and others working on RGS premises and/or with RGS staff or students. The scope of this policy includes, but is not limited to, all settings in which members of the campus community may find themselves in connection with their employment, education and other institutionally-related activities, such as off-site meetings, conferences, social events, etc., including the time spent traveling and socializing on the way to and from, and while at, such events. It also extends to other interactions between or among members of the RGS community, to the extent that a community member's right to a campus community free from harassment or other inappropriate conduct is involved

RGS Policies Concerning Controlled Substances, Alcohol, and Weapons

RGS promotes a healthy, safe and secure environment for all students, faculty, staff and those who are on its premises. To that end:

RGS is a tobacco-free campus. This provision includes tobacco products that are smoked or smokeless.

RGS is a drug and alcohol-free campus, and conforms to the Drug-Free Workplace and the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act Amendments. RGS prohibits the unlawful manufacture, possession, use or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol by students, faculty, administrators, staff, vendors or any other persons on campus. The only exceptions are for use that is certified as necessary for the health of an individual under medical supervision. Such certification is to be obtained in writing from a physician and given to the Vice President.

RGS prohibits all students, faculty, staff, administrators, independent contractors and other guests to possess or use firearms on its property, including all related buildings, grounds and parking areas, and any RGS-owned or leased property, including vehicles, even by those who may possess a valid concealed carry or other permit. On-duty RGS security officers may carry their service weapon, or other defensive devices which they are trained to use, when conducting official business on campus.

RGS prohibition of weapons includes, but is not limited to, firearms and ammunition; bombs, grenades, fireworks and other explosive devices; blackjacks and brass knuckles; knives, swords, razors, daggers and other cutting instruments, the blades of which can be exposed in an automatic way by a switch, push-button, spring mechanism, or otherwise; stun guns and tasers; batons and clubs; paintball and pellet guns; and any other harmful instruments and devices. Any questions concerning a questionable item or any other questions about the campus weapons policy is to be directed to the Vice President.

Conflicts of Interest

Conflict of interest is defined as any activity or interest that has direct or indirect financial consequences and impairs, or may be seen to impair, an individual's independent, unbiased judgment in the performance of his or her responsibilities to the RGS. This definition also applies to any activity or interest conducted by dependent family members, such as a spouse or same-sex partner, child, parent, etc.

Employees of RGS are not to be involved in any employment decisions that may result in a direct benefit to their relatives. In addition, a relative is not to have direct supervisory responsibility over another relative (this includes student employees). In all cases of potential conflicts of interest, staff are required to remove themselves from any decision-making processes that may directly affect their relatives and partners. Employment decisions include, but are not limited to, those relating to initial appointment, reappointment, promotion, performance appraisal, and changes in salary. A relative, for the purposes of this policy, is considered to be a spouse, domestic partner, parent, child, sibling, grandparent, in-law, nephew, niece, cousin, aunt, or uncle. This policy applies to family members of the Board, vendors and those who engage in contractual relations with the RGS.

Faculty and staff are expected to conduct private business and personal activities in a manner that avoids conflict with the interests of the RGS.

A person has a financial interest if the person has, directly or indirectly, through business, investment or family, (a) an ownership or investment interest in any entity with which RGS has a transaction or arrangement, or (b) a compensation arrangement with RGS or with any entity or individual with which RGS has a transaction or arrangement, or (c) an actual or potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which RGS is negotiating a transaction or arrangement. Compensation includes direct and indirect remuneration, as well as gifts or favors that are more than incidental. The term *family* refers to a spouse, parent or other ancestor, a sibling (or spouse of same), child (or spouse of same), grandchild (or spouse of same) or great-grandchild (or spouse of same), or any other relative, if the latter resides in the same household as the interested person.

Upon initial association with RGS, trustees, faculty members and staff shall be required to sign a statement acknowledging the existence of actual or possible Conflicts of Interest. Board members, administrators and faculty members will be required to renew this acknowledgement annually.

5. Use of Electronic Facilities

RGS provides faculty, administrators, students and staff with access to institutional electronic facilities for use in conducting the Institution's business, academic work, research, and communication relevant to the mission and vision of the Institution. Electronic facilities include, but are not limited to, telephones, voice-mail, dictation equipment, pagers, cellular telephones, digital assistants, copiers, standard and electronic facsimile devices, e-mail, instant messaging and Internet access, computers (laptops and desktops), peripheral equipment, network equipment, and all software provided by the institution. The institution shall, at its sole discretion, determine whether and to what extent its personnel should have access to electronic facilities. Personnel not granted access to some or all electronic facilities shall not utilize such electronic facilities. Personnel shall not afford or facilitate third party access to any electronic facilities at any time.

Manner of Usage of Electronic Facilities

The electronic facilities that are the property of the Institution are provided to the Institution's personnel to enable them to better conduct the business of the Institution and to promote the interests of the Institution. The Institution's personnel are required to use electronic facilities solely for these

purposes and in a professional, ethical and lawful manner, cognizant of the risks that may arise from their use. The use of RGS electronic facilities for personal communications and use is strongly discouraged.

Purposes for Using the Electronic Facilities

The electronic facilities of Respect Graduate School can only be used for

- purposes of, or in support of, education and research, and
- administrative and other support activities considered consistent with the RGS' mission.