

# Disabilities and Academic Accommodations

Students are required to meet the technical standards set forth by the college/program in which they are enrolled, if applicable, with or without reasonable accommodations. RVU complies with federal and state law prohibiting discrimination against any applicant or enrolled student on the basis of race, color, religion, sexual preference, age, disability, or other protected status. In accordance with its obligations under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Section 5.04 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, RVU does not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities in admission or in access to programs and activities.

A person with a disability is someone who has a physical or mental impairment that limits substantially one or more major life activity, such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, learning, walking, seeing, hearing, breathing, and working; has a record of such an impairment; or is regarded as having such an impairment. Although students with temporary illness or injury are not considered disabled by law, every reasonable effort to accommodate their needs will be exercised.

All requests for accommodation are evaluated on a case-by-case basis. This request and evaluation process includes a formal request for accommodation/s, the review of clinical documentation and a determination of the reasonableness of the accommodation requests by the ADA Committee. Primary clinical documentation or other diagnostic information held by the RVU Disability Officer in the Student Affairs Office on each campus is kept confidential and is released to a third party only with the student's written permission or as required by law. General information about a student's disability and accommodation request/s, however, may be shared with other RVU officials or, in limited circumstances, with third parties who have a legitimate need to know. The student's disabilities file is maintained by the RVU Disability Officer and is held separately from the student's official academic record.

Although disclosure of a disability may not be necessary or appropriate for some, those who seek reasonable accommodations from RVU must follow the procedures outlined below.

## **Academic Accommodations Process**

It is the student's responsibility to initiate the process for disability services or accommodations. RVU students are expected to be actively responsible for all aspects of their accommodation request(s). Students requesting accommodations must take the initiative to seek assistance, comply with deadlines and agreements, and participate in the following procedure:

### **1. Contact the RVU Disability Officer.**

RVU students requesting accommodations should contact the campus RVU Disability Officer in the Office of Student Affairs. This contact should take place at least three weeks prior to the start of a semester/term, course, or clinical clerkship or immediately following an injury or illness, in order to disclose a disability/illness/injury and to initiate accommodation(s).

### **2. Provide Clinical Documentation.**

The student has the obligation to provide current evidence of the disability, including supporting documentation from a physician or clinician holding a terminal degree in a field that qualifies the professional to evaluate the student, diagnose the condition, and provide recommendation(s) for the accommodation(s) requested.

Clinical documentation must be supported by a recent medical, psychological, psychometric, and/or educational assessment that includes the date administered and evaluated by a qualified professional along with the credentials of the professional performing the evaluation and testing. Documentation presented must be no older than 24 months prior to the date of the request of accommodation(s).

### **3. Complete the "Request for ADA Accommodation/s Application".**

In initiating the accommodation process, the student must complete a written request for reasonable accommodation(s) and submit current clinical documentation that supports the request for accommodation(s). The student can obtain the Request for ADA Accommodation/s Application from the campus Disability Office. The RVU Disability Officer will make an initial evaluation of the request with respect to the completeness of the clinical or other diagnostic documentation submitted.

Sometimes a student may be asked to provide additional comprehensive documentation/information if previous documentation is outdated or does not include sufficient relevant information required by the ADA Committee. Last-minute submission of documentation may result in unavoidable delays in consideration of requested services.

The University has the right to require a second opinion (at the University's expense) by a provider recognized by the University as having expertise in the evaluation, diagnosis, and treatment of the alleged condition in their consideration of the appropriateness of a student's request for accommodation(s) or services.

#### **4. ADA Accommodation Request Review.**

Upon receipt of the Request of ADA Accommodation Application and clinical documentation to support the request of accommodations, the ADA Committee will review the student's request. Upon approval of the ADA Committee, the student will receive the requested accommodation(s) and the Office of Testing and appropriate RVU officials will be notified for the term designated by the committee. Once approved for accommodations, the Testing Center will send out instructions for the administration and location of exams with accommodations.

If a student is denied accommodations by the ADA Committee, the student can appeal the decision to the Associate/Assistant Dean of Student Affairs.

Any accommodations granted by the University are not applicable retroactively and will not affect past performance evaluations, administrative, or academic actions.

Students seeking accommodations for licensure exams (USMLE, COMLEX, and PANCE) must directly petition the National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME), the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners (NBOME), or the National Commission on the Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA).

#### **5. Yearly review of Course/Clinical Accommodations by Disability Officer.**

Any student who wishes to utilize his or her approved accommodations for more than one year must renew his/her request for accommodations annually before the beginning of each academic year. The student will need to complete a Renewal Request form and meet with the campus RVU Disability Officer to review accommodation needs and supporting documentation for the upcoming year.