

# FAQ's

about

***COUNSELING & GUIDANCE***

**MASTER'S of EDUCATION DEGREE PROGRAM**

at the University of Hawaii

August 2008

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# Frequently Asked Questions

## 1. [What is “Rehabilitation Counseling”?](#)

Rehabilitation counseling is emerging as a popular career choice for high-energy people who want to be creative and independent while they make a very real difference in the lives of people with disabilities. Rehabilitation counseling is very unique in that it trains professionals who will be dedicated to working with individuals with physical, emotional and mental disabilities including developmental and adventitious brain injuries in order to help them achieve productive and independent lives. Just as other counseling tracks, Rehabilitation counseling programs – in order to produce competent and certifiable professionals – are at the master’s level. The programs are determined by the requirements set by the Council of Rehabilitation Education (CORE), and consist of a minimum of 48 semester credit hours. The graduates of such degree programs then are eligible to take a national examination which earns them the coveted CRC (Certified Rehabilitation Counselor) designation.

The curricula of rehabilitation counseling degree programs differ in details among the many institutions in the United States (and Canada), but the overall content must follow the specifications of the Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE). Quite recently, CORE standards were revised in order to achieve parity with the standard of another accrediting agency of non-rehabilitation counseling programs, that of the Council on Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). The following are the new standards, (1) Professional Identity, (2) Social and Cultural Diversity Issues, (3) Human Growth and Development, (4) Employment and Career Development, (5) Counseling and Consultation (CACREP uses the term Helping Relationships), (6) Group Work, (7) Assessment, (8) Research and Program Evaluation. Two specialized rehabilitation counseling standards have been added: (9) Medical, Functional, Environmental and Psychosocial Aspects of Disability, and (10) Rehabilitation Services and Resources. Program courses must reflect these standards, which are defined further into very specific statements.

All CORE accredited programs, minimally consisting of 48 credits have at least one practicum (minimum of 100 field hours, in UH 150 hours) and an Internship (minimum of 600 field hours, at UH divided into two semesters). The courses at UH are listed on the following page. Scholarships and other financial aid are available for students.

## 2. [What do Rehabilitation Counselors do?](#)

Rehabilitation counseling encompasses a diverse range of professional specialties, including vocational rehabilitation counselors, vocational evaluators, deafness specialists, orientation and mobility specialists, rehabilitation teachers, administrators, and a multitude of other rewarding options. In short, the goal of rehabilitation counseling is empowering people with disabilities to make informed choices, build viable careers and live more independently in the community.

According to the National Rehabilitation Counseling Association<sup>2</sup>,

*Rehabilitation counseling is a systematic process which assists persons with physical, developmental, cognitive, and emotional disabilities to achieve their personal, career, and independent living goals in the most integrated setting possible through the application of the counseling process. The counseling process involves communication, goal setting, and beneficial growth or change through self advocacy, psychological, vocational, social, and behavioral interventions. The specific techniques and modalities utilized within this rehabilitation counseling process may include, but not be limited to:*

\* assessment and appraisal;

\* diagnosis and treatment planning;

- \* *interventions to remove environmental, employment and attitudinal barriers;*
- \* *career counseling;*
- \* *individual and group counseling treatment interventions focused on facilitating adjustment to the medical and psychosocial impacts of disability;*
- \* *referral;*
- \* *case management and service coordination;*
- \* *providing consultation and access to rehabilitation technology.*
- \* *program evaluation and research;*
- \* *consultation services among multiple parties and regulatory systems;*
- \* *job development and placement services, including assistance with employment and job accommodations;*

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<sup>1</sup> Retrieved February 28, 2005 from <http://www.core-rehab.org/Reviewletter.html>

<sup>2</sup> Retrieved March 18, 2005 from <http://ncra-net.org/>

### 3. [Is the Rehabilitation Counseling program at UH accredited?](#)

The Rehabilitation Counseling Program is accredited by the Council for Rehabilitation Counseling.

### 4. [How does the UH Counseling and Guidance program compare with similar programs on the mainland?](#)

It compares favorably on at several grounds. 1. At UH, the Counseling and Guidance master's degree program requires a considerably greater number of hours spent in internship activities than most programs on the mainland. 2. Our program benefits by being situated in a state with very diverse population, thus enabling the teaching and learning to take advantage of that natural situation. The multicultural considerations are strongly incorporated into all program courses and activities.

### 5. [For what kind of jobs and positions does the UH program train its students?](#)

As in almost every profession, the jobs, positions, and challenges are equally present in the counseling profession, and therefore in the educational process of its aspiring members. Rehabilitation counselors have as their task almost anything which faces people with one or another disability, and sometime multiple disabilities, physical, mental, or emotional impairments.

### 6. [What type of baccalaureate degree does the program require or recommend?](#)

Many prospective counseling students have undergraduate degrees in psychology, sociology, or education. Usually, the type of undergraduate major does not matter, though some counseling programs might "prefer" to see on the transcripts a few psychology courses.

### 7. [Are there any courses required as prerequisites?](#)

No, there are not.

### 8. [What constitutes an "equivalent" substitute for the prerequisite course listed in the catalog, and how can a student request that it be accepted by the program?](#)

Equivalency of courses from other departments and/or institutions may be approved by the Department Chair on a case-by-case basis. Requests for substitutions should be made in writing to the Department Chair during the student's first semester as a classified EDCG major. Syllabus of the requested course will be necessary to judge the equivalency.

9. [What is required for admission to the program?](#)

Admission is based on prior academic and other preparation and background, on intellectual and affective potentials for graduate study, and on personal qualifications that are likely to contribute to success as a counselor. Application for the M.Ed. program in counseling and guidance presumes satisfactory completion of a bachelor's degree with an acceptable grade-point-average. Admission to the counseling and guidance program consists of two separate but simultaneous procedures – one involves the Graduate Division, the other leads directly to the Department of Kinesiology & Rehabilitation Science. Each procedure has a separate website, and both are equally important, so the prospective applicants should not proceed without considering the steps and requirements of both procedures.

**Graduate Division Admission Requirements and Procedure**

**Prospective students may apply online or by downloading the necessary instructions.** Either process should be initiated at the which provides detailed instructions on (1) how to access either of the two modes, (2) deadlines, (3) \$50 non-refundable application fee, and (4) required documentation materials.

<http://www.hawaii.edu/graduatestudies/admissions/html/admissions.htm#>

**Online Application** Prospective students are encouraged to submit an online application at . You will need to register and be issued a PIN. <<http://apply.hawaii.edu>>

**Paper Application** Prospective students who prefer to submit paper applications need to download the application materials below. Please download the free [Adobe Reader](#) to view, download and print the documents. Please follow the instructions carefully. Complete and submit the appropriate forms to the [Graduate Admissions Office](#) and to the intended graduate program. For Academic Year 2008-09, consider the following downloads:

[Graduate Admissions Application Instructions and Form](#) (82KB, non-fillable)

[Graduate Program Supplemental Information Form](#) (37KB, non-fillable)

[Statement of Objectives Form](#) (22KB)

[Residency Declaration Form](#) (71KB, non-fillable)

[Confidential Financial Statement for International Applicants](#) (54KB, non-fillable)

**Deadline: No application will be considered after March 1 for Fall Admission and September 1 for Spring admission.**

10. [If the GPA is below 3.0 \(on a 4.0 scale\) or is not available, how is the application evaluated?](#)

It depends on how far below 3.0 the GPA is. GPA of 2.9 is too close to 3.0 to be rejected outright, but one has to keep in mind the 3.0 is a minimal GPA for regular admission. GPA of 2.7 is the lowest one the Graduate Division would entertain as a possibility for conditional admission.

Unless the applicant's dossier includes items, which would counterbalance the below-par GPA, the Admission Committee probably would pass over the application.

Application with unavailable GPA will need to be evaluated on the basis of other evidence of academic performance used by the institution with non-standard grading procedures.

11. [Is all coursework for the Counseling and Guidance degree preset, or can the program be individualized?](#)

Rehabilitation counseling consists only of specific EDCG courses, and allows one elective within the 48-60 semester credit requirement.

12. [What is the policy of transferring course credits to the counseling program?](#)

Occasionally, a new student may have taken graduate course(s) in similar counselor education programs at other accredited universities. The Graduate Chair must approve the applicability of the courses to the program. Generally, **core** courses may not be substituted or transferred. Courses considered transferable should be identified as to which specific EDCG courses are to be substituted; therefore, the transferred and substituted courses must be equivalent in both level and content. A one-time written request of course transfers should be initiated by students in their first semester. Documentation regarding the courses requested to be transferred must be provided by the student to the satisfaction of the specialty and of the Graduate Chair.

13. [Is online coursework transferable from other institutions?](#)

Yes, provided it meets all the criteria mentioned in item #16: the course must be fully equivalent of a specific EDCG course, the student must have earned an A or B grade, and the course was offered by an accredited institution.

14. [What types of courses may be used as electives?](#)

Courses from the CE Department as well as other departments such as Special Education, Psychology, Social Work, Educational Psychology, and Public Health may be used as electives. Students should consult with their advisors relative to which courses would strengthen their program of studies.

15. [May courses be taken for grade “by examination”?](#)

The university rules do not allow graduate level courses to be “challenged” and taken “by examination”. Furthermore, no graduate courses may be applied to a degree program if taken for Credit/No Credit (the UH version of the Pass/Fail system).

16. [What time are classes offered?](#)

During the Fall and Spring semesters, the Counseling and Guidance classes are generally offered evenings once a week. Summer courses are usually offered twice a week. Clinical courses (EdCG 703 Practicum and EdCG 733 and 734 Internships) are scheduled in late afternoon as not to interfere with the clinical activities during the daytime hours. These courses are not generally offered during the summer.

17. [How many years does a student have to complete the program and graduate?](#)

For the master's degree, students have seven (7) years. In very extenuating circumstances, students may petition for a one-semester extension, but the department must support the request.

18. [What grading systems do the CE faculty members use?](#)

The UH policy on grades is explained in the current UH Catalog (the 04-05 volume, p.31). The traditional grades of A, B, C, D, and F have been augmented by the +/- option, which is, however, only voluntary. Not all Counselor Education faculty use the +/- option. Grade of **I** (Incomplete) is given to students who fail to complete a small part of a semester's work before the semester grades are determined, if the instructor believes that the failure was caused by conditions beyond the student's control and not by carelessness and procrastination. All course syllabi must contain a section on student performance evaluation and grading.

19. [Are grades of “C” acceptable?](#)

You will not be dismissed from the program as long as you maintain a 3.0 GPA, and do not receive a "C" in either a practicum or internship course. When students do not maintain a 3.0 GPA, they are placed on probation to raise their GPA to 3.0 in the subsequent semester. If the expected increase of the GPA does not occur, the student is dismissed from the program.

Regardless of the student's GPA, a grade of C in either Practicum or an Internship course will result in student's dismissal from the program.

20. [What is "advancement to candidacy"?](#)

Students admitted to the Graduate Division as regular or conditional graduate students are prospective candidates for advanced degrees. As the first step toward an advanced degree, students must be officially advanced to candidacy. This step is defined by individual degree programs, but must be preceded by clearing the conditional admission status and all undergraduate deficiencies of the student.

21. [What does it take in the C&G program to be advanced to candidacy?](#)

Students who have completed the prerequisite and 24 credits in EDCG courses, including the Practicum EDCG 703, will be considered for advancement to candidacy. It is recommended that students be advanced to candidacy before submitting Plan A or B proposals, if these options are selected instead of the comprehensive exam option.

22. [Does a student need special equipment?](#)

Yes, one requirement is a computer with access to the Internet. It is inconceivable that an applicant would consider entering a graduate program without being able to own a computer, i.e., have continuous access to a computer. The platform does not matter; the computer's capability does. E-mail being the only reliable means of communication with the department, the lack of access would cause severe problems.

Another piece of technology used in counseling is the audio recorder. Both practicum and the internship courses have built-in expectations of audio recording capturing examples of student's interviews, and interaction with clients.

23. [Is the use of departmental equipment available to students?](#)

Yes, the department has a few video cameras, which the students may borrow for purpose of recording the visual aspects of counseling activities. Technical equipment also available to students on campus building.

24. [Are there any scholarships or assistantships available?](#)

To start with, it is necessary to distinguish between scholarships, tuition waivers, and similar awards, which are direct grants to students, and teaching or research assistantships that are awarded for specific work to be performed by the recipient.

Furthermore, the source of the funds for either type of financial assistance determines whether it is available in this program. Scholarship monies most often come from private donors, and in that category, the College of Education (COE) has been quite successful in recent years. The deadline is well publicized, but the applicants must be enrolled as majors in one of the many programs of the College and have a recommendation by one of the college faculty.

The current distribution of state-funded assistantships at the University of Hawaii provides only one (1) 1/2 position for Counselor Education. However, some outside grants allow such appointments. When available, these are also well publicized, and qualified applicants are selected on the basis of how well suited they are for a particular grant.

Tuition waivers are state-funded grants, of which the department has been allotted two in each of the last few years. The administration of the tuition waivers allows the waivers to be split and thus provide some financial help to four rather than just two CE majors. Because in Counselor Education, awards of tuition waivers are based primarily on academic merit, only continuing students are eligible. Additionally, applicants also need to provide information on financial need. Finally, there is the Financial Aid Office (956-7251, [www.hawaii.edu/fas](http://www.hawaii.edu/fas)) that administers campus-wide scholarships, grants, and loans, and the Student Employment and Cooperative

Education Office (956-7007), which coordinates the Federal Work-Study program. Additionally scholarships are available from the U.S Department of Education.

25. [What about housing on or off campus?](#)

The University of Hawaii has been functioning as a commuter college, not as a residential campus, though that may well change, if the current administration succeeds in bringing this idea to fruition. For the time being, consult <http://www.housing.hawaii.edu/> for housing on campus, and <http://www.housing.hawaii.edu/och> for off-campus housing.

26. [What can an “unclassified” student at UH expect as far as being allowed to take courses?](#)

The matter of unclassified students is a complex one. The department will entertain requests from prospective applicants seeking to discover (through taking a CE class or two) what counseling entails and whether the field of counseling is right for them. Permission to register, however, will depend on availability of accommodation of “unclassifieds” in the appropriate class(es). There are only four (4) courses open for this purpose, and they may not be scheduled at the time the unclassified student may want to enroll; furthermore, there may be space limitations. Classified majors will always have priority of registration. (The *"Exploring" the CE Program at UH* document on this website provides additional information on this topic.)

27. [How does one become certified as a rehabilitation counselor?](#)

To be a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC), an individual must complete the master's degree in rehabilitation counseling, submit an application to the Counselor Certification Commission on Rehabilitation and satisfactorily complete the CRC exam. It is advantageous for rehabilitation counseling students to take the NCE (<http://www.nbcc.org/exams/nce.htm>) if they wish to pursue licensure.

28. [What happens to a student for whom the counseling program is not appropriate?](#)

This is a rare occurrence but should a student be inappropriate for the program he/she will be referred to the Admissions and Retention Committee. The committee would then make a recommendation to the faculty. The chairperson will advise a student who has been terminated on other career options and programs.

29. [Is there a doctoral program in counseling available at UH?](#)

No.