Staff Information

We truly desire and hope that you better understand RFL Academy's College Transition Program. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to ask us. You can direct your questions to the following staff members.

Emily Perton (Executive Director)
E-mail Emily.perton@rflnetwork.org
Office 616-285-3775
Cell 616-550-5064

Amber Gilliland (Instructor for RFL Academy at Hope College)
E-mail Amber.gilliland@rflnetwork.org
Cell 630-940-9655

Mallory Dye (CLS Team Coordinator)
E-mail Mallory.dye@rflnetwork.org
Classroom 616-395-7177
Cell 317-670-4904

Ready For Life Academy
College Transition Program
at Hope College

Student Handbook

3250 28th St SE, Suite 102 | Grand Rapids, MI 49512
Phone: 616-248-3775 | Fax: 616-248-3775
Retaliation
Every effort at maintaining confidentiality will be made in order to protect the reputation and integrity of all individuals involved.

No persons involved, or acting on behalf of a person involved (including those acting as witnesses), in any phase of the implementation of the Sexual Harassment Policy shall be abused, threatened, or exhibit behavior which intimidates any other person involved prior to, during, or after the conclusion of the phase which is being pursued.

If either the complainant or the alleged harasser is abused, threatened, or intimidated, s/he may bring this to the attention of the administrators or committee handling the complaint, asking them for assistance in arranging protection or redress (at that time or after the process has been completed).
No member of the Academy community shall knowingly file a false complaint of sexual harassment or knowingly provide false information to or intentionally mislead Academy officials investigating a complaint of alleged sexual harassment.
ployee of RFL Academy and any current RFL Academy student for whom the employee has a direct professional responsibility is unacceptable. Instances of direct professional responsibility include: assigning grades, writing recommendations, advising, coaching-supervising, awarding financial aid, disciplining, and any other action that may affect the student’s current or future study or employment. Initiation of a romantic relationship subsequent to or following a situation where there was a professional responsibility (teaching, advising, coaching, supervising, etc.) is also a violation because it could be perceived as an extension of the power relationship therefore undermining the educational process. Romantic or sexual relationships during or after a relationship of professional responsibility may have the effect of undermining the atmosphere of trust on which the educational process depends. If a complaint by the involved student is filed, it is defined as a complaint of sexual harassment.

B. The initiation of or consent to a romantic or sexual relationship is also unacceptable between a supervisor and an employee for whom the supervisor has direct professional responsibility. If a complaint is filed, it is defined as a complaint of sexual harassment.

C. The initiation of a romantic or sexual relationship is strongly discouraged even where there is not a direct professional responsibility. In these situations, there still may be an element of power or authority which could diminish the individual’s freedom of choice. Additionally, a change in the situation may establish direct professional responsibility between the individuals. Individuals in positions of authority must be sensitive to the potential conflicts between personal relationships and professional responsibility. Furthermore, for individuals who enter into a relationship where a power differential exists, it will be difficult to prove immunity on grounds of mutual consent if a complaint alleging sexual harassment is lodged.

D. Such romantic or sexual relationships frequently can have a detrimental effect on other students or employees who share a work or classroom environment with the involved parties. When a third party complains of such effects, it is not considered a complaint of sexual harassment. Instead it may be taken to a supervisor as a matter of unprofessional conduct.

E. This category does not apply to married couples.

Ready For Life Academy
Academy Transition Program

The Ready for Life (RFL) Academy College Transition program is designed to provide a unique college experience that is academically challenging, builds mutual relationships and lays the foundation for one’s transition into the adult world. Individual goals are developed and implemented through a blended curriculum design. A Certificate in Life Studies is available for those students who complete their personalized program. The Life Studies Certificate program can be completed in four years as a full-time student.

Mission
To provide young adults experiencing cognitive, learning and social disabilities opportunities to be challenged academically, build relationships and prepare for the transition into life.

Vision
RFL Academy seeks to touch the lives of persons experiencing disabilities so that they might have the opportunity to experience an inclusive Academy setting.

RFL Academy is dedicated to providing challenging educational experiences while building a community that empowers, values and uplifts its members.

RFL Academy desires to develop opportunities today that lay the foundation for a future of meaningful work opportunities and strong friendships.

How do we help you be a successful student?
- We personalize the curriculum to meet goals designed for YOU.
- We assist you as you discover your own gifts, abilities, interests and areas for growth.
- We support you with the help of other Academy students as you learn about meaningful relationships and develop new friendships.
• We encourage you to define and develop realistic social and career objectives.
• We aid you as you develop and practice specific skills for your future home, work and community involvement.
• We create with you a personal academic plan that will be a roadmap to your adult life.

Guiding Values

RFL Academy believes that each individual is uniquely and beautifully created in the image of his or her Creator, God. As such, each person has worth and value that benefits and blesses the community at large. In addition, each individual can continue to learn for a lifetime if given the opportunity and the environment that encourages and promotes learning.

RFL Academy is committed to fostering the personal/social skills, independence, self-advocacy and self-confidence of the RFL students and the host college students. The maturity and self-esteem that develops from participation in RFL Academy are readily and capably carried on into the world of adulthood.

Academics

RFL Academy takes a liberal arts approach to learning that offers a diverse choice of core and elective studies for the individual learner.

Being firmly rooted in a Life Long Learning Model, RFL Academy is dedicated to making learning challenging, fun and meaningful.

Life Long Learning Model Provides

• Studies in individual gift-based character to define and develop the proper goals and skill development needed to match personal talents and interests to further service and a career.
• Studies that promote and foster healthy bodies, minds and souls.
• Studies in the development of relationships that are mutual dating relationship will be considered to be a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature where the relationship is defined by: the length of the relationship, type of relationship, and frequency of interaction. (MCL 750.81)

Stalking
Stalking is defined as: following, pursuing, or repeatedly committing acts with the intention of killing, injuring, harassing, or intimidating another person; placing a person under observation with the intention of harming another; or placing a person in reasonable fear of a serious injury, death or emotional harm. (MCL750.411h)

Domestic Violence
Domestic Violence are incidents that involve people that are spouse or former spouse, in a dating relationship or former dating relationship, the individuals have a child in common, or they live together or did live together. The violence may be physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional or psychological abuse, or economic abuse or combination of these different abuses. (MCL 750.81a)

Consent
Consent means there is a clear, unambiguous, and voluntary verbal agreement in which a reasonable person(s) would understand as a willingness to engage in a sexual activity. Past consent to a given act does not imply ongoing or future consent. Consent can be revoked at any time.
Consent cannot be freely given if there is:
• There is a presence or fear of physical force or violence
• There is a presence or fear of verbal or emotional harm
• Drugs or alcohol
• Impaired consciousness
• Mental or physical impairment

Romantic Relationships between Employee/Student and Supervisor/Employee
A. Implicit in the concept of professionalism is the recognition by those in positions of authority that their relationships with students include an element of power. It is incumbent on those with authority not to abuse, nor to seem to abuse, the power with which they are entrusted. Therefore, the initiation of or consent to a romantic or sexual relationship between an em-
includes the following categories:

**Actions Which Create a Hostile Environment**
1. Generalized Sexist Remarks or Sexist Behavior - This involves demeaning remarks or actions serving no scholarly, artistic, or educational purpose that are directed at individuals or groups because of their gender or sexual orientation.
2. Sexually Offensive Remarks or Behavior – This includes lewd, obscene, or sexually suggestive remarks or actions serving no scholarly, artistic, or educational purpose, which would be found offensive by a reasonable person in that situation. This category also includes the public display of sexually offensive audio-visual material serving no scholarly, artistic, or educational purpose.

**Sexual Advances**
1. Sexual Advances without Intimidation – This includes repeated unwanted requests for a social or sexual encounter. It also includes unwanted or inappropriate touching or kissing.
2. Sexual Advances with Intimidation – This refers to sexual advances which are accompanied by the threat of punishment or promise of reward.

**Sexual Assaults**
This includes sexual advances that are accompanied by actual or threatened physical violence, as specified in the “Criminal Sexual Conduct Statute” of the State of Michigan. This category also applies to any of the following, if lacking explicit verbal consent: physical contact with groin, genital area, inner thigh, buttocks, and/or breast; penetration that involves sexual or anal intercourse; cunnilingus; fellatio, or placing any other object in the genital or anal opening. Physical acts that are perpetrated against a persons’ will or when a person is incapable of giving consent due to the victims’ use of drugs or alcohol will be considered sexual violence. An individual also may be unable to give consent due to an intellectual or other disability. Rape, sexual assault, battery, and coercion may all be classified as sexual violence as well.

**Dating Violence**
Dating violence is any physical, mental, or emotional harm that is directed intentionally or unintentionally toward a dating partner. A and valued.
- Studies that teach the importance and significance of being a part of a larger community

---

**Program Information**

**Life Studies Certificate**
By combining RLF coursework, independent studies, field experiences and elective courses, one can complete the credits need for the Life Studies Certificate.

**RFL Core Course Work**
Transition classes creatively designed to meet the needs of the student to gain life skills.

**Independent Studies**
Courses providing experiences and skill development targeted to meet specific individual interest and goals of the student.

**Field Experiences**
Vocational and service related experiences on and off campus that develop work and social skill sets.

**Elective Courses**
Allows RFL students enrollment in a wide range of coursework offered by the host college.

---

**RFL Core Course Description**

**Culture, Design and Geography of the world: Cultures of the World** - Students will be introduced to world cultures as well as respect for and interaction with those cultures.

**First Year Studies Adapting to Academy Life** - Students will learn to maneuver the campus independently, learn Academy note taking and study skills, create a safety plan in case of emergency, learn to communicate with mentors and RFL staff, and create a personal brochure to use throughout Academy experience.

**First Year Studies: Discovering Individual Interest and Roles** - Students will identify personal and educational interests and abili-
ties, discover personal roles and use information to create a personal profile of themselves.

**Fitness, Sport, Dance and Exercise** - Students will examine and identify body mechanics. Students will introduce, explore, and participate in lifelong sports, games, and physical activities. Students will develop a personal fitness plan.

**Home Management: Locating Housing** - Investigate home options and the steps, financing, and behaviors needed to live in those various settings.

**Home Management: Maintenance** - Students will explore, practice, and implement home maintenance and repair responsibilities. Students will study, practice, and demonstrate routine indoor and outdoor chores. Students will define and explore home emergency situations.

**Human Dynamics: Behaviors/ Emotions** - Students will explore factors that influence behavior, motivation, emotions, and personality development. They will also practice and implement social interaction skills, presentation skills, appropriate voice qualities, and word selection, and social manners in integrated settings.

**Human Dynamics: Human Development** - Students will explore human development from conception to death, including behavior, physical, and emotional characteristics, mental health issues, and addictions.

**Human Dynamics: Relationships Relate** - Students will explore the relationships they are in and the kind of relationships they desire to be in. They will learn how to interact appropriately in different relationships.

**Issues and Impact of Current Events** - Students will investigate and explore current campus and world events.

**Leisure and Lifetime Activities** - Students will learn about community resources, develop a healthy life plan for

registered an emergency contact number through their plus.hope.edu account. The CAMPUSMAIL email system allows for the dispatch of messages by the college to the Hope College email address of every student and employee. The college's internal website (inHope) is also utilized for posting messages of importance.

**POLICY STATEMENT ON SEXUAL ASSAULT OR HARASSMENT AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

Ready for Life is committed to fostering an environment in which all persons have an equal opportunity to work and pursue learning freely, whether in group settings or in close relationships between individual students, faculty and staff. This entails an obligation to protect the dignity, safety, and self-respect of all students, faculty, and staff. RFL Academy is committed to the belief that each individual is of unqualified worth. God values each person, female and male, as a unique work of divine creation. Therefore, the Academy condemns covert and overt acts which interfere with this commitment and will not tolerate any form of intimidation, abuse or harassment.

**DESCRIPTION AND EXPLANATIONS**

Sexual harassment is a form of discrimination. It includes any inappropriate or unwanted conduct of a sexual nature which has a negative effect on the educational process, employment benefits, campus climate, or opportunities of any student or employee. As such, it violates the **Title VII of the Civil Rights Act and the Michigan Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act**.

An abuse of privilege or power, sexual harassment can threaten a person's academic status, economic livelihood, sense of safety, well-being and personal dignity. The effects of sexual harassment may include feelings of anger, resentment, embarrassment, humiliation, fear and lowered self-esteem.

This policy strives to ensure both academic freedom and freedom from harassment. Respect for all persons and freedom of inquiry are at the center of both academic freedom and an environment devoid of sexual harassment. Nothing in this policy should be construed to limit the scholarly, educational, or artistic content of written, oral, or other presentations or discussions. Sexual Harassment
X. PROPERTY
Malicious or unwarranted destruction or damage to property belonging to RFL Academy, the host college or to a member of the RFL Academy and host college community is prohibited (e.g., buildings, equipment, grounds, personal belonging, and computer files).

XI. SMOKING POLICY
The Ottawa County Smoke-Free Indoor Air Regulation became effective on January 1, 2008. This regulation requires all public and private employers to prohibit smoking in all enclosed areas and within twenty-five feet of any entrance, operable window, and ventilation system.

Smoking (including e-cigarettes) will not be permitted in any campus owned or leased building, in any residence hall, apartment, or cottage, on any campus walkway or green space or outside in Academy parking lots.

Smoking (including e-cigarettes) is permitted in private vehicles (including those parked in Academy lots) and on public right-of-ways away from building entrances. Please adhere to the twenty-five foot distance and dispose of your smoking materials appropriately before reentering the campus area.

The Academy is supportive of smoking cessation programs and will work with faculty and staff seeking help with their smoking habit. Please contact the Human Resources office for more information.

XII. THEFT
Taking or selling property of RFL Academy, the host college or other students, faculty, or staff without permission of the owner is prohibited (including unauthorized use of another’s telephone access code and tampering with parking permits).

XIII. TIMELY WARNING/EMERGENCY NOTIFICATIONS
Hope College has a system in place for notifying the campus community when there is a matter of urgency that requires immediate attention. The college has the capability to send a text message to the cell phones of members of the campus community who have leisure and recreational activity, and develop skills for social interaction.

Lifetime Management - Students will develop balance in life routines by developing an individualized organizational system and keeping a journal. Students will take an active role in managing a support team for their education.

Literature - Students will participate in Literature Circles and study with their peers a nonfiction or fiction chapter book. The students will increase fluency and reading ability as well increase vocabulary.

Musical Representation (independent Study) - Students will have one one voice coaching or musical instrument lessons.

Nutrition / Academy Cooking - Students will explore, practice, and implement a nutrition plan. Students will also explore, practice, and implement culinary prep techniques and equipment usage common to the Academy life style.

Personal Economics I: Budgeting - Students will be introduced to daily and monthly budgeting practices. Students will increase money awareness and money handling skills.

Personal Economics II: Savings, Banking and Taxes - Students will be introduced to personal income issues and matters and giving practices. Banking practices including the use of credit and tax calculation will also be explored.

Personal Values - Students will discover their individual gifts, talents, skills and characteristics

Wellness - Students will learn skills to manage and maintain their mental and physical health.

Classes are subject to change and classes can be added when needed.
Typical Host College Elective Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dance for Sport</td>
<td>KIN 115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Dynamics</td>
<td>KIN 140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swim Fit</td>
<td>KIN 153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jazz Dance I</td>
<td>DAN 140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jazz Dance II</td>
<td>DAN 142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication Process</td>
<td>COMM 101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intro to Social Welfare</td>
<td>SWK 241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>ENG 113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Drawing</td>
<td>ART 114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Printmaking</td>
<td>ART 116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encounter with Cultures</td>
<td>IDS 200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intro to Music</td>
<td>MUS 101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perspectives in Music</td>
<td>MUS 102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intro to Mass Media</td>
<td>COM 101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race in America</td>
<td>PSY 110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intro to Psychology</td>
<td>PSY 101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Year Seminar</td>
<td>IDS 101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intro to Leadership</td>
<td>LDS 101</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mentoring

Peer mentors are central to RFL Academy’s program and reflect the primary method for achieving inclusion within the host college community. A peer mentor is a similar-age companion that assists and guides a RFL student for the purposes of unlocking and achieving his or her potential. Mentors will also provide support for the successful inclusion in traditional Academy classes and activities.

No person shall possess any dagger, dirk, saber, stiletto, nunchucks, and knife having a blade over three inches in length, brass knuckles, blackjack, sap, sling shot, or any other dangerous weapon.

No person shall possess a portable devise or weapon (Stun Gun) designed to incapacitate temporarily, injure, or kill. This includes all devices from which an electrical current, impulse, wave or beam may be directed.

No person shall possess an altered or replicated dangerous weapon, which, in the manner used or displayed, may create fear.

VIII. MEDICAL MARIJUANA POLICY
Medical marijuana, which is prescribed for healing purposes, is prohibited at the Academy even though there may be state laws, which permit its use.

IX. MISSING PERSON POLICY
A Ready for Life student will be considered missing:
- If after 24 continuous hours a student’s location is not known and with reasonable inquiry cannot be determined where they are.
  OR
- A student is missing, when their behavior is contrary to an established pattern or there are unusual circumstances that may have contributed to their absence.

Official notification procedures of missing persons:
- Any individual on campus who has information that a residential student may be a missing person should notify Campus Safety or a Residential Life staff member as soon as possible.
- Campus Safety will gather all essential information about the residential student from the reporting person and from the student’s acquaintances (description, clothes last worn, where student might be, who the student might be with, vehicle description, information about the physical and mental well being of the student, an up-to-date photograph, class schedule, etc.) Appropriate campus staff will be notified to aid in the search for the student.
tor or host college official when he or she is performing the functions of his/her position is prohibited.

Entering or attempting to enter any athletic contest, dance, social gathering, or other such event without the proper credentials for attendance (ticket, I.D., or invitation) or in violation of the reasonable qualifications for attendance as established by the sponsor is prohibited.

No student shall engage in inappropriate behavior in any area where food is being served (i.e., throwing of food or utensils, leaving the eating area in disarray).

No student shall attempt to use an I.D. other than his/her own to gain entrance to the dining area. Students are also not allowed to transfer their I.D. to someone else.

VI. DRUGS
RFL Academy upholds state and municipal laws regarding illegal drugs. The RFL Academy policy relating to medical marijuana can be found on page 13. Further, RFL Academy prohibits the use, possession, sale, manufacture, production, administering, dispensing, and prescribing of any illegal drug, or the misuses of prescribed drugs.

Possession of drug paraphernalia is prohibited. Drug paraphernalia generally refers to any items used in connection with controlled substances. A full definition of what constitutes drug paraphernalia can be found in sec.333.7451 of the Michigan Penal Code.

VII. FIREARMS, WEAPONS OR FIREWORKS
No person shall possess and/or use live ammunition, fireworks or explosives on campus. Fireworks are defined as substances which are prepared for the purpose of creating visual or audible effects by combustion, explosion, or detonation.

No person shall possess or discharge any firearm, air rifle, bow and arrow, paint ball gun, or other dangerous weapon expelling a projectile.

The “Mentoring Matters” relationship is much more than formal assistance or support. Our mentor relationships reflect shared experiences that result in mutual benefit. In other words, “Mentoring Matters” is intended to expand the typical role of mentor and will create the opportunities to develop respectful, meaningful and reciprocal relationships.

When mentoring truly matters and a reciprocal relationship is developed, everyone benefits from the blessings of the relationship.

Three types of mentorships are sought out and fostered in RFL's Academy. They include:

In-class Mentors
- Link RFL student to group during group activities
- Involve the RFL student in group discussions
- Assist RFL student with questions he/she may have
- Remind RFL student of class changes (times, rooms, out of class activities, etc.)
- Provide physical assistance – assist with effective seating, scribe notes or provide class discussion notes
- Email RFL student and Instructor/Coordinator of class changes

Academic Mentors
- Willing to spend time in class or out of class to study and review class material.
- Offer academic support for the RFL student that addresses an educationally defined goal
- Provide out of class study time on campus during RLF hours (9am -3pm, Monday through Friday)
- Coordinate with RFL student/family for study time during non-RFL hours
- Inform RFL instructor/coordinaotr of study time by signing up on the RFL student calendar/schedule
**Social Mentors**
- Spend social/relational time together dedicated to building a reciprocal relationship

**Student Policies**

I. ABSENCES/ATTENDANCE
Your timely attendance at the Academy is critical in making the program successful. You must do your part to achieve a good attendance record. Any absence becomes a part of your student record.

Students are expected to inform their instructor that they will be absent as soon as it becomes evident. Failure to call will result in the following disciplinary action:
- 1 absence; verbal warning
- 2 absences; written warning
- 3 absences; parent/client meeting
- 4 absences; suspension

II. TARDINESS
Timely and regular attendance is an expectation of performance for all RFL Students. In an event that a student is unable to meet this expectation, he/she must obtain approval from the RFL Instructor in advance of any requested schedule changes.

III. ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES
RFL Academy upholds state and local laws regarding the possession and consumption of alcoholic beverages. The concepts listed below are for your consideration:
- Michigan’s drinking age is 21; therefore, most Academy students cannot drink alcohol legally.
- Alcohol use inhibits individuals from functioning at full capacity.
- Alcohol abuse has a negative impact upon the learning environment of the Academy.
- Peer pressure may intimidate and compel persons to change their behavior to go along with the crowd.
- Alcohol use has the potential for leading to alcohol abuse.
- There is a high correlation between alcohol use and sexual assault.

While the Academy affirms that the decision to drink or not drink is a matter of individual choice, it has established the following regulations regarding the use of alcoholic beverages in order to maintain an atmosphere supportive of its educational purpose:
1. The possession and/or consumption of alcoholic beverages on Academy or the host college property, at Academy or host college events are prohibited. Any alcohol, which is found at the Academy or on-campus, will be confiscated and disposed of by the Residential Life Staff or Campus Safety.
2. The use of Academy or organizational monies to purchase alcoholic beverages is prohibited.
3. Alcoholic beverages may not be used to promote an event.
4. The possession of alcoholic beverage containers is prohibited in campus housing units; this includes collectable empty or full alcohol containers and dispensing paraphernalia.

IV. ASSAULT AND/OR HARASSMENT
RFL Academy encourages and aspires to be a community in which all its members feel welcome and respected. In order to affirm and inspire this idea, the following policies are in place. (In the event of an alleged sexual harassment, see page 15 of the Student Handbook).

No person shall threaten, harass, haze, abuse, or assault any member of the faculty, staff, or member of the student body. Any action or situation, regardless of intention, whether in-person or technology-mediated (e.g., web post, text, etc.), whether on or off Academy premises, which results or has the potential of resulting in physical, psychological, or emotional harm, discomfort, or distress to a member of the RFL Academy or host college community may be regarded as such.

No person shall perform any action demonstrating lack of respect for the dignity of another person.

No person shall abuse, threaten, harass, or exhibit behavior which intimidates any complainant, respondent, counsel, witness, or judiciary member prior to, during, or after a judicial hearing.

V. DISORDERLY CONDUCT
Failing to comply with the policy, or request of a Academy instruc-