



Transforming Lives. Inventing the Future.

Division of Counseling & Rehabilitation Science



M.S. Rehabilitation & Mental Health Counseling Program Manual 2019-2020

I. INTRODUCTION

The faculty at Illinois Institute of Technology believe that Clinical Mental Health and Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling are specialized areas of professional counseling practice. Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling offers a variety of exciting career options. Graduates of the Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counselor Program (RMHCP) are well positioned to obtain excellent jobs in a variety of professional counseling and human service settings. Frequently, these counselors work as part of a team alongside physicians, psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, physical and occupational therapists, educators, as well as various other professionals. These teams work together with the individual who has a mental illness, disability or chronic illness to assess the individual's assets, limitations and preferences in order to assist in the planning of services intended to maximize the client's functioning, independence, and quality of life. A major goal for the Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counselor is to assist a person with a disability or chronic illness move from a position of psychological and economic dependence to one of independence.

II. MISSION AND OBJECTIVES OF THE TRAINING PROGRAM

The mission of the RMHCP at Illinois Tech is to offer a student-focused and evidence-based rehabilitation and mental health counseling curriculum that prepares students to become professional counselors trained to assist a diverse group of people who experience a mental illness, disability and/or a chronic illness across the lifespan. The RMHCP prepares prospective clinical rehabilitation and clinical mental health counselors for employment in numerous settings including mental health agencies, private counseling practice, public/private rehabilitation agencies, hospitals, correctional institutions, public schools, rehabilitation centers, social service agencies, and other organizations serving individuals with chronic illness and disability. It also provides advanced training for individuals presently employed in agencies and facilities offering professional counseling services to individuals with chronic illness or disability.

The mission of the program is accomplished by training future professional counselors in the skills, research, evidence-based practices, and knowledge most relevant to the practice of clinical rehabilitation and clinical mental health counseling. Before students can graduate, they must demonstrate learning and competence in the following foundational areas:

- a. History, philosophy and trends of rehabilitation and mental health counseling;
- b. Professional, ethical and legal considerations that influence the practice of rehabilitation and mental health counseling;
- c. Intake, assessment and evaluation skills;
- d. Diagnosis of mental disorders;
- e. Rehabilitation and mental health counseling theory and evidence-based interventions;
- f. Role and function of clinical rehabilitation and mental health counseling within the context of a variety of clinical practice settings;

- g. Employment trends, career counseling, and job demands in a dynamic 21st century workforce;
- h. Medical and psychological implications of chronic illness and disability including substance abuse, dependence and the potential for coexistence with other disorders;
- i. Case management skills including the utilization of community resources and multidisciplinary team approaches in multiple clinical settings;
- j. Multicultural counseling competencies;
- k. Professional organizations, preparation standards and credentials relevant to the practice of clinical rehabilitation and clinical mental health counseling;
- l. Crisis, disaster and trauma assessment, intervention and emergency preparedness;
- m. Research methodology including program evaluation;
- n. Critical evaluation of research and the ability to incorporate the evolving fund of knowledge in the professional literature into clinical counseling practice.

III. ACCREDITATION

The RMHCP has been in existence at Illinois Institute of Technology (Illinois Tech) since 1966. The program was among the first nationwide to be accredited by the Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE) as a *Rehabilitation Counseling* program in 1975, and it until CORE merged with CACREP on July 1, 2017.

The RMHCP was also accredited in 2015 by the Council on Counseling and Related Education Programs (CACREP) for both *Clinical Mental Health Counseling* and *Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling*.

IV. PROGRAM OF STUDY

Currently, ILLINOIS TECH offers one 60-hour program of study in the rehabilitation and mental health counseling M.S. program. The Full-Time Program is designed for individuals entering the Clinical Rehabilitation and Clinical Mental Health Counseling fields. The Working Professionals Program (WPP) is also a 60-credit hour program designed specifically for individuals currently working in a mental health or disability-related field.

Full-Time Program of Study

The Full-Time Program of study in the clinical RMHCP provides the equivalent of two years (four semesters) of full-time study and is designed to provide students with the essential knowledge and skills necessary for clinical professional rehabilitation and mental health counseling practice. A basic core of required graduate courses is described below and there is no option for elective coursework. The program of study also affords students ongoing opportunities

for interactive and collaborative experiences with persons with mental health disabilities and chronic illness, requiring activities that facilitate student interactions with persons with disabilities and clinical experiences that align with the clinical specializations.

Typical Course Sequence for Full-Time Program of Study

All courses listed below are required except where previous coursework makes them superfluous:

Fall 1

Course	Credits	Title
PSYC 410	3	Introduction to Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling
PSYC 412	3	Multicultural & Psychosocial Issues in RMHC
PSYC 513	3	Assessment in Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling
PSYC 523	3	Introduction to Theories of Psychotherapy
PSYC 583	3	Rehabilitation Engineering Technology I

Spring 1

PSYC 526	3	Psychopathology
PSYC 557	3	Pre-Practicum in Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling
PSYC 561	3	Applied Counseling Techniques: Group Counseling
PSYC 563	3	Human Growth & Career Development
PSYC 590	3	Psychiatric Rehabilitation I

Summer

PSYC 411	3	Medical Aspects of Disability (ONLINE)
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Fall 2

PSYC 549	3	Practicum in Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling
PSYC 547	3	Evidence-Based Practices in RMHC
PSYC 562	3	Job Placement
PSYC 564	3	Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling Research Seminar
PSYC 588	3	Addictions and Psychopharmacology

Spring 2

PSYC 578	6	Rehabilitation & Mental Health Counseling Internship I (Fieldwork)
PSYC 579	3	Rehabilitation & Mental Health Counseling Internship II (Group Supervision)
PSYC 576	3	Research in Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling

Total Credits: 60

Psychiatric Rehabilitation – The curriculum in the RMHCP has a strong emphasis in psychiatric rehabilitation. This emphasis is designed to prepare students to more effectively help people with mental illness to obtain and maintain employment. Topics studied include counseling methods, successful vocational techniques and job placement strategies, psychopharmacology, diagnosis, consumer empowerment, use of community resources, supported education models, working with groups, and more. The following courses are intended to serve as the psychiatric rehabilitation core:

PSYC 590	Psychiatric Rehabilitation
PSYC 526	Psychopathology
PSYC 547	Evidence-Based Practice in Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling

Working Professionals Program (WPP)

The WPP is specifically designed for people who are currently working in the field of rehabilitation and mental health counseling and are pursuing a master's degree for job maintenance or enhancement. The WPP is designed to allow students to complete the degree program within three years while maintaining employment by taking into consideration students' work schedules. The WPP is different from typical distance learning programs because we believe certain skill sets, such as counseling techniques and research methods, can only be obtained by engaging in group activities and direct contact with faculty. Therefore, in addition to providing online options for some classes, the WPP offers face-to-face evening classes and summer weekend classes, where students will benefit from direct interaction with faculty and other students with little to no impact on work schedules. If the work site meets the fieldwork and related supervision requirements, it is possible for students in the WPP to complete some or all of the required fieldwork experiences at the work site. Students in this program should refer to the *Illinois Tech Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling Fieldwork Manual* and talk directly with the fieldwork coordinator to ascertain if their work site would be an appropriate placement. The WPP is a 60 credit-hour program.

Tentative Course of Study for the Working Professionals Program

Term/Semester	Course #	Hrs	Course Title
1 Fall	PSYC 410	3	Intro to Rehabilitation & Mental Health Counseling (Online)
	PSYC 523	3	Introduction to Theories of Psychotherapy (Online)
	PSYC 412	3	Multicultural & Psychosocial Issues in RMHC (Online)
2 Spring	PSYC 526	3	Psychopathology
	PSYC 557	3	Pre-Practicum in RMHC
	PSYC 563	3	Human Growth and Career Development (Online)
3 Summer	PSYC 513	3	Assessment in Rehabilitation & Mental Health Counseling
4 Fall	PSYC 564	3	Rehabilitation & Mental Health Counseling Research Seminar
	PSYC 583	3	Rehabilitation Engineering Tech I (Online)
	PSYC 411	3	Medical Aspects of Disability
5 Spring	PSYC 590	3	Psychiatric Rehabilitation I
	PSYC 576	3	Research in Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling
	PSYC 549	3	Practicum in Rehabilitation & Mental Health Counseling
6 Summer	PSYC 561	3	Applied Counseling Skills: Group Counseling
7 Fall	PSYC 562	3	Job Placement (Online)
	PSYC 588	3	Addictions and Psychopharmacology
	PSYC 547	3	Evidence-Based Practice in RMHC
8 Spring	PSYC 578	3	Rehabilitation & Mental Health Counseling Internship I
	PSYC 579	6	Rehabilitation & Mental Health Counseling Internship II

Total Credits = 60

V. CLINICAL TRAINING

Clinical training is a major emphasis of the curriculum and fieldwork experiences (practicum and internship) are required for all students in the RMHCP. All students complete one semester of part-time supervised practicum (200 hours). Students also complete a full-time supervised internship during their final semester in the program (600 hours). Specific guidelines regarding clinical instruction and requirements for the supervised fieldwork experiences are found in the *Illinois Tech Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling Fieldwork Manual*.

VI. REHABILITATION RESEARCH PROJECT GUIDELINES

The rehabilitation and mental health counseling research project is an independent project conducted under the supervision of a faculty adviser. The research project can be initiated only after the completion of PSYC 564 Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling Research Seminar. Through this project, students will examine theoretical frameworks and empirical research related to a specific problem facing a disability or mental health population. Students will develop and write a study proposal. The research proposal should follow the format of a formal thesis, which is presented in detail in PSYC 564. If the student cannot complete the project in one semester, s/he is required to register for at least one credit of research project each semester until completion of the project.

VII. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students are expected to adhere to the *Code of Academic Honesty* outlined in the graduate handbook. Cheating or plagiarism in any form is unacceptable and constitutes inexcusable behavior. Simply stated, plagiarism is presenting someone else's work as one's own. Any incident of plagiarism or cheating in a course is considered a serious offense and action will be taken as specified by the *Code of Academic Honesty*. The full code can be accessed here: http://www.IllinoisTech.edu/student_affairs/handbook/information_and_regulations/code_of_academic_honesty.shtml

VIII. STUDENT EVALUATION

Being a successful clinical professional counselor requires not only knowledge, but certain interpersonal skills and personal characteristics. For example, counselors need to show an ability to listen, consider the point of views of others, tolerate ambiguity and strong emotion, react to disturbing disclosures without becoming judgmental, and other similar characteristics. Thus, several classes will include an evaluation of these areas as well as one's academic performance. It is understood that these skills, abilities and characteristics involve some degree of subjective judgment on the part of first the faculty, and later, the site supervisors at practicum and internship settings. Every attempt will be made to make the evaluation of these qualities as fair and objective as possible, but students need to be aware that sometimes grades in counseling skills courses will be, in part, based on these less tangible factors.

The faculty has an ethical responsibility to ensure that students have the knowledge, skills and personal maturity to work independently with individuals with mental health and other

disabilities prior to graduation. The faculty conducts an annual evaluation of each student in April of each year while a student is in the program. In addition, a faculty member can request a special evaluation of a student at the end of his/her practicum, internship I, or internship II based on poor performance. During the annual or special evaluation, faculty review the collective feedback (mid-term and final) from the site supervisor(s), the feedback of the faculty member(s) who have provided individual and group supervision and completed class assignments. Faculty may require the student to repeat the practicum and/or internship until acceptable skills or traits are demonstrated. When the faculty is in doubt of the student's ability, character, or integrity to become an effective counselor, they may terminate the student from further clinical training. Students who disagree with a decision regarding their evaluation have the right to follow the grievance procedures outlined in section XIV of the program manual.

The student's progress is evaluated in two major areas: (a) academic performance and (b) clinical work. Faculty have a group discussion about the progress and achievement made by each student and any concerns related to the student are presented. The advisor collects the feedback from the meeting and completes the annual evaluation form. The summary of the annual evaluation meeting is shared with the student in face-to-face meeting and written format. The advisor and the student discuss recommendations about retention/remediation/dismissal from the faculty and/or strategies to improve student's learning and progress if necessary. If the student receives "remediation" twice, the entire faculty and the student have a group meeting to develop the final remediation plan and both parties sign the remediation plan document. If the student does not adhere to the remediation plan and receives another "remediation", the faculty will evaluate if "dismissal" is warranted in accordance with the *Department of Psychology's Policy on the Evaluation and/or Dismissal of Students*.

Grade Point Average: Satisfactory performance in the graduate divisions is defined as the maintenance of a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0/4.0, as reported by the registrar. The minimum GPA for graduation is 3.0/4.0. This figure is based only on those courses that appear on the approved program of study and not on the total cumulative GPA reported by the registrar; there is no exception or waiver to this rule. If a student repeats a course, the last grade issued for the course will be used to compute the cumulative GPA and the program of study GPA.

Academic Probation: A graduate student whose cumulative GPA falls below 3.0/4.0 is no longer in good standing and must petition the Graduate College, Office of Academic Affairs for permission for provisional enrollment by submitting form G702. Students for whom provisional enrollment is granted must not earn a semester GPA less than 3.0 while on Academic Probation. Probationary students who receive "C" or "E" grades will be required to repeat courses to improve the cumulative GPA. Dismissal will occur when a student fails to make the requisite academic progress during the probationary period. If a student's GPA in his or her approved program of study is below 3.0, then graduate courses approved on a revised Program of Study Form G406 may be added to the program until the corresponding GPA is at least 3.0, with the approval of the Graduate College, Office of Academic Affairs.

Students should consult the Graduate Handbook for additional policies regarding withdrawing from a course, leave of absence and other special circumstances.

IX. POLICY ON COURSE WAIVER: ADVANCED STANDING

Students who wish to pursue an MS in Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling with Advanced Standing may request a maximum of 15 credit hours be waived for specified courses provided that:

1. the student received graduate credit for the course at Illinois Tech or another U.S. university;
2. the course is judged to be relevant to the current rehabilitation and mental health counseling education program;
3. a current faculty member in Counseling and Rehabilitation Science, who teaches the course, has recently taught a similar course, or would be qualified to teach a similar course, evaluates the course syllabus and textbook(s) and determines that the course sufficiently overlaps with the course taught at Illinois Tech and is of satisfactory quality to qualify as a transfer;
4. The courses taken at another U.S. university did not count toward completion of another degree.

In order for a course to qualify toward the Advanced Standing waiver, the student must receive a B or better in the course, and must get written approval from the relevant faculty member and also from the Head of the Counseling and Rehabilitation Science Division. *If a student was not admitted with Advanced Standing and feel that he or she may qualify for this, they should speak to the Program Director as soon as possible in order for the case to be reviewed and to get the status changed.*

The following courses are eligible to be taken through Illinois Tech as an undergraduate student seeking Advanced Standing, or to be waived, if taken elsewhere as a graduate student:

- PSYC 410 Introduction to Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling
- PSYC 411 Medical Aspects of Disability
- PSYC 412 Multicultural and Psychosocial Issues in Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling
- PSYC 513 Assessment in Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling
- PSYC 523 Introduction to Theories of Psychotherapy
- PSYC 562 Job Placement
- PSYC 563 Human Growth and Career Development
- PSYC 564 Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling Research Seminar
- PSYC 583 Rehabilitation Engineering Technology I
- PSYC 590 Psychiatric Rehabilitation

X. PROFESSIONAL CREDENTIALING

Students who graduate from the RMHCP are trained as clinical counselors and have an ethical responsibility to carry the appropriate certification and clinical license relevant to their practice. Students completing the program are eligible to sit for the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) examination and become a CRC. Students are also eligible to sit for the National Certified Counselor (NCC) exam through the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC). Once the

student passes the CRC and/or NCC exam, s/he is eligible to become a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) in the state of Illinois. After working for a minimum of 2 years under the supervision of a qualified supervisor, individuals are eligible to become a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor (LCPC) in Illinois. Students who intend to move outside the state of Illinois are strongly encouraged to understand licensure laws in their intended state of residency. Students are also strongly encouraged to educate themselves on licensure laws as well as national trends in licensure and certification by going to <http://www.counseling.org/knowledge-center/licensure-requirements>

Students are eligible to sit for the CRC exam prior to graduation if 75% of coursework is completed. Students are encouraged to regularly visit the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC) for exam application deadlines and materials: <http://www.crccertification.com>. Similarly, students are encouraged to visit the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) website and familiarize themselves with the requirements necessary to sit for the NCC exam by going to www.nbcc.org

XI. STUDENT INPUT TO THE PROGRAM

There are both formal and informal processes for students to communicate with program faculty about curriculum needs and program objectives. The formal processes consist of regular milestones during the student's program of study where feedback is intentionally solicited. Students provide feedback to the instructor for each course through a formal evaluation process. In addition, student feedback is solicited during their year-end faculty annual performance evaluation and a formal evaluation of each student prior to graduation from the program. There are 3 student representatives on the Program Advisory Board: one student from the M.S. program, one student from the Ph.D. program, and the President of the Illinois Tech-Student ARCA Chapter. The advisory board meetings are held twice a year and student feedback and participation is encouraged at each meeting. Finally, students are invited to attend regularly scheduled program meetings that involve faculty, teaching assistants, doctoral and master's students.

In addition to formal procedures for feedback, a number of informal processes exist for communicating with the program faculty. Students are encouraged to provide informal feedback to their course instructors and to advisors. Students are also encouraged to provide feedback to student representatives to the Advisory Board for discussion at one of the advisory board meetings, when appropriate. Input can also be given at any time by verbal or written request to any faculty member to attend the program faculty meeting.

XII. ACCOMMODATIONS

The RMHCP faculty is committed to utilizing instructional strategies that support and facilitate a viable learning community with an emphasis on respect for different learning styles. The Center for Disability Resources ensures that all materials (program, instructional, occupational, testing, etc.) are made available in alternate format to meet the individualized needs of each student. Examples of modifications include: note taking, sign-language interpreting, speech-to-text services, testing accommodations, tutoring, and housing accommodations, to name a few. The CDR utilizes computer, audiotaping, videotaping, among other forms of technology to accommodate students' needs.

If a student believes he or she requires an accommodations to the learning environment, please contact Mr. Gary Walley at the Center for Disability Resources, Room 1C3-2 in the Tech South building (3424 S. State Street), phone (312) 567-5744 voice, (312) 567-5135 TDD, disabilities@iit.edu email, and <http://www.iit.edu/cdr/> website. The process of approving accommodations can take time so students should please contact Mr. Walley as soon as they are accepted into the program.

Mr. Walley will notify the instructor of the courses the student is enrolled in at the beginning of each semester that an accommodation(s) is required and the nature and type of accommodation to be received.

XIII. PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY

Professional Identity. The RMHCP faculty regard rehabilitation and mental health counseling as specialty areas within the counseling profession. It is important that students develop a strong identity as a professional counselor. As a future professional counselor, it is important for students to affiliate with the larger community of professional counselors to stay current on clinical practice, ethical codes of conduct and scope of practice through continuing education opportunities and professional journals as well as affiliation with other professional counselors.

Ethical Adherence: Students entering into the RMHCP are required to adhere to both the American Counseling Association's (ACA) Code of Ethics, found at <http://www.counseling.org/Resources/aca-code-of-ethics.pdf>, and the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC), Rehabilitation Counselor's Code of Professional Ethics, found at <http://www.crc certification.com/filebin/pdf/CRCCCodeOfEthics.pdf>

Professional Associations. Professional organizations are an important component of any profession. They provide continuing education, define scope of practice, and establish the ethical code of conduct for the profession. Associations provide continuing education opportunities at annual conferences, in professional journals and newsletters, and online continuing education opportunities. It is important for graduate students to become involved in professional organizations to facilitate growth as a Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counselor.

Professional Conferences. Students are encouraged to attend the American Counseling Association (ACA) annual conference every year. Students involved in Illinois Tech's chapter of ARCA have been successful in obtaining funding support for this travel in past years. Graduate students in the Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling program are urged to attend this and other professional conferences and meetings provided by ACA, the American Mental Health Counseling Association (AMHCA) and the American Rehabilitation Counseling Association (ARCA) as well as their state chapters, if available. Information about such meetings and conferences can be found on the website of each association.

Because Illinois Tech's philosophy is that rehabilitation and mental health counselors are professional counselors who specialize in working with people with disabilities and mental health concerns, students are encouraged to join, as student members, the American Counseling Association (ACA) and the division for Rehabilitation Counselors, the American Rehabilitation Counseling Association (ARCA), and for Mental Health Counselors, the American Mental Health Counseling Association (AMHCA).

The URL for each association is below:

American Counseling Association (ACA)	www.counseling.org
American Rehabilitation Counseling Association (ARCA)	www.arcaweb.org
American Mental Health Counseling Association (AMHCA)	www.amhca.org

By joining the above professional organizations, students will receive the following professional journals, which are strongly recommended for reading:

1. Journal of Counseling and Development (ACA)
2. Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin (ARCA)
3. Journal of Mental Health Counseling (AMHCA)

Illinois Institute of Technology has a Student Chapter of the American Rehabilitation Counseling Association (ARCA) as part of the recognized list of student organizations on the campus. Students are encouraged to become student members of ARCA (cost is \$25.00 annually) and membership comes with a subscription to the ARCA journal, the *Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin*.

ARCA student members who are active in the Illinois Tech-ARCA Student Chapter may be eligible for funds through the Illinois Tech student government and ARCA to attend national ACA conferences and participate in student competitions designed to recognize original student work. Previous Illinois Tech students who have attended national conferences have met leaders in the counseling field such as Dr. Gerald Corey, Dr. Vilia Tarvydas, Dr. Fong Chan, Dr. Brian McMahon (Illinois Tech Alum), Dr. Susan Brueyer, among other professionals.

XIV. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

During the degree program, students may feel they need to file a complaint regarding a grade received on an assignment or for a course, a particular behavior of an instructor, or a decision by the faculty, for example, to repeat a course such as practicum or internship. Should a student wish to file a complaint he or she should first discuss the matter with the faculty member(s) who made the decision. If the complaint is not resolved to the student's satisfaction, the student should take the issue to the Program Director and Head of the Division of Counseling and Rehabilitation Science, Dr. Kelly Kazukauskas. She can be reached via email at kkazukau@iit.edu or phone at (312) 567-3506. If the decision was made by the Program Director or the student does not feel his or her grievance was resolved by the Division Head satisfactorily, an appeal can be made to Dr. Frank Lane, Chair of the Department of Psychology. He can be reached via email at lane@iit.edu or phone at (312) 567-8862.

XV. APPLICATION FOR GRADUATION

Students who are planning to graduate should follow procedures and guidelines outlined in the Graduate College Bulletin at <http://web.Illinois Tech.edu/academic-affairs/graduate-bulletin>.