



UNIVERSITY OF  
**NORTHERN  
COLORADO**

## **Rehabilitation Counseling and Sciences: 2018 – 2019 Annual Report (May 2019)**

The Rehabilitation Counseling program at the University of Northern Colorado is fully accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) through October of 2020. The program is currently completing a self-study as part of the re-accreditation process. The program currently has two tenured, full-time faculty members, and one tenure-track, full-time faculty member.

Over the past academic year, nine students graduated from the program, and there were a total of 26 students enrolled in the program. The program has a 90% successful program completion rate. The employment rate for graduating students is 100%, with students typically finding employment with state vocational rehabilitation agencies, non-profit community agencies, private for-profit rehabilitation agencies, and the federal government. In order to graduate, all students must pass a comprehensive examination, which is currently the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor Examination (CRC). In the last academic year, 82% of students who took the exam passed, and those students that did not pass are eligible to take the exam again.

### **Program Evaluation**

In order to continuously improve program objectives, program evaluation is conducted on an ongoing basis using numerous procedures to assess student outcomes. A summary of data collected from current students, program graduates, and site supervisors/employers is provided. In addition, the program's mission and objectives are provided below for reference when reviewing the summarized data.

*The mission of the program is to educate master's students in the area of rehabilitation counseling to assist and support individuals with disabilities or chronic illnesses to achieve maximum potential, meaningful employment, and full community integration. In doing so, the program focuses on encouraging students to pursue a life-long commitment to learning, critical thinking skills, creative problem solving, and an appreciation of the skills and abilities of individuals with disabilities.*

### **Program Objectives**

- *Develop an understanding for psychosocial, cultural, and diversity issues that impact rehabilitation counseling.*
- *Demonstrate ethical behavior and ethical problem-solving skills.*

- *Evaluate barriers in the environment and social and economic influences that create barriers for individuals with disabilities.*
- *Effectively utilize counseling theories and techniques to serve individuals with disabilities and chronic illnesses.*
- *Master methods of inquiry to acquire a deeper understanding of the discipline.*
- *Utilize current research to improve services for individuals with disabilities and chronic illness.*
- *Acquire knowledge and skills necessary for careers in rehabilitation counseling, vocational evaluation, and/or advanced scholarly work.*

### Assessment of Current Students

The Rehabilitation Counseling program established key performance indicators for each of the eight core counseling areas and the rehabilitation counseling specialty area in order to assess the progress of current students. Table 1 shows the percentage of students who have successfully achieved the key performance indicators in each of the areas.

Table 1

<b>Core Area</b>	<b>Key Performance Indicator 1</b>	<b>Key Performance Indicator 2</b>
Profession Counseling Orientation and Ethical Practice	100%	100%
Social and Cultural Diversity	95%	100%
Human Growth and Development	96%	100%
Career Development	86%	100%
Counseling and Helping Relationships	87%	100%
Group Counseling and Group Work	100%	100%
Assessment and Testing	86%	100%
Research and Program Evaluation	92%	92%
Rehabilitation Counseling	100%	100%

### Assessment of Program Graduates

In March of 2019, data was collected from program graduates regarding their level of preparedness for employment in the field of rehabilitation counseling with attention to the program objectives. A total of 19 participants completed this survey. Nearly 79% of graduates surveyed indicated they were working in the field of rehabilitation counseling. When asked how well the program prepared graduates in each of the areas outlined in the program objectives, 100% of respondents indicated the program prepared them moderately to extremely well in all areas with one exception. Approximately, 7% of graduates surveyed indicated the program prepared students slightly well in the utilization of research to improve services for individuals with disabilities. Qualitative data collected also indicated a need for additional resources when preparing for the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor Examination.

### Assessment of Site Supervisors/Employers

In March of 2019, data was also collected from site supervisors/employers regarding the students' level of preparedness for employment in the field of rehabilitation counseling with attention to the program objectives. A total of nine participants completed this survey, but only four participants completed the questions related to program objectives. When asked how well the program prepared students in each of the areas outlined by the program objectives, 100% of respondents indicated the program prepared them moderately to extremely well in 9 of the 13 areas. Approximately, 25% (n=1) of site supervisors/employers surveyed indicated the program prepared students only slightly well in the utilization of counseling theories and techniques to serve individuals with disabilities. In addition, approximately 50% (n=2) of site supervisors/employers surveyed indicated the program prepared students only slightly well in the utilization of research to improve services for individuals with disabilities. Qualitative data collected also indicated more emphasis was needed on evidenced-based practices in the field of rehabilitation counseling.

### **Program Modifications and Changes**

Based on the program evaluation results, the program faculty plan to make modifications to curriculum, but no significant program changes are anticipated. In order to address concerns regarding the utilization of research to improve services for individuals with disabilities, the program faculty agreed to no longer accept substitutions for the research methods course in the curriculum. This will allow all students to gain adequate skills and knowledge in the application of research to rehabilitation counseling practice. In addition, faculty will incorporate more skills-based activities into counseling theories and techniques curriculum. Attention to evidence-based practice will also be increased in all courses, and students will be required to investigate current best practices in depth for course assignments. Faculty also plan to implement strategies to increase student engagement, including mandatory meetings each semester, regular check-ins with advisors, and further development of a student chapter of the American Rehabilitation Counseling Association (ARCA).