

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

Academic Year 2022-2023

Program evaluation involves analyses of student assessment, demographics, and follow-up data. Findings are aggregated from applicants and the 15 students, including 3 graduates, enrolled in the rehabilitation counseling program during the 2022 – 2023 academic year.

# **Student Assessment**

Students demonstrated appropriate knowledge and skills across the below eight common core areas. The use of the computer lab and university libraries were critical for facilitating students to successful outcomes.

1. Professional counseling orientation and ethical practice
2. Social and cultural diversity
3. Human growth and development
4. Career development
5. Counseling and helping relationships
6. Group counseling and group work
7. Assessment and testing
8. Research and program evaluation

An assessment of students’ professional dispositions each semester was determined by faculty to reflect steady progression over time and positive individual performance across the below areas. The scale of measurement ranges from 4.00 (Exceeds Requirements) to 1.00 (Unacceptable). Group averages for each area fall within the 3.24 – 3.46 range.

* Professional ethics
* Professionalism
* Self-awareness and understanding
* Emotional stability and maturity
* Motivation to learn and grow professionally
* Cultural sensitivity and awareness
* Openness to feedback
* Professional and personal boundaries

Students are evaluated by site supervisors during their clinical experiences. On a scale of 10.00 (exceeding expectations) to 1.00 (underperforming), site supervisor evaluations of internship students averaged 9.11 with the highest scores for writing case notes and other documentation (10.00), professional onsite behaviors (9.67), maintaining confidentiality (9.33), responsibility to clients (9.33), and courtesy to fellow workers (9.33). Site supervisors noted the following in their comments:

* The student demonstrates the ability to establish rapport and relate to clients with diverse needs.
* The student has strong organizational skills.
* The student is open-minded and willing to learn and apply feedback to make improvements.
* The student is patient when interacting with others struggling with employment and personal issues.

In fall 2022, three students took the Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE). All students scored below the passing criteria (i.e., 68.8) which is one standard deviation below the national mean for this test administration (M = 83.1, SD = 14.3). These students then successfully completed remediation activities addressing specific content sections from the examination.

None of the students (n = 3) passed the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) Examination compared to the 63% national pass rate. Each student (n = 3) passed the in-house alterative comprehensive examination.

Students report a supportive faculty with emphases on opportunities for self-reflection and growth in the program. Students appreciate experiential learning with low student-to-instructor ratios. Student goals are aligned with program objectives such as to (a) successfully complete the program, (b) obtain relevant certification and license credentials, and (c) begin careers assisting persons with disabilities. Students expressed appreciation for the wide range of university resources. Specifically, students identified faculty advisers, the writing center, computer labs, and university libraries as helpful to their program success.

# **Demographics**

The following are characteristics of program applicants, students, and graduates.

Applicants (n = 11).

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Gender** | **Race/Ethnicity** | **Military Veteran** |
| 73% Female | 45% Non-White | 0% Veteran |

Students (n = 15) and Graduates (n = 3).

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Gender** | **Race/Ethnicity** | **Disability** | **Military Veteran** | **Bridge Program** | **Average Time to Degree (months)** |
| 93% Female | 53% Non-White60% Non-White or White-Hispanic | 27% Disclosed | 7% Veteran | 20% | 29 |

# **Follow-Up Data**

Recent graduates intend to work as rehabilitation counselors at non-profit organizations (67%) or are unsure (33%).

Most program alumni (n = 18) are employed (89%) at public sector (39%), for-profit sector (28), and not-for-profit (22%) agencies. Surveyed alumni are certified as rehabilitation counselors (70%) and licensed to practice (29%) in their state of residence. Alumni agree or strongly agree the program prepared them to effectively demonstrate an understanding of rehabilitation counseling concepts (94%), communication in rehabilitation counseling settings (88%), critical thinking skills (88%), clinical skills (76%), and multicultural competencies (71%).

Clinical site supervisors (n = 3) are generally satisfied with the clinical experiences. A noted area of improvement is for the program to consider more realistic timeframes to complete 600-hour internships.

Surveyed employers (n = 2) report that employees/graduates of the NIU rehabilitation counseling program are fully prepared for employment (100%). In addition, employers are satisfied with alumni competencies with communication (100%), understanding of rehabilitation counseling concepts (100%), clinical skills (100%), and multicultural counseling (100%). Employers had mixed satisfaction with alumni critical thinking competencies (50%). Employers suggest more emphasis on medical and psychological aspects of disability as well as on specific rehabilitation concepts such as SSI/SSDI, law/policy, and case/caseload management.