

2023 Counseling and Rehabilitation Education Program Annual Report

(1) Program Overview

The Counseling and Rehabilitation Education (CARE) program is a part of the Masters in Science program, offering Clinical Mental Health Counseling and Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling (CMHC and CRC) tracks. CARE is located within the School of Health Sciences, College of Health and Human Sciences. Established in 2019, the CARE program draws from the former CORE-accredited Rehabilitation Counseling program and CACREP-accredited Counselor Education program to provide a hybrid degree program that combines the expertise of professionals in both specialty areas. The faculty members teach, and students share most courses, resulting in a comprehensive learning experience. Moreover, the CARE program also offers a Certified Alcohol and Drug counseling certification open to current graduate students, undergraduate and postgraduate students. This is summarized in the table below:

	Total Credits Required	Common Credits	Other
MS CMHC and CRC	61	49	12 credits in MH or RC
CADC Certificate	24	20	8 credits of clinical experience and One elective credit

Our course syllabi templates require instructors to link course objectives with specific course activities that reflect CACREP competencies for counselors. This linkage is also reflected in *Appendix A*, which measures student progress.

Our mission statement is:

The Counseling and Rehabilitation Education (CARE) program promotes counselors-in-training professional development to prepare them to provide ethical, culturally-inclusive practices that sustain and empower those using counseling services

The goals are:

1. Staff professionalism: Maintaining rigorous education, training, and clinical practice standards.
2. Respect for others: demonstrating an appreciation for each individual's uniqueness and cultural differences.
3. Relevance in teaching: learning experiences will reflect evidence-based practices; they will be relevant and purposeful.
4. Innovation in learning: Students develop understanding through inquiry, new technologies, creative problem-solving, and critical thinking skills.
5. Expanding student potential: Learning experiences will promote all students' emotional, relational, and academic potential.

The ten objectives are:

1. CARE graduates possess the content knowledge and dispositions necessary to be effective counselors and social justice advocates in their specialty areas.
2. CARE graduates appropriately respond to the unique combination of cultural variables, including ability, age, beliefs, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, race, level of acculturation, and socioeconomic status, that influence the counseling process.
3. CARE graduates understand that human development occurs in critical contexts influenced by a person's race, ethnicity, religion, and factors such as poverty, loss, developmental and physical trauma, and access to resources.
4. CARE graduates conceptualize the career decision-making as developmentally influenced and individually determined.
5. CARE graduates value the influence of a strong working alliance built upon honesty and trust in achieving success in the therapeutic relationship.
6. CARE graduates differentiate between group counseling theories and utilize effective interventions and leadership skills in facilitating various types of groups.
7. CARE graduates understand developmentally and culturally appropriate approaches to assessment and testing.
8. CARE graduates value using statistically supported, evidence-based psychoeducational and psychotherapeutic interventions in their practice.
9. CARE graduates who specialize in clinical mental health counseling promote healthy coping capacities and support systems for individuals who identify as persons with mental illnesses to assist them in improving their quality of life.
10. CARE graduates who specialize in clinical rehabilitation counseling advocate for removing functional, environmental, and social barriers that impede self-sufficiency and reduce the quality of life for persons who identify as an individual with a disability.

(2) Introduction

Faculty: The start of the Fall of 2022 marked the return to in-person classes as the norm, with a lessening of the mask mandates. Dr. Pender retired in the Summer semester, of 2022. Also, we received two new faculty members, Dr. Yancy Cruz and Assistant Professor of Practice Lisa Vinson. Dr. Cruz started in the Fall of 2022, and Professor Vinson began in the Fall of 2023.

Accreditation: CACREP Accreditation Status-Under Review

Timeline: Self-study submitted in August 2022. Addendum #1 was submitted in October 2022. Addendum #2 was submitted in January 2023. Site visit completed in February 2023. Rebuttal submitted in March 2023. Response received on August 9, 2023.

Our focus in 2022 and 2023 has been on re-accrediting the counseling program at SIU. After CACREP absorbed CORE, all CORE programs could be grandfathered into the CACREP program. Unfortunately, the REHB program didn't meet the requirements, and

the Counselor Education program lost its accreditation before the merger. Building an accreditation proposal has been a three-year process. In 2020, we submitted our original draft to CACREP and two follow-up addendums at their request. CACREP conducted a successful site visit in February 2023. A rebuttal to the findings of the site visitors was submitted in March.

We anticipated approval for a two-year accreditation. Instead, we were asked to provide additional documentation in the following areas:

Standard H

The standard requires that practicum students have weekly interaction with supervisors that averages one hour per week of individual and triadic supervision throughout the practicum and internship.

Standard I and M

The standard requires that practicum students participate in an average of 1½ hours per week of group supervision regularly throughout the practicum and internship.

Standard D and E

The program website must have the annual report published in a convenient location that is easily accessible. Additionally, students currently enrolled in the program, program faculty, institutional administrators, and personnel in cooperating agencies such as employers and site supervisors must be informed about the report's availability.

Before the February site visit, the previous clinical supervisor and the current practicum/internship faculty confirmed they had provided supervision. However, they could not provide records and documentation for all the students. Our annual report is posted, but it is hard to find, and we need to document efforts to distribute it to others.

Contact was made with CACREP in September 2023 for clarification, and the faculty has developed a plan to respond before the May deadline. Steps we will be taking include:

1. CACREP seeks our response on how to avoid this happening again. To respond, we are introducing a new edtech partner that offers user-friendly interfaces and streamlined data collection for assessment and clinical management. We have received approval to purchase these services from Tevera, which will handle documentation and scheduling for student field placements. This means no more relying on paper forms - all records of hours and supervision will be stored on Tevera. Our community partners, as are our faculty and students, are already familiar with this service and eager to use it.
2. A meeting will be held with SIU Web Services so that our annual report can be placed in a location on our website that is more visible to all. Students, faculty,

administration, and other stakeholders will be notified that the report is available via a newly created email listserv.

3. Documentation from students who have graduated has been challenging to obtain. Our review of other university websites shows this is common across accredited programs. CACREP confirmed in our conversation that they are most interested in seeing that the program is trying to provide the best information available. This will be accomplished with pre- and post-graduation surveys using Alumni Association contact information.

Program and Curriculum Changes: With a newer faculty pool, we have started to draft possible structural and logistic changes to the CARE programs. Some topics up for discussion include emphasizing more of a case management focus during students' coursework, practicum, and internship, adding a pre-practicum course, removing the additional group practicum, and considering the use of a student portfolio presentation as opposed to a Comprehensive exam for students to qualify for graduation. We have also discussed revisiting how to make clinical documentation and other student assessment tools easier to manage and more useful for students and faculty outside of meeting accreditation requirements. We anticipate approval of our curriculum changes from the University and the Advisory Board. The proposed curriculum revisions are available for review in *Attachment A*.

(3) Matriculation, enrollment, demographics and GPA

According to SIU documentation and our paperwork of students in their final semester, we have 12 graduates from Fall 2021 up to this Fall semester.

Total Number of Students Enrolled

CARE	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Total Head Count	17	17	21

Demographics:

We are happy to report that our program has seen a small rise in minority students joining our ranks. While it's typical for our field to have more women enrolled in our counselor training program than men, we're determined to attract more male counselors and increase the number of minority applicants in the upcoming year. This is an exciting area of growth for CARE, and we're looking forward to continuing to broaden our reach.

Fall 2022

59% women 17% disabled 41% minority

Spring 2023

62% women 14% disabled 48% minority

Our student GPAs are improving. We consider this improvement a great accomplishment reflective of a careful admissions process and the outstanding instruction of dedicated faculty.

Grade Point Avg.

Sem/Year	Mean	Range
<i>F2021</i>	3.4	(2.0, 4.0)
<i>SP 2022</i>	3.5	(3.0,4.0)
<i>F 2022</i>	3.7	(3.4, 4.0)
<i>SP 2023</i>	3.8	(3.1, 4.0)

Evaluation Data

As a newly formed program, we are still working on developing a reliable strategy to incorporate the opinions of everyone in our program evaluation data. At the moment, we are reviewing student surveys, program evaluation data, and qualitative feedback from faculty on student performance to contribute to our plans for program changes. In 2024, we plan to include other performance measures in our annual reports, such as exit surveys from students, feedback from supervisors/employers, advisory board feedback, and university-wide program performance data, which are currently in progress.

(4) Program Evaluation data

Our program evaluation table, including competencies, ways measured, scores and KPIs is attached. For 2022-Spring 20223, 99 % of CARE students met all KPI's. Regrettably, one student was withdrawn from the program due to a substantial violation of ethical behavior. Please refer to *Appendix B*.

(5) Student evaluations data

A survey was conducted to evaluate student satisfaction in various areas of the Counseling and Rehabilitation Education program.

Most students in the Counseling and Rehabilitation Education program were satisfied with the program's performance, according to a Spring 2023 survey. 75% of the students were satisfied with the counseling principles and process, while 81% were satisfied with the importance of counseling in interprofessional practice. The program covered psychological and medical aspects related to disabilities, and 68% of the students were satisfied with this area. However, only 47% of students were satisfied with community resources for children, adolescents, adults, and families.

In terms of counseling theory, 55% of the students were satisfied, while 56% were satisfied with group theory. Diagnostic impressions and reporting showed that 67% of the students were satisfied, and 81% were satisfied with ethical decision-making.

The use of diversity and multicultural techniques in counseling was assessed, with 67% of the students reporting satisfactory to very satisfactory results. Building a therapeutic relationship was another aspect that was assessed, with 60% of the students reporting satisfactory to very satisfactory results.

Regarding practicum and internship experiences, 54% of the students expressed satisfaction with their supervision, while 62% were satisfied or very satisfied with their growth as a counselor.

Overall, the academic experience in the CARE program was rated as 79% satisfactory to very satisfactory by students.

Faculty assessment:

Our goal is to improve student satisfaction across all areas of our program during the 2024-2025 academic year. Unfortunately, student satisfaction has decreased slightly compared to 2022. Although instructors have received high evaluations, students' overall satisfaction with the program has not been as high. We need to investigate the cause of this discrepancy. We will informally investigate our advising strategy in the upcoming academic year.

Our objective is to have 90% of students rate their experience as satisfactory to highly satisfactory in all areas, which is a 20% increase from the current level. Our ultimate aim is to achieve a close-to-perfect overall experience rating. We can achieve these goals by working diligently on our instructional methods and by involving students in more frequent meetings to assess their experiences in the program.

NCE. An additional informal measure of student achievement is the National Counselor Exam (NCE). This is the primary examination required for students to become Licensed Professional Counselors in Oregon and most other states. Last year, we had a 100% pass rate in Spring 2022, and our students scored *higher* than the national average. Based on anecdotal data from graduates, this report shows us a 75% pass rate for the three students who took the NCE in the Spring of 2023. We have not yet received the new NCE report at the time of this report.

(6)Exit Survey Results

The responses to the question "How well did your educational experiences at SIU/CARE increase your knowledge and understanding of the following?" were limited to only 4 graduates responding. However, among the areas that scored with a mean average over 4.0 (considered high), were the professional roles and functions of counselors, counseling theories, social and cultural diversity, ethical and legal issues in counseling, establishing an effective working relationship with clients, providing effective counseling for individuals, appropriate assessment of clients, sound development and implementation of

treatment plans, the importance of balancing self-care and work/career, and accessing and utilizing research information to improve counseling effectiveness.

(7) Employment Data

Spring 2021

- 2 graduates; 1 working

Summer 2021

- 8 graduates; 7 working

Fall 2021

- 1 graduate, 1 unknown

Spring 2022

- 4 graduates, 4 working

Summer 2022

- 1 graduate; 1 working

Fall 2022

- 3 graduates, 3 working

Spring 2023

- 5 graduates, 4 working, one unknown

24 graduates, 20 employed; 83% employment rate