

COUNSELING AND REHABILITATION, M.A.

Academic Program

The Master of Arts (M.A.) in Counseling and Rehabilitation is a 60 semester-credit hour program that prepares professional counselors. This MA program includes a specialization in clinical rehabilitation counseling, which equips graduates with specialized knowledge and skills related to disability and disadvantage-related issues.

Learning Outcomes

- Students will adopt a professional counseling orientation commensurate to beginning counselors. (EDCE 510)
- Students will engage in ethical decision-making process that demonstrates an understanding of ethical principles and is beneficial to the client. (RCON 704)
- Students will describe how student-centered and client-centered cultural factors may influence the counseling relationship across a variety of helping settings. (RCON 605)
- Students will demonstrate ability to work effectively with diverse clients in a counseling setting. (RCON 711, RCON 883)
- Students will identify psychosocial and psychoeducational strategies for promoting resilience and optimal development and wellness across the lifespan. (EDPY 705, RCON 711, NPSY 757, Comprehensive assessment)
- Students will accurately describe theories and models of career development and career decision-making. (RCON 725, Comprehensive assessment)
- Students will apply a theory and/or model of career development to a client. (RCON 725, RCON 883)
- Students will demonstrate the intentional use of interviewing and basic counseling skills. (RCON 601, RCON 880)
- Students will discuss and demonstrate counseling theories and related techniques. (RCON 711, RCON 883)
- Students will demonstrate group leadership skills by planning and carrying out purposeful group counseling activities. (RCON 720, RCON 880)
- Students will select and describe assessment and testing techniques with specific counseling populations. (RCON 714, NPSY 758)
- Students will utilize the results of scholarly research to inform and adapt counseling practice. (RCON 700, RCON 702, Comprehensive examination)
- Students will identify and strategically utilize community services and resources related to the provision of individualized rehabilitation services. (RCON 734, Comprehensive assessment).
- Students will develop and implement individualized service plan for a person with a disability that reflects principles of client choice and self-determination and include theory-based and evidence-based counseling and rehabilitation services. (RCON 733, RCON 883)
- Students will demonstrate fundamental competencies in Addictions and Mental Health counseling. (NPSY 760, NPSY 757, NPSY 758)

Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling

Graduates are specialized professionals who assist persons with physical, mental, developmental, cognitive, addictions-based and other disabilities, as well as other forms of disadvantage. They help these

individuals deal with personal, interpersonal, and societal problems; plan careers; pursue educational goals; and find and maintain employment. The counseling process involves communication, goal setting, and facilitating personal growth or beneficial change through advocacy, psychological, vocational, social, and behavioral interventions. Clinical rehabilitation counselors also work with individuals, organizations, and advocacy groups that address environmental and social barriers that create obstacles for persons with disabilities. In effect, they build bridges between persons with disabilities, their families, communities, and work places. They also collaborate with physicians, psychologists, and others in assisting persons with disabilities in pursuing their educational, vocational, and independent-living goals. Because employment is a major focus for persons with disabilities, clinical rehabilitation counselors work closely with employers and representatives of the business community to identify job opportunities and to make work environments more accommodating.

Major employers of clinical rehabilitation counselors in South Carolina include both public and private agencies, hospitals, and behavioral care settings such as the South Carolina Department of Mental Health, the South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department, and the South Carolina Commission for the Blind. Other employers include a variety of addictions treatment agencies, local hospitals, and other care settings. Clinical rehabilitation counselors also serve as consultants to educational institutions, insurance companies, and industry. The profession of clinical rehabilitation counseling also has an important role in providing rehabilitation and transition services for school-aged children and adolescents, with focuses on transitioning from high school to college, or from education to employment. Also, geriatric services are provided to older persons who are experiencing changing lifestyles and health problems. Increasingly, workers injured on the job receive rehabilitation counseling services through private rehabilitation companies and employers' in-house disability management and employee assistance programs. Persons who have severe disabilities that limit opportunities for full-time competitive employment may also be assisted through independent-living service programs and supported employment arrangements developed and provided by rehabilitation counselors.

Program Accreditation

On July 1, 2017, the Council for Accreditation of Counseling & Related Educational Programs (CACREP) assumed responsibility for carrying out the mission and vision of the Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE). All graduate programs that were formerly accredited by CORE are now accredited by CACREP. The USC Rehabilitation Counseling Program's 48 credit hour degree was most recently accredited by CORE in 2012 and received a full 8-year accreditation (2012-2020). That program is accredited as a rehabilitation counseling program by CACREP through 2020 under the former CORE standards. The USC Rehabilitation Counseling Program intends to seek accreditation for the updated 60 credit hour program as a Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling program, under current CACREP standards, when the reaccreditation process begins in 2019.

Credentialing Information

Program graduates are eligible to take the national certification exam administered by the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC) and either the National Counselor Examination (NCE) or the National Clinical Mental Health Counseling Examination (NCMHCE) that leads to counselor licensure in South Carolina and several states. It is important to note that each state has its own licensing board with its

own counselor licensure requirements. The program's website provides additional information about certification and licensure.

Learning Community

The program utilizes a Learning Community approach to the professional development of clinical rehabilitation counselors. We believe that a diverse group of faculty and students working collaboratively to help students reach academic and professional goals best prepares students for success. We value diversity in age, gender, race and ethnicity, educational background, sexual orientation, ability status, and other multicultural characteristics. We encourage applications from all interested potential students, including persons from historically and typically underrepresented groups.

As a member of the clinical rehabilitation counseling Learning Community, students can expect to get to know the core counselor education program faculty as well as student peers. In addition to courses that meet in real-time and are open to both in-person and distance students, the program includes Learning Community in-person days during which faculty and students engage in hands-on learning and professional development.

Additional Information

For additional information, please contact the Program Director or the Student Services Coordinator at 803-434-4296. You may also visit the program website (http://sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/medicine/education/graduate_programs/rehabilitation_counseling/).