

Rehabilitation Counseling Curriculum Academic Survey (RCCAS)

Executive Summary

The Center for Innovative Training in Vocational Rehabilitation (CIT-VR) at The George Washington University is focused on developing innovative methods to train VR personnel to support the work of State Vocational Rehabilitation agencies (SVRAs) in delivering high-quality rehabilitation services and to improve employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. The CIT-VR is designed to develop and offer training, Communities of Practice (CoP), webinars and other learning modalities for personnel at SVRAs. The Center is funded by a five-year grant, October 1, 2019 – September 30, 2024, from the US Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration under the Innovative Rehabilitation Training Program (CFDA 84.263C).

In order to assess the training needs of rehabilitation personnel working in State VR agencies, CIT-VR disseminated a national survey of those agencies in 2020 called the State VR Agency Training Needs Survey (SVRATNS). Based on those findings, a second survey was developed called the Rehabilitation Counseling Curriculum Academic Survey (RCCAS) that was disseminated to Rehabilitation Counseling academic programs via large membership organizations. The RCCAS content areas align with Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs (CACREP) Rehabilitation Counseling and the Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling specialty areas of Foundations, Contextual Dimensions, and Practice. The purpose of the RCCAS was to obtain baseline information and gain further understanding of the extent to which of the stated content areas are addressed in Rehabilitation Counseling curricula from which to prepare, as appropriate, novel, innovative modules that universities can include to update curricula and that can be used by a variety of trainers to provide short-term or other training to VR professionals and paraprofessionals providing service to individuals with disabilities. Respondents were also asked to provide information regarding the occupational and organizational setting in which their graduates were employed to assess current trends.

The results from the survey indicated that respondents evaluated 85.3% of the 34 rehabilitation counseling curricula content areas as Extensive or Adequate; suggesting that the identified areas of training needs are addressed in the rehabilitation counseling curriculum. A total of five curricula topics were evaluated as minimal (i.e., Integrated Resource Team model, IPE development and implementation for youth, Roles of core partners in the Workforce Development System, Vocational counseling and guidance for specific significant disability, WIOA Common Performance Measures). Respondents identified eight additional rehabilitation counseling curricula content areas that deserve further exploration. These topics include family therapy (e.g., working with persons with disabilities [PWD] and their families), diagnosis and mental health, trauma informed care, co-occurring disabilities (e.g., substance use and mental disorders), Psychopathology (e.g., origins, developments, treatments), Suicide prevention, Telehealth, and Human Development across the lifespan.

In regard to the occupational and organizational setting of graduates, respondents reported that the majority (63.2%) of rehabilitation counseling students who graduated by the end of the 2019-2020 academic year, were employed in positions identified as rehabilitation counselors and 36.8% were not employed as rehabilitation counselors. In addition, responses were grouped into two employment trends. Of these, employment as a rehabilitation counselor in State/Federal/VR agencies presented as a decreasing trend.; employment as a rehabilitation counselor in non-State/Federal agencies suggested a continued stable trend.

To gain greater understanding of the value of the five aforementioned rehabilitation counseling curricula content areas, CIT-VR will further assess students and faculty via survey, structured interviews and/or focus groups mentioned above that were rated as being minimally addressed in Rehabilitation Counseling program curriculum to assist in development of training to assist in addressing these gaps in curriculum. [Access the full results of the Rehabilitation Counseling Curriculum Academic Survey Report.](#)

About CIT-VR

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The Center for Innovative Training in Vocational Rehabilitation (CIT-VR) is managed by the George Washington University Center for Rehabilitation Counseling Research and Education, in partnership with San Diego State University and the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation.

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The GW Center for Rehabilitation Counseling Research and Education (GRCRE) aims to enhance research and provide opportunities for growth and development to a diverse population including persons with disabilities.

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