

# COUNSELOR EDUCATION: REHABILITATION COUNSELING, MA

The Masters of Arts Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling is designed to prepare rehabilitation counselors to serve persons with disabilities in a variety of work settings. The rehabilitation counseling program is a 60 hour credit program and is fully accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling & Related Educational Programs (CACREP). The curriculum provides both didactic and experiential learning opportunities and culminates in a 600 hour internship.

Professional rehabilitation counselors encourage and provide support to persons with disabilities and their families by helping them meet their personal, social, vocational, psychological and wider quality of life goals. The program focuses on the provision of individual and group counseling, vocational assessment, case management, advocacy, assistive technology, and consultation services. The mission of the Rehabilitation Counselor Education (RCE) distance-based program is to produce professional rehabilitation counselors who will provide quality rehabilitation counseling services for persons with disabilities and their families.

## Admissions

In addition to the minimum Graduate School admission requirements, admission decisions are made based on submitted application materials. The following materials are required for the application to be considered complete:

- CV/Resume
- A Statement of Purpose. In the Statement of Purpose, applicants should discuss:
  - Your interest in pursuing an MA degree in Rehabilitation Counseling and your related career goals.
  - Your aptitude (e.g., skills, traits, and/or previous experiences) for graduate-level study in a digitally delivered program (see Statement on Digital Delivery).
  - Your approach to working with diverse populations and respect for cultural differences.
- Three letters of recommendation consistent with goals of the program from individuals who can attest to your potential for success in graduate school (e.g., former professors, supervisors).
- Official transcripts from all college-level coursework and degree programs.

The application deadlines for admission to each academic semester are as follows:

- Fall admission – February 15th
- Spring admission – October 15th
- Summer admission – February 15th

Applicants can expect a response to their application materials within one month after the deadline.

Faculty reserve the right to revisit the application pool after final decisions in the event spots remain available, although applicants who submit their materials after the deadline should expect their applications to be denied admission or requested to be reviewed in the subsequent review period.

Admission decisions are made based on application materials submitted, cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.0, and applicant interview with the admission committee. After reviewing application packets, interviews between selected applicants and the admission

committee may be scheduled. The Admission Committee is comprised of corresponding program faculty members. Dates and times of interviews will be determined and communicated to potential candidates by program faculty. Interviews are typically group-based in which multiple applicants will be interviewed at the same time.

While Graduate Record Exam (GRE) or Miller Analogies Test (MAT) scores are not required for admission, an applicant with a GPA below 3.0 but with a score of 300 or higher (verbal and quantitative combined) on the GRE or a score in the 50th percentile or higher on the MAT may submit their scores to be considered for Admission with Permission to Continue.

Applicants may be eligible to be considered for Admission with Permission to Continue if they do not fully meet the requirements for regular admission. Applicants who do not meet at least one criterion for Admission will not be considered. A decision to admit an applicant with Permission to Continue will be based upon several factors including the combination of the GPA and admission test scores (if provided), the applicant's goals, and previous work experience.

Please understand that delays in processing applications are both necessary and inevitable. In this way, we can ensure adequate provision of faculty and program resources for students admitted to the Rehabilitation Counseling program.

See the Admission Criteria section of this catalog for more information.

## Curricular Requirements

The Rehabilitation Counselor Education program is an online program. Similar to all Counselor Education Master's degree programs, RCE students have a planned program of study. Once an academic advisor has been assigned for your program of study, you should make an appointment to discuss your preferences and career aspirations. Some rehabilitation courses are offered as synchronous courses and will require weekly participation via live virtual classroom. The Rehabilitation Counseling program is 60 credit hours and meets accreditation criteria put forward by Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). All students in the Rehabilitation Counseling program are required to purchase/register a Watermark™ Student Learning & Licensure account for student assessment purposes.

While the majority of your courses will be offered through the Counselor Education programs (designated as BCE), many required courses will be offered by affiliated programs. During your academic career, you will likely enroll for courses in Educational Psychology (designated as BEP), Educational Research (designated as BER), School Psychology (designated as BSP), and other areas. These courses afford the opportunity to take advantage of the expertise of faculty in other programs in the College of Education.

Code and Title		Hours
Required Courses *		
BCE 512	Counseling Theory Proc	3
BCE 513	Career Development	3
BCE 514	Counseling Skills	3
BCE 517	Professional Counseling	3
BCE 521	Group Proced Coun Educ	3
BCE 522	Indiv & Group Appraisal	3
BCE 533	Special Topics (With title Work and Disability)	3
BCE 540	Orientation to Rehab. Counsel.	3

BCE 542	Med Aspects	3
BCE 545	Case Man., Voc. Rehab & Placem	3
BCE 611	Multicult. Approach Counseling	3
BCE 613	Substance Abuse Counseling	3
BEP 550	Life Span Development	3
BER 500	Intro Educatn Research	3
BER 540	Statistical Methods In Educ	3
BSP 660	Psychopathology	3
Elective Course (in consultation with advisor)		3
BCE 546	Pract Rehab Counseling	3
BCE 547	Intern Rehab Counseling	6
<b>Total Hours</b>		<b>60</b>

#### Footnotes

\* Students must earn a B or higher in prerequisite courses to advance to higher level coursework.

## Transfer Credit

Graduate School information on Transfer Credit.

## Comprehensive Exam

The policy of the Graduate School is that a comprehensive examination or summary project must be completed by all students seeking to graduate from any University of Alabama graduate program. The content and scheduling of the master's comprehensive examination in Counselor Education is consistent with this expectation. Per Graduate School policies, students have two (2) opportunities for successful performance on the comprehensive examination established for their program/department.

Eligibility for the initial attempt to secure a passing score on the master's comprehensive examination in Counselor Education is granted in the last semester in which students are completing their master's degree. The examination must be given at least two weeks before the date of graduation and reported promptly to the dean of the Graduate School on appropriate forms. The second attempt can be scheduled as early as in the following semester or a semester other than the first administration. Students need to register for at least 1 credit-hour for taking the second attempt. The Graduate School policy limits students to two (2) attempts for successful performance on the comprehensive examination. Failure on both attempts will lead to the student's dismissal from the program.

### Objective Section

The objective portion of the comprehensive examination consists of 200 multiple-choice items. Questions are taken from courses required for the degree. This includes questions from the research and the Life Span Development courses. Students must achieve a score of 70% (140) or higher on the objective section in order to pass this section.

Typically, students are provided three hours to complete the objective section of the master's comprehensive examination. Dates and times for the objective examination are posted on the Rehabilitation Counseling webpage at the beginning of each academic year. In the event that a student requires an accommodation beyond the typical examination conditions, the student should contact the Office of Disability Services and request approval for exam accommodations (no less than two [2] working weeks before the examination). Once approved, an ODS staff member will inform the designated faculty about the required test accommodation. Students are encouraged to be familiar with regulations affecting comprehensive examinations published in the University of

Alabama Graduate Catalog on their website or contact the Graduate School for further information.

#### Content areas for objective portion of comprehensive exam:

##### Foundations (Content Areas)

- Counseling Theorists and their Theories
- Counseling Skills and the Helping Relationship
- Group Work
- Career Theorists and their Theories
- Career Development Process and Career
- Counseling Research Designs and Methods
- Individual and Group Appraisal
- Life Span Development

##### Program Emphasis-Rehabilitation Counseling (Content Areas)

- Societal Attitudes and Disability
- Models of Disability
- Legislative History of Rehabilitation
- Counseling Policies and Laws Affecting Persons with Disabilities
- Roles and Functions of Rehabilitation Counselors
- The Vocational Rehabilitation Process
- Principles of Case Management
- Assessment in Vocational Rehabilitation
- Medical and Psychological Evaluations
- Job Development and Placement
- Resources for Occupational and Labor Market Information
- Job Analysis, Job Modification and Reasonable Accommodations
- Federal Employment Incentives
- Supported Employment
- Work Adjustment
- Assistive Technology
- Independent Living Advocacy
- Rehabilitation Ethics and Ethical Decision Making
- Medical Aspects and Psychological Aspects of Disability
- Health and Wellness
- Adjustment to Disability
- Multicultural Issues and Disability
- Disability Management
- Private-for-Profit Rehabilitation

Graduate School information Comprehensive Exams.

## Fieldwork/Practicum/Internship Requirements

While the skills necessary to performing classroom, settings are fundamental to the educational process, a significant element of the training program or any degree sought in the Program in Counselor Education is the applied experiences. In many ways, the activities associated in typical classroom work such as examinations, presentations, research papers, and special projects are the building blocks for the work a counselor does in the field: serving their clients! The curriculum in your program features a variety of practical, applied requirements. These are typically noted as "practicum" or "internship" on your Program Planning Records. As was noted previously, the academic advising process is critical in the sequence of your applied experiences

in that the general rule is "practicum precedes internships" and deviation from that sequence is not allowed. Again, your academic advisor is quite aware of this principle and will assist in your course selection from the annual academic schedule to insure both efficient and effective progress in your preparatory program.

### A. Practicum

As an initial experience in applied work, students typically engage in closely supervised work with clients in courses noted as "practicum." For rehabilitation counseling students, BCE 546 typically involves 1.5 hours of weekly group supervision and one hour of weekly individual supervision with client contact throughout. University supervision for rehabilitation counseling students is provided via Zoom online video conference.

Since practicum is a prerequisite to internship and features expectations for certain skills levels, students may not be allowed to proceed to the next course in their applied experiences. Such a decision reflects the fundamental commitment of our program to quality service to clients, a position we advocate and we expect all affiliated with our program to advocate. Practicum placements are typically arranged prior to the semester in which the student anticipates enrolling for course credit. Pre-placement arrangements should be discussed and approved by the faculty listed in the University Schedule for the section of the practicum in which the student is enrolled.

**Documentation.** Students are responsible for retaining cumulative documentation of all practicum activities. The program requires completion of a supervised practicum in the student's designated program area of 100 clock hours. Each student's practicum includes all of the following:

#### Required CACREP 2016 Standards for Practicum Students:

- Students complete supervised counseling practicum experiences that total a minimum of 100 clock hours over a full academic term that is a minimum of 10 weeks.
- Practicum students complete at least 40 clock hours of direct service with actual clients that contributes to the development of counseling skills.
- Practicum students have weekly interaction with supervisors that averages one hour per week of individual and/or triadic supervision throughout the practicum by (1) a counselor education program faculty member, (2) a student supervisor who is under the supervision of a counselor education program faculty member, or (3) a site supervisor who is working in consultation on a regular schedule with a counselor education program faculty member in accordance with the supervision agreement.
- Practicum students participate in an average of 1½ hours per week of group supervision on a regular schedule throughout the practicum. Group supervision must be provided by a counselor education program faculty member or a student supervisor who is under the supervision of a counselor education program faculty member."

### B. Internship

The internship is considered to be the culminating academic experience and, consequently, occurs at the end of a student's training program. Expectations for internships are rather demanding in terms of placement duties and hours of commitment. Essentially, students completing the internship have the option of either one full-time placement (40 hours per week for 6 hours of credit for Rehabilitation Counseling) or two (2) consecutive half-time placements (20 hours per week for 3 hours of credit per semester for Rehabilitation Counseling). Student interns perform the duties of a counselor in a setting in which the student aspires to work

upon graduation. Students employed in full-time work should anticipate meeting this challenge. The culminating internship experience must feature at least 600 hours of internship-related activity in the placement, of which at least 240 hours are in direct contact with clients. As with practicum, internship placements are prearranged during the semester prior to enrollments. For rehabilitation counseling students, Zoom online video conference is provided weekly for the supervision purpose.

**Prearranged Placement.** Internship placements are to be approved by the University Supervisor of Internships prior to the beginning of the semester/term for which the intern is enrolled for internship credit. To assist in making the internship experience as meaningful as possible, students are responsible for making preliminary contacts with prospective internship site placements (this activity is very much like a job interview, a procedure we ALL hope you will undertake in the future!). Prospective interns are encouraged to develop their vita and arrange to interview with a prospective site supervisor (a copy of your Program Planning Record may be helpful for students to discuss their academic experiences).

**Internship responsibilities and duties.** Basic Student Responsibilities: (a) Complete work at internship site as specified in Internship Agreement, (b) Participate in weekly individual site supervision, (c) Participate in weekly university group supervision, and (d) Complete and submit all required forms including weekly progress reviews/summaries/time log, mid-internship self-evaluation, and final self-evaluation. *Basic Agency Responsibilities:* (a) Assign a site supervisor who meets minimum education and experience requirements, (b) Provide intern with an orientation to the agency, (c) Provide an average of one hour of weekly individual supervision, (d) Expose intern to the range of services provided by the agency, (e) Provide intern with opportunities to perform multiple functions in the agency, depending on the focus of the agency, (f) Communicate at least three times with the university supervisor for progress review, (g) Complete a mid-internship evaluation of the student and (h) Complete a final evaluation of the student. *Basic University Supervisor Responsibilities:* (a) Maintain direct and periodic communication (at least 3 times a semester) with the site supervisor, (b) Provide one hour of weekly individual supervision or 1½ hours of group supervision, (c) Be available for consultation with both site supervisor and intern, and (d) Assign a final grade for the internship.

Orientation, assistance, consultation, and professional development opportunities are provided by the counseling program faculty to site supervisors. All internship forms and supervision training are electronically provided to site supervisors.

**Documentation.** Interns are responsible for retaining cumulative documentation of all internship activities. The program requires completion of a supervised internship in the student's designated program area of 600 clock hours, begun after successful completion of the practicum. The internship is intended to reflect the comprehensive work experience of a professional counselor appropriate to the designated program area. Each student's internship includes all of the following:

#### Required CACREP 2016 Standards for Interns:

- After successful completion of the practicum, students complete 600 clock hours of supervised counseling internship in roles and settings with clients relevant to their specialty area.
- Internship students complete at least 240 clock hours of direct service.
- Internship students have weekly interaction with supervisors that averages one hour per week of individual and/or triadic supervision throughout the internship, provided by (1) the site supervisor, (2)

counselor education program faculty, or (3) a student supervisor who is under the supervision of a counselor education program faculty member.

- Internship students participate in an average of 1 ½ hours per week of group supervision on a regular schedule throughout the internship. Group supervision must be provided by a counselor education program faculty member or a student supervisor who is under the supervision of a counselor education program faculty member.”

**Internship Evaluation.** Evaluations of internships are secured from two (2) sources at the conclusion of the internship placement. The first source of evaluation is derived from the site supervisor using the Internship Performance Evaluation rubric. The second source of evaluation is derived from the student. These evaluations, along with the Summary of Internship Activities, are due to the university supervisor as noted on the schedule for internship. Site supervisor evaluations offer formal ratings of performance and a recommended grade based on the Internship Performance Evaluation rubric.

**Site Supervisors Requirements for Practicum and Internship:**

Prospective site supervisors must meet the following CACREP and program criteria:

1. A minimum of a master’s degree in counseling or related profession with equivalent qualifications, including appropriate certifications and/or licenses.
2. A minimum of two (2) years of pertinent professional experience in the program area in which the student is enrolled.
3. Knowledge of the program’s expectations, requirements, and evaluation procedures for students (faculty will provide additional information if necessary).
4. Relevant training in counseling supervision.

The Procedure for completing a prearranged practicum or internship is:

1. Prospective intern interviews with prospective site supervisor.
2. Prospective intern discusses placement opportunity with university supervisor.
3. Prospective intern discusses placement opportunity with prospective site supervisor.
4. If an unapproved site, university supervisor visits site to determine placement suitability based on prospective intern’s training and aspirations as well as the program
5. If approved, UA supervisor informs both site supervisor and intern of approval.

**Student Insurance.** Prior to 8/18/20, students are enrolled for UA liability insurance through registration for any practicum or internship in Counselor Education per policy of the Office of Risk Management. Students must complete the liability form each term and return the form to BCE instructor for course. Beginning from 8/19/2020, all students who plan to start practicum or internship for counseling/supervision practices are responsible to purchase individual liability insurance for professional counseling at their own expense and submit a copy of insurance verification to the Practicum/Internship Coordinator prior to their practice.

## Time Limit for Degree Completion

Graduate School information on Time Limits.

## Student Progress Requirements

Each student enrolled in a degree-seeking status in every degree level of study in Counselor Education is involved in a Student Performance

review near the end of Fall and Spring semesters. The rubric used is the Faculty Review of Student Performance and Review of Student Dispositions. The faculty review professional and personal strengths and concerns, while monitoring progress. This form entails five sections: academic skills, clinical skills, ethical and professional behaviors, personal characteristics, and the four professional dispositions, endorsed by the College of Education are also included.

Within each section, faculty members will discuss their observed student performance or individual characteristics/dispositions over various indicators and rate a student on a four-point scale: advanced, target, developing, and unacceptable. If dispositions do not meet the minimum standard of “Target,” a concern for remediation plan is raised. Student data on their dispositions are also aggregated to help faculty members annually evaluate program objectives for the purpose of program improvement.

Based on this evaluation, students will receive one of the following based on rubric scores: (1) A letter stating exemplary progress in the program, (2) Communication that there were no concerns related to progress in the program, (3) Communication to meet advisor because of a provisional recommendation, and (4) An action plan is required (Remediation). Such reviews are regular components of the training program. Student reviews are conducted with the participation of all Program faculty. Results of student evaluations are entered into each student’s record and discussed with the student and their advisor.

In instances of concern about a student, pertinent materials and observations about the student are examined and discussed among the faculty and remedial decisions are determined according to the Selection, Review, Retention, and Dismissal Policy noted in the appendices of the Student Handbook. Due process issues affecting student evaluations are followed in accordance with all published guidelines in materials from the Graduate Catalog and University of Alabama Faculty Handbook.

## Academic Misconduct Information

Graduate School information on Academic Misconduct.

## Withdrawals and Leave of Absence Information

Graduate School information on Withdrawals and Leave of Absence.

## Academic Grievances Information

Graduate School information on Academic Grievances.

## Grades and Academic Standing

Graduate School information on Grades and Academic Standing.

## Graduate School Deadlines

Information on Graduate School Deadlines.

## Application for Graduation

Information on the Application for Graduation.