

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 adventurous 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 education degree program differs 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 (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.

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 Association²,

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;
- * 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.
- * interventions to remove environmental, employment and attitudinal barriers;
- * 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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Retrieved February 28, 2005 from <http://www.core-rehab.org/Reviewletter.html>

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