

SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATION
AND DISABILITY STUDIES
COLLEGE OF NURSING AND ALLIED HEALTH

GRADUATE
STUDENT HANDBOOK

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

2018

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History

The Rehabilitation Counseling Program (RCP) was established in 1983 under the Consent Decree. The program became the first in the state of Louisiana to receive national accreditation from the Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE). Currently, it enjoys eight years of accreditation (2010-2018). As of to date, RCP has graduated about 300 professionals who are employed in various strategic positions throughout the country.

In 1988, a fully equipped Vocational Evaluation and Work Adjustment (VEWA) laboratory was set up to complement the specialty track study. In 1993, the program started offering a second area of specialization in Rehabilitation of Ethnic Minorities (REM). In 2005, the department received funding to offer a specialization in Assistive Technology (AT) and Rehabilitation Counseling Online (RCO) began to offer the master's degree by distance education. The distance education program is funded by the Rehabilitation Services Administration to address the Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD). Currently, it houses the Sigma Upsilon Chi Chapter of Chi Sigma Iota, Counseling, Academic and Professional Honor Society International. In 1995, the program took the lead to establish the first Students Rehabilitation Counseling Association in the country. The enthusiasm and diligence of a group of our graduate students and faculty resulted in the foundation of the Southern University Student Rehabilitation Association (SUSRA) in 2000. In 1998, RCP received Honorable Mention from the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration. In 2003, the Department of Rehabilitation and Disability Studies became independent under the College of Sciences. Since

2014, the department is under the auspices of the College of Nursing and Allied Health.

Mission Statement

To educate and train masters level degree candidates to meet the qualified personnel needs of the rehabilitation profession, and enhance the quality of services to unserved and underserved populations with disabilities, by providing specialized knowledge and skills in both Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling and Clinical Mental Health Counseling and rehabilitation service delivery.

Objective 1

The clinical rehabilitation counselor education program emphasizes development of skills, knowledge, and competencies required to:

- A. Provide clinical rehabilitation counseling services
- B. Provide comprehensive rehabilitation services to persons with disabilities,
- C. Honor diversity and embrace a multicultural approach to counseling and rehabilitation services in support of the worth, dignity, potential, and uniqueness of people within their social and cultural contexts;
- D. Conduct rehabilitation research and scholarly activities, and
- E. Become effective policy makers and advocates.

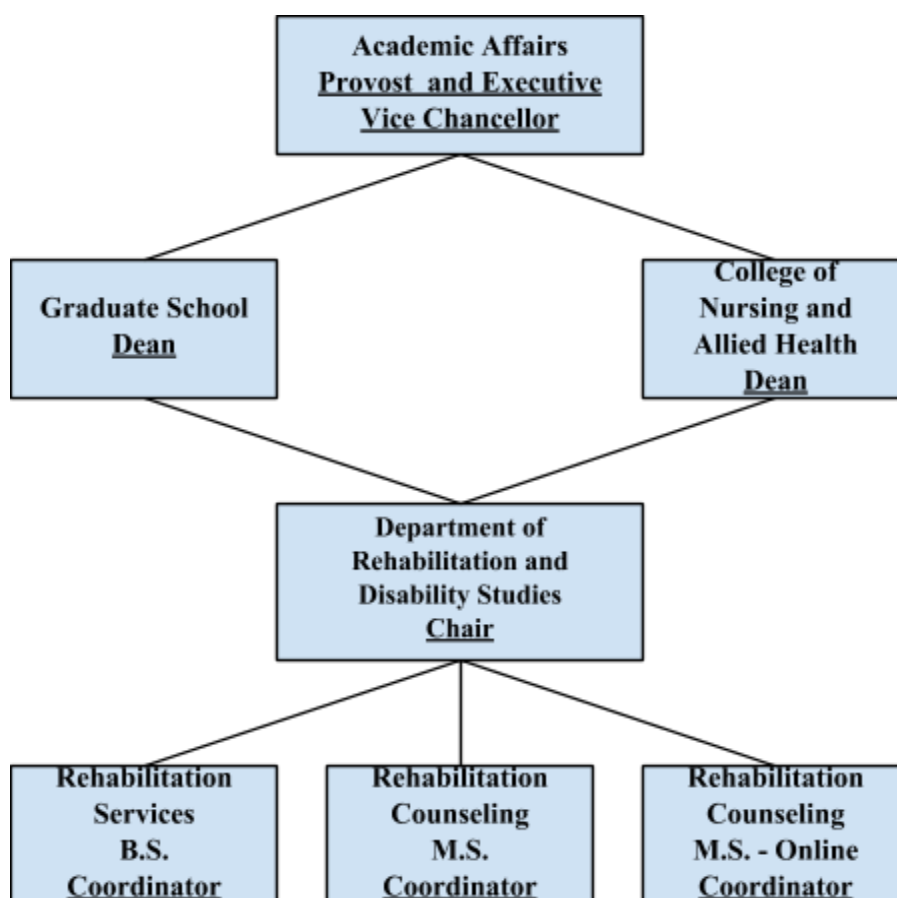
Objective 2

To provide continuing education to the personnel of Louisiana Rehabilitation Services and other state Vocational Rehabilitation agencies in the country, community rehabilitation providers, and clinical rehabilitation counselors for further skill development, attainment/maintenance of national certification/state licensure, and/or completion of a degree.

Objectives 3

To develop a doctoral program in rehabilitation geared to prepare qualified students to become educators, researchers, scholars, policy makers, and leaders.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

One of the pre-requisites for admission to the CRCP is an undergraduate degree in rehabilitation services, nursing, psychology, social work, sociology, or other related human services fields. However, students with other majors are also encouraged and accepted into the program. The relevant characteristics that are considered during the admission process are: (1) relevance of career goals, (2) aptitude for graduate-level study as indicated undergraduate Grade Point Average (GPA), (3) three letters of recommendations (4) potential success in forming effective counseling relationships, (5) respect for cultural differences, and (6) financial capability. The applicants are called for personal interview with the Admission Committee after preliminary assessment of application materials.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Southern University has historically been successful obtaining a number of grants through the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), U. S. Department of Education. As they are available, a limited number of federal traineeships are available for students in the Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling masters program. Historically, scholarships have offered full tuition remission in addition to monthly stipend, books and travel to conferences. RSA scholarships have a payback requirement that requires recipients of the scholarships to provide written confirmation of employment in state VR agencies or other qualified organizations within two years of completing the degree program. Each year of support requires two years of payback.

Additionally, graduate assistantships (10 hours per week) are available to those scholarship recipients with a minimum of 3.0 GPA through the Graduate School (Phone: 225-771-5390 or 888-223-1460; Fax: 225-771-5791). Scholarships are awarded for 11 months

whereas graduate assistantships are offered for 8 months (Fall and Spring) and renewed in the Summer for 2 months based on availability of funds.

In addition, tuition, books, and travel scholarships may be available to distance education students.

Students may also apply for financial aid (Phone: 225-771-2790; Fax: 225-771-5898). Scholarship and graduate assistantship recipients must consult with the financial aid advisor prior to accepting assistance from additional sources. The receipt of financial assistance exceeding a specified limit will result in reduction of scholarship and assistantship funds.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAM

Curriculum

The Rehabilitation Counseling Program (RCP) was accredited by the Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE). On July 1, 2017 CORE has merged with the Council on Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). RCP is a member of the National Council of Rehabilitation Education (NCRE) and is accredited by CACREP through October 31, 2019. The Department is currently in the process of transitioning to Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling and Clinical Mental Health Counseling. These programs are structured to prepare students for effective and efficient clinical rehabilitation counseling service delivery to persons with varying disabilities, while addressing multicultural issues. A minimum of 60 semester hour master's degree curriculum requires completion core courses, including 3 hours of practicum (100 clock hours), 6 hours of internship (600 clock hours), 9 -12 hours of specialization, and passing CRC or Departmental Comprehensive Examinations.

The updated curriculum incorporates knowledge and competencies necessary for graduates to serve in a variety of clinical rehabilitation counseling and related positions. The acquisition of required competencies in meeting the program objectives will be achieved through a combination of didactic and practical experiences. The acquisition of research skills and the ability to interpret research findings and incorporate these findings into rehabilitation practice is an integral part of the skill development required of students. The program will prepare students interested in seeking further educational opportunities in clinical rehabilitation and mental health studies at the doctoral level. The curriculum follows:

A MODEL TWO-YEAR CURRICULUM

Course Number	Course Title	Credit Hours
First Semester: Fall		

REHB 501	Introduction to Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling	3
REHB 502	Professional Orientation and Ethics in Counseling	3
REHB 510	Theories and Process of Counseling	3
REHB 580	Medical and Psychosocial Aspects of Disability I	3
Second Semester: Spring		
REHB 564	Assessment and Diagnosis	3
REHB 515	Human Growth and Development	3
REHB 581	Medical and Psychosocial Aspects of Disability II	3
REHB 514	Psychopathology and Diagnosis (DSM V)	3
Third Semester: Summer		
REHB 504	Rehabilitation Caseload Management and Reporting	3
REHB 590	Clinical Practicum	3
Fourth Semester: Fall		
REHB 565	Research Methods, Statistics, and Program Evaluation	3
REHB 571	Career development, Job Development, and Job Placement	3
REHB 591	Clinical Internship I	3
REHB 575	Elective: Application of Assistive Technology in VR	3
Fifth Semester: Spring		
REHB 511	Counseling Culturally Diverse	3
REHB 520	Family and Group Counseling	3
REHB 592	Clinical Internship II	3
REHB 512	Advocacy, Ethics, and Empowerment	3
REHB 699	CRC/Comprehensive	0
Sixth Semester: Summer		
REHB 525	Substance Abuse and Mental Health Counseling	3
REHB 572	Elective: Foundations of Vocational Evaluation	3

Clinical Experience

One of the pre-requisites of Practicum and Internship placement is the demonstration of adequate knowledge, skills, competencies, and appropriate manners and behaviors conducive in

dealing with people with significant disabilities of culturally diverse backgrounds. The master's degree curriculum includes completion of 3 hours of clinical practicum (100 clock hours in the summer) and 6 hours of clinical internship (300 clock hours in the fall and 300 clock hours in the spring). The student will be eligible to embark on this uniquely insightful practical experience upon the completion of first two semesters of courses: REHB 501 Introduction to Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling, REHB 502 Professional Orientation and Ethics in Counseling, REHB 510 Theories and Process of Counseling, REHB 514 Psychopathology and Diagnosis (DSM V) REHB 515 Human Growth and Development, REHB 564 Assessment and Diagnosis, REHB 580 Medical and Psychosocial Aspects of Disability I, and REHB 581 Medical and Psychosocial Aspects of Disability II.

This year-long supervised clinical experience is designed to acquaint the student with the practical application of didactic knowledge and skills learned in the classroom, building counselor-client relationship, effective techniques of decision making, ways of integrating community resources to optimize the quality and level of services provided; and methods of developing professionalism and networking skills within the rehabilitation community. The majority of the time will be spent providing services to rehabilitation consumers, especially those from underserved/underserved populations.

In order to select an appropriate site, the student will be required to write a rationale describing his/her expectations from clinical experience, the preferred population, type of agency, and goals for future career enhancement. Based on this rationale, the student and the faculty supervisor will select an approved site.

During this one-year period, the student will be required to enroll in REHB 590 Clinical Practicum, REHB 591 Clinical Internship I, and REHB 592 Clinical Internship II. The student will receive supervision from an on-site professional and a faculty in-charge of the course. He/she will meet with the agency supervisor for at least one to two hours per week and with the faculty supervisor for at least one hour per week. Supervision sessions will be designed to discuss about the progress made and address any concerns. It is preferable that both supervisors be Certified Rehabilitation Counselors (CRCs). The student will be required to maintain a daily log of activities and write reports pertaining to the experience.

The student will be evaluated twice a semester by both supervisors. However, the faculty supervisor will make the final decision about the grade. At the end of the semester, the student will have an opportunity to evaluate the agency and suggest modes of improving the quality of clinical experience in the future. The student must demonstrate professional and ethical behaviors during the clinical experience. Failing which he/she will be withdrawn from the agency and may be dismissed from the program. For further details about practicum and internships, please refer to the Practicum and Internship Manuals.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

The RCP is structured to prepare students for effective and efficient service delivery to persons with disabilities. A minimum of 60 semester hours is required to earn a master of science degree in Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling. Students must have a minimum GPA of 3.0. As part of the graduate school regulations, a student may have a maximum of 2 “C” grades, which

must average out with 2 “A” grades. In addition to coursework, students are required to pass the CRC examination or the departmental comprehensive examination.

CERTIFIED REHABILITATION COUNSELOR (CRC)

- In order to graduate from the program, the students are encouraged to take CRC examination in lieu of the Departmental Comprehensive Examination. The students are eligible to take CRC examination upon completion of 75% of the course work. The designation of Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) is an indication of an advanced level of specialized education and training, an adherence to rigid standards of ethical practice, and an ongoing commitment to lifelong learning. Rehabilitation counselors who have earned the CRC designation possess a marketable and valued credential that distinguishes them from other counseling professionals. CRC certification also establishes a recognizable point of differentiation with employers and clients that promotes consumer confidence and protection in the workplace. The goal of CRC Certification is greater marketability and increased salary. (<http://www.crccertification.com>)

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

An alternative to CRC examination, the student may take departmental comprehensive examination after completing all the required content courses and in the semester the student intends to graduate.

Guidelines for the Comprehensive Examination

1. Each student is allowed to take the written comprehensive examination three times.

2. The student must obtain an overall 70% to pass the examination.
3. If a student fails to obtain 70% in aggregate, he/she will be required to retake only those areas in which he/she has obtained less than 70%.
4. The student re-taking the examination must obtain an overall 70% in each administration.
5. The results of the examination will be released within 10 working days.
6. The student will take the comprehensive examination **only once per semester**.
7. The student may obtain a profile of his/her score but will not be allowed to review the comprehensive examination.

**ACADEMIC REGULATIONS AND GRIEVANCES
(ALSO SEE “GENERAL REGULATIONS” IN GRADUATE CATALOG)**

Academic Standards:

1. The minimum standard for graduate work leading to a graduate degree is a 3.0 grade point average in the overall program of courses pursued while enrolled in graduate school with no more than two grades below “B”.
2. A student may be denied further registration in a graduate program in which the student’s scholastic performance or progress toward completion of the planned program has not maintained a “B” average in all work attempted is, by definition, unsatisfactory scholarship. Disciplinary actions (e.g., probation, suspension) will be taken against students with unsatisfactory scholarship.
3. A student whose cumulative GPA falls below 3.0 for the first time is placed on probation.

A student who is placed on probation for two consecutive semesters will be suspended from the program if a GPA of 3.0 is not achieved at the end of the second probationary period.

Professional Disposition Assessment

The Department of Rehabilitation Counseling and Disability Studies conforms to the Council for Accreditation for Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) standards requiring that students can demonstrate the required knowledge and skill across the curriculum as well as professional dispositions for professional counseling practice.

The systematic assessment of students is required by **CACREP (2016) Section 4.G; 4.H and ACA Code of Ethics (2014) Section F.9: F.9.a; F.9.b**. The term professional dispositions describes fundamental characteristics necessary for competent practice as a professional counselor and/or rehabilitation counselor. The assessment of professional dispositions is a fundamental element of the rehabilitation counseling program at Southern University and A&M College in Baton Rouge.

Professional disposition standards include but are not limited to:

- 1) Demonstrating appropriateness for professional counseling and rehabilitation as measured by the reviews conducted using the Professional Disposition Assessment Form which include the following competencies:
 - a. Professional Ethics
 - b. Multicultural Competence
 - c. Engagement in Learning
 - d. Personal Insight

- e. Adaptability and Cooperation
 - f. Use of Feedback
 - g. Conflict Resolution
 - h. Personal Responsibility
 - i. Emotional Stability
 - j. Dependability, Record Keeping and Task Completion
- 2) Conformity with the American Counseling Association Code (ACA) of Ethics, the CRCC Code of Ethics, and any relevant counseling specialty ethical codes and relevant state licensure boards rules and regulations.

Evaluation Calendar: The assessment be completed at multiple points in the program. The chart below provides the evaluation calendar, including who bears responsibility for the evaluation.

Evaluation Point	Evaluator
1. Before the first day of classes	Area – led by advisor
2. At the end of the first completed semester	Instructor of Counseling Techniques
3. At the end of the 2 nd semester	Area – led by advisor
4. Practicum Evaluations	Program and Site Supervisor
5. Internship Evaluations	Program and Site Supervisor

6. Program Completion	Area – led by advisor
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Admission to the program or receiving promotion through the curriculum does not guarantee retention in or graduation from the program.

Remediation planning, academic probation, or dismissal may be utilized, as appropriate, to address a deficiency. A student's inability to show the appropriate level of competency in a minimum of one competence is sufficient for dismissal from the program.

A review may be initiated on any student at any time if a faculty member, staff, course instructor, program advisor or field supervisor believes the student has displayed behavior which suggests the student does not possess sufficient competency on one or more of the assessment criteria.

Remediation & Dismissal: Any student who score lower than meets expectation on any one of the dispositions will be required to meet with their faculty advisor to discuss the assessment and to determine an appropriate course of action. Students may request the presence of another faculty or of the department chair in cases when the student is concerned about the objectivity of her or his advisor. The advisor will consult with the student on a possible remediation plan or dismissal from the program, however, the advisor and rehabilitation counseling faculty reserve responsibility for determining the final course of action. Options include

1. Allowing the student to continue in the program without conditions;
2. Allowing the student to continue in the program with conditions to be determined by the

faculty

3. Or discontinuation from the program.

Remediation efforts may only require informing a student of the area of deficiency. Where additional action is needed, the advisor will create a written remediation plan that details the actions of both the student and the program. Program faculty review the remediation plans at least once per semester in a designated area meeting until the remediation process is deemed complete. Students will be notified of the completion of remediation.

Discontinuation from the program would be a very rare occurrence, with the faculty doing everything possible to help students achieve expected knowledge, skill, and competence. In instances where a student feels that he or she has not been treated fairly, College and University grievance procedures are available.

Academic Appeals:

A student may appeal a suspension only if it is the first one for the student and the student is able to provide strong supporting documentation as well as compelling reasons for reconsideration.

Student Disruptive Behavior:

1. The Department of Rehabilitation and Disability Studies will not tolerate disruptive behavior. All reports of incidents will be taken seriously and dealt with appropriately.
2. Disruptive behavior is behavior which the Department of Rehabilitation and Disability Studies regards as speech or action which
 - is disrespectful, offensive, and/or threatening;

- interferes with the learning activities of other students;
- impedes the delivery of Departmental services; and/or
- has a negative impact in any learning environment - including faculty offices, classrooms, labs, and service-learning sites (practicum, internship).

3. Disruptive behavior includes physically, verbally or psychologically harassing, threatening, or acting abusively toward an instructor, staff member, or toward other students in any activity authorized by the University. Disruptive behavior also includes any other behavior covered by the Student Code of Conduct.

4. Description/Examples of Disruptive Behaviors - Minor or Moderate Disruption:

a. The behavior is perceived as disruptive, disrespectful, offensive, and/or threatening and interferes with the learning of other students or impedes the delivery of college services. This behavior may include speech or action that is not part of the learning process but is perceived to create an atmosphere of hostility, intimidation, ridicule or anxiety among other students, instructors or staff. The student may be verbally harassing the instructor/staff/students, or making unreasonable demands for attention or special treatment to the detriment of other students in or out of the classroom, or engaging in other behaviors covered in the Student Code of Conduct.

b. The behavior may stem from a conflict with the instructor, staff or another student, from the course itself, or personal problems that may be causing inappropriate behavior. For example, the student deliberately distracts other students from the task at hand, talks loudly out of turn during lecture, monopolizes the discussion, makes disrespectful comments (written or verbal) to the instructor or to another student, comes late and is disruptive settling in, hinders cooperation,

harasses or intimidates a college employee or another student, or engages in other behaviors covered in the Student Code of Conduct.

5. Description/Examples of Disruptive Behaviors - Serious and Dangerous Disruption:

The behavior is perceived as dangerous, violent, and threatening to cause physical and mental harm, injury, indignity, harassment, or written and spoken abuse to the instructor, staff or to other students in classroom or non-classroom settings or in any learning environment; or causes damage or threat to University property or property of students or University employees. If the student causes damage and/or threatens bodily harm on self or others, i.e. verbal threats of violence, brandishing of lethal weapons, or assault in or out of class, or if the behavior inflicts serious emotional and mental stress on others, or creates substantial disruption of normal campus activities.

Grievances:

1. A grievance is a request for specific action to solve a problem or redress an injury done to the individual presenting it. The designation academic grievance covers those problems related to academic issues. Included within academic grievance cases are faculty, departmental, college or Graduate School policies affecting individual student prerogatives, deviations from stated grading procedures (but not individual grade challenges), unfair treatment and related issues.
2. Informal Resolution: The graduate student is encouraged, when feasible, to attempt first to resolve a grievance with the faculty and/or staff member(s) involved. If this proves unsatisfactory, the grievance must be directed to the chair of the Department's grievance committee for formal departmental deliberation and decision.
3. Formal Grievance: If the student is dissatisfied at the departmental level and if all appeals

have been exhausted, he/she may file a written formal complaint with the Dean of the Graduate School. Contact the Graduate School for procedures.

Professional Organizations

Students are encouraged to join, as a student member, any of the numerous professional organizations related to the counseling and rehabilitation fields. Of the professional organizations there are a number that may suit students more than others.

Organizations to consider are:

American Counseling Association

American Rehabilitation Counseling Association

National Rehabilitation Association

National Association of Multicultural Rehabilitation Concerns

National Rehabilitation Counseling Association

National Council on Rehabilitation Education

International Association of Rehabilitation Professionals

Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America

The advantages of joining a professional organization is that students receive journals, announcements, and communications about the furtherment of the professional field of rehabilitation. Becoming a member helps add valuable resources to resumes. Members have the opportunities to network with other professional in the field, and stay up-to-date on current issues through, continued education, conferences, and social events.

Professional organizations exist to gather like minded people in a profession, while maintaining control and oversight of the legitimate practice of a profession. They also serve to safeguard the interests of the profession and its members both through self regulation and political action.

