

# REHABILITATION AND MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING, MASTER OF SCIENCE (M.S.)

## Program accreditation

Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs

## Department goals

- To provide students with educational experiences that facilitate the development of knowledge, skills and values necessary to practice as a licensed professional counselor and certified rehabilitation counselor
- To provide students with learning opportunities that foster culturally responsive and ethical counseling practices
- To provide students with clinical training environments that prepare them to work in a variety of counseling settings

## Program objectives

- Develop a well-rounded education in rehabilitation and mental health counseling
- Advance the basic philosophical tenets of rehabilitation, including the value and worth of all individuals, a belief in human dignity, and the right of all persons to fully participate in society
- Exercise skills and competencies on a high ethical level and with personal integrity
- Acquire a comprehensive understanding of the personal, social, vocational and psychological needs of persons with disabilities

## Student learning outcomes

Upon completion of the program, the graduate will be able to:

- Demonstrate the ability to function ethically and effectively within settings that offer counseling, advocacy and related services to diverse populations
- Understand a range of counseling theories and skills applicable in a pluralistic society with individuals, groups, couples and families, as well as demonstrate the ability to apply this knowledge in a therapeutic manner to promote change and growth.
- Understand and apply the stages of development throughout the lifespan, including developmental goals, when working with individuals, regardless of disability or other impairing conditions
- Understand and apply career development theory and tools
- Demonstrate the ability to apply case management techniques with an understanding of the range of community resources available
- Demonstrate the appropriate use of assessment techniques when working with individuals and utilize relevant information within the counseling process
- Demonstrate the ability to evaluate professional research literature and incorporate such information into their professional development
- Demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary to be an effective professional counselor through supervised practicum and internship experience

## VCU Graduate Bulletin, VCU Graduate School and general academic policies and regulations for all graduate students in all graduate programs

The VCU Graduate Bulletin website documents the official admission and academic rules and regulations that govern graduate education for all graduate programs at the university. These policies are established by the graduate faculty of the university through their elected representatives to the University Graduate Council.

It is the responsibility of all graduate students, both on- and off-campus, to be familiar with the VCU Graduate Bulletin as well as the Graduate School website (<http://www.graduate.vcu.edu/>) and academic regulations in individual school and department publications and on program websites. However, in all cases, the official policies and procedures of the University Graduate Council, as published on the VCU Graduate Bulletin and Graduate School websites, take precedence over individual program policies and guidelines.

**Visit the academic regulations section** for additional information on academic regulations for graduate students. (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/>)

## Degree candidacy requirements

A graduate student admitted to a program or concentration requiring a final research project, work of art, thesis or dissertation, must qualify for continuing master's or doctoral status according to the degree candidacy requirements of the student's graduate program. Admission to degree candidacy, if applicable, is a formal statement by the graduate student's faculty regarding the student's academic achievements and the student's readiness to proceed to the final research phase of the degree program.

Graduate students and program directors should refer to the following degree candidacy policy as published in the VCU Graduate Bulletin for complete information and instructions.

**Visit the academic regulations section** for additional information on degree candidacy requirements. (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad/candidacy/>)

## Graduation requirements

As graduate students approach the end of their academic programs and the final semester of matriculation, they must make formal application to graduate. No degrees will be conferred until the application to graduate has been finalized.

Graduate students and program directors should refer to the following graduation requirements as published in the Graduate Bulletin for a complete list of instructions and a graduation checklist.

**Visit the academic regulations section** for additional information on graduation requirements. (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad/graduation-info/>)

## Other information

A student handbook is made available to students through a closed electronic system (Canvas) and at new student orientation.

Apply online today. (<https://www.vcu.edu/admissions/apply/graduate/>)

## Admission requirements

Degree:	Semester(s) of entry:	Deadline dates:	Test requirements:
M.S.	Fall	Jan 15	GRE or MAT
	Spring	Sep 15	

## Special requirements

- Full- and part-time students can be accommodated by the program. Applications are reviewed on an ongoing basis. To be considered, all pertinent materials must be received in the department by Jan. 15 for fall and Sept. 15 for spring.

In addition to the general admission requirements of the VCU Graduate School (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/study/admission-graduate-study/admission-requirements/>), applicants must meet the following requirements:

- Satisfactory performance in undergraduate education (based upon transcripts provided to Graduate Admissions)
- Three positive letters of reference from professors, employers or relevant sources
- Satisfactory performance on either the GRE or the MAT
- A relevant and clear statement of goals for graduate study and career
- Statement of previous work or volunteer experience

A personal interview with a faculty member may also be required.

Instructions for applying are located on the Graduate Admissions website (<https://www.vcu.edu/admissions/apply/graduate/>).

## Degree requirements

In addition to general VCU Graduate School graduation requirements (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad/graduation-info/>), the minimum degree requirement is 60 graduate credits, including 48 credits of didactic course work, 100 hours of fieldwork, 600 hours of internship and three credits of electives.

Graduates from accredited rehabilitation counseling programs are typically trained in counseling theory and techniques; individual, group and environmental assessment; psychosocial and medical aspects of disability; human development; cultural diversity; principles of psychiatric rehabilitation, case management and rehabilitation planning; issues and ethics in rehabilitation service delivery; technological adaptation; vocational evaluation and work adjustment; career counseling; implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act; job development; and placement.

According to the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs standards and the requirements of the department, students must have supervised rehabilitation and mental health counseling fieldwork and internship experiences that include:

- A minimum of 100 clock hours of fieldwork experience (as part of RHAB 692)
- A minimum of 600 clock hours of internship experience in rehabilitation and mental health settings (as part of RHAB 695 or RHAB 696)
- Written expectations and procedures for these experiences that are distributed to students and agency supervisors

- The following activities:
  - Orientation to program components, policies and procedures
  - Introduction to staff and their roles and functions
  - Identification of the expectations for students
  - Observation of all aspects of the delivery of rehabilitation and mental health counseling services
  - Work assignments performing the tasks required of an employed rehabilitation and mental health counselor in a rehabilitation and mental health setting from intake to discharge and/or placement
  - Reporting, including all required academic reports as well as logs, weekly progress reviews and summaries of activities
- Evaluation of student performance by the agency supervisor and the faculty supervisor, including self-evaluation by the student

Internship experiences shall be carried out under the regularly scheduled supervision of a CRC and LPC. The quality of supervision shall be maintained by involvement of VCU faculty in terms of in-service training, consultation, information and the provision of professional development resources to agency supervisors.

## Transfer credit

A maximum of 12 graduate credit hours may be transferred from another VCU graduate program or outside institution if not applied previously to another degree. Transfer credit hours must carry a minimum grade of B from an accredited institution. Acceptance of transfer credit hours is made at the level of the department chair and dean of the College of Health Professions. Transfer credit hours earned as a nondegree-seeking graduate student are limited to six credit hours. Credit hours earned as deficiency hours or to demonstrate the ability to compete at the graduate level, though transferable, may not be applied to the 48-credit-hour program of study.

## Curriculum requirements

Course	Title	Hours
RHAB 521	Addiction Counseling	3
RHAB 525	Introduction to Rehabilitation Counseling	3
RHAB 526	Introduction to Mental Health Counseling	3
RHAB 611	Theories of Professional Counseling	3
RHAB 612	Group Counseling Theories and Techniques	3
RHAB 615	Human Growth and Development	3
RHAB 616	Couples and Family Counseling	3
RHAB 623	Career Counseling and Job Placement	3
RHAB 624	Assessment and Evaluation	3
RHAB 625	Research and Program Evaluation	3
RHAB 633	Case Management	3
RHAB 640	Medical and Psychosocial Aspects of Disabilities	3
RHAB 642	Diagnosis and Treatment of Mental Health Disorders	3
RHAB 654	Multicultural Counseling	3
RHAB 691	Counseling Techniques	3
RHAB 692	Advanced Professional Issues in Counseling (includes 100-hour practicum)	3

Select one of the following: <sup>1</sup> 9

RHAB 695	Supervised Clinical Practice in Substance Abuse Rehabilitation	3
RHAB 696	Supervised Clinical Practice in Rehabilitation and Mental Health	3

Elective	3
----------	---

Total Hours	60
-------------	----

1

Includes 600 hours of internship and may be spread across two semesters as shown below in example plan of study.

**The minimum number of graduate credit hours required for this degree is 60.**

## Example of a full-time plan of study

Note that semesters three and six are completed during the summer.

Semester 1	Hours
RHAB 526 Introduction to Mental Health Counseling	3
RHAB 611 Theories of Professional Counseling	3
RHAB 623 Career Counseling and Job Placement	3
RHAB 691 Counseling Techniques	3
Term Hours:	12

Semester 2	Hours
RHAB 525 Introduction to Rehabilitation Counseling	3
RHAB 624 Assessment and Evaluation	3
RHAB 642 Diagnosis and Treatment of Mental Health Disorders	3
RHAB 692 Advanced Professional Issues in Counseling (includes 100-hour practicum)	3
Term Hours:	12

Semester 3	Hours
RHAB 521 Addiction Counseling	3
RHAB 633 Case Management	3
Term Hours:	6

Semester 4	Hours
RHAB 612 Group Counseling Theories and Techniques	3
RHAB 625 Research and Program Evaluation	3
RHAB 640 Medical and Psychosocial Aspects of Disabilities	3
RHAB 695 Supervised Clinical Practice in Substance Abuse Rehabilitation or RHAB 696 or Supervised Clinical Practice in Rehabilitation and Mental Health	3
Term Hours:	12

Semester 5	Hours
RHAB 616 Couples and Family Counseling	3
RHAB 654 Multicultural Counseling	3
RHAB 695 Supervised Clinical Practice in Substance Abuse Rehabilitation (includes 400 hours of internship) or RHAB 696 or Supervised Clinical Practice in Rehabilitation and Mental Health	6
Term Hours:	12

### Semester 6

RHAB 615 Human Growth and Development	3
Elective	3
Term Hours:	6
Total Hours:	60

**The minimum number of graduate credit hours required for this degree is 60.**

### Contact

Jared Schultz, Ph.D.  
Professor and chair, Department of Rehabilitation Counseling  
rehabcnsling@vcu.edu

**Program website:** [rehab.chp.vcu.edu/programs/masters-program](https://rehab.chp.vcu.edu/programs/masters-program/)  
(<https://rehab.chp.vcu.edu/programs/masters-program/>)