Montana State University Billings
Master of Science in Clinical Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling
Program Outcomes Report
(2020-2021)

This program assessment report summarizes all collected and analyzed data for the purposes of informing program improvement. Our program relies on the 2016 CACREP Standards to meet the requirements of CACREP. The program has incorporated the CACREP eight core areas (e.g., Professional Counseling Orientation and Professional Practice, Social and Cultural Diversity, Human Growth and Development, Career Development, Helping Relationships, Group Work, Assessment and Testing, and Research and Program Evaluation) into the curriculum into all syllabi.

Program Mission: The mission of the Department of Rehabilitation and Human Services is to provide professional preparation of master’s level students with the knowledge and skills to improve the quality of life for individuals with disabilities. This mission is achieved through various instructional, clinical, and other programmatic activities.

Program Objectives: The Master of Science in Clinical Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling (MSCRMHC) program seeks to prepare counselors who:

- Understand and practice core rehabilitation and mental health counseling roles, stay current in the profession, and are life-long learners in counseling practice and scholarly activity.
- Recognize the importance of continued personal growth and exploration of self as well as personal biases and assumptions that interfere with professional competence;
- Are exposed to the broad spectrum of counseling theory and human development as applied to clients of diverse social and racial backgrounds;
- Facilitate client lifelong career development through assessment, educational planning, and cutting-edge technology;
- Understand and apply counseling and consultation processes necessary to assist individuals, groups, and families, utilizing the ethics codes and ethical behaviors applicable to their professional identities and credentials;
- An ability to understand and use group and family theories and methods to address systemic and ecological factors that affect the lives of those with whom they work;
- Choose counseling assessment instruments based on their appropriateness and efficacy, being especially aware of racial and ethno cultural implications, while understanding the process, benefits, and limits of diagnosis and treatment planning;
- Recognize the importance of seeking consultation and/or supervision from the professional community and of belonging to and participating in professional counseling organizations at the local, state, regional, and national levels; and
- Utilize effective, and when possible, empirically supported means of assisting clients in their growth and development, striving toward accountability through data collection and analysis.
**Program Evaluation:** In accordance with CACREP standards, the program is dedicated to the process of continuous and systematic program evaluation. The program evaluation is conducted annually at three levels:

I. Evaluation of program objectives;
II. Evaluation of educational objectives;
III. Evaluation of institutional support.

### I. Evaluation of Program Objectives

**Appropriateness of program mission and objectives review activities**

Annual review of program mission and objectives.

**Semester/Year Evaluated:** AY 2020-2021

**Evaluation Task/Activity and Course(s):** A combination of internal and external reviews, based on:
- Student course evaluations
- CACREP standards
- Faculty/site supervisor evaluations
- Alumni surveys
- Faculty reviews

**Results of Evaluation:** Program mission and objectives were reviewed and found to be appropriate.

**Knowledge/skills/abilities/areas/topics/situations to improve:** No changes recommended.

**Recommendations for change of program mission and objectives:** No changes recommended.

**Recommendations for change to evaluation process:** No changes recommended.

### II. Evaluation of Educational Objectives

**Content and design of the curriculum**

Review of program curriculum to assess fidelity to program objectives.

**Semester/Year Evaluated:** AY 2020-2021

**Evaluation Task/Activity and Course(s):** Program syllabi

**Results of Evaluation:** Syllabi were reviewed and found to include the following areas of information:
- Course/unit objectives;
• Content areas;
• Texts or required readings;
• Student evaluation criteria; and
• Information on reasonable accommodation process.

Knowledge/skills/abilities/areas/topics/situations to improve: The 2017-2018 Program Outcome Report identified the need to develop rubrics and assessment procedures of student learning and performance outcomes (SLPO) for CACREP common core curriculum. We created a Benchmarks and Portfolio based assignments which began with the fall 2019 semester. We are adapting the student evaluation process to effectively meet student needs. We anticipate our student’s evaluation process changing to utilize the tools Tevera has to offer. Faculty will provide periodic behavioral assessments of students, to determine their development through the course of the program. This remains an ongoing process of evaluation for the program which continues to evaluate the most effective method to collect student assessment information to ensure standards are met. Tevera provides a platform for the faculty to engage in routine student evaluation based on their behavioral dispositions.

• A series of three clinical benchmarks has been designated to review times of clinical skill. Each student is required to successfully complete REHA 590 Pre-practicum, REHA 594 Practicum and REHA 596 Internship to graduate from the program.

• All courses have a portfolio-based assignment. The highlighted courses will be identified as priorities in alignment with CACREP’s identified essential learning outcomes. In the spring semester of each year students will be required to meet with their advisor and provide an overview of each class, lessons learned and opportunities for growth, utilizing the Tevera reviews to determine behavioral growth and fit. These are the courses requiring essential learning outcomes as required by CACREP (*Denotes CACREP essential learning outcome required reporting):

REHA 501 Principles of Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling
REHA 502 Individual and Family Response to Disability
REHA 503 Psychiatric Rehabilitation
*REHA 505 Theories of Counseling
*REHA 507 Professional Orientation and Ethical Practice
*REHA 508 Multicultural/Gender Issues in Counseling
REHA 515 Medical and Psychological Aspects of Disability
*REHA 517 Research and Program Evaluation
*REHA 519 Human Growth and Development
*REHA 520 Group and Individual Evaluation
REHA 521 Advanced Group Counseling
*REHA 523 Advanced Group Counseling
*REHA 525 Career Development, Placement and Support
REHA 560 DSM-5 for Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counselors

Recommendations for change to program or curriculum: No changes recommended.
Recommendations for change to evaluation process: Department will be incorporating behavioral assessment tools provided by Tevera to determine student progress through the program.

**Practicum and internship requirements and supervision**

Provide opportunities for students to develop knowledge and skills necessary to provide counseling and related services to diverse populations.

**Semester/Year Evaluated:** AY 2020-2021

**Evaluation Task/Activity and Course(s):** Fieldwork experience in REHA 594 Counseling Practicum and REHA 596 Cooperative Education/Internship.

**Results of Evaluation:** Surveys were sent to Practicum supervisors for them to evaluate the student they were supervising. Questions were ranked on a 5-point Likert Scale. Twenty supervisors responded (n=20). Highlights of this survey were student’s flexibility (4.9) their reliability and dependability (4.79) and their ability to demonstrate appropriate interest in their clients (4.65). Students were evaluated as quick learners (4.6) and their problem-solving abilities were highly valued (4.58).

There were consistent rankings where students demonstrated warmth during client contacts, convey self-confidence in establishing relationship, respect and follow program procedures, they sought and consider the professional opinion of their supervisor, demonstrate problem solving and they demonstrated enthusiasm in their work (4.5). These positive evaluations reflected student’s overall performance (4.5) and their potential as a clinical counselor (4.55). Students were positively rated for demonstrating genuine respect for clients and their readiness for employment (4.45) and they presented in a professional manner (4.44). Supervisors indicated that students could accept constructive criticism and that they understood content issues during supervision (4.39) and were able to recognize their own weaknesses (4.35).

Students demonstrated accepted standards of ethical conduct within their practicum sites (4.37). Students were shown as being capable of developing counseling relationships (4.35) and identified as working well with other professional personnel and able to make appropriate use of program resources (4.25). They were able to present well in staffing and team meetings (4.2). Student’s report writing skills were positively evaluated (4.17). Students were capable of evaluating and conceptualizing client’s problems well (4.16) And can give advice in sessions, while being sensitive to the impact of self in counseling relationships (4.1). Students were aware of both content and feeling in sessions and thoughts and feelings clearly in sessions (4.05). Regarding professional attributes, students were aware strategies of independent living (4.18) of community resources (4.11) and the rehabilitation process and system (3.94). They had sufficient awareness federal, state, and local counseling related laws (3.95) and of fundamental counseling principles and skills (3.8). Students were able to use and interpret assessment data (3.94) and interpret client background data (3.9).

Surveys were sent to Internship Supervisors requesting their evaluation of the student skills and abilities they were supervising. Questions were ranked on a 5-point Likert Scale. Twenty-three
Supervisors responded (n=23). Interns demonstrated potential as clinical counselors and demonstrated readiness for employment (4.86) and their overall performance was positively reviewed (4.82). They were able to keep appointments and complete assignments (4.83). Supervisors indicated that they were reliable and dependable, acted in a mature manner and were able to demonstrate resourcefulness (4.82). Interns understood the accepted standards of ethical conduct and federal, state and local counseling related laws (4.82). They were able to make appropriate use of program resources (4.65).

Supervisors indicated that their interns were able to develop counseling relationships (4.83). Interns present in a professional manner during supervision (4.78). They recognized their own strengths (4.55) and weaknesses (4.68). They were able to respect and follow program procedures and present well in staffing/team meetings (4.7). Interns had strong personal qualities, they were able to learn quickly, demonstrate flexibility, problem solving skills and qualities of leadership (4.77). They were enthusiastic (4.73). Interns were able to demonstrate genuine respect for clients (4.7) and convey self-confidence in establishing relationships (4.73).

Interns were able to evaluate and conceptualize client’s problems well (4.73) and seek and consider the professional opinion of their supervisor when necessary (4.74). They were able to understand content issues during supervision (4.74) and accept constructive criticism (4.65). Interns were sensitive to the impact of self in counseling relationships (4.66) and were relaxed in their counseling sessions (4.62). Interns did not lecture, moralize, or give advice in sessions (4.68) and were able to express thoughts and feelings clearly in sessions (4.64). They possessed emotional stability and were able to demonstrate imagination (4.68). Interns were able to use and interpret client background data (4.57) and use and interpret assessment data (4.52). They were able to demonstrate appropriate interest in clients and relate to human diversity (4.57). Interns presented well in intake interviews (4.45) and prepare written products and reports well (4.47).

There was consistency of interns understanding and applying the fundamental counseling principles and skills (4.43). They were aware of community resources and familiar with the rehabilitation process and system (4.36). Interns understood strategies of Independent Living (4.24) and the medical aspects of rehabilitation (4.23) and funding programs and systems (4.19).

Comparing the data between the practicum and internship supervisor’s responses as outlined in the following graph, evaluating at clinical skills of the students. Students develop and refine their abilities as they progress from practicum to internship, as expected:
Knowledge/skills/abilities/areas/topics/situations to improve: No changes recommended.

Recommendations for change to program or curriculum: No changes recommended.

Recommendations for change to evaluation process: No changes recommended.

Student learning review activities

Evaluate effectiveness of curriculum delivery through multiple sources relevant to students’ integration of counseling theory, research, and practice into clinical setting.

Semester/Year Evaluated: AY 2020-2021

Evaluation Task/Activity and Course(s): Clinical experience in REHA 594 and 596 in addition to review of student transcripts and student/supervisor ratings as noted above.
Results of Evaluation: Results from the faculty generated clinical counseling performance evaluations reflect students consistently meet program level criteria with respect to integration of counseling skills and abilities, professional responsibility, competence, maturity, and integrity into the clinical setting.

Knowledge/skills/abilities/areas/topics/situations to improve: No changes recommended.

Recommendations for change to program or curriculum: No changes recommended.

Recommendations for change to evaluation process: No changes recommended.

Graduate employment and professional credentialing

Evaluate student preparedness, employee competence and satisfaction.

Semester/Year Evaluated: AY 2020-2021

Evaluation Task/Activity and Course(s): Surveys are sent out on a rotational annual basis to three groups of stakeholders: program graduates, practicum/internship site supervisors, and employers. This year, surveys were sent to the program graduates, respondents were asked to indicate on four-point Likert scale their levels of satisfaction (4 indicating “very satisfied” and 1 indicating “very dissatisfied”, N/A indicates does not apply) with the program areas being evaluated. The forms also included a section to provide impressions of the major strengths and weaknesses of the program. Surveys were also sent to practicum and internship site supervisors the details of which are outlined in the Practicum and Internship section of this report.

Results of Alumni Evaluations:

Although there were eleven respondents to the survey, only nine alumni completed the data-oriented portion. Overall, the graduate alumni surveys (n=9) ratings were high (2.89-3.78). Due to a lower number of respondents, the data was skewed by one respondent who consistently scored the queries negatively.

For alumni who completed the practicum and internships, the quality of site supervision was highlighted with the highest ranking at (3.78) followed by the procedures used to deal with problems on site (3.63). Students also appreciated the quality of faculty supervision (3.44) and quality of feedback on performance (3.33).

The scope and content of the courses was ranked high at (3.44). Alumni indicated overall satisfaction with the courses ranked at (3.22). Curriculum highlighted were Professional Identity and Ethics (3.44) and Medical and Psychosocial Aspects of Disability (3.33). Student positively ranked the development of Client Advocacy (3.22). Respondents positively ranked Individual Counseling Skills, Assessment and Diagnostic Skills, Career Counseling Skills, Case Management Skills and Human Growth and Development at (3.00). Group Counseling Skills and Research and Evaluation skills were ranked at (2.89).
Alumni ranked the quality of advising as consistent (3.22) and the availability of advising (3.11) as sufficient. Accessibility of practicum and internship requirements and application process as well as the helpfulness of descriptive materials of the program (Student Handbook, Fieldwork Manual and Counseling Clinic Manual) were consistently ranked (3.11). The department continues to evaluate the guidance offered by faculty to alumni regarding career guidance (3.11).

Open-ended feedback revealed that students felt that the program provided them with good foundational skills from which to build their skills, and that their overall experience in the program was a positive one.

Clinical skills and development were identified as an area of concern. Given the increased number of out of state students, the program needs to evaluate how to develop students’ clinical skills in the classroom environment, synchronous and asynchronous instruction has been expanded and there are increased opportunities for students to interact with faculty in a variety of capacities. Currently, Hyflex instruction will be offered for some courses to help address these issues.

**Knowledge/skills/abilities/areas/topics/situations to improve:** Evaluate and address the development of clinical training skills for students.

**Recommendations for change to program or curriculum:** Procedures used to deal with problems. The program needs to identify transparent processes for the program to be able to address procedural and student concerns and create guidance which will be incorporated into program guidance materials.

**Recommendations for change to evaluation process:** Continue to attempt to increase the number of responses to surveys completed by program stakeholders (graduates, site supervisors, and employers) by using an electronic method of survey delivery.

**Efforts to recruit and retain students with an emphasis on diversity.**

The CACREP liaison and the chair periodically, throughout the year, review recruitment and retention activities based on data provided by the Office of Graduate Studies. Recruitment materials are made available to students in various accessible, web-based and print formats. Prospective students are assessed about their academic performance and potential, personal characteristics, and career goals.

In the academic year 2020-2021 there were 25 graduates from the Clinical Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling program. The average time to complete the program is three years. On time program completion rate for AY 2020-2021 was 85%. 90% of the graduates had obtained employment on or before graduation. The program has an open enrollment policy, admitting 30 students in the AY 2020-2021. The program curriculum meets the academic preparation requirements for licensure (LCPC) in Montana and (CRC) and (NCC) nationally. Data regarding the NCE and CRC examinations is not available for 2020-2021; however, based on self-report, our graduates are very successful at obtaining licensure. Students are eligible to receive scholarships and financial aid funding from the University. The program also works closely with
Disability Support Services to assist students who qualify for the provision of reasonable accommodations so they may more fully participate in all aspects of their program.

**III. Evaluation of Institutional Support**

**Resources to carry out program mission.**

The program continues to be well recognized and supported by members of the University administration. Given the current budgetary constraints and limitations the University is still able to provide adequate resources for the program to meet its instructional responsibilities. Faculty members are given individual offices that allow for sufficient privacy for confidentiality. The program utilizes a counseling clinic in the College of Education building for practicum and internship courses that is soundproof and equipped to videotape counseling sessions. The University works toward ensuring that the campus, its classrooms and facilities, websites, materials, media, etc. follow state and federal laws to be accessible and usable by individuals with disabilities. The technology needs of the program are met by the University IT services. While support staff is shared with the Health Care Services department, the program has also been able to have a graduate assistant each semester. The program maintains a recommended ratio of FTE students to FTE faculty (12:1). The program has four full-time, tenure-track faculty who teach the CACREP based curriculum, a fifth faculty member will be added in the Fall of 2021. The program has been able to maintain the individual supervision equivalency (6:1) for students in fieldwork placements.

**Faculty strengths and experience**

Program faculty continue to show a record of excellence in teaching and service as evidenced in student evaluations and comments, peer reviews, mentoring and advising activities, committee involvement, workshop/conference presentations.

Scholarship activities conducted by faculty, during the past year included a presentation addressing Technology Use and Ethical Boundaries presented to the Wisconsin Chapter of the International Association of Rehabilitation Professionals. A presentation of the Evolution of the life care planning organization: History and current challenges, at the annual conference of the International Association of Rehabilitation Professionals. Another addressed Hearsay challenges in life care planning provided to the Annual Symposium of the International Academy of Life Care Planning.

Incorporating the Principles of Universal Design in online teaching was provided at the Northwest E-Learning Community conference. Two presentations were given on Enrollment and Retention of Native American Students in Montana, to the American Indian and Minority Achievement Council and the OCHE scholarship fellow committee, respectively. And there was engagement in Strategic Planning, an invitation from the Mayor of Billings to facilitate an empirically based process.
Locally there were presentations on Ethics and Boundaries provided to the State of Montana Vocational Rehabilitation Agency, Navigating the Accommodation Process at Work with an Invisible Disability: Title I of the ADA provided for Disability Rights Montana.

Faculty have engaged in research that includes reviewing data for an article to submit on a joint research project that explores the Self-Directed Search assessment and its effect on retention of freshmen who had not declared a major. Also, research titled: Pedagogical Technologies for Remote Learning in Counselor Education: Hyflex Course Design (ongoing). Research also includes a review of the Outcome Data of North Dakota Supported Employment Program. This project whose objectives are to raise awareness among college athletes of their own attitudes; to provide them with an opportunity to hear personal stories of mental illness, hope, and recovery from their peers with mental illness and to improve referral and access to mental health resources on campus and in the community. Also, research includes a designed and conducted survey among members and individual participants of an Alliance of Organizations and People Opposed to Racism to identify what issues of racism are considered most important in the Billings community. Faculty also worked in collaboration with a Psychiatric Nursing program in Bozeman which was the HRSA Behavioral Health Workforce Education and Training (BHWET) Program for Professionals Grant, awarded in June 2021. Also, faculty worked on a Field Initiated project grant through the Montana Council on Developmental disabilities which was not awarded. Finally, a research article for the Journal of Life Care Planning was published addressing the effects of post-Sanchez hearsay in life care planning.

Consistent with the MSUB Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), students are asked to complete course evaluation forms at the end of each semester, rating the quality of the course and the instructor (5 indicating “excellent” and 1 indicating “unacceptable”) and any related concerns. The Office of Institutional Research manages the course evaluations and then returns this information to the program director chair and the respective instructors for further follow-up and discussion. Student course evaluation results are also included as part of the annual rank and tenure documentation submitted by faculty.

The University changed the format for soliciting feedback from students between the Fall 2019 and Spring 2020 semesters, removing the opportunity to create a baseline comparison between years. The evaluations utilized Likert scales, and worked on a continuum from strongly agree to strongly disagree. For the Spring semester of last year student feedback (n=97) was positive. These scores had some minor variations to the previous year, there was a higher level of feedback (n=217) and the scores remained well above average.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items Assessed</th>
<th>Spring 2018-19</th>
<th>AY 2019-2020</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instructor is accessible</td>
<td>4.90</td>
<td>4.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treats students with respect</td>
<td>4.84</td>
<td>4.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grading Expectations are clear</td>
<td>4.76</td>
<td>4.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding of material</td>
<td>4.70</td>
<td>4.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructors provide valuable feedback</td>
<td>4.77</td>
<td>4.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning objectives of class are clear</td>
<td>4.68</td>
<td>4.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructors present information clearly</td>
<td>4.67</td>
<td>4.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expectations being clearly defined</td>
<td>4.66</td>
<td>4.66</td>
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<td>-----------------------------------</td>
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<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course activities help me learn</td>
<td>4.66</td>
<td>4.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Organization</td>
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<td>4.66</td>
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</tbody>
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The data in this outcome report for 2020-2021 provides evidence that we continue to meet the high CACREP standards used to evaluate this program.