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Glenn Stevens* (ghs@math.bu.edu), Department of Mathematics and Statistics, Boston University, Boston, MA 02446. *Steinberg Symbols and Eisenstein Cohomology.*

In this talk we will give an explicit construction of a universal Dedekind-Eisenstein symbol belonging to the compactly supported cohomology of arithmetic subgroups of $GL(n)$ and taking values in a distribution theoretic module of Milnor K -groups. At least when $n = 2$, the symbol we describe appears to be *universal* in the sense that any eigen-cohomology class (including torsion cuspidal classes) whose Hecke eigenvalues are of Eisenstein type may be obtained as a specialization of ours. We do not know if this holds true in general, but will give three important examples of the phenomenon: (1) the classical Dedekind-Rademacher homomorphisms; (2) the Busuioc-Sharifi symbol in K_2 of $\mathbb{Z}[\mu_p, 1/p]$; and (3) p -adic analytic families of cohomology classes over Eisenstein components of the eigencurve. (Received August 19, 2008)