

Student Employee Handbook 2025

RIT | **MAGIC Spell Studios**

Welcome to Team MAGIC!

We are glad you are here and we are excited to welcome you to our team! This guide is here to help orient you to your new role and responsibilities. But first, let's start with the basics:

What is MAGIC?

MAGIC stands for Media, Arts, Games, Interaction and Creativity. Our facilities were designed to support the RIT and Rochester community interested in digital media research and production across several digital mediums including film, animation, game design and development, 3D digital design, VR, AR, and everything in between!

MAGIC has both an academic and commercial mission. We are housed within the Division of Research at RIT, which means we do not belong to a specific college, but are available to support those across campus doing research in digital media. Academics are always our first priority, which includes our support and service to classroom activity and exercises, research initiatives, along with RIT events and activities.

Our commercial mission affords RIT students the opportunity to get paid, hands-on, professional experience in their field of interest. We accomplish this by serving as a launching pad and publisher for RIT students and local game developers. We also provide client support services as a for-hire studio. In addition, our production facilities can also be rented out commercially to external clients, often opening paid positions on set for students.

As a MAGIC teammate, you will notice we are community-driven and strike the balance between playful and professional. We whole-heartedly embrace our motto of "we learn by making" and expect you will as well.

Who Works With MAGIC/Who are the People of MAGIC?

MAGIC engages with students, faculty, staff, alumni and community members across many disciplines, and all these roles are essential to our core mission. You will cross paths with MAGIC teammates working on tasks and projects different than your own, and we encourage curiosity and collaboration amongst everyone in our community.

MAGIC Staff

Meet the full-time staff members of MAGIC! You'll see us working away every day!

David Long, Director

David leads the MAGIC Team. From supporting the teaching and learning goals of the research spaces to building connections for entrepreneurship and commercialization, David champions the MAGIC mission and is responsible for our budget. David is also a Full Professor in SOFA and teaches courses in motion picture science. David supervises: Jenn, Amanda, and Brenda.

Jenn Hinton, Chief of Staff | Director of Games Industry Relations

Jenn sets the agenda for MAGIC and plays a key role in the execution of strategy and takes direct leadership of business development, fundraising, select initiatives, projects, client relations, etc. She is responsible for day-to-day operations and program management. She serves as our spokesperson and brand ambassador and develops and champions all internal and external communications. She also coordinates all of our efforts related to the video game industry. Jenn supervises: Denny, Aaron and Eva.

Brenda Schlageter, Financial Operations Manager

Brenda manages all of MAGIC's finances and HR department. She is responsible for providing leadership and support for financial planning and compliance. You likely remember having a conversation with her during your hiring paperwork. Any questions in regard to student employment and timecards should be directed her way.

Amanda Hughes, Technology and Studio Manager

Amanda manages all of MAGIC's technology, production equipment, and facilities. She is responsible for the general building operations, responding to helpdesk tickets, and providing resources for current MAGIC projects and initiatives. She also oversees the MAGIC PA department, along with some student teams working on specialty projects. Amanda supervises: Andrew.

Andrew Sevigny, Media IT & Systems Engineer

Andrew is our residential engineer responsible for research, design, and implementation of MAGIC's technical infrastructure, production, and post-production facilities and workflows. It's people like Andrew that keep MAGIC's resources state-of-the-art! Andrew also works with Amanda in responding to helpdesk tickets and supervises the MAGIC Tech and MAGIC Production Engineer student team.

Denny McCorry, Digital Games Hub Coordinator

Denny is a game developer and our liaison between MAGIC and the local game community. He supports the participants in our MAGIC Incubator Program along with commercial game projects coming in through MAGIC. Reach out to Denny if you want to learn more about games.

Aaron Nieboer, Production Associate

Aaron serves as the producer for our in-house game development teams. This includes students in our MAGIC Maker Program and the development of That Damn Goat! Reach out to Aaron with questions in regard to game development or if you want to hear more about these programs.

Eva Sarachan-Dubay, Events and Social Media Manager

Eva handles all logistics for MAGIC related events along with our social media accounts. She also oversees the MAGIC Graphic Design department. Reach out to Eva if you'd like to hold an event at MAGIC.

*As our portfolio of client work grows, we may add additional staff in "**Client Project Director**" capacities to support the project and student team through the project's life cycle. Currently Diane Linnet and Jivitesh Debata serve in these roles.*

MAGIC Programs

MAGIC offers select programs to encourage students and community members to take the leap in developing their next big idea!

MAGIC Maker Program

The goal of the MAGIC Maker program is to provide students with the funding and support to manage their own digital media (games, film, digital media, interactive experiences, digital design and more) projects and prepare them for publication and investment-readiness.

Traver Creative Technologist Founders Program

The Traver Creative Technologist Founders Program integrates problem-solving, customer discovery, business model exploration, technology development (including prototyping), business acceleration, and learning frameworks for creative technologists at RIT. An emphasis of the program is making multidisciplinary connections between technology and business students, working also with experienced creative students, to advance product concepts across the entrepreneurship lifecycle, while simultaneously leveraging support and mentorship.

Community Incubator Program

The goal of our Community Incubator Program is to assist indie developers in the Greater Rochester area (including the Finger Lakes and Western New York) who are developing games. We are excited to extend our reach and support beyond the RIT campus: this unique opportunity is for individuals who are not currently RIT students, staff, or faculty.

Student Producer Program

The goal of this new program is to provide students who are interested in working as producers or in production/project management roles with a co-curricular, professional development experience that includes programming and access to industry professionals who do this work. In addition, we anticipate that we will select the strongest, most qualified students from this pool to assist us as (paid) “student” or “junior” producers on client projects that have been commissioned.

MAGIC Student Operation Departments

These student teams are the backbone behind the day-to-day operational needs at MAGIC.

MAGIC Tech

The MAGIC Tech department is MAGIC’s first line of defense for IT and technical support. You’ll find them working away to tackle helpdesk tickets at their station located in the MAGIC lab, MSS-3120.

MAGIC Production Engineers

MAGIC Production Engineers provide technical support and training for our advanced production facilities, including our Color Correction Suite, Virtual Production, and Motion Capture Lab. These students are here to manage these spaces and further MAGIC’s research in these disciplines so we can remain state-of-the-art.

MAGIC Production Assistants (PAs)

The MAGIC PAs oversee all MAGIC’s film production inventory and provide direct support for many classes for the School of Film and Animation. They maintain equipment reservations and facilities inspection and maintenance. You can find the PAs on the soundstage, MSS-2020/2060

MAGIC Graphic Design

The MAGIC Graphic Design Team handles digital content produced in house for MAGIC promotion, social media, and events. You can find the Graphic Design team located in the MAGIC lab, MSS-3120.

MAGIC Front Desk Clerk

The MAGIC Front Desk Staff has excellent organizational skills and attention to detail. They are responsible for the little things that keep our facilities running and looking their best. They have also perfected the art of giving tours of our facilities, and know all the details behind our building’s nooks and crannies. They are here to greet visitors, help manage clerical duties, and serve as support to other operational departments. The Front Desk Clerks are located in the MAGIC Lab, MSS-3120.

MAGIC Client Services

MAGIC provides for-hire services to clients looking for digital solutions or research. These teams vary based on project demands, timeline, and scope. A few examples of MAGIC commercial contracts include:

- **Overshoot Animation:** 2D animators developing content for a various shorts and clients
- **The SHED Content Creators:** Ever notice the awesome visuals on the jumbotron in the SHED? This is the team that makes it happen, from curating, designing, and managing this content.
- **MAGIC Internal IP:** As a proper studio, MAGIC creates its own marketable projects as well! Check out *That Damn Goat!* as our most recent game made by students and published to Nintendo Switch.

MAGIC Community Cultural Expectations

Community and culture are very important to us at MAGIC and we expect that every member of our team will contribute to our community in a positive, inclusive and professional way. Should you experience a situation that is contradictory to this, you are encouraged to speak to your supervisor and/or Jenn.

MAGIC is a busy place with a lot of activity in all of our spaces each and every day. Your professionalism, which includes respect, good communication, collaboration, responsibility and trust is expected. We have a lot of pride in our building and people and expect that our people and places will be respected. This is especially important in our MAGIC Lab which is a shared research and production space that includes faculty/staff offices and work stations for students who are engaged in MAGIC-related work and activities.

Please be mindful of your language and the volume of your voice when working in the lab. If you are asked to lower your voice or watch your language, please be respectful of the person making this request. Noise cancelling headphones are encouraged. Collaboration is key here, so if you find yourself needing to an impromptu meeting and/or video/phone call, please pop into our huddle room located in the reception area. This is a non-reservable space that is just for us. If you have a planned meeting, you are encouraged to make a reservation for one of our conference rooms (2015 and 3190) utilizing reserve.rit.edu.

Our Green Room and Demo Lounge are non-reservable spaces and are often used by members of the MAGIC team for meetings and private conversations. While you are welcome to utilize these spaces as well, please note that their use for professional purposes is the priority. You should not be utilizing these spaces to take naps, breaks, eat, etc.

Our kitchen is well-stocked and is available for you to utilize. Please help yourself to the microwave, coffee machine, electric tea kettle, fridge/freezer, paper products and more. If you are utilizing the fridge/freezer, please label your food items and remove them in a timely manner. We often have “free food and drinks” and when we do it will be labeled and you will be encouraged to help yourself to it. Please do not take food and drinks that do not belong to you. It is expected that you will clean up after yourself and take the initiative to clean up a mess should you encounter one.

As a student employee, you have our trust and 24/7 access to our spaces, please do not take this privilege for granted.

Need something to get your job done? Don’t know if we have it, or where to find it? Please ask. We have several storage closets throughout the building that have everything ranging from office supplies to tools, paint and more! The closet that you will most likely access the most often is the storage closet located directly across from Eva’s office. You will find office supplies here, as well as our lost and found.

If you identify an item that is lost/left behind, please bring it to the front desk where it will be logged into our system. Should someone communicate to you that they are missing a lost item, please send them to the front desk as well. If a front desk clerk is not available, please ask a staff member for assistance. Note: if “expensive” (i.e. electronics) or items that contain personal information (i.e. wallets, purses) are brought to the front desk, we will contact Public Safety to ask them to pick up the item(s). RIT Public Safety Lost and Found can be contacted at: 585-475-5967 (dial 5-5967 if calling from office phone) or psdcps@rit.edu

MAGIC Facilities Hours and Access

MAGIC’s 52,000 sq ft building was designed to support ambitious creative minds with state-of-the-art facilities. These facilities include:

- 5 computer labs designated to the School of Interactive Games and Media and the College of Art and Design
- Film production, post-production, and exhibition spaces
- Research labs, include the MAGIC Lab and the VR Lab

The facilities you are able to access with your RIT ID is dependent on your role at MAGIC. Our operational student staff receive access to a wide variety of our facilities because they are responsible for upkeep and maintenance of the space. Students partaking in our specialty programs or client work will generally receive access to specific labs needed to progress their work.

Amanda Hughes is the primary MAGIC staff member responsible for assigning access to MAGIC users. If you find your access does not meet your needs, submit a **Facilities Helpdesk Support Ticket** and Amanda will respond as soon as she can!

Our main lab, commonly referred to as the MAGIC Lab, is room number MSS-3120 and located at the top of the main stairs in the building. This is where you can find our MAGIC Makers, residential researchers, faculty, and MAGIC staff.

MAGIC Lab Hours:

Monday – Friday, 7:30am – 6pm. Assigned RIT ID access required outside these times.

MAGIC Building Hours:

Monday – Saturday, 7am – 10pm: doors open

Monday – Saturday, 10pm – 12am: active RIT ID required for building access

After 12am or Sunday access: All traffic must enter through main Booth entrance off the breezeway.

Getting Help

MAGIC is dedicated to providing a safe and healthy work environment for students, faculty, staff, residents, clients, and all visitors. We all have a responsibility to our community and we are each encouraged to take an active role in it. If you feel comfortable addressing a difficult situation that you encounter, you may do so. No member of our team or community is expected to put themselves in harm's way to address a concern. You are however, expected to contact Public Safety to report what you have observed, and especially if something appears or feels "off". Please remember, "if you see something, say something".

Please familiarize yourself with our comprehensive "Emergency Standard Operating Procedures" (SOP) documentation which is included as an appendix to this handbook.

Technical Support

The MAGIC staff is here to support you and move your projects forward. If you find you need technical support, production support, or facilities support, please submit at helpdesk ticket here or scan the QR codes throughout the building: helpdesk.magic.rit.edu

Submitting a helpdesk ticket is the best way to get fast and efficient support! These tickets are directly received by Amanda Hughes, Andrew Sevigny, MAGIC Tech, MAGIC Production Engineers, and the MAGIC PAs. Help tickets allow us to work together in solving problems and keep track of recurring issues.

A ticket is always the first step to getting help at MAGIC, but feel free to swing by the MAGIC Tech desk (MSS-3120) for immediate support. They will submit a ticket on your behalf and then work with you to find a solution.

Dress Code

You are free to dress as your truest self here at MAGIC, but depending on your role, you may want to consider the following:

- Will I be lifting and moving heavy equipment? Close toed shoes are required, and we will ask you to remove excessively dangly jewelry/accessories which may get caught on equipment.
- Does my job require set up and tear down of computers? Wear something you can move in comfortably! Who knows, you might be crawling under tables or climbing up ladders!

Note: MAGIC hosts several events throughout the year, many of which attract high-profile community members. We may ask you to dress professionally or wear your MAGIC attire when supporting these events.

RIT Student Employment Rules and Expectations

RIT follows New York State labor laws and has an established set of rules and guidelines specific for student employees. Note that these guidelines are here for your protection, and they must be followed. More information regarding student employment can be found here:

<https://www.rit.edu/careerservices/students/on-campus-employment>

Access to your RIT timecard can be found here:

<https://fastapps.rit.edu/kronosTimecard/login>

General Employment Overview

To be eligible as an RIT student employee, you must be considered a full-time student. Full-time status means you are enrolled in at least 12 credits for undergraduate students or 9 credits for graduate students. Students who have graduated, are incoming, suspended, or have taken a leave of absence are not eligible to be RIT student employees.

Student employees are limited to 20 hours total per working week in Fall and Spring semester, but may work up to 40 hours per week during the summer or on specified academic breaks. RIT pay weeks run from Friday to Thursday. That means if you clock in for 5 hours on a Friday, you can work up to 15 more hours before the end of day on Thursday. Your supervisor is aware of the 20 hour limit and will never schedule you for more than 20 hours per week. Remember that this 20 hour limit applies across ALL your jobs on campus. If you are a MAGIC Tech employee

and a TA for one of your professors, you can only work 20 hours between both of these roles. It is your responsibility to communicate with your MAGIC supervisor if you have any other student jobs so they can schedule you appropriately.

Student employees also must have at least one day off per week between all their on-campus jobs. You cannot work 10 days in a row, and clocking in for even just 5 minutes counts as working.

All student employees must take a 30 minute break if they work 6 consecutive hours, or two 30 minute breaks if they are clocked in for 10 consecutive hours. This means if your shift is scheduled from 10am – 4pm, you MUST clock out and take a 30 minute break. Your supervisor is aware that you will need to clock out for a break, and you should coordinate with them when you plan on clocking out. You may not complete any work related tasks if you are not clocked in. Remember, you're on break! Enjoy it!

Please be sure that your break is the full 30 minutes. If you clock out at 11:30am, you may not clock back in until 12:00pm. If you clock in early, you will need to provide Brenda and your supervisor a detailed email description of why your lunch break was cut short. If you do not clock out for your break, you will also need to email Brenda and your supervisor with a detailed email description as to why you did not take a break. Please remember that “I forgot,” or “I didn't have time, I was busy,” are not acceptable reasons to skip your break or cut it early. Continued neglect to follow these rules may result in termination of MAGIC employment.

Clocking Your Hours

All hourly student employees will be issued an employee badge number for each job when they are hired. This is the number you will be using to clock in and out for your shifts. Note if you work multiple jobs, you will have multiple badge numbers. You must use the MAGIC Kronos timeclock located near the bathrooms on the 2nd floor (across from the sound stage). If you need help clocking in or out, or do not know where the timeclock is located, please contact your supervisor and they can assist you.

MAGIC encourages on-campus employment so we can get to know you as a part of our community, and because many of our roles require attention or access to the resources physically provided in our building. However, some remote opportunities may be possible for students physically located in upstate New York and who have prior approval from their supervisor. If you are working remotely, you must keep track of your hours and email them to Brenda and your supervisor on Thursdays. Please be sure to email the exact times you worked and do not round to a convenient number.

Some MAGIC employees who contribute to commercial projects may have two badge numbers. This is so MAGIC can track commercial hours and allocate funds appropriately. For example,

many PAs have a “normal” badge number that they will use each shift for their job duties, however, they will also have a “commercial” badge number that will be used if they are helping to support a commercial client renting out the sound stage. Your supervisor will let you know if you’ve been assigned to a job that requires you to use your commercial badge number. After your commercial shift, you must email Brenda and your supervisor detailing which commercial project you clocked in for. This is so we can track hours applied to each project and bill appropriately.

Missing or Overlapping Punches

Accidents happen, and sometimes you may have forgotten to clock in or out for your shift. If this happens, please email Brenda and your supervisor ASAP. Your email must detail the exact times and dates of your missing punch, and you cannot round your hours to a convenient number (use exact times, like 12:04pm instead of 12:00pm).

Here is an example of how to send a missing punch email:

To: Brenda Schlageter
CC: Jenn Hinton
Subject: Amanda Hughes Missing Punch, 8/14/24

Hello Brenda,

I accidentally missed a punch for my shift on 8/14/24. Can you please correct my hours to the times below?

Clock in: 9:03am
Clock out: 11:58am

Thank you!
Amanda Hughes

An overlapping punch means you are clocked in for two jobs at the same time. This will be flagged in the Kronos timecard system as a student cannot be working two jobs at once. Typically when this happens, it means there was a timeclock error. This can stem from any of your jobs on campus, and your MAGIC supervisor can only see your MAGIC timecard. This means you will need to log onto your timecard and email the supervisor who needs to make the timecard adjustments.

Overlapping punches can happen for many reasons, but here are a few examples:

1. You work as a MAGIC Front Desk Clerk and as a cashier at the Ritz. Your MAGIC shift is on Mondays from 2pm – 5pm, and you have a Ritz shift on Tuesdays from 11am – 2pm. You remembered to clock in for your MAGIC shift at 1:58pm, but you were so busy you forgot to clock out! The Konos timeclock does not know the difference, so it will keep you clocked in under your MAGIC badge number. On Tuesday, you clock into your Ritz job at 11:03am – but remember, you never clocked out from your MAGIC job. Now the system believes you are working two jobs at once!

In this case, you must email Brenda, your MAGIC supervisor, and your Ritz supervisor so they know the overlapping punch is being taken care of. Your email should indicate the correct hours you clocked in and out. Your Ritz supervisor will not need to correct your timecard, but they will know the issue is being handled.

2. You work as a MAGIC Content Creator and as a TA for class. Your TA hours are from 11am – 2pm, and your MAGIC shift is scheduled from 2pm – 5pm. You clock out of your TA job at 1:58pm and immediately clock into your MAGIC job at 1:58pm. This will be flagged as an overlapping punch, because the timeclock sees you were clocked in for both jobs at 1:58pm. In the case, you would need to wait until the clock turns until 1:59pm before clocking into your MAGIC job.

This overlapping punch is handled the same way, where you must email all supervisors so they are aware of the issue and know it is being handled by the correct department.

Remember, student employees are responsible for checking their timecards every Thursday to make sure there are no mistakes. All mistakes should be emailed to Brenda and your supervisor using the above format.

Your supervisor will sign off on your hours every other Friday, which will essentially “approve” your paycheck. If you have not checked your timecard and there are any mistakes, Brenda will receive a notification and email you immediately. You MUST respond promptly to Brenda’s email! We cannot make adjustments to your timecard without your written email consent. This means if we do not hear back from you before the signoff deadline and there is an issue with your timecard, those hours will need to be deleted and reconciled on a future pay cycle.

Continued missing punches, overlapping punches, timecard errors, or neglect to respond to timecard correction emails may be means for termination of MAGIC employment.

Scheduling and Shift Coverage

Your supervisor will work with you to determine your work schedule, and you should contact them directly with any scheduling changes or concerns. If for some reason you cannot make it to your shift, contact your supervisor and they will help you identify steps for shift coverage.

Appendix:

- MAGIC Spell Studios Emergency SOP
- MAGIC Spell Studios Tour Script