May 12, 2017

Congratulations on your decision to live and study at Rice University! We are delighted that you will be joining us. This August, you will join a community of the most talented young people from around the world in what I’m sure you will find to be a fulfilling and exciting intellectual and social experience.

This is the first of several communications you will receive over the next few months from Rice. We are busily preparing for Orientation Week (O-Week) that will begin with Move-In on the morning of Sunday, August 13, 2017. After they help you move in, your family members are invited to join us for New Families Orientation on Sunday afternoon. More information regarding the program will be available online (http://success.rice.edu/families/nfo/). Please note that all family members should depart campus no later than 6:30 p.m.

The Student Success Initiatives’ website (success.rice.edu) contains vital information for new students and will be constantly updated. We strongly encourage you to look through the entire website and to become familiar with its menus and resources. You will need to revisit the site often during the summer. Please make sure to familiarize yourself with the New Student Checklist under the “First Year Programs, O-Week” tab. This checklist details the deadlines for many of the forms and surveys you will need to complete in order to matriculate at Rice. The College Information Form, Academic Advising Questionnaire, Roommate Information Forms, First Look Questionnaire, and others should be submitted by Thursday, June 1, 2017. Please complete all forms online. All forms, except the Health Data Form, are available online by accessing ESTHER (esther.rice.edu), then by clicking on the “Welcome to Rice” tab which includes the following:

- **College Information Form** – This form will assist us in making residential college assignments.
- **Roommate Information Forms** – The information on these forms will help us get to know you better. The questionnaires will be used by the student O-Week Coordinators to assign roommates, create O-Week groups, and more, and the instructions outline who may see each of these forms. We take the process of roommate matching very seriously, so it is very important that you complete these forms candidly.
- **Advising Questionnaire** – This form will provide information about your educational and research interests to your academic advisors.
- **First Look Questionnaire** – This form will assure your inclusion in the First Look, a directory of new students that you will receive when you arrive. We also ask that you include a photograph that clearly shows your face that will be used by your residential college and for the First Look.

The **Health Data Form** is also required of all incoming students and **is due to Rice by June 1, 2017**. A copy can be found online (http://health.rice.edu/Content.aspx?id=106). Per Texas state law, all incoming first year and transfer students are required to provide verification of vaccination for meningitis. Rice must receive proof of vaccination or exemption no later than Tuesday, August 1, 2017. Please consult with the Office of International Students and Scholars for international student deadlines. If you do not have the meningitis vaccine or proof of exemption, per state law, you **WILL NOT** be able to
move into the residential college for O-Week. Additionally, college assignments WILL NOT be released to any student who has not provided proof of vaccination or exemption. Although you can still participate in O-Week, you will need to make your own housing accommodations off campus, and you must remain there until 10 days after receiving the vaccination. Please visit Student Health Services’ website (health.rice.edu) for additional information.

Please note – the information you are asked to provide on the Health Data Form is essential if we are to be able to support your health and wellbeing, and that of the Rice community. You must complete the form in its entirety. Any student who does not complete this form will not be permitted to register for classes, and students who do not have proof of the meningitis vaccine or exemption WILL NOT be permitted to live in the residential colleges.

If you have physical or medical needs that will impact your living on campus, please let us know as soon as possible. Requests for special housing accommodations should be made online (dss.rice.edu/Content.aspx?ekfrm=2147483651) no later than June 1, 2017. Additional questions can be directed to Disability Support Services at 713-348-5841 or adarice@rice.edu. Additionally, if you have mental health concerns such as anxiety, attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, depression, etc. please contact the Rice Wellbeing and Counseling Center at 713-348-3311 or rucc@rice.edu by July 15, 2017 to discuss options for continued care.

You are also invited to sign up for Urban Immersion, a six-day, service learning opportunity that aims to introduce incoming students to the city of Houston. The program focuses on social issues unique to the city and participants work hand-in-hand with local organizations that are striving to create positive, sustainable change. In addition to service, the program affords students the opportunity to build relationships with civic-minded and compassion-driven peers before ever moving to campus. For more information and to apply, visit the Center for Civic Leadership’s website (ccl.rice.edu). The application deadline is May 26, 2017, and there are two sessions, July 10-14 and July 16-21.

All entering students are required to take the Composition Exam prior to arriving on campus. The exam is given online twice during the summer: May 31-June 5 and June 21-26. This exam is mandatory, so be sure to add these dates to your summer schedule. Be sure to check out the New Student Checklist on Student Success Initiatives’ website (success.rice.edu/checklist) as well as the Composition Exam website (compexam.rice.edu) for more information and updates.

The online Language Placement Exams are required for students who already have knowledge of a foreign language and are interested in pursuing its study at Rice. Online language placement tests in 11 languages including Mandarin Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, and Spanish will be offered August 8-12, 2017. To take the online tests or to view information about other languages, please visit the Center for Languages and Intercultural Communication’s website (clic.rice.edu).

New students will soon be added to the Matriculating Class of 2017 OWL Space, a content management system used by most instructors at Rice. Throughout the summer and during O-Week, this site will serve as an information hub to help you make the most of your time and resources before classes begin. There will be videos and resources from various departments as well as information about opportunities that are specifically geared to help new students become accustomed to their new home including:

- O-Week & New Student Resources – There will be materials directly related to your transition to Rice and about Orientation Week including the New Student Checklist, the O-Week Schedule, and information from your College.
• **Academic Planning Information** – The Office of Academic Advising will supply materials for new students to become acclimated to the resources, policies, and procedures for all students at Rice and to prepare you for course registration during O-Week.

You will gain access to this site with your Rice netID which you should already be accustomed to using through the admissions process. If you are unsure of your password or do not remember your netID, email registrar@rice.edu from your Rice email address to request it to be reset. We encourage you to check the OWL Space site frequently throughout the summer as information will be updated and use this opportunity to better acclimate yourself with this valuable tool that will be used in your classes very often.

College assignments will be determined around the first week of July. *Notification of assignments will be made by each residential college via first class mail on July 7, 2017. College assignments will not be released to any student who has not provided verification of their meningitis vaccination.* Questions regarding assignments should be directed to Wendi Schoffstall, Division Coordinator in the Office of the Dean of Undergraduates, at 713-348-4997 or wendi@rice.edu. The College Magisters will provide the official notification of college assignments; please do not call the Office of the Dean of Undergraduates to find out your assignment as no college assignments will be released over the phone. Remember that all new students who have provided verification of their meningitis vaccination will move into their colleges on the morning of **Sunday, August 13, 2017**. You will receive information from your residential college with more specific information regarding this process in mid-July.

Student Success Initiatives (SSI) is an excellent starting point should you have any questions or concerns leading to O-Week and throughout your time at Rice. In addition to Orientation Week and New Families Orientation, SSI also coordinates UNIV 110, a course specifically designed for first year students; Rice Firsts, a mentoring program for first generation college students; and proactive advising to help students identify areas of support and growth in many areas of life at Rice. They can be reached via email at success@rice.edu or online at their website (success.rice.edu).

I look forward to greeting you in August!

Sincerely,

John S. Hutchinson
Dean of Undergraduates