

Utah State University  
Master's of Rehabilitation Counseling Program  
Annual Report: 2022-2023 Academic Year

In accordance with the accreditation standards of the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), the following Annual Report is designed to provide current students, alumni, program faculty, institutional administrators, and other key stakeholders (e.g., practicum/internship site supervisors, employers of alumni, agency administrators, etc.) with a summary of program evaluation efforts for the 2022-2023 Academic year, any program modifications that arose from those evaluation efforts, as well as any other substantial changes to the program.

The Master's of Rehabilitation Counseling (MRC) Program at Utah State University (USU) was most recently accredited by CACREP in 2021 as a rehabilitation counseling program (not clinical rehabilitation counseling). This two-year accreditation period required the submission of an interim report to the board to address specific standard deficiencies. The CACREP board will use this determination to aide in their decision regarding the accreditation cycle and end date for the USU MRC program. To aide in this interim report, alumni surveys and employers surveys were sent to their respective populations in May of each year. What follows is a summary of the data collected from 2019 through the 2022 classes. Data for those graduating in the Spring 2023 semester will be collected in May of 2023 and included in a future report.

#### Master's Program – Rehabilitation Counseling Specialization

The Department of Special Education and Rehabilitation Counseling is the academic home of the USU MRC program. The data presented in this section was analyzed in aggregate form and not specific to graduation years. A total of 163 participants have provided information on the alumni survey thus far. Their responses to the alumni survey are shown at the end of this document.

During the March 2023 analysis of the Alumni Survey, results indicated an overall belief that the USU MRC program does prepare them for their role as a rehabilitation counselor in various employment settings. Due to external research grants, Dr. Brian Phillips and Dr. Kathleen Oertle did have course buyouts as part of their research funding over the last two years. Adjuncts helped deliver REH 6100 Professional Counseling Orientation for Dr. Brian Phillips in the Fall 2022 semester, and we have had adjuncts assist annually since 2020 with REH 6190 Vocational Assessment in Rehabilitation Counseling and REH 6350 Treatment Approaches for Addiction Disorders to leverage the knowledge of content area experts. It is anticipated that Dr. Phillips and Dr. Oertle will be back to teaching a full load of courses within the USU MRC program starting in the Fall 2023 academic semester.

Semester based student feedback is gathered by the USU Office of Analysis, Assessment, and Accreditation. Our graduate program coordinator (Kris Wengreen) also sends out a mid-semester evaluation specific to the needs of our program. Results are shared with the respective faculty member responsible for the individual course. The faculty review the results and discuss opportunities for change and growth. As part of this student feedback process, some changes to the curriculum enacted for the 2022-2023 academic year include:

REH 6160 Career Development Analysis and Placement: Is now being taught by Dr. Kathleen Oertle, not an adjunct.

REH 6320 The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Health Disorders (DSM V) – was changed to an asynchronous delivery method to avoid having class so late into the evening.

Anticipated changes for the 2023-2024 academic year include:

- REH 6110 Medical Aspects of Disability will now be taught in both the Fall and Spring semesters of each academic year.
- REH 6200 Counseling Theories moving from the Spring Semester to the Fall Semester and will now be taught by Dr. Michael Gerald.
- REH 6230 Introduction to Research in Rehabilitation Counseling will now be taught by Dr. Trenton Landon and will be taught using an asynchronous format.

Faculty are aware of the respective accreditation standards for these courses, and it is anticipated they will integrate these standards into the curricular experiences of the students in these courses.

An emphasis in the 2023-2024 review will be an emphasis on integrating employer and community stakeholder feedback into the annual report. This will address a shortcoming of the previous “Year in Review” reports presently on the website and will also provide valuable data points to consider as we continuously evaluate the program. Overall, the USU MRC program faculty see the results of the alumni survey and semester-based course evaluations of current students as indicative of a strong rehabilitation counseling program focused on serving people with disabilities in employment settings, aspects of social inclusion, and transition from the K-12 school system into higher education and employment. As program faculty, we do our best to be responsive and attentive to feedback and will continue to seek input from our stakeholders moving forward.

#### Future Changes to the Program

- *Master’s Degree:* The program is working toward accrediting the program as a ***Clinical Rehabilitation Program***. We feel this best positions ourselves as a program to meet the needs of the State of Utah and allow our students to have the most options available to them upon graduation. Students will remain eligible for the CRC exam and traditional rehabilitation counseling practice settings and will also have greater opportunities to bring their expertise to mental health settings.
- *Doctoral Program:* The program is working toward accrediting the doctoral program as a Counselor Education and Supervision program. The program will remain under the disability disciplines program, and is noted as the Rehabilitation Counselor Education and Supervision specialization. We presently have three doctoral students and two new students enrolling in the fall 2023 semester. We anticipate submitting this self-study to CACREP in the 2023-2024 academic year.

## Data Points from the Alumni Survey

### *Type of Degree/Program*

- 70 (42.9%) graduated with a Master's Degree;
- 67 (41.1%) completed requirements to become eligible for the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor exam via the Category 3 designation;
- 11 (6.7%) graduated with a graduate certificate in Transition; and,
- 7 (4.3%) graduated with a graduate certificate in Customized Employment.

### *Membership in a Professional Association*

- 53 (32.5%) indicated they held no membership in a professional association;
- 11 (6.7%) are members of the National Rehabilitation Association;
- 8 (4.9%) are members of the American Counseling Association;
- 7 (4.3%) are member of the International Association of Rehabilitation Professionals;
- 3 (1.8%) are a member of the American Rehabilitation Counseling Association; and
- 9 (5.5%) were members of various different associations.

### *Current Practice Setting*

- 82 (50.3%) indicated current employment with a State Vocational Rehabilitation Agency;
- 10 Indicated current employment with the Veterans Administration;
- 1 (.6%) indicated current employment in a State sponsored worker's compensation program;
- 16 (9.8%) are working for a community rehabilitation program;
- 10 (6.1%) are working in community mental health settings;
- 9 (5.5%) are working in forensic/expert witness testimony settings;
- 2 (1.2%) are working in university based Disability Resource Centers;
- 3 (1.8%) are not working in a field that uses their training and education from the USU MRC program;
- 3 (1.8%) indicated they were not presently working;
- 14 (8.5%) indicated employment in other setting; and,
- 13 (8.0%) did not indicate a current employment setting.

### *Certification*

- 94 (57.7%) have obtained their CRC credential;

- 30 (20.2%) planned on obtaining their CRC credential;
- 7 (4.3%) have obtained their National Certified Counselor (NCC) credential; and,
- 5 (3.1%) have obtained their National Clinical Mental Health Counselor credential.

*Licensure*

- 44 (27.0%) have obtained licensure as a Licensed Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (LVRC);
- 19 (11.7%) are planning on obtaining their LVRC license;
- 17 (10.4%) have obtained mental health licensure (e.g., LPC, CMHC); and,
- 36 (22.1%) are planning on obtaining their mental health licensure.

*General Content Areas*

As a result of my training at USU, I understand:							
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A – Not part of their program
The History of Rehabilitation Counseling	3		1	1	58	82	4
The Philosophy of Rehabilitation Counseling	3			5	45	92	4
The Philosophy of Transition Services	2	2	3	18	53	54	14
The Philosophy of Customized Employment	2	3	6	12	53	64	9
The Role of the Rehabilitation Counselor	3			7	43	90	6
The Inherent Power Difference Between Counselor and Client	2	1	4	7	40	88	5

*Specific Abilities*

As a result of my training at USU, I am:							
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A – Not part of their program
Better Able to Advocate on Behalf of Persons with Disabilities	3		2	15	34	95	
Familiar with and adhere to Professional Codes of Ethics (e.g., CRCC and ACA)	2	1	2	6	20	42	10
Confident in my Counseling Skills	3	3	4	12	47	76	4
Confident in my Ability to Serve People with Disabilities	1	2	2	12	32	100	
Confident in my Interactions with Employers	3	6	5	19	49	66	1
Confident in my Interactions with Community Partners	3	4	4	14	36	86	2

### Knowledge Domains

My graduate training at USU enhanced my knowledge of:							
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A – Not part of their program
Ecological Assessments	5	11	4	20	50	34	20
Vocational Assessments	4	2	4	14	52	63	5
Mental Health Assessment	3	4	7	28	48	39	16
The Use of Assessment to Plan Service Provision	1	4	3	14	54	64	5
How to Talk with Employers	5	3	14	24	45	49	5
How to Serve as a Disability Support for Employers	3	4	9	17	45	64	3
Counseling Theories	1	1		8	57	67	11
Human Growth & Development	1	2	4	17	45	59	17
Career Development Theories	1	1	3	11	66	60	3
Case Conceptualization	1		2	9	49	80	3

### Skills

As a result of my training in the USU MRC program, I am better able to:							
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A – Not part of their program
Conduct Ecological Assessments	6	7	7	26	49	27	22
Conduct Vocational Assessments	4	4	8	21	52	51	5
Recognize Mental Health Concerns	2	1	4	17	49	63	9
Use a Variety of Assessments to Ensure Holistic Service Provision	2	3	5	24	52	54	4
Talk with Employers	4	2	13	24	44	54	4
Serve as a Disability Support for Employers		1	2	17	52	61	11
Apply Human Growth & Development Theories to my Clientele	1	1	5	19	53	50	16
Apply Career Development Theories		1	4	17	61	58	3
Conceptualize Cases and Identify Needs		1	3	12	49	75	3