

Ranken Technical College Disability and Reasonable Accommodations Policy

I. Introduction

Ranken Technical College (“Ranken” or the “College”) is dedicated to providing individuals with disabilities access to Ranken’s programs, services, and activities. Pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and other applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations, the College prohibits discrimination and harassment against any qualified individual with a disability.

II. Roles and Responsibilities

- A. *Students*: Students are expected to meet the minimum academic and technical standards of College programs. They must register with the Student Success Department (“Department”) and actively participate in the accommodation process, provide appropriate medical documentation, and contact the Department if a granted accommodation is not meeting the student’s needs.
- B. *Instructors*: Instructors work with the Department by providing information as requested and referrals to the Department as necessary. Instructors implement accommodations granted by the Department and, with assistance from the Department, assure course instruction and materials are accessible. Instructors are responsible for including the College-required information about the Department on their course syllabi. Instructors should also include information on their course syllabi about any course specific requirements students must follow to schedule extended exam times, alternate exam sites, or other academic adjustments. Course specific requirements regarding implementation of accommodations included in syllabi must first be approved by the Department before inclusion on the syllabus.
- C. *Student Success Department*: The Student Success Department (“Department”) is the point of contact for all current and prospective students regarding disability issues. The Department evaluates the academic needs of students with disabilities and approves reasonable accommodations where necessary for the student to utilize and benefit from Ranken’s programs, services, and activities.
- D. *Confidentiality*: All individuals involved in the accommodation or grievance process are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of medical information and other information concerning an individual’s disability. Such information will only be shared as the minimum necessary to administer the accommodation process.

III. Reasonable Accommodation Procedures: Students

In order for students and prospective students to receive reasonable accommodations, the following procedures must be followed. Students who request accommodations directly from faculty or staff must be referred to the Student Success Department.

- A. Current and prospective students seeking an accommodation must first register as a person with a disability and make a written request for an accommodation with the Student Success Department. Students should strive to provide documentation of their disability to the Student Success Department at least 30 days before the start of the semester. However, documentation may be provided by students at any time. Once all the required documentation is received and reviewed, the student will be contacted to schedule a meeting to discuss the accommodation request.
- B. Current and prospective students must submit medical documentation that is no more than three years old from a clinically diagnosing medical professional verifying the nature and extent of the disability. Documentation from relatives or persons not licensed to diagnose such conditions will not be accepted. At any time during the accommodation request process, the Student Success Department may ask for additional medical documentation of the disability and of the need for an accommodation.
- C. After adequate documentation of a disability has been provided and a meeting with the student has taken place, the Student Success Department will determine whether a reasonable accommodation can be approved. What constitutes a reasonable accommodation will vary depending on the circumstances of each case. In evaluating alternatives for accommodation, the preferences of the student are considered but the ultimate decision regarding what type of accommodation, if any, will be provided is made by the Student Success Department.
- D. Ranken will make an individualized determination about the accommodations necessary to afford the student an equal opportunity to participate in Ranken's programs, services, and activities. Accommodations is a collective term and may include academic adjustments or auxiliary aids and services, or modifications to policies, practices and procedures. Ranken is not required to provide accommodations that would result in a fundamental alteration of the College's program or impose an undue financial or administrative burden.
- E. Accommodations may include academic adjustments or modifications, such as a change in the length of time permitted for completion of a degree, extended exam times, and alternate exam environments, as well as auxiliary aids/services such as note takers, large print handouts, electronic textbooks, alternatives to printed tests, and other assistive technology. Ranken does not provide attendants, individually prescribed devices, readers for personal use or study, or other devices or services of a personal nature.
- F. When an accommodation is granted, the Student Success Department will provide a written explanation of the accommodation to the student. The Department will also provide the notice of accommodation to the relevant instructors to initiate the implementation of approved accommodations.

- G. Instructors are responsible for facilitating and implementing accommodations, modifications or adjustments as outlined in the written notice of accommodation.
- H. The student is expected to follow all instructions contained in the approved accommodation and course syllabus (if applicable) regarding scheduling for extended exam times, alternate exam sites, and other academic adjustments.

IV. Grievance and Appeal Procedures

Any individual may file a grievance alleging discrimination or harassment on the basis of disability by filing a complaint pursuant to this policy. The grievance process applies to all students regardless of whether the student has requested accommodations. Grievances may allege disability discrimination, including disability harassment, carried out by employees, students, or third parties. The grievance process may also be used when a student, employee, or applicant for employment is dissatisfied with an approved accommodation. The College has both informal and formal grievance processes in place to resolve concerns about disability discrimination.

A. Informal Grievance Process

Ranken encourages, but does not require, individuals with concerns about a disability-related issue to first discuss the matter with the Department. The applicable office or a College designee will attempt to facilitate a resolution. Concerns regarding a disability-related issue must be raised within thirty (30) calendar days of the alleged disability discrimination and/or accommodation decision. The College will make a case-by-case determination regarding complaints not meeting the timely filing requirement, and exceptions may be made to this requirement.

If the designated office is not successful in achieving a satisfactory resolution within ten (10) working days, or if the complaint is against the office itself, a formal grievance may be filed as described below.

The purpose of the informal process is to make a good faith effort to resolve the issue quickly and efficiently; however, the individual may ask to implement the formal process at any time during the informal resolution process or as the first step of the grievance process if preferred.

B. Formal Grievance Process

Students wishing to file a formal grievance must do so electronically via the following URL, <http://ranken.edu/current-students/complaint/> and should be filed within thirty (30) calendar days of the occurrence giving rise to the grievance. This deadline may be extended if the parties have attempted to informally resolve the matter and the grievance is filed within ten (10) working days from the end of informal resolution.

Ranken will review the grievance for timeliness and appropriateness under this grievance procedure and notify the grievant if the grievance has been accepted. Ranken will make a case-by-case determination regarding complaints not meeting the timely filing requirement, and exceptions may be made to this requirement.

If the grievance is accepted, Ranken's designee (the "investigator") will promptly initiate an investigation. The investigator may interview, consult with, and/or request a written response to the issues raised in the grievance from any individual the investigator believes has relevant information, including but not limited to medical professionals, faculty, staff, students, and visitors to the College. All parties will have an opportunity to present witnesses, information, or evidence that the party believes is relevant to the grievance. All parties involved will receive a fair and equitable process and be treated with care and respect. The investigator will respect the privacy of all of the individuals involved.

The investigation is to be completed within fifteen (15) working days of the filing of the complaint, unless the investigator determines that an extension is needed. At the request of the grievant (student), the investigator will determine whether the formal grievance process can and should be expedited.

Within five (5) working days of the completion of the investigation, the investigator will make a determination regarding the grievance and appropriate actions to be taken. The investigator will summarize the evidence that supports the determination, and the parties will be advised in writing of the outcome of the investigation. If the College determines discrimination or harassment occurred, it will take appropriate action to prevent recurrence of the discrimination and/or harassment and take steps to correct its discriminatory effects on the complainant and others, if appropriate. Possible outcomes include, but are not limited to, approval and/or administration of a particular accommodation, remediation to address access to opportunities, and/or facilitation of communications between the complainant and the person against whom the grievance is filed. Individuals found responsible for violating Ranken's nondiscrimination policies will face disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal or termination.

C. Appeal Process

Within five (5) calendar days of receiving the determination from the investigator, either party to the grievance may appeal the determination. The appeal must be in writing and submitted to the investigator. The basis for appeal must be failure to follow applicable procedures or new evidence that was unavailable at the time of the investigation. Upon receipt of the appeal, the investigator will determine if the appeal contains the necessary elements and, if so, will forward the appeal to an Appeal Officer. The President will determine who will serve as the Appeal Officer for appeals involving students or prospective students. The investigator will provide a copy of the appeal to the other party and solicit a written response.

The Appeal Officer will review the written appeal, any response to the appeal, the grievance decision, and all relevant documents. The Appeal Officer will accept, reject, or modify the grievance decision and notify the parties of the appeal decision in writing. The Appeal Officer

will provide the parties to the appeal with a copy of the written appeal decision within fifteen (15) business days of the filing the appeal. The Appeal Officer's decision will be the final determination of the College.

The individual may also file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, at any time before, during, after, or instead of Ranken's ADA/Section 504 grievance process. Doing so will not affect the individual's right to prompt, fair consideration of a grievance or an appeal. The Missouri/local Office for Civil Rights may be contacted at:

U.S Department of Education
One Petticoat Lane
1010 Walnut Street, Suite 320
Kansas City, MO 64106
Telephone: (816) 268-0550
Email: OCR.KansasCity@ed.gov

D. Training Requirements

Individuals involved in processing grievances, whether informal or formal, shall receive annual training regarding complaint investigation, disability issues, and the legal mandates of state and federal disability laws.

V. Retaliation

Ranken will not tolerate retaliation against any individual for making a good faith claim of discrimination or harassment or for participating in an investigation of such a claim. Individuals who feel that they have experienced retaliation should contact the Student Success Department.

VI. Contact Information

Student Success Department
ssc@ranken.edu
(314) 286-4891