

1. **What does RISE stand for?**

RISE stands for **R**oad to **I**ndependent Living, **S**piritual Formation and **E**mployment.

- a. Mission: Shaping a greater future for students with intellectual disabilities
- b. Vision: An inclusive college life experience for students with intellectual disabilities to prepare for a more fulfilling and self-sustaining future.

2. **What is the purpose of the RISE program?**

The purpose is to provide students with intellectual disabilities the college life experience, in a Christian community, to prepare for independent living and competitive employment.

3. **How long has RISE existed at Judson University?**

RISE was founded in 2016, with our first cohort beginning in the Fall semester, August, 2017.

4.

Who is eligible to apply for the RISE program?

Ideal candidates for the RISE program:

- a. Aged 18-25 upon enrollment
 - b. With a diagnosed intellectual disability
 - c. A high school diploma or equivalent
 - d. Practical reading & writing skills (ideally grade 4 or higher)
 - e. A desire to live on campus, and learn with, traditional college students
- We evaluate each candidate on a case-by-case basis. If you are unsure if your student qualifies for the RISE program, please contact:

Gineen Vargas (847-628-2524 or gineen.vargas@judsonu.edu) or
Alyssa Mitchell (847-628-8535 or alyssa.mitchell@judsonu.edu).

5. **Will you students accept all students that meet these criteria?**

The RISE program accommodates 10-12 students in each cohort; we select the most qualified students for each cohort.

6. **Is RISE a 4-year undergraduate degree program?**

RISE is a 2-year certification program. Students receive a Certificate of Completion in Liberal Arts at the conclusion of his/her cohort. Each RISE student is invited to participate in the Judson graduation ceremony and receive his/her certificate on stage, along with all of our traditional graduating students.

7. **Do we need to provide a computer for our student?**

RISE students will need to provide their own technology. A laptop, tablet, or Chromebook would be appropriate as long as it has the ability to run Microsoft offices and the Internet. These are required for their coursework and assignments, as well as email.

8. **What types of classes will RISE students take?**

The RISE students take a variety of classes, including: independent living, current events, math & money management, fitness & wellness, person-centered planning and professional skills. First semester RISE students also take a general education class with traditional freshmen, who learn about the Judson community. In the 2nd, 3rd and 4th semesters, RISE students take one class with traditional students in a subject area concentration that s/he selects. Faculty have the option to offer the class as audit only or with an adapted syllabus. Judson offers RISE students six concentrations to choose from, including:

- a. Business & Entrepreneurship
- b. Christian Ministries
- c. Creative Arts-3 different tracks: Visual, Vocal, Instrumental
- d. Education
- e. Health & Wellness
- f. Math & Technology

In their second semester, RISE students have an on-campus internship, accompanied by a Vocational Advisor. Second year RISE students work alongside his/her Vocational Advisor at a local business, church or organization. Placement for all internships are based upon the students' interests and abilities.

The course schedule, below, shows the typical first semester for RISE students:

Time	Monday/Wednesday/Friday	Tuesday/Thursday
7:30am	BREAKFAST Betty Lindner Commons	BREAKFAST Betty Lindner Commons
8:00am		
8:30am		
9:00am	Introduction to the Workplace Creekside 131	Nutrition and Exercise Fitness Center Alumni Room
9:30am	Chapel	Free Time
10:00am		
10:30am		
11:00am	Free Time	LUNCH Betty Lindner Commons
11:30am		
12:00am	LUNCH Betty Lindner Commons	Gen 101 Faith Community/Independent Study Session HAWAC 239
12:30pm		
1:00pm	Career Exploration and Self-Discovery Lindner Tower Classroom A	Free Time
1:30pm		
2:00pm	Free Time	Current Events Lindner Tower Media Lab B
2:30pm		
3:00pm	Relational Dynamics Creekside 131	Career Shadowing Lindner Tower Classroom B
3:30pm		
4:00pm	Free Time	
4:30pm		
5:00pm	DINNER Betty Lindner Commons	DINNER Betty Lindner Commons
5:30pm		
6:00pm		
6:30pm		
7:00-11:00pm	Chosen Student Activities/Free Time	Chosen Student Activities/Free Time
Check In with RISE Resident Advisor Before 11:00pm		

9. **Can you tell me more about living on campus?**

Each RISE student lives on campus in a residence hall. S/he rooms with another RISE student and a RISE Resident Advisor lives adjacent to, or across the hall from, their assigned students.

RISE students eat their meals with traditional students and staff at the Betty Lindner Campus Commons. The food service staff accommodates special dietary requirements for any student. All facilities that are available to traditional students are open to the RISE students, including the library, on-campus cafes, intramural sports and the fitness center.

The daily class schedule is designed so that the students have a relatively full day of activity, with short breaks. We expect that all RISE students can navigate the campus independently. That said, most of the time, RISE students walk to class and/or other activities in groups.

Spiritual formation is a key component of the RISE program. Therefore, RISE students participate in all campus life activities, including chapel three times each week and small groups.

During weekdays, either a class instructor or a Student Advisor are with RISE students most of the day. Should a RISE student not come to class or be available for his/her on-/off-campus internship, the instructor or Student Advisor attempts to contact the student to confirm their whereabouts.

Judson University is a very safe environment, recently named the third safest college campus in the U.S. by Universities.com. The RISE staff leverages mobile technology, including Life360, to determine the location of the student. These tools are used as safety precautions and not to track students on a minute-by-minute basis.

10. **What support will be provided?**

A key component of the RISE program are Student Advisors. A RISE Resident Advisor (RA) shares the suite or lives across the hall from two RISE students and is there to help the RISE students by answering questions, assisting them to navigate campus and resolving roommate issues. RISE students must check-in by 11pm each night with the RISE RA on duty. RISE Resident Advisors receive a discount on room and board.

There are also Learning and Vocational Advisors, who are paid hourly for their time. Learning Advisors assist RISE students with curriculum and class assignments. Vocational Advisors help train RISE students and work alongside of them for both on- and off-campus internships.

We also encourage RISE students to use all campus resources, including the Student Success Center. The Student Success Center is a place where RISE students can connect with counselors and/or resources who can assist him/her to successfully understand and complete class assignments, as well as achieving personal goals.

The Wellness Center includes counseling services, which are available to any student. Should a student wish to utilize counseling services on an ongoing basis, there is a sliding scale hourly rate.

11. **How will RISE staff communicate with parents or guardians?**

The RISE staff requests multiple contact methods for parents and guardians, including email, phone and/or text options. RISE students send a weekly email update to his/her parents. A bi-monthly RISE newsletter is sent to parents. Parents/Guardians may reach out to the RISE Program Director or Assistant Director at any time to discuss the student and/or questions.

12. **What will happen if my student becomes homesick or ill?**

If the student becomes homesick, the RISE staff, Student Advisors and/or the Student Success Center attempt to resolve the situation with the individual. If the feelings persist, we encourage the student to contact his/her parent or guardian.

Should there be any concern for the student's personal care or safety, the RISE staff contacts the parent or guardian immediately.

If the student becomes ill with conditions such as the common cold or flu, there is a Wellness Center on campus. RISE students can be diagnosed and treated by this medical team.

The Department of Campus Safety is licensed by the State of Illinois as an EMS Non-Transport Provider through Advocate Sherman Hospital, with most Campus Safety staff licensed at the EMT-b level. EMT staff are equipped for life-saving intervention including administration of oxygen, EpiPen, albuterol and automated defibrillator. All department personnel receive training in CPR/AED use, controlling severe bleeding via tourniquet use and other methods, and other life safety techniques.

13. **What does tuition, room and board cost?**

RISE tuition, fees, room & board is currently \$27,990 for the 2023/2024 academic year, which breaks down as follows:

- Tuition-\$15,110
- Room & Board-\$11,820
- Student Life-\$530
- Technology-\$530

14. **Will there be additional costs for textbooks and additional class materials?**

The only additional costs would be for Gen Ed 101 or traditional courses that the RISE student elects to take within his/her subject area concentration. RISE students have the option of purchasing the course materials and/or may be subject to additional fees for private music lessons, lab or studio fees for certain classes. Typically, the traditional class instructors will communicate the course materials/cost to RISE students on the first day of class. Private music lessons, lab or studio fees are communicated to families prior to the start of the semester.

15. **How do I apply for admission into the RISE program?**

The RISE application for admission is available at: www.JudsonU.edu/RISE. *If you are unable to access the application online, please contact Gineen Vargas at 847-628-2524 or Alyssa Mitchell at 847-628-8535.*

Applications may be submitted from September through January, with the goal of finalizing the Fall cohort by the beginning of March.

16. **What grants, scholarships, other funding sources are available?**

RISE is a Comprehensive Transition Program (CTP); therefore, our students qualify for federal student aid through the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). Judson University's School Code is: 001700.

RISE has received scholarship monies from local, private foundations. There are also four endowments that have been created to provide scholarships for RISE students:

- **Al Rogers Scholarship Fund** – Awards scholarship monies to a RISE student in memory of Al Rogers, whose daughter, Emily, graduated with the first RISE cohort in May, 2019.
- **Cody Binger Scholarship Fund** – Awards scholarship monies to a RISE student who has Down syndrome, in honor of Cody Binger.
- **RISE Founder Scholarship Fund** – Awards scholarship monies to a RISE student, in honor of the Gianopulos family and the many people who funded the RISE Program start-up.
- **Tracy Naples Gassen Scholarship Fund** – Awards scholarship monies to a RISE student, in memory of Tracy Naples Gassen, whose daughter, Ellie, graduated with the first RISE cohort in May, 2019.

Private Grants or scholarships are also available from various agencies and organizations. Visit these websites for more information:

- [American Autism Association](#)
- [DO-IT](#)
- [Epilepsy Foundation](#)
- [HEATH Resource Center at the National Youth Transitions Center](#)
- [National Down Syndrome Society](#)
- [Nitro College](#)
- [Ruby's Rainbow](#)
- [Scholarships.com](#)
- [Think College](#)
- [UPS for DownS](#)

Judson University is a 501(c)(3) non-profit. Private, church and/or corporate donations may be tax deductible.

Please contact the Financial Aid office (*847-628-2531*) to discuss:

- Federal Student Aid
- Charitable Donations
- Endowments
- Corporate Sponsorships