Program Review
2006-07 Planning and Review Committee

I. Degree: M.S. in Vocational Rehabilitation

Program Director: Bob Peters, Ph.D. and Michelle Hamilton, Ph.D.

PRC Consultant(s): Diane Klemme

Date of Review: Spring 2007

Purpose of the Review: This review is conducted in order to assess the program’s quality as part of the on-going seven year cycle required by all UW-Stout degree programs.

Committee Findings: The PRC recommends continuation of this program through the next scheduled review as part of the seven-year cycle required of all degree programs.

II. Abstract: The vocational rehabilitation program at UW-Stout is guided by its mission to prepare rehabilitation professionals who will assist and support individuals with disabilities during the rehabilitation process. Emphasis is given to the vocational and social adjustment and independent living phase of rehabilitation. The program emphasized understanding vocational issues as a strategy to empower individuals with disabilities. The program has four concentrations: Rehabilitation Counseling, Vocational Evaluation, Rehabilitation Administration, and School-to-Work Transition. A dual concentration in vocational evaluation and rehabilitation counseling is available.

The Rehabilitation Counseling concentration is accredited by the Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE) and students may become certified rehabilitation counselors by successfully passing the required examination.

The Vocational Evaluation concentration prepares student to effectively work with individuals with disabilities. Students may become certified vocational evaluators after successfully completing the examinations administered by the Commission on Certification of Work Adjustment and Vocational Evaluations Specialist.

The Rehabilitation Administration concentration prepares experienced professionals (at least two years of experience in rehabilitation) for leadership and administrative position in rehabilitation.

The School-to-Work Transition concentration prepares students to effectively implement school-to-work transition services, including counseling, planning and networking to develop resources to assist students with disabilities transition from school to work.

The program is a 48 credit program. A core of 15 credits is common to all four concentrations; students have options in the research preparation classes and either do a Plan B Problem, Plan A Thesis or take a comprehensive exam. The remaining credits (25-30) are prescribed within each concentration. Each concentration has at least one elective available for students. Each concentration also includes a supervised practical experience as part of the program.

The program is offered on-campus and also on-line. The first on-line cohort program began in 2002. Students in the on-line program must be an employed working professional. Current
enrollment in the on-campus program is campus 43 students and the on-line program has 54 students.

III. Process Followed for Current Review:
Under guidelines developed by the PRC, information regarding the program was gathered from the Placement Office, Institutional Research, the program directors, key instructors with-in the department – 6 out of the 7 on-line key instructors responded; 9 out of the 10 on-campus key instructors responded and 8 out of 10 on-campus (outside the department) responded; the advisory committee members of which 10 out of 13 responded; and both on-line and on-campus students. Student responses included: 12 on-campus students and 14 on-campus program alumni; 18 on-line students and 3 on-line alumni; and 2 other alumni. All 49 student responses (120 surveys were sent out) were incorporated and one report was generated.

The program directors, Bob Peters and Michelle Hamilton, presented a summary of the self-study report to the PRC on January 26, 2007.

IV. Previous Review: The Spring 2000 review included the following recommendations

Recommendation #1: Encourage graduate faculty to pursue both current field experience and scholarly research opportunities so as to keep the program up-to-date.

Response: Since the last PRC review, there has been almost a 100% turnover of faculty - Dr. Peters continues to serve as a faculty member.

Summation of Consultants: The new faculty include individuals from both the public and private sector. Faculty are encouraged to present and do serve as supervisors for students in internships/field experiences so they have the opportunity to keep abreast of the field.

Recommendation #2: Continue work with the department in evaluating personnel needs for the graduate program.

Response: Faculty/student ratio continues to be a concern. The CORE accreditation recommends faculty/student supervision ratio of 5/1; currently the rehabilitation program has a faculty/student supervision ratio of 8/1. All faculty teach undergraduate classes.

Summation of Consultants: Additional staffing is still needed in the program.

Recommendation #3: Monitor 500/700 level course to ensure that graduate students needs are met, and that noted course overlap is addressed.

Response: Program has reduced the number of 500 level classes and increased the number of 700 level classes.

Summation of Consultants: The instructor of the only dual level course enhanced the objectives for the graduate students so that they had a distinctly different set of objectives that required higher order concepts and activities (reported by PD.)

Recommendation #4: Continue to evaluate and modify concentration to keep program responsive to current issues in the rehabilitation field.

Response: Most of the students do take the comprehensive exams vs. thesis so students have to be up-to-date to pass exams.
**Summation of Consultants:** The Vocational Evaluation lab was updated in 2005-2006 with assessment software and hardware, increased connectivity and evaluation tools. This impacted the following courses: Procedures of Vocational Evaluation, Lab in Vocational Evaluation, Work Adjustment, Occupational Analysis and Case Coordination

**Recommendation #5: Continue to assess distance learning technologies as a means to address the need to offer a range of courses and at times convenient for working students**


**Summation of Consultants:** On-line program has been popular with students.

**Recommendation #6: Continue efforts to encourage students to seek certification post graduation. Also encourage the program to seek accreditation of concentration where appropriate.**

**Response:** Most of the graduates seek Certification as a Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) or Vocational Evaluator (CVE). A few will seek counseling licensure based on the state in which they work. At this time most graduates seek the CRC and CVE.

**Summation of Consultants:** Students continue to seek certification as needed for career.

**Recommendation #7: Develop recruitment plan to increase program enrollment.**

**Response:** Enrollment has increased and has approximately doubled since the last review.

**Summation of Consultants:** On-line program has increased enrollment.

V. **Program Review:**

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<th>Source</th>
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<td>Competent instructors passionate about work</td>
<td>Student surveys, advisory committee survey, key instructor survey</td>
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<td>Availability of instructors</td>
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<td>Strong program directors</td>
<td>advisory committee survey, key instructor survey</td>
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<td>Curriculum provides depth plus hands-on experience</td>
<td>advisory committee survey, student survey, key instructor survey</td>
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<td>National and International reputation</td>
<td>advisory committee survey, student survey, key instructor survey</td>
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<td>CORE accredited program</td>
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<td>High employment rate</td>
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<td>On-line delivery</td>
<td>Student surveys, advisory committee survey, key instructor survey</td>
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<td>Issues of Concern</td>
<td>Source</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>Need more faculty to meet accreditation ratios</td>
<td>Program director, advisory committee survey, key instructor survey</td>
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<td>On-line program – needs additional counseling course – inherent limitations of on-line delivery</td>
<td>Program director, key instructor survey, program director</td>
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<td>Low enrollment in two concentrations</td>
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<td>More field experience early in the program</td>
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<td>Facilities – update classroom facilities</td>
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<td>Additional counseling coursework</td>
<td>Program director, students, CORE accreditation</td>
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**Recommendations for the Program Director**

1. Work with the department chair and dean to address staffing needs addressed by CORE accreditation recommendations of FTE student to FTE faculty ratio and student-advisor ratio.
2. Work with PRC, D2L staff, and others, as deemed appropriate, to develop an independent evaluation for the on-line program to address specific on-line issues.
3. Review low-enrolled concentrations with low-enrollments and evaluate viability. The School-to-Work concentration could provide a collaborative partnership with the School of Education.
4. Investigate the possibility of including more field experiences and counseling coursework in both the on-line and on-campus program.

**Recommendations for the Chair**

1. Work with program director and dean to address staffing needs addressed by CORE accreditation recommendations of FTE student to FTE faculty ratio and student-advisor ratio.
2. Work with the dean to support resources for on-line technology and on-campus labs.

**Recommendations for the Dean**

1. Work with program director and chair to address staffing needs addressed by CORE accreditation recommendations of FTE student to FTE faculty ratio and student-advisor ratio.
2. Continue support for resources needed for on-campus labs and on-line technology.