**The Rice General Announcements** and the **CAAM Graduate Student Handbook** are essential resources with many more details than contained on this sheet. *Read these before classes begin*, and review them before registering for courses each semester. The General Announcements are online at [http://ga.rice.edu/](http://ga.rice.edu/).

**Class selection for Fall 2014:** On Thursday, August 21, the faculty will conduct an entrance interview in (1) real and numerical analysis and (2) computing. These 15 minute conversations are diagnostic: they help us place you in fall courses and make assignments for course grading. You do not need to prepare specially for this interview.

**Qualifying exams:** In May 2015, first year students will take qualifying exams in *Real Analysis* (CAAM 501 and 502) and *Computational Methods* (each student chooses two from CAAM 553, 554, 571). Students that do not pass may retake each exam once, generally the following January. (Prepared students are encouraged to attempt one or both exams in January 2015. Failure of a first-year student on these January 2015 tests will not be counted.)

**Choosing an advisor:** Each first year student is assigned a faculty mentor, who recommends courses and offers other advice. Communicate regularly with your mentor during the first year, while actively investigating the research interests of the entire faculty. Some students make appointments with professors to discuss projects; you can also drop by research group meetings or advanced classes. By the end of the first year, students should pair up with a research advisor.

**Master's thesis:** By the end of their second year, students in the PhD program are expected to complete a master's thesis, written under the guidance of your advisor. Typical theses are roughly 50 pages long and may comprise either a careful literature review or original results. Students take CAAM 600 (Thesis Writing) Spring of their second year.

**Course work:** During their first two years, most students will take three or four courses per semester, typically including CAAM 420, 501, 502, 553, 554, 571, and 600. In addition to these seven core classes, PhD students must take six *distribution courses*, one from each of the six distribution groups (*see the Graduate Student Handbook*), which must be completed before advancement to PhD candidacy (ideally by the end of the third year). Your advisor will help you select these courses. *You are expected to attend class regularly and arrive punctually.*

**Honor Code:** Some problem sets and essentially all exams are ‘pledged’. Such assignments must be completed independently, without assistance from other students/books/internet. To pledge an assignment, write ‘On my Honor, I have neither given nor received any unauthorized aid on this [exam/paper/etc.]’ and sign your name.

**Colloquia and seminars:** All students must attend the **Department Colloquium** held each Monday at 3 pm and the **Graduate Seminars** held each Wednesday at 12 pm. Your failure to participate will be noted by the faculty. (Students are encouraged to present their own work in the Wednesday seminars.)

**Department service:** During their first few years, students grade papers for various courses: typically students mark 10-15 papers per assignment; some instructors also ask graders to write out solutions. In the second year and beyond, some students serve as teaching assistants, holding office hours and giving a recitation
session each week. Finally, several advanced students teach an undergraduate class (typically CAAM 210, 335, or 336) each semester.

**Department citizenship:** Beyond the above-mentioned attendance and grading obligations, each student has a more general responsibility to be a good departmental citizen *by being present in the department*, attending departmental and university functions, helping to recruit new students and faculty, assisting fellow students, etc.

**Graduate Coordinator:** Daria Lawrence (daria@rice.edu, (713) 348-4657); office hours 8:30A - 12:00P, 1:00P - 5:00P.

**Computer access, accounts, email:** All students have a desk in a shared office in Duncan Hall; the computers on these desks run the Linux operating system. Your home directory is stored on the department network; it can be accessed from any machine on that network. Your email address will be username@rice.edu. Further computers, a scanner, and a printer are available in the Pearlman Lab (Duncan 3132); this lab remains locked, but you will receive a key. Additional computing resources are available from Rice Shared Computing Resources, [www.rcsg.rice.edu/sharecore](http://www.rcsg.rice.edu/sharecore). Special printers (for color, posters, theses) are available 24 hours/day in the Mudd building. If you encounter hardware or software difficulties, first ask your fellow students; if unresolved, email a detailed description to the system administrators at helpdesk@rice.edu.

**Library:** The Fondren Library ([http://library.rice.edu/](http://library.rice.edu/)) has a fine collection of technical books; the CAAM department has a small library in DH 2116. Most research articles are online. Google Scholar ([http://scholar.google.com/](http://scholar.google.com/)) has links to these articles; MathSciNet ([http://www.ams.org/mathscinet/](http://www.ams.org/mathscinet/)) has summaries of math articles. To access journals from off-campus, use VPN: to set this up, go to [http://connect.rice.edu/](http://connect.rice.edu/) and look for VPN. For articles unavailable online or in the library, use interlibrary loan: [https://rice.illiad.oclc.org/illiad/logon.html](https://rice.illiad.oclc.org/illiad/logon.html).

**SIAM = Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics:** Rice has a student chapter of this important professional organization. Membership is free for Rice students and gives big discounts on SIAM books. To join, fill out the form at [http://www.caam.rice.edu/~siamchapter/registration.html](http://www.caam.rice.edu/~siamchapter/registration.html). Students interested in operations research/optimization should also consider joining INFORMS, [https://www.informs.org/](https://www.informs.org/) ($36 for a student membership).

*Be sure to read the General Announcements and Graduate Student Handbook!*