

ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022
Program Evaluation Summary
REHABILITATION COUNSELING PROGRAM
(CACREP Standard Section 4.D)

2021-2022 Program Objectives

Objective 1: Ensuring graduate competence in the latest knowledge skills, and dispositional standards.

Objective 2: To attract and retain diverse faculty and students.

Objective 3: Excellence through program evaluation and self-study.

Objective 4: Critical evaluation of current syllabi for equity, diversity, social justice, and inclusion related content that reflects current knowledge and projected needs concerning counseling practice in a multicultural and pluralistic society.

I. Summary of Program Evaluation Results (Standard Section 4.D.1)

Disability Rate Study:

2020 anonymous disability study:

- A voluntary, anonymous survey of current students in the program revealed a self-disclosed rate of disability of approximately 3x the national average when compared with 2019 American Community Survey statistics [approximately 40%]. (Objective 2; standard Section 4.B.2)

2021 anonymous disability study:

- A voluntary, anonymous survey of current students in the program revealed a self-disclosed rate of disability of approximately 3x the national average when compared with 2019 American Community Survey statistics [approximately 35% of respondents; 9.1% did not want to disclose disability status]. (Objective 2; standard Section 4.B.2)

Applicant and Current Student Demographics Comparisons:

2021 to 2022 Academic Year Demographics Students:

- Current students in the 2021-2022 academic year demographics: 41% White, 28% Black/African American, 10% Puerto Rican, 9% Asian, 6.4% unknown, 5.2% other (Mexican/Central American/Native American/Dominican); 12.8% identified as Hispanic/Latino. The group self-identified as 79.5% female, 20.5% male.

2019 to 2020 Academic Year Demographics for Students:

- Students during the 2019-2020 academic year demographics: 75% White, 10% Black/African American, 4% Hispanic/Latino, 4% 2 or more race; 2% Asian, 4% other; (86% female, 14% male).

Fall 2021 Applicants ($n = 58$):

- (The following indicates that our applicant pool and accepted student have been growing more diverse this year overall when comparing demographics from last year and 2018. Gender remains weighted toward female applicants).
- The applicants for Fall 2021 were: 45% White, 38% Black/African American, 10% Asian, 2% American Indian/Alaskan Native, 5% other/unknown; 17 % Hispanic/Latino; [71% female, 29% male].

Fall 2020 Applicants ($n = 72$):

- The applicants for Fall 2020 were: 49% White, 31% Black/African American, 9% Asian, 3% American Indian/Alaskan Native, 7% other/unknown; 11.4% Hispanic/Latino; 77% female (23% male; 0 other).

Fall 2018 Applicants:

- The pool of applicants to the program for Fall 2018 were: 63% white, 13% black, 8% Asian, 1% Other, and 15% more than one race/ethnicity - which is reasonably consistent with proportion of race/ethnicities of CRCs in the United States (CRC Annual Report 2018). Sixty-eight percent (68%) of applicants in 2018 were female. (Objective 2; standard Section 4.B.2)

Academic Success Indicators:

- CRC examination pass rates for dates in the 2020 to 2021 academic year were 75%, which is above the national average. The pass rates for the 2019 to 2020 academic year were 85.7% which is much higher than national average (Objective 1; standard Section 4.E.2)
- Follow up survey of program graduates from 2017-2020, conducted in October, 2021 revealed: 95.5% were employed (95.5% working in the rehabilitation field; $n = 22$); (Objective 3; standard Section 4.B.3)
- A study of students who entered the program in 2018-2019 (part-time students 2018 entry; full time students entry 2019) revealed that 70.3% had successfully completed their master's degree programs (26/37). (Objective 3; standard Section 4.E.3)
- One-hundred percent (100%) of students admitted in Fall 2020 were near or meeting expected professional dispositions (KPDs) based on faculty evaluations, 0% were below expectations. (Objective 1; standard Section 4.B.1)
- One-hundred percent (100%) of students in the 2020-2021 academic year who were in internship were meeting expectations are all key professional dispositions (KPDS) based on site supervisor, internship evaluations (Objective 1; standard Section 4.B.1)
- Ninety-seven percent (96.7%) of internship students were meeting expectations on across key performance indicators (KPIs) standards in the 2020-2021 academic year (3.3% were near expectations; 0% below expectations). (Objective 1; standard Section 4.B.1)

Professional Counseling Membership:

- 2021 Program Graduate Survey (graduates from 2017 to 2021): 59% of graduates within the sample stated they were members of professional associations (e.g., ACA, NRA, NCRE, NRCA).
- 2021 Current Student Survey: Coinciding with CACREP standards of assessing and promoting membership in professional organizations, a question was added to our student survey requesting information on professional membership.
- 20% of current students reported being members of professional counseling organizations (e.g., NCRE, NRA, ACA, NRCA).

Survey of Program Graduates (2021 results):

2021 Emerging Needs Identified:

- Vocational evaluation, **caseload management (x2), emphasis on cultural diversity (x2), computer skills and technology/access (x2)**, assessment, Emerging Needs for underrepresented cultural groups or disability populations:
- Affordable housing (x2), LGBTQ awareness, recruiting more counselors of color, technological access.

Survey of Current Students (2021 results):

Student Needs for Additional Support:(the following reflects themes that were found)

- **Preparation for the CRC exam (x3)**. Perhaps a 1 credit course in preparation for the CRC exam. CRC/CEU workshops that are available after graduation. Less activity during the Internship semesters to allow for CRC studying.
- **Additional scholarship opportunities (x3)**.
- **Mentorship program for students** (distance students; **x4**); pairing new students with advanced students.
- **Advising**: advising agreements between advisors and advisees; more individual meetings with faculty advisors; responsiveness of faculty to student emails.
 - Increased interaction with faculty for distance formats.
- **Counseling support for students**: Faculty should ask students about mental health and how they can assist, online support group for distance students, online counseling services. Tutoring resources for coursework.
- **Coursework**: Additional coursework or elective options in rehabilitation counseling related areas/issues. An additional course on assistive technology and digital accessibility.
- **Career pathways and professionalization**: Additional knowledge and exposure to a range of career pathways with the rehabilitation counseling field. Improved connections to professional organizations, student chapters of professional organizations, financial assistance for joining professional organizations.
- **Faculty Affirmations**: “Nothing but wonderful experience with faculty thus far; faculty are doing an amazing job.” (**x4**)

- **Course Formats:** continued improvement of universal design for distance coursework (x2); accommodations for students working full-times such as flexible schedules and due dates, make up work and extra credit;

Systematic Follow Up Survey of Supervisors and Employers (2021 survey):

- The 2021 follow up survey of site supervisors and employers revealed the following themes (Objective 3; standard Section 4.B.3):
 - Of the respondents, 100% had supervised our interns and 50% had employed our graduates ($n = 14$).
 - 93% of the respondents had reported that they were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with our rehabilitation counselor interns and graduates (7% neutral or dissatisfied).
 - 100% of respondents stated that our counselor training was “good” or “excellent” compared to other rehabilitation counseling programs (of those who had other programs to compare against).
 - Qualitative results identified the following themes as “strengths of program interns and graduates”: promptness, **mental health service provision, vocational counseling service provision**, teamwork skills, **motivation to learn**, desire to help, documentation skills, case conceptualization, **good knowledge base**,
 - Qualitative results identified the following themes as “needs of our rehabilitation counselor interns and graduates”: improved skills in working with substance use populations, crisis intervention skill training, **training on WIOA and transition youth services, writing skills for case management notes**, soft skills, greater familiarity with assessment instruments earlier in the program (mental health, substance use, vocational, quality of life), medical aspects of disability (experience with one intern with deficiencies in this area), vocational evaluation, student interns with inflexible schedules.
 - Emerging needs identified within your agency in the field: substance use treatment, apprenticeships, students with ASD and other mental health disabilities, **services for transition ages** (with mental health disabilities), co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders, **telehealth services and training**, more in-depth case note documentation, vocational rehabilitation **counselor vacancies across our organization**,
 - Emerging needs for individuals from minority cultural group or disability groups: needs for more diverse student interns (linguistically and ethnically), virtual session accessibility needs, the field needs more diversity in counselors, access to transportation major disability barrier (particularly for transition age students), understanding of individuals who are transgender.

II. Subsequent Program Modifications; Proposed (Standard Section 4.C; Standard Section 4.D.2)

- Based on review of CACREP guidelines, revised intake procedures to include standardized interview questions that incorporated: Relevance of Career Goals, Aptitude and readiness for graduate-level study, Motivation and commitment to graduate school, Personality and Interpersonal skills (potential success in forming effective counseling relationships), and respect for cultural differences.
- The Rehabilitation Counseling Program incorporated revised intake procedures to assess applicants to ensure our applicant review process met with CACREP guidelines. Within the application vetting process, the program required that applicants submit a statement of purpose that incorporates the following five areas: 1) relevance of career goals, 2) aptitude for graduate-level study, 3) personality and interpersonal skills (potential success in forming effective counseling relationships), 4) respect for cultural differences, and also 5) motivation and commitment to graduate school. Additionally, the program used a semi-structured list of interview questions for candidates that also incorporate these five areas (Standard Section 1.L.).
- Based on CACREP Self-Study findings the Rehabilitation Counseling Program will undergo a remapping of CACREP standards across its 48-credit curriculum from November, 2021 to January, 2022. [Objective 1]
- Continuation of the updating of materials based on past course mapping studies to create a study guide for the updated CRC examination. [Objective 1]
 - Specific topic areas being added to existing coursework were identified using mapping studies to address CACREP standards and CRCC exam content standard updates.
 - Topic areas are: crisis and trauma counseling, evidence-based counseling for clients with mental health and substance use disabilities, social media use in counseling practice, business engagement, biopsychosocial case formulation models, and program evaluation models. (Objective 1)
- **To adhere to CACREP guidelines, program to add 12 credits to the current 48 credit hour program by Fall, 2023 for a 60 credit hour program.** The program faculty are making progress in planning for the change during the 2022 calendar year. This include the new curriculum with 12 additional hours of coursework, the new course mapping and schedules for part-time and full-time study, and ensuring the curriculum change adheres to CACREP standards.
 - Based on 2018-2021 program evaluation findings, the topics of human growth and development and multicultural counseling methods are being targeted for addition within the 60 credit hour program (case management is a tentative third course target, plus one elective)
- **The Graduate School of Education and related offices have introduced a several equity, diversity, social justice, and inclusion initiatives. The rehabilitation program have implemented a number of actions aligned with these initiatives** (Objective 2 and Objective 4).
 - In the Fall 2020, the GSE canceled classes for 2 days to conduct a teach-in in which all students and faculty participated in trainings and guided

discussions related to anti-racism, equity, and social justice, entitled “Make Good Trouble” Now Teach-in for Racial Equity.

- The faculty are evaluating their syllabi for inclusion of equity, diversity, and social justice material.
- The rehabilitation faculty introduced an antiracism text that all students were required to read during the 2019-2020 year.
- In the Spring 2021, the Graduate School of Education held a two-day conference “Making Good Trouble” to address discussions of racism, social justice, and pluralism [Objective 2 and Objective 4]
- The rehabilitation faculty began a faculty search in the 2021-2022 year, and incorporated an “Inclusive Excellence Plan” that outlines our plan and strategies to increase our pool of applicants from underrepresented populations. The search committee members are also required to attend a training session on implied bias, as it relates to the faculty search process. The intent of the Inclusive Excellence Plan is to increase the number of applicants from underrepresented minority groups (specifically Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino faculty). The faculty search is part of a larger GSE “cluster hire” intended to increase the diversity of our faculty and to better address issues of equity, diversity, justice, and inclusion (Objective 2).
- Completed an update to the three modules of supervision training for online delivery to practicum and internship site supervisors who were lacking training on clinical supervision. These modules were initiated in 2020 by site supervisors. We have revised our tracking of supervisor qualification and supervisory training (Objective 3).
- Consideration of a Student Mentorship Program.
- Advisement policy amendments. Requirement for group meeting with all advisees each semester.
- Improvements in educating students on UB professional counseling services.
- Based on program evaluation and survey data, several updates to course content are being considered on a continuing basis including:
 - professional writing skills,
 - mental health (DSM-V) and substance use content,
 - telehealth services training (add to rehabilitation foundations and fieldwork)
 - trauma-informed care,
 - program evaluation,
 - multicultural counseling competencies,
 - WIOA, transitions service provision,
 - family counseling,
 - case conceptualization/formulation,
 - history of counseling profession (professional memberships and associations).

III. Other Substantial Program Changes (Standard Section 4.D.3)

Faculty and Staff Changes:

- Dr. Kayte Conroy served as the interim Program Director in the Spring 2021 term.
- Dr. Scott Sabella assumed the Program Director role starting in the Fall 2021 term (3-year term).
- Dr. Daniel Wong resigned after the Fall 2020 semester.
- Dr. Denise Riley was hired on a full-time basis as a visiting core faculty member for the Spring 2021 semester.
- Dr. Omayra Munoz-Lorenzo was hired as a Clinical Assistant Professor (core faculty) for the start of the Fall 2021 semester.
- The Rehabilitation Counseling Program hired a new Clinical Coordinator, Jennifer Dexheimer, to replace Dr. Omayra Munoz-Lorenzo in that position. Jennifer has a Master's Degree in rehabilitation counseling from the University at Buffalo.
- Dr. Kayte Conroy and Dr. Tim Janikowski have both notified the academic unit that they will be retiring following the Spring 2022 semester.
- The University at Buffalo faculty are currently engaged in a national search for two new Assistant Professor faculty positions within the rehabilitation counseling program. Dr. Scott Sabella is chairing those searches. The anticipated start date for these positions is in the Fall 2022.

Scholarship Opportunities:

- The Rehabilitation Counseling Program received a Rehabilitation Long-Term Training grant from the U.S. Department of Education to provide approximately full scholarships annually for master's level rehabilitation counseling students. In the 2020-2021 academic year years we funded 15 scholars full tuition and fees (all scholars part time). In the Fall 2021 we added 4 new scholars (1 full-time, 3 part-time).
- The Rehabilitation Counseling Program is collaborating with School of Nursing on a U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration grant that provides additional training and scholarship stipends for students during their internships. The project provides advanced supplemental training in prevention and treatment of substance use disorders (including opioid use disorders) through work in integrated behavioral health settings. This project supports regular workshops over a one-year period and student financial assistance in the form of stipends.

Program Policy and Practice Changes:

- Fall 2021 new student orientation was held in a hybrid format with students participating on campus and distance students participating through live-stream.
- We are currently revising our policies with regard to Professional Behavioral Expectations for our RC program students. Revisions will be incorporated into our student handbook for the 2022-2023 academic year.

- Course mapping: We are currently revising our course map to reduce complexity and to reduce the number of standards that are incorporated in the practicum and internship courses. The program is planning for its move to a 60 credit hour curriculum and associated, prospective course maps are in development.
- Based on CACREP review feedback, the program is currently revising the Portfolio course syllabus and requirements so they have matching alignment with the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Successful completion of the portfolio course is used as one of the “multiple measures of student learning” so students will be required to provide artifact evidence and narrative within the “connection paper” that demonstrates their growth and competency in each of the KPIs.
- Given students preferences for flexibility in course offerings, course scheduling was revised in 2020-2021 to better align on-campus and online delivery formats.
- As part of our Graduate School of Education-wide initiatives to address equity, diversity, justice, and inclusion, the Rehabilitation Counseling Program is engaged in on-going critical review of course content, syllabi, and delivery, to better reflect current and projected needs for multicultural counseling practice, promotion of pluralistic ideals, and the needs of diverse students.
- The faculty have added assessments to our graduate as well as supervisor and employer surveys that request information on current and emerging needs related to counseling practice in a multicultural and pluralistic environment. This feedback will be collected and will be used to guide curriculum content changes starting in the 2021-2022 academic year.
- Revisions have been made to the Practicum/Internship Placement Guidelines and forms for 2021-2022.

Proposed 2022-2023 Program Objectives

(After analysis of 2020-2021 program evaluation data, it was determined our current objectives continue to be relevant for upcoming 2022-2023 program year).

Objective 1: Ensuring graduate competence in the latest knowledge skills, and dispositional standards.

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Objective 3: Excellence through program evaluation and self-study.

Objective 4: Critical evaluation of current syllabi for equity, diversity, social justice, and inclusion related content that reflects current knowledge and projected needs concerning counseling practice in a multicultural and pluralistic society.

Objective 5: Increase the number of students who are participating in professional organizations