

**The University of Alabama  
Rehabilitation Counselor Education**

**Information for Prospective Students**

Thank you for your interest in the Rehabilitation Counselor Education (RCE) program at The University of Alabama. The RCE program is an online program. Students admitted into the program must meet criteria for full or conditional admission. Students who enroll in 9 credit hours (fall and spring) and 6 credit hours (summer) may complete the degree program in two calendar years. Students may take more or fewer hours each semester with advisor approval.

All rehabilitation courses are offered as synchronous courses and require weekly participation via live virtual classroom (Blackboard Collaborate). Sessions are recorded giving students the opportunity to review what occurred during the live class. All live virtual classes are delivered in Central Standard Time.

Students who have access to the UA main campus may supplement the online program with a few campus courses. These students may enroll in 12 credit hours each semester (fall, spring, and summer) and can anticipate completing degree requirements in four semesters.

Professional rehabilitation counselors encourage and support persons with disabilities and their families to fully participate in their community by providing individual and group counseling, vocational assessment, case management, advocacy, assistive technology, and consultation services to help meet their personal, social, vocational, psychological, independent living, and quality-of-life goals. The mission of the Rehabilitation Counselor Education (RCE) online program at the University of Alabama is to prepare professional rehabilitation counselors who will provide quality rehabilitation counseling services for persons with disabilities from diverse backgrounds and their families.

**Objectives**

1. To introduce the philosophy and historical tenets of rehabilitation counseling through new literacies of technology and interpersonal communication
2. To deliver a 21st century, distance-based curriculum of didactic and clinical experiences that encourages active learning and adheres to the Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE) standards
3. To prepare qualified rehabilitation counselors to work in both public and private settings located in rural and urban communities to facilitate the needs of all persons with disabilities and their families
4. To recruit, select, and matriculate rehabilitation counseling graduate students who represent minorities, women, and individuals with disabilities
5. To provide our rehabilitation counseling graduate students with the knowledge and skills necessary to develop a philosophical orientation and approach reflective of their commitment to meeting the needs of persons with disabilities and their families, as well as employer and community needs
6. To foster our university's mission in advancing the intellectual and social condition of the people by communicating to our rehabilitation graduate counseling students the need for advocacy, community integration, and social responsibility

7. To prepare our rehabilitation counseling graduate students to become ethical rehabilitation counselors by understanding and following the Code of Professional Ethics for rehabilitation counselors
8. To promote the involvement of our rehabilitation counseling graduate students in rehabilitation counseling professional associations (e.g., National Rehabilitation Association, National Rehabilitation Counseling Association, American Rehabilitation Counseling Association, National Rehabilitation Counselors and Educators Association) to enhance awareness of professional issues and service that are important to the growth of our field

The rehabilitation counseling curriculum provides both didactic and experiential learning and culminates in a 600 hour internship under the supervision of a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor. The RCE program is accredited by the Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE). Students completing the RCE program are eligible to become Certified Rehabilitation Counselors (CRC). For more information about becoming a CRC, visit the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification website: <http://www.crc certification.com/>

In most states, program graduates are eligible to begin the process of becoming a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC). The following link provides a listing of counselor licensure boards in all of the states:

<http://www.counseling.org/knowledge-center/licensure-requirements/state-professional-counselor-licensure-boards>

If you are interested in pursuing licensure, you are encouraged review the licensure requirements for the state in which you live to ensure that the program will meet the specific licensure requirements for your state.

The RCE master's program is 48 semester hours in length. However, a 60-semester-hour option is available for students who wish to pursue 60 hours of graduate coursework.

### **Technology Competencies and Requirements**

Successful students of the RCE program will be comfortable in using technology and Internet communication necessary for accessing library databases for research, sending and receiving files from professors and peers, and participating in online classroom discussions. Students will need to use word processing software such as Microsoft Word or Google Docs to complete assignments. Communication with students is facilitated through Skype and email. A high speed connection (e.g., broadband, DSL) is recommended for participation in live, online courses.

The RCE program is delivered through the University of Alabama's institutional partnership with Blackboard Learning System and requires specific web browsers (e.g. Firefox, Google Chrome, Internet Explorer) to access the system. Clinical courses require digital recording submissions of practice counseling sessions that can be accommodated by recording with Apple iPad 2 cameras, flip video cameras, HD webcams, and camcorders. The use of cellular phones will not be acceptable for recording practice counseling sessions.

## **REQUIRED COURSES (48 semester hours) - Effective Fall 2015**

While the majority of your courses will be offered through the Program in Counselor Education (designated as BCE), some required courses will be offered by affiliated programs. During your academic career, you will enroll in courses in Educational Psychology (designated as BEP) and Educational Research (designated as BER). Students will also take one elective course for 3 credit hours.

### **BCE 512 Counseling: Theory and Process:** Three credit hours

Introduction to counseling, counseling theories, the counseling relationship, and an overview of the counseling profession.

### **BCE 513 Career Development:** Three credit hours

An introduction to career development concepts, labor force information, and other resources needed to help persons with career planning and decision making.

### **BCE 514 Counseling Skills:** Three credit hours

An experiential course involving applied elements of theoretical models and customary helping skills to orient and prepare students for their initial supervised work with counseling clients.

### **BCE 521 Group: Process and Procedures:** Three credit hours

Background in group methods, including group guidance, group counseling, and group dynamics.

### **BCE 522 Individual and Group Appraisal:** Three credit hours

An overview of measurement methods, practice in administration and interpretation of standardized tests, and evaluation of tests and testing programs for counseling and guidance.

### **BCE 540 Orientation to Rehabilitation Counseling:** Three credit hours

Philosophical, social, psychological, and legislative bases of rehabilitation; the nature and scope of the rehabilitation process and the functions of the rehabilitation counselor; and the study of the individual.

### **BCE 542 Medical and Psychological Aspects of Disability:** Three credit hours

Orientation to the medical professions and related rehabilitation professions. Survey of body systems, their functions and malfunctions, and the most common diagnostic and treatment procedures. Implications for educational, social, and vocational development.

### **BCE 544 Vocational Rehabilitation Case Management and Placement:** Three credit hours

The purpose of this course is to provide the student with information about the total vocational rehabilitation process including follow-up services. Students will learn about the referral process, criteria for services, comprehensive assessment (including medical, psychological, sociological, vocational, or work evaluation, etc.), vocational training and placement. Additionally, students will learn about job analysis, job modification, and current placement practices such as supported employment and transitional employment.

**BER 500 Introduction to Educational Research:** Three credit hours

An overview of the research process.

**BEP 550 Life Span Development:** Three credit hours

A study of principles and concepts of physical, cognitive, personality, and social development from conception through death.

**BCE 546 Practicum in Rehabilitation Counseling:** Three credit hours

Prerequisite: Permission of the faculty. Supervised experience in rehabilitation counseling

**BCE 547 Internship in Rehabilitation Counseling:** Six credit hours

Prerequisite: Completion of requirements for BCE 546. Supervised field experience in rehabilitation counseling.

**BCE 611 Multicultural Counseling:** Three credit hours

This course is a theoretical and skill development course for counselors and other human helpers to strengthen multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills in the competencies necessary to evaluate presenting issues brought forward by ethnically and culturally diverse clients.

Additionally, this course will examine the related ethical and professional issues of developing multicultural competency.

**BCE 633 Advanced Seminar in Substance Abuse Counseling:** Three credit hours

Examination of issues involved in counseling individuals with substance abuse and other addictions.

An Elective Course: Three credit hours.

To be determined in consultation with your advisor.

**60 Hour Option:** The following courses are available for students who wish to take 60 hours of coursework:

**BCE 618 Advanced Theories of Counseling:** Three credit hours

Historical and current approaches to individual counseling, and the theories of personality structure and individual behavior from which these approaches are derived. Offered alternate spring semesters.

**BCE 626 Readings in Counseling:** Three credit hours

Prerequisite: Permission of the faculty. Independent study under faculty direction. Offered fall, spring, and summer semesters/terms.

**BCE 631 Consultation, Administration, and Leadership in Counseling:** Three credit hours

Prerequisite: Advanced graduate student status or instructor's permission. For majors only. An examination of consultation, collaboration, advocacy, administration, and leadership practices for counselors in a variety of practice settings.

**BCE 652 Counseling Strategies for Adult-Child Relationships:** Three credit hours  
Prerequisite: BCE 512 or permission of the instructor. Examination of theoretical and applied elements of intervention with discordant relationships between adults and children. Offered summer terms only.

**BCE 633 Advanced Seminar in Counselor Education - Issues in Couple and Family**

**Intervention:** Three credit hours.

Examination of selected legal, ethical, and professional issues affecting practitioners serving couples and families in various practice settings

**BCE 633 Advanced Seminar in Counselor Education - Legal, Ethical, and Professional Issues in Counseling:** Three credit hours

Examination of selected legal, ethical, and professional issues affecting counselors in a variety of service settings.

**BCE 633 Advanced Seminar in Counselor Education - Multicultural Approaches to Helping:** Three credit hours.

This course is a theoretical and skill development course for counselors and other human helpers to strengthen multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills in the competencies necessary to evaluate presenting issues brought forward by racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse clients. Additionally, this course will examine the related ethical and professional issues of developing multicultural counselling competencies.

**Employment Outlook**

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, *Occupational Outlook Handbook* (2014/2015), jobs for rehabilitation counselors are expected to grow by 20 percent, which is faster than the average for all occupations. Rehabilitation counselors serve persons with disabilities in a variety of work settings including, but not limited to, state-federal vocational rehabilitation agencies, non-profit community rehabilitation programs, private-for-profit rehabilitation companies, rehabilitation hospital settings, community mental health and substance abuse programs, correctional facilities, and private practice.

**Admissions Criteria**

Unconditional admission to the RCE program involves the following elements:

- A completed graduate application (apply at the following website: <http://graduate.ua.edu/application>)
- A statement of goals and purpose in seeking graduate training (to be submitted to the Graduate School when completing the graduate application)
- One copy of official transcripts from other academic institutions attended (to be submitted to the Graduate School)
- Live online interview
- Three (3) letters of recommendation from persons who can attest to your potential for success in graduate school. Letters of recommendation should be mailed to the following:

Updated April 24, 2015

**Amy McCool**  
**University of Alabama**  
**Program in Counselor Education**  
**Box 870231**  
**Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0231**

- An undergraduate GPA of 3.00 or higher (last 60 hours of undergraduate study)
- A score of 300 or higher (verbal and quantitative combined) on the revised GRE or a score of 50th percentile or higher on the MAT

You may be eligible to be considered for conditional admission if you do not fully meet the GPA or admission test score requirements. A decision to admit you conditionally into the RCE program will be based upon a number of factors including the combination of your GPA and admission test scores, your goals, and previous work experience. Students admitted conditionally into the RCE program will be considered for unconditional status if they maintain a “B” average during their first 12 hours of study.

## **Admission Deadlines**

Admission decisions are made each semester with priority given to prospective students whose applications are reviewed in November and April. Admission decisions may be made in the summer if openings remain after April admission decisions have been completed. Please adhere to the following dates to allow adequate time for your application to be reviewed:

- October 15: Priority deadline for applications to be completed with Graduate School
- March 15: Priority deadline for applications to be completed with Graduate School
- May 15: Priority deadline for applications to be completed with Graduate School (only applies if openings remain available after April admission decisions are made)

## **Advising**

Upon acceptance into the RCE program, you will be assigned an advisor. You will receive a letter from the Program in Counselor Education letting you know that you have been admitted and providing you with your advisor's name and contact information. It is important to plan all aspects of your program of study with your academic advisor; therefore, it is important that you contact your advisor prior to enrolling in any classes.

## **Field Experiences**

The RCE program requires that you complete a 100 hour practicum and a 600 hour internship. The internship may be completed in the final semester of study or over the last two semesters of study. Both the practicum and internship must be completed in a setting providing rehabilitation counseling services for persons with physical, cognitive, psychiatric, and/or substance abuse disabilities.

Field experiences are to be completed under the supervision of an agency supervisor as well as a university faculty member through live, distance-based communication technologies. Students are expected to begin planning for their field experiences early in the program and must have the field experience site approved by the academic advisor in the semester before either field experience is to be started.

## **Student Evaluation**

In addition to evaluations that occur as a part of the courses, all students in the RCE program are evaluated once each semester by Program in Counselor Education faculty. This evaluation encompasses a broad range of activities including professional orientation, ethical behavior, and skills. This evaluation reflects faculty commitment to ensure competent service to clients. While rare, our commitment to the integrity of the program and its reputation occasionally leads to decisions to restrict or even discontinue a student's enrollment in courses. This occurs only after careful attempts have been made to assist the student in correcting difficulties that may present the potential for unsatisfactory care and service to clients. Therefore, selection and retention for students in the RCE program is a sustained process intended to ensure the best possible education for our students and the best possible service to their clients.

## **Comprehensive Examination**

During your final semester of study, you will be required to successfully demonstrate that you have acquired basic knowledge and skills as a rehabilitation counselor. You will be required to submit a professional portfolio for faculty review. Additionally, you must pass a 200 item comprehensive examination covering the courses that you have taken as part of your program of study. See Student Handbook for further details.

## **Professional Involvement**

Rehabilitation counseling students are encouraged to become professionally involved by joining professional associations. Such memberships will encourage ongoing learning opportunities to introduce students to the rehabilitation counseling profession and to expose rehabilitation counseling students to professional issues, and leaders and workers in the field of rehabilitation counseling. The following are links to professional associations which offer student discounts for membership:

National Rehabilitation Association

<http://www.nationalrehab.org/cwt/external/wcpages/index.aspx>

National Rehabilitation Counseling Association

<http://nrca-net.org/>

American Rehabilitation Counseling Association

<http://www.arcaweb.org/>

Rehabilitation Counselors and Counselor Educators Association

<http://www.nationalrehab.org/cwt/external/wcpages/divisions/rcea.aspx>

American Counseling Association

<http://www.counseling.org/>

### **To Learn More about the RCE Program, Contact:**

Rick Houser

Professor

[rhouser@bamaed.ua.edu](mailto:rhouser@bamaed.ua.edu)

Visit:

The Rehabilitation Counselor Education website:

<http://education.ua.edu/academics/esprmc/counseling/marehab/>

The Program in Counselor Education website:

<http://education.ua.edu/academics/esprmc/counseling/>