



**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 EXCHANGE 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.
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.



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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.

***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.

- **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.



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- **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.
- **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 sever 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.

The Protestant Institute of Arts and Social Sciences (PIASS) is aware of the educational trend toward internationalization.' Only through constructing bridges for our students will they be able to further



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develop their professional and cultural potential and take advantage of the numerous possibilities available in the world of higher education. They will be able to become more competitive candidates for employment prospects in East Africa and throughout the world as a result of this extensive exposure. This Policy is developed for facilitating our institutional effort to increase student exchanges between PIASS and other universities worldwide.

#### **Article 1: Definition**

An exchange program is a distinguishing feature of international universities in which a student may apply for a site transfer to any of the institutions with whom PIASS has an academic partnership or exchange arrangement. The International Exchange and Industrial Attachment Office (IEIAO) coordinates student exchange programs, industrial attachment and internships, which reports to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Academics (DVCA).

#### **Article 2: Objective**

The goal of student exchange program is to increase international awareness and build successful collaborations with established universities and educational institutions. Through the exchange of students between PIASS and corresponding higher education institutions that are parties to a formal Exchange Agreement or a Memorandum of Understanding/Cooperation, a student exchange program will give academic and intellectual advantage.

#### **Article 3: General Considerations**

- The International Exchange and Industrial Attachment Office (IEIAO), in consultation with PIASS academic and administrative units, will establish and maintain a register of all Exchange Agreements and Memoranda of Understanding/Cooperation. This Office will be the central resource for information on agreements, memoranda, and the files of participating students.
- Institution to Institution Exchange Agreements and Memorandums of Understanding/Cooperation are typically authorized and approved by the University's Vice-Chancellor, and such exchanges are open to all qualified PIASS students who choose to engage in a student exchange program.



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- Before a student may apply to participate in a student exchange program at a Host Institution, a written Memorandum of Understanding/Cooperation or an Exchange Agreement must be in place.
- Approval for a student to participate in a student exchange program will be given based on the selection criteria outlined by the faculty council (academic criteria) with due consideration to gender balance and balance between national and international students.
- As a courtesy, official documents or other needed documentation for participation in the exchange program must be provided as facilitation.
- In addition to obtaining approval from the Dean of Faculty and Registrar's Office, the proposed subject of study for every student participating in a student exchange program must be authorized by IEIAO.
- PIASS policies and procedures include grievance procedures if students have objections to the decisions arising from this policy.

#### **Article 4: Outgoing Exchange Students**

Exchange students at PIASS will be classified as 'outgoing students.' This does not imply that they are no longer PIASS students. Outgoing Students will not obtain a degree from the Host Institution, regardless of how long the exchange program lasts; they must return to PIASS to receive their degree. That being said, in order to participate in the student exchange program, outgoing students must meet a number of prerequisites and submit an application letter to IEIAO.

The eligibility requirements will be determined by the faculty council in liaison with IEIAO.

#### **Article 5: Application Process**

Students who wish to participate in a student exchange program are required to: a) Complete and lodge an application form/ letter with IEIAO by the date specified on the application form/ announcement. b) Agree in writing to the terms and conditions set out in the student exchange program. c) Be aware that the attainment of the transcript of grades from the Host Institution is the student's responsibility.

#### **Article 6: Registration Requirements**





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a) The PIASS Registrar will register a student for courses if the student presents a properly signed form listing the course(s) to be taken at the Host Institution. b) The student must have completed all course prerequisites. c) Based on the faculty council's assessment of the relevance of courses completed, credits earned by taking courses at the Host Institution may be transferred as resident credits at PIASS to meet degree requirements. d) At the end of the period of study at Host Institution, no official diploma or certificate whatsoever will be delivered to the student, but an official transcript of records will be issued for the exclusive purpose of transfer to the Home Institution. e) An exchange student is entitled to an enrolment statement from PIASS.

### **Article 7: Incoming Exchange Students**

Student exchange programs at PIASS are short-term programs that enable international students to study for up to two academic semesters and a summer session (one academic year, not renewable) in any of the PIASS campuses (Huye or Karongi). 'Incoming Exchange Student' is a student who participates in an academic program at PIASS as part of his/her degree at the Home Institution that has an MoU with PIASS. He/she may transfer the credits earned at PIASS to meet degree requirements at his/her Home Institution in accordance with its regulations.

### **Article 8: Credit Transfer**

IEIAO, Registrar, Head of the Departments at PIASS will work with the student to negotiate a suitable program, with credit transferable to his/her Home Institution. The student will need to work hard on this part of the process at his/her Home Institution, but should not expect to have it completely finished until he/she is here at PIASS. When the student finishes his/her study in the student exchange program at PIASS, he/she will be issued an official transcript of the courses he/she has completed and the grades achieved. It is, however, the student's responsibility to obtain his/her transcript. Therefore, follow-up on the attainment of the transcript of grades is the student's responsibility.

### **Article 9: Registration Requirements**

The criteria of the registration requirements and process are highlighted in the admission policy of PIASS.



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**NB:** Attached is the Exchange agreement between student, parent/ official guardian and PIASS represented by IEIAO.

**Exchange Program Student Agreement**

The student (Names and Reg.No).....

ID/Passport.....Nationality.....Gender.....

Year of the study.....Department.....

is allowed by PIASS to participate in the exchange program (Host Institution)

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From date...../month...../year.....to date...../month...../year.....

According to the PIASS exchange program policy, internal rules and regulations, national laws; I am committed to display a sense of maturity, respect and responsibility as a representative of PIASS with its values during the entire period of the exchange program. I also understand that I am subject to the laws of the host country where I will study as well as the rules and regulations of my host institution. I am committed to return to PIASS immediately after the program period, and failure to do so without any justifiable reason will result in disciplinary actions including the nullification of academic achievements and the termination of student status with PIASS.

One week after arrival, I will submit an exchange report to the International Exchange and Industrial Attachment Office (IEIAO) and the Dean of the Faculty and share the experience obtained during the induction week with other students or use other ways agreed with directorate of student affairs.

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Student's signature and Date

Parent/ Guardian's signature and Date

Names:

Names:

ID/Passport.....

Approved By PIASS Council at Huye on 25-5-2022

**Chairman of PIASS Council**