



**PROTESTANT INSTITUTE OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES (PIASS)**

**OFFICE OF THE VICE CHANCELLOR**

*P.O. Box 619 Butare Rwanda- Phone: (+ 250)788310 811*

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# **PROTESTANT INSTITUTE OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES (PIASS)**



## **STUDENT HANDBOOK POLICY**



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## **1. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF PROTESTANT INSTITUTE OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

The institution which later on became the Protestant Institute of Arts and Social Sciences was founded in 1970 by mainline protestant churches that were operating in Rwanda. The institution was then called “Ecole de Theologie de Butare: ETB” (Butare School of Theology). In 1990, it was upgraded into Faculty of Protestant Theology of Butare (FTPB) which got official accreditation in 1993 by the convention No 1552 of 09 December 1993. In the same year, the convention No 1554/09.2/01/02 acknowledged the degrees delivered by the FTPB.

In the aftermath of 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda, the founders of the institution, in the collaboration with the FTPB national and international partners deployed a lot of efforts to help FTPB resume its activities in such a way that specific needs of a recovering society could be met. In that perspective, a so-called Special Program was launched in 1995 and lasted till 2001: three successive intakes of students have been trained over two years and educated in contextual and practical theological training through those kinds of crash courses. The graduates of the Special program were awarded with Diploma in Protestant Theology. As of 1999, the FTPB returned to the ordinary four years’ program of Hon. Bachelor’s degree in Protestant Theology.

In 2009, the FTPB grew up and was supplemented by two new Faculties: The Faculty of Education (FED) and the Faculty of Development Studies (FDS) within the new framework of “Institut Protestant des Sciences Humaines de Butare (IPSHB)”. Those two new fields have been chosen based on the experiences and expertise acquired by Protestant Churches in Rwanda. In 2010, the French name was changed to Protestant Institute of Arts and Social Sciences (PIASS). The new Institution (PIASS) has been respectively accredited by the Ministerial Order no 09/11 of November 2009 licensing “Institut Protestant des Sciences Humaines de Butare (IPSHB)” and the ministerial order n°29 of 19/07/2010 recognizing the Institute under the new name of Protestant Institute of Arts and Social Sciences (PIASS).



**1.1. PIASS Philosophy**

PIASS holds the view that faith and science are indispensable tools for any society to survive and harness moral obligation of people to creatively improve the socio-economic environment in which they can survive and realize their potential. This can only be achieved through a well-conceptualized educational and scientific package through which everyone must rightfully experience and acquire the tools to facilitate this philosophy.

**1.2. PIASS's Statement of Faith**

PIASS affirms the following as fundamental to Christian belief, practice, and behavior.

1. The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as the written Word originally given by God through revelation to humans, are inspired, true, and entirely trustworthy in all that it intends to teach, and have supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct since they contain all things necessary for salvation.
2. There is ONE GOD, eternally existent in Three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
3. God is the Creator and Sustainer of the world and of life thanks to His universal sovereignty over all that He has made in heaven and on earth.
4. Our Lord Jesus Christ, incarnated God, was conceived through the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, true God, and a true man without sin. His bodily resurrection, His ascension, His present mediatorial work, and His personal return in Power and Glory to judge the living and the dead remain a firm source of our hope for the present and life to come.
5. The Holy Spirit, one of the persons of the Trinity, witnesses to Christ, regenerates, and sanctifies us. His indwelling enables us to witness and serve the Triune God and humankind through different spiritual gifts and talents.



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6. Man and woman were created by God in His image, free and responsible to choose good or evil. By sin, human beings were corrupted in their nature and were separated from their Creator.
7. Salvation for humans remains the work of God, accomplished through Jesus Christ's expiatory death and bodily resurrection. In His grace, God justifies the sinner through faith alone.
8. The unity of all those who, through believing and confessing that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the Saviour of the world, form a community of children of God, the Church, the Body of Christ of which He is the Head.
9. The bodily resurrection of all the dead, the final judgment, and the establishment of the eternal kingdom of Christ.

As a Church-owned institution, PIASS's overall conviction and calling are to build a world in which the love of God for His creation and that we have for one another is visible and lived in concrete experiences. To stand firm in its faith and succeed in its mission, the following commitments and strategies are set as safeguards:

1. PIASS is committed to reading, teaching, and preaching the Holy Scriptures in their plain and canonical sense through an in-depth analysis, and to applying their message.
2. PIASS is committed to promoting Ecumenism within it and among Protestant Churches in Rwanda and beyond as an opportunity and strategy to affirm our Christian witness and fight against separatism, destructive fundamentalism, and any form of extremism.
3. PIASS is engaged in the ministry of reconciliation and search for peace within surrounding communities, in the Rwandan society, and in the Great Lakes sub-region.
4. PIASS is committed to supporting initiatives likely to improve the living conditions of communities.
5. PIASS is committed to supporting the weakest among us and to building healing communities where everyone finds a place.



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### 1.3. PIASS Vision

“To be a reference university, fostering knowledge development and research that is relevant for the society and inspired by Christian ethics and values.”

### 1.4. PIASS Mission

“To provide Society and Churches with well trained personnel who are inquisitive, solution oriented, committed and equipped with intellectual tools that enable them to meeting specific needs of societies that are moving to a global, modern and pluralistic world.”

### 1.5. PIASS Moto

Fides et Scientia (Faith and Science): By this moto, PIASS assumes that faith and science are interwoven to ensure the quality of life.

### 1.6. PIASS Objectives

PIASS as Higher Learning Institution has the following objectives:

- To develop practical and applicable knowledge in social as well as economic development.
- To impart a high-quality teaching enabling creation of employment and that proves relevant to communities is close to reality, helpful for the society at large.
- To contribute to the positive transformation of society using short teaching and training, research, consultancy and projects and respect to ethical dimension.
- To contribute to local and national sustainable development by promoting scientific and technological research as well as research for integrated development.

### 1.7. Principles and values

Being a Protestant institution of Higher Education, PIASS ethical values are grounded in its statement of faith.



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- **Liberation:** As the Gospel of Christ liberates from all human alienations here and now, bearing witness to it cannot go without running social dialogue with the society and serving the poor.
- **Relevance:** Higher education plays a key role in construction and development of a just, equitable and stable society through the training of committed, responsible and professionally competent citizens.
- **Unity in Diversity:** Open and respectful exchange of ideas along with evidence-based documentation is essential to higher education contribution to a pluralistic society.
- **Effectiveness and efficiency:** Finding out the optimal and cost-effective way to reach objectives, in changing environment and limitation of resources and keeps on being result and solution oriented.
- **Quality Service Delivery:** Training, research, and services to both national and international communities must be qualitative and competitive.
- **Innovation:** Teaching and learning processes are considering changing needs of churches and society and therefore programs are continually assessed and improved accordingly in a spirit of creativity and entrepreneurship at all levels.
- **Responsibility:** Teachers, students and administrative staff, to achieve their job, are expected to make decisions, act upon their choices, delegate and report openly.
- **Solidarity:** Promoting a gender balanced culture and stressing on the needs of disadvantaged groups.
- **Collaboration:** Fostering team spirit and looking for win-win partnerships with other institutions of higher learning.
- **Transparency:** Managing resources of the institution in a rigorous and transparent manner.
- **Good Governance:** Fairness, equity without discrimination, clear delegation and decentralization are adopted at all levels of the institution.



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- **Prayerful life:** Prayer as a conversation with God and a means for self-examination can bring about a sense of inner peace, spiritual refreshment, and more commitment to serve God, fellow humans, and the whole creation.
- **Hard work:** The necessity for hard work is not only a way to attain prosperity and wealth for oneself and society, but it also remains a calling to fulfill the mandate given to human beings to take care of creation and fructify it in a sustainable way.
- **Equality and Inclusivity:** All members of the PIASS community are equal. We believe in a fair and respectful manner so that each member of the PIASS community has an equal opportunity to contribute to the University's operations. We promote the safety, security and wellbeing of society and our environment by acting in accordance with the University's equality and diversity policy.

### **Student Rights and Responsibility**

Students enjoy the basic rights as indicated below and are bound by the same responsibilities to respect the rights of others as is true for all citizens. However, by virtue of their enrolment in PIASS, students are obligated to abide by the policies and regulations of the university. The university is responsible for enforcing its policies fairly and with equitable procedures. It is the responsibility of each student to know the policies and procedures contained in this Student's handbook.

### **CAMPUS SERVICES AND HELPFUL INFORMATION**

Academic Coaching: For free help with study strategies, tutoring, academic accommodation, or time management, the Center for language improvement (multimedia center) for student success staff will help you get on track for a successful semester.

### **MAKING CHOICES AS A STUDENT AT PIASS**



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We desire to empower students to discover their talents through not only classrooms learning but also in student's clubs and different formal and non-formal trainings (keep your eyes open) and life styles. The reality of campus life, both on and off campus, is that we make small decisions every day that move us either closer to or farther away from dreams. Our goal is to be self-disciplined and to hold each other accountable in our student's life style. As such, PIASS reserves a right to provide counsel and/or discipline to students who, in the University's sole judgment, do not follow stated policies of student conduct or expressed principles and expectations of the University.

### **SOCIAL, ACADEMIC, AND PROFESSIONAL INTEGRITY**

**Integrity:** Students are expected to maintain high levels of academic honesty. Submitting someone else's work as your own (without proper citations, identifying particular research, copying, etc.), or otherwise cheating is dishonest and is not congruent with PIASS values and academic values

**Physical Aggression/Assault:** Pushing, striking, or physically assaulting another person is prohibited. The University reserves the right to review alleged incidents of self-defense, in light of physical aggression. Activities that could be interpreted as degrading to others or potentially endanger individuals, or property are prohibited.

**Respectful Behavior:** We expect all community members to show respect to each other. Conduct that is disrespectful or intentionally disruptive is unacceptable. When a student or guest exhibits behaviors that cause concern or could be considered a threat to others or to University's property, students have a right to ask questions, seek information and assistance, or to express dissent in a respectful way that maintains dignity and rights of others in the educational community.

**Outreach and Service:** PIASS as a community, encourages students to be involved in outreach, missions, and service through though different programs. We partner with many local and national non-profit groups, keep your eye for any opportunity that PIASS will post regarding that, and ask for advice in your department.





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## **SAFETY STANDARDS**

PIASS environment in general is safe but you are required to be responsible and watchful for any possible harm. University enjoys relative safety that is enhanced by professionally trained and equipped security officers who maintain surveillance of the campus 24 hours per day, every day. You are required however to keep your staff in a safe environment for your own personal interest.

Because cases are often complex due to unique circumstances of individuals involved, the process attempts to be redemptive, within the structure of the University. Thus, disciplinary decisions may not always appear “fair” or “consistent” to those outside of the process. Development of student’s personal integrity is the primary goal and corrective measures are intended to help students be responsible and contributing community members.

Suspension may include, where a student found in crimes are either suspended for a period of time or complete separation from the University. Suspension may be for one semester, one year, or longer depending on the severity of the behavior.

## **Acts of Academic Dishonesty**

Violations may include but are not limited to:

- Any form of falsification of information.
- Cheating or colluding on any assignment, quiz or project.
- Incidents of blatant plagiarism on any assignment, paper, or project (including oral reports, presentations, and online discussions).