Rehabilitation counseling
An introduction to the profession

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Job description

- Assist people with physical, mental, developmental, cognitive, and emotional disabilities to achieve their personal, career, and independent living goals in the most integrated setting possible through the application of the counseling process.
- Specialty type of professional counselor.
- Work with teenagers – aging adults.
- Counsel individuals regarding personal problems, adjustment issues in family and community, plan careers and develop skills for employment and independent living.
Underlying values

- Belief in the dignity and worth of all people
- Emphasis on the holistic nature of human function (principles of interdisciplinary teamwork, mind-body health, considering context of family and community)
- Recognition of importance of focusing on personal assets
Education and training

- Master’s degree program in rehabilitation counseling
- 48-60 credit master’s programs
- Approximately 80 programs nationally accredited by Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE) (two in Wisconsin: Madison and Stout)
UW-Madison rehabilitation counseling program

- Tied with Michigan State as #1 program in U.S. in rehabilitation counseling according to U.S. News and World Report rankings
- Approximately 40 students (admit app. 15-20 per year)
- Students can start program fall, spring or summer; primary application reviews in November and March
- Full summer school program shortens program length
- Small class sizes (usually 15-20)
- In addition to required coursework, each student completes two 12 hour per week practica experiences and one 600 hour internship
Curriculum focus for specialized knowledge and skills

- medical and psychosocial aspects of disability
- assessment skills including psychological testing
- career development, job analysis and job placement
- counseling techniques and theories for individuals and groups
- case management skills
- consultation about and facilitation of rehabilitation technology use and appropriate accommodations
- research and writing skills
Master’s degree course requirements that can be completed at the undergraduate degree level

- Abnormal psychology
- Developmental or personality psychology
- Statistics
Certification

- Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC)
- National certification
- Meet educational requirements, pass an examination
- Maintain certification by completing 100 hours of acceptable continuing education credit every 5 years
- CRCC has certified nearly 40,000 rehabilitation counselors since 1974
Licensure

- Wisconsin Department Regulation and Licensing
  - Marriage and Family Therapy, Professional Counseling, and Social Work Examining Board - Joint Board

- Individuals who wish to practice professional counseling or who wish to use the title "professional counselor" must be licensed as a professional counselor or hold a temporary license or professional counselor training certificate, pursuant to s. 457.04(6) and s. 457.13 of the Wisconsin Statutes. Professional counseling means applying a combination of human development, rehabilitation and either psychosocial or psychotherapeutic principles, procedures or services that integrate a wellness, pathology and multicultural model of human behavior in order to assist an individual, couple, family, group of individuals, organization, institution or community to achieve mental, emotional, physical, social, moral, educational, spiritual, vocational or career development and adjustment through the life span of the individual, couple, family, group of individuals, organization, institution or community.
Employment options

- State or federal rehabilitation agencies
- Veteran’s administration programs
- Community mental health programs
- Hospital rehabilitation centers (psychiatric or physical disabilities)
- Private practice consultation in legal cases
- Disability management consultation with insurance providers (e.g., worker’s compensation programs)
- Correctional facilities
- College programs for students with disabilities
- Substance abuse rehabilitation programs
- School to work transition
- Programs for injured workers
- Employee assistance programs
- Life care planning
- Independent living centers
Employment outlook

- Employment 2006 = 141,000
- Projected Employment 2016 = 173,000
- 32,000 increase (= 23% increase, much faster than average growth)
- Expected to grow as advances in medical technology allow more people to survive injury or illness and live independently.
- Other related employment options as substance abuse counselors (employment growth 21%) mental health counselors (employment growth 30%)
Salaries

- Depends on geographic location, employer (govt. or private) and work setting

- WI Division of Vocational Rehabilitation counselor in training $37,800. (initial)
  licensed professional counselor $40,800. (initial)

Dept. of Veteran’s Affairs $45,000. (initial)