

Tips for Rutgers Earth and Planetary Sciences Graduate Students

This document was prepared by EPS graduate students to welcome and help new and continuing students navigate the maze of graduate school at Rutgers. The 2019-2021 Graduate Student Organization (GSO) President Anya Hess oversaw the development with input from EPS Graduate Program Director (GPD) Ken Miller (kgm@rutgers.edu), EPS Chair (2018-2021 AY) Gregory Mountain gmtn@eps.rutgers.edu, and EPS Chair (2021-2024 AY) Jim Wright jdwright@eps.rutgers.edu. This document is useful, but does not supplant all prospective and current students from reaching out to the GPD and EPS Chair. We welcome all question!

This document does not include information on the rapidly changing landscape of Covid-19 requirements. As of this writing, full mask, distancing, limited building access are in place. Please contact the current chair with questions on updates.


This document is not encyclopedic, and among other things, it also do not address selection of research topic, formation of graduate committee, interaction issues with advisor(s), other faculty, and issues of discrimination, harassment, and equity. Many of these issues are addressed in the graduate handbook and welcome page (<https://eps.rutgers.edu/academics/graduate/graduate-program>) or will be addressed in other documents.

Things to Do Before Classes Start

- Find out your NetID and set up a password at <https://netid.rutgers.edu/index.htm>
- Email Louis Lokuta ll656@sas.rutgers.edu for instructions on getting emails set up in Outlook or on your phone; detailed instructions are given at the end of this documents, but Louis is an excellent resource.
- Set up your **Rutgers emails** (there are multiple emails, here's how it works):
 - Manage your Rutgers email addresses at <https://services.oit.rutgers.edu/services/manage.cgi?.State=Manage%20Email%20Addresses&arg=>
 - whateveryouwant@rutgers.edu: An alias you can set up at the link immediately above. You can make it something easy to remember like firstname.lastname@rutgers.edu and then have all the other rutgers emails forwarded here.
 - netid@rutgers.edu: The default email you're given once you sign up for your netID
 - netid@scarletmail.rutgers.edu:
 - access it at scarletmail.rutgers.edu or through myRutgers (my.rutgers.edu)
 - This email stays with you after you graduate, but most people don't use it while at Rutgers
 - ____@eps.rutgers.edu: your departmental email address. Email Louis Lokuta to set this up. The department prefers we use this email address for TA business.

- Any mail sent to netid@eps.rutgers.edu aliases to netid@rutgers.edu (they are not separate imap accounts).
- Set up your Rutgers **Zoom** and **Webex** accounts (you'll need both). You may want to add a photo and change your preferred names and add gender pronouns.
 - **Zoom:** <https://rutgers.zoom.us/> → Sign in (with your NetID/password) → Profile
 - **Webex:**
<https://rutgers.webex.com/webappng/sites/rutgers/dashboard?siteurl=rutgers> → Sign in → your name in the corner → My profile → Edit My Profile
- **Rutgers Parking Permits** -TA\GA\Fellows & PTLs
 - Temporary permit until you are able to buy a permanent one:
 - Email info_dots@ipo.rutgers.edu and include full name, NetID and a copy of appointment letter. You will be emailed a link to register for a temporary permit. After you have received your first paycheck, you can purchase a permit online.
 - To get your permanent (semester long) permit:
 - Visit <https://rudots.nupark.com/portal/Account/Login>
 - follow instructions to add vehicles and purchase permit
 - You can park in any staff parking lots listed here
 - <https://ipo.rutgers.edu/dots/parking-lots>
- Get your **student ID** at <https://ipo.rutgers.edu/publicsafety/online-photo-submission>
 - You'll upload a photo (requirements listed on the website) and then pick your ID card up on campus
 - Your ID gets you into the campus rec centers, allows after-hours access to Wright-Rieman Labs, and lets you check out library books
- Set-up **Printing and Wi-fi** with IT Personnel, Louis Lokuta
<https://eps.rutgers.edu/people/faculty/people-list/25-staff/898-richard-vaughn>
 - Our department offers free, color printing on one printer (WL-142);). Please use your discretion availing yourself of this benefit (the department pays \$0.15/color page).
- Associate your **Google Scholar** account with Rutgers to get online access to articles
https://scholar.google.com/scholar_setprefs?instq=Rutgers
 - Rutgers also has access to Web of Science, which lets you search for articles that cited an article you're interested in. Log in with your NetID at https://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/indexes/web_of_science
- Get free **software** (Microsoft, Endnote, anti-virus, etc) <https://software.rutgers.edu/index/>
- Find out from our grad program director if you're going to be a TA/GA/Fellow for each semester of the academic year.
- If you're a TA, you'll be emailed about a 1-day mandatory training for that, so sign up and attend
- Do any safety training you need for your lab (ask your advisor or Lab Manager what you'll need for your specific lab) at <https://ipo.rutgers.edu/rehs/training>
- Take the **Rutgers Defensive Driving course**: an 8-hour course that lets you drive the department vans. Required for TAs and helpful for everyone else in case of a grad

student field trip or because sometimes the department will offer to pay for your time driving for a field trip. Complete the following:

- Step 1: Change your driver's license to NJ. With a NJ license, you can get money off of your car insurance for taking this course.
- Step 2: If you have problems registering, check with Katanya to be sure everything has been done to get you into the system.
- Step 3: Register for it under the "I am registering as part of my official Rutgers driving responsibilities" at <https://ipo.rutgers.edu/publicsafety/defensive-driving>
- Edit your bio on the EPS website.
 - If you don't already have a page under <https://eps.rutgers.edu/people/graduate-students>, email Wendy and include a photo of yourself. Once there's a page for you, email Louis Lokuta to get editing power assigned to you. Then hit the "Login" link in the dark gray bar at the bottom of the page, navigate to your bio page, and hit the  button to start editing.
 - You may link your personal webpage to your Rutgers one <https://eps.rutgers.edu/people/graduate-students>

Types of Funding Appointments

- **TAs:** TAs are expected to work up to 15 hours/week on TA duties during the semesters they are TAing. Responsibilities vary by class and can range from building and leading labs to strictly online grading.
- **GAs:** Funding comes from your advisor or other Principal Investigator. GAs are expected to work up to 15 hours/week on duties related to the grant funding them, Check with the PI to see what expectations/requirements they have for you beyond your research and taking classes.
- **University Fellows:** Funding comes from the university. There are no additional expectations/requirements for you beyond doing your research and taking classes.

Health Insurance

- Check your contract (issued each year) to see which type of funding appointment you fall under. If it doesn't match the description below for how you understand you'll be working, email Katanya Myers or Grad Program Director (Ken Miller).
- For full-year TA/GAs:
 - **Full-time TA/GAs** are those who will be TAs or GAs for both the fall and spring semester of an academic year (TA for one semester and GA for the other still counts as "full time"). TA and GA positions require 15 hours/week.
 - Full time TA/GAs are eligible for the state plan (State Health Benefits Plan, SHBP). If you're told to enroll with UnitedHealthcare, do not, it is the wrong plan. Check with the graduate director first to be sure you are a full time TA/GA. Then go to: <https://uhr.rutgers.edu/teaching-assistants-graduate-assistants> from here go to 'medical plans'. Scroll down and select which plan you would like. The NJ DIRECT plans are good, and the only difference between them really is deductibles. There are 'resources to help you' to the right side (the 'Medical Plan Design Chart' is particularly helpful). Once you've chosen, select '2020 SHBP

Medical Application' and fill out the form. You can then either email this form to onesource@rutgers.edu or go to <https://rutgers.service-now.com/hrportal> and submit it online, and then you're done! HR will also waive your student health insurance for you. In the Spring, you'll get an email about waiving student health insurance, and you don't need to do that, it happens automatically.

- ½ year TA/GAs split with Fellowships or your own support (self funded or from outside agency)
 - **TA/GAs** are those who will be TAs or GAs for only one semester of a fall-spring academic year and the other half year as a Fellow or unsupported. During the semester you TA, you will still be TAing 15 hours/week. The other semester you may be on a Fellowship, have outside funding (not Rutgers), or be self-funded. You're eligible for the Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP). It's a good plan.
 - <https://www.universityhealthplans.com/>
- For full-year fellows:
https://www.universityhealthplans.com/letters/letter.cgi?group_id=288
- For self-funded, you should be emailed the student health insurance plan and instructions, enroll in this if you want to.

Registering for Credits

- Before registering for credits, you should talk to your advisor and the Grad Program Director (Ken Miller). You need to register for 9 credits each fall and spring semester to be a full-time student (not including TA/GA credits); for PhD students, after you pass qualifying exams and your proposal defense is accepted and you become a PhD candidate (ABD), you only need to register for 1 credit per semester. In total, Rutgers will pay for 75 credits for you (including credits you transfer in if you choose to do that) so be sure to save enough credits to use as research credits while you finish your degree so you can stay enrolled as a full-time student.
- **Course credits:** Graduate-level classes you take. Min 24 total for PhD or MS. People typically take 3-9 credits (1-3 classes)/semester for the first ~2 years and less later on.
- **Research credits:** Doing your research for your degree. Min 24 total for PhD and 6 for MS. You should not register for any of these early on if you're doing a full course load of classes (~3 classes/semester)
- **TA credits:** These are meant as placeholders to make sure you're not overloading your schedule. They do not count towards your degree or cost the department anything. Note that if you're TAing you should register for full-time TA credits for the semesters you TA, even though you are considered a "part-time TA" for health insurance purposes.
- **Auditing:** The university has an official way you can audit classes, but most professors will let you unofficially sit in on a class without registering at all, if you just email and explain why you want/need to do that. It's preferred to officially take classes though, especially with pre-tenure professors, because that's how SAS sees how valuable the course is.

Registration tips

- Graduate students are encouraged to take appropriate 300- and 400-level undergraduate courses (with advice and consent of their advisor and committee) in Geological Science/EPS and graduate and undergraduate courses in allied fields (Oceanography, Physics, Chemistry, Atmospheric Sciences (grad)/Meteorology (undergrad). This will likely require a Course Prerequisite Override form for undergraduate SAS courses (school 1) <http://sasundergrad.rutgers.edu/images/forms/PrerequisiteOverrideForm.pdf> that is signed by the course instructor and the GPD and emailed to gradreg@registrar.rutgers.edu.
- Up to 12 credits of undergraduate courses at the 300- and 400 level may be used toward graduate credit (keep an eye on this)
- Students supported by fellowships and teaching assistants should wait until mid-Aug. to register to avoid late fees (i.e., term bills are generated if you register in Spring). New students register during orientation, usually the last week in Aug.
- Full-time status for the School of Graduate Studies for students not yet admitted to candidacy is 9 credits. The maximum is 16 credits (including 6 credits for TA/GA) (i.e., three 3 credit courses, 1 one credit course, plus TA/GA credits).
- Full time status for the School of Graduate Studied for students admitted to candidacy ("ABD") is 3 credits/semester until 72 credits, then it is 1 research credit per semester.
- TAs and GAs are allowed 24 credits remission (i.e., free tuition) per year; if you take 9 credits Fall and 9 credits Spring, you can register for 6 credits in Summer.
- Once a student is ABD, and has all coursework completed, they should register for research, usually 1 credit. SGS considers you full-time but on paper you are part-time. If you are deferring prior loans, there is a form that has to be completed and submitted to the Registrar, "Enrollment Certification for Doctoral Students," which can be found on the SGS website at <https://gsnb.rutgers.edu/resources/graduate-student-forms>
- International students who register less than full-time (9 credits) are required to complete a "Reduced Course Load Form" and submitted to Global Services. This includes student who are ABD. <https://global.rutgers.edu/academic-status-and-changes/full-course-studyreduced-credit-load>
- All international students must maintain full-time status per the guidelines above.
- Transfer credits from master's/undergraduate studies (those in excess of what was needed for undergraduate degree) after completing 9 credits at Rutgers.

- Try to target the right number of research credits to reach 72 credits total in 5 years. Years three to five (assuming student has been admitted to candidacy) should ideally be 6-9 research credits per semester until 72 credits is achieved

Inter-University Doctoral Consortium The Inter-University Doctoral Consortium is open to doctoral students from participating schools who have completed at least one year of full-time study toward the Ph.D. Rutgers students may, with the required permissions, attend (including online/virtual) courses at any other participating school as part of their home school registration. How to enroll: <https://gsnb.rutgers.edu/academics/inter-university-doctoral-consortium>

Participating schools are:

Columbia University, GSAS
CUNY Graduate Center
Fordham University GSAS
Graduate Faculty, New School University
New York University, GSAS
Princeton University-The Graduate School
Stony Brook University
Teachers College, Columbia University

Useful Rutgers Websites

- EPS grad student guidelines
 - Ph.D.: <https://eps.rutgers.edu/academics/graduate/ph-d-program>
 - M.S.: <https://eps.rutgers.edu/academics/graduate/ms-program>
 - M.S. (environmental geo): <https://eps.rutgers.edu/academics/graduate/ms-program-2>
- MyRutgers: one-stop shop for everything about you at Rutgers, like course registration, grades, pay stubs, etc.
 - <https://my.rutgers.edu/portal>
- Rutgers clubs and student organizations: <https://rutgers.campuslabs.com/engage/>
- Oceanography incoming grads guide: <https://marine.rutgers.edu/academics/graduate/oceanography-graduate-student-association-ogsa/new-student-guide/>

Adding your rutgers email to your phone (courtesy of Louis Lokuta, Dec. 2020):



RUTGERS Information Technology

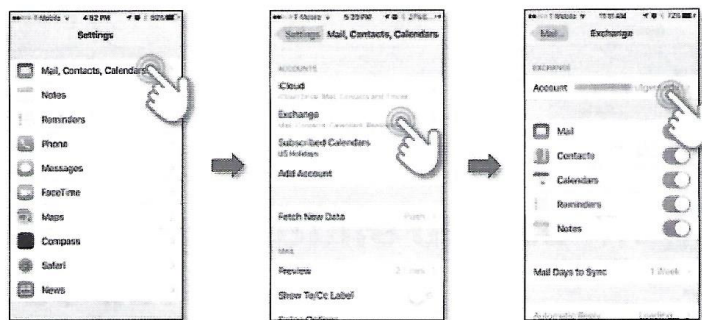
Services Help & Support About ▾ I want to... ▾ Log into... ▾



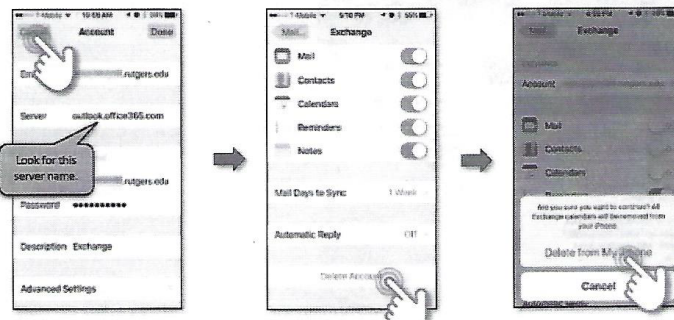
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Enabling mobile device management on iOS devices

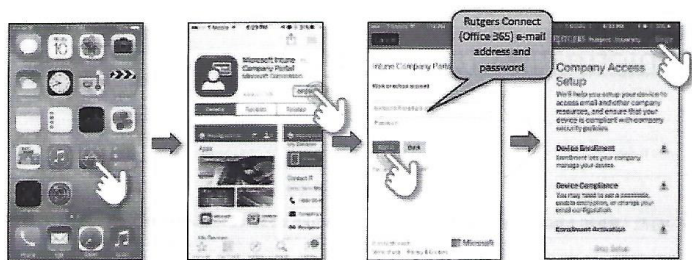
1. Open the Settings app and check if there are any mail account configurations connecting to Office 365.



2. If an Exchange mail account connecting to outlook.office365.com is found, delete it. Failure to delete this may cause the compliance check to fail, or to get stuck on the "Checking compliance" step. New mail account settings will be downloaded automatically after the device is secured.



3. Open the App Store. Find and install the Intune Company Portal app and enroll the device. An Apple ID account will be required to download and install the app.

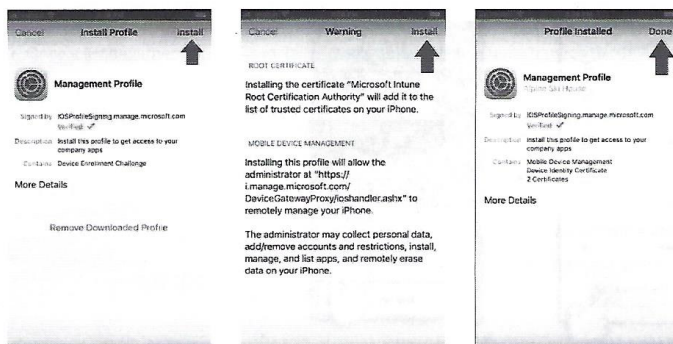


4. Manually navigate to the Profiles section of the Settings app (Settings > General > Profiles)

5. When in device settings, there should be an Install Downloaded Profile blade with a red circle badge. You have 8 minutes to install the profile or the badge will disappear. After about 15 minutes the profile is removed from the device and enrollment must be restarted.



6. Follow the prompts to complete device enrollment, iOS Management Profile installation, compliance, and activation. You may be required to change the device's passcode.

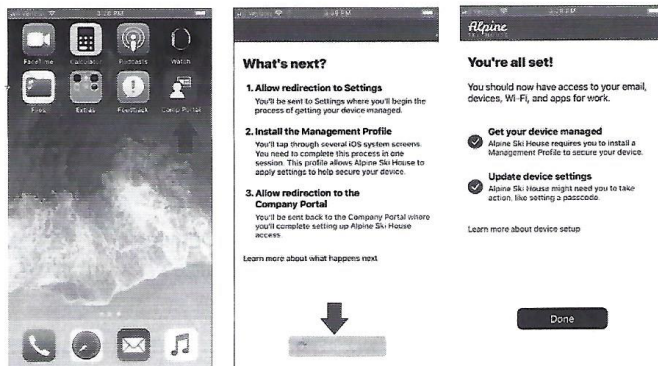


Note: This section of the Settings app may be named differently depending on profiles currently on the device.

7. Once a Management Profile is installed, the name of the section changes to "Device Management".

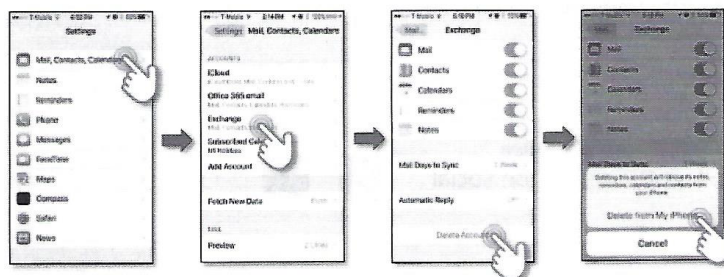
- Select "Install Profile" on the Downloaded Management Profile
- Select "Install" on the upper right hand of the Management Profile details page and follow prompts to install profile
- Select "Trust" on the Remote Management prompt

8. Manually navigate back to Company Portal app to finish workflow



9. After a compliant passcode has been entered, the device will be secured and access to e-mail, calendar, and University data will be granted. The Office 365 Exchange mail settings will be automatically configured.

10. If the mobile device has been previously configured to access Rutgers email through Exchange you must remove the old exchange settings as illustrated.



11. Press the Home button to return to the Home screen.

12. The Apple iOS mobile device configuration is now complete.

Troubleshooting

- If the compliance check screen remains for more than 5 minutes, force-close the Company Portal app.
- Proceed to step 1 and 2 to check and remove any existing Office 365 account configurations.
- After completing steps 1 and 2, reopen the Company Portal app and follow the prompts to continue enrollment.
- When opening the Company Portal app, you can force the device to check compliance by tapping on the device and "Check Settings".



- If enrollment stops and remains at this screen, tap the refresh icon to continue.

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Moving to NJ

- **Housing Areas:**
 - **Highland Park:** Many grad students live here. A little town ~10 min from Busch campus. Great for walkability to, restaurants, coffee shop(s?) and a bar and has a nice park. Big Jewish population so kosher restaurants are everywhere.
 - **New Brunswick:** More of a college town feel, big party scene, big houses with rooms to rent. Close to lots of restaurants and bars, but you'll have to take the bus, bike, or car to Busch for classes. Probably a cheaper way to go, but mostly undergraduates populate this area. You can find a bunch of apartment complexes that are quieter for ~ \$2000+. More affordable options are 10 Landing Lane Apartments and Raritan Crossing Apartments.
 - **Piscataway:** This place is more suburban, family orientated. Close to the major highway I-287 so visiting nearby malls/restaurants is convenient. Less traffic than Highland Park and New Brunswick, but less to do within walking distance. I recommend Society Hill development if you want to stay close to Rutgers.
 - **Jersey City:** More of a city and closer to NYC so some who want to spend a lot of time in the city or have a significant other who works in NYC live here. About an hour commute from Busch campus.
- **Ways to find housing:**
 - Craigslist
 - Apartments.com
 - Facebook Marketplace
 - GSA Marketplace email listserv
https://email.rutgers.edu/mailman/listinfo/gsa_market
 - Send out an email looking for housing/roommate. Can also read what people are looking for as well. Daily emails.
- **Things to Do in NJ:** If you're looking for things to do before classes start, or any time, here are some ideas for places to visit.
 - The cities: New York (take the train/subway), Philly (drive), or Atlantic City (drive)
 - The shore: Asbury Park is fun to walk around, nice boardwalk and a downtown area
 - Delaware Water Gap: beautiful, cool geology, good for hiking and getting out into nature
 - Princeton: Cute town to walk around in, lots of restaurants (check out Bent Spoon for awesome ice cream!)
 - Lambertville/New Hope: two towns straddling the Delaware River, one in NJ the other in PA. Great for walking around and shopping, lots of antique stores and artsy shops.
 - Check out all the farmers markets and roadside stands in South Jersey - fresh produce and fruits!
- **License and vehicle information:**
<https://www.state.nj.us/mvc/drivertopics/movetonj.htm>
- **Temporary Change of Address USPS:** <https://www.usa.gov/post-office#item-37197>