CONSULTANT RECOMMENDATION REPORT
Planning and Review Committee
Consultant Recommendation

I. Degree: B.S. Vocational Rehabilitation

Date of Review: December 2, 2011

Program Director: Kyle Kleist

PRC Consultant(s): Loretta Thielman, Christine Peterson

Purpose of the Review:

This review was conducted to assess the quality and status of the BS Vocational Rehabilitation program as part of the regularly scheduled program review cycle.

Committee Findings:

Recommend continuation of the program through the next program review cycle, scheduled for 2018-19 academic year.

Abstract:

The B.S. in Vocational Rehabilitation (BSVR) at UW-Stout is a unique program that prepares students for a variety of professional careers serving persons with barriers related to characteristics such as disabilities, aging, offender status, and/or insufficient economic resources. Wisconsin Department of Labor statistics lists Rehabilitation as one of the fastest growing occupations in the state. Career options related to this degree include: Work Experience Coordinator, Behavioral Specialist, Probation/Parole Officer, Community Corrections Counselor, Juvenile Justice Case Coordinator, Independent Living Coordinator, Social Worker, Special Education Teacher, Residential Counselor, and Vocational Evaluator.

The BSVR program offers a solid core of generalist professional preparation courses, with a uniquely broad array of specialty options, including 10 different concentration areas plus an individualized concentration option.

II. Process Followed for Current Review:

The PRC Chair met with the dean, program director and chair of the primary department to discuss the review process. The PRC consultants also met with the program director to review the procedures and offer assistance. Under guidelines developed by the PRC, information regarding the program was gathered from the Placement Office, Institutional Research, the program director, key instructors, program committee, students, and one-year and three-year graduates. Observations were made by the consultants based on these surveys and institutional data and were reported to and discussed by the PRC. The program director presented a summary of his report to the committee and had an opportunity to address concerns. The Dean from the College of Human Development as
well as the Chair the department were in attendance, and available to answer questions. The consultants then wrote the recommendation report. This report was forwarded to the deans for their response. The PRC reviewed the responses from the deans, approved the recommendation report, and forwarded the report to the Faculty Senate.

III. Previous Review Year: 2004-2005

Previous Recommendations for Program Director:

1. Continue the current efforts to eliminate unnecessary course overlap and to help students understand the reasons for necessary course overlap, especially with courses like Psychometric Testing and Evaluation, as well as Caseload Management and Introduction to Vocational Rehabilitation.

2. Assist the special education concentration students and faculty in making the transition to the new DPI standards.

3. Continue to support new faculty to understand the program and advisement process.

4. Since it is unlikely that any additional new courses will be added to the Criminal Justice concentration, it is recommended that continued emphasis be placed on advising students about the rehabilitation rather than enforcement emphasis in this concentration.

5. Identify and modify areas in the curriculum where racial equity can be emphasized.

Response from Program Director:

1. The dean and associate dean will meet with the program director on a periodic basis to ensure faculty in the Department of Rehabilitation and Counseling are working to eliminate course overlap. This will be reviewed with special attention given to orient new positions who teach courses where the overlap perception exists.

2. The Dean of the School of Education and special education program director will be contacted to determine whether the DPI standards are being effectively communicated to students taking the Special Education concentration in the Vocational Rehabilitation program.

3. The dean’s office will continue to support the program director to ensure that faculty are continually updated about the program and to ensure that university-wide policy changes are communicated to students so they will receive the best possible advisement.

4. The dean will meet with the program director to evaluate progress in orienting Criminal Justice students to the overall purpose and outcomes of the vocational rehabilitation program. Although no new courses are to be developed, students who select the Criminal Justice concentration must be well versed and effective in providing a strong rehabilitation orientation to their future career roles. This is necessary because there seems to be less emphasis on the rehabilitation side of this process and more attention to understanding laws and enforcing punitive interventions with this population.
5. The dean’s office will monitor course revisions to ensure diversity issues and multi-cultural orientations to content are included and emphasized.

**Previous Recommendations for Department Chair:**

Assist the program director as needed to provide resources that will permit the program to be registered with the Undergraduate Rehabilitation Registry.

**Response from Department Chair:**

The chair and program director were notified that the college will provide funds to enable the undergraduate program to be listed in the CORE Registry beginning next academic year 2005-06.

**Previous Recommendations for Dean:**

College of Human Development: Identify and secure funding-based opportunities that can assist the B.S. Vocational Rehabilitation program with the updating of its lab-based facilities as well as staffing of such areas. Also support the updating and presentation of materials on the program webpage.

School of Education: Work with the program director of the B.S. in Vocational Rehabilitation program to assist the special education students and faculty in making the transition to the new DPI standards.

**Response from Dean: College of Human Development:**

1. Alan Block and I work closely together to plan the offerings and staffing. With very few exceptions regular SOE faculty/staff now teach all of the required courses.

2. Funds to update laboratories predominantly used by the undergraduate program were provided in Spring 2005. These were in addition to laboratory modernization dollars provided by the university. The college will review the webpage to ensure that it is current and that support is provided to keep it updated for all students and interested prospects.

**School of Education:**

1. Dr. Amy Gillett is the program director for the new Special Education: Cross Categorical certification program. She also works with the students who have the Special Education concentration in the B.S. in Vocational Rehabilitation program. She and the School of Education Coordinating Chair will work with the B.S. in Vocational Rehabilitation program director, students and faculty in transitioning to the PI34 Department of Public Instruction standards. These standards became effective August 31, 2004 and are currently being implemented.
IV. Current Year Program Review: 2011-12

Program Strengths-Indicate Source:

1. This is a dynamic and flexible program to prepare students for successful careers in the chosen fields. Sources: Student surveys, self-report, employer surveys, advisory committee surveys

2. The BSVR has one of the highest enrollments for student diversity across the institution. Sources: Self-study

3. The BSVR program is registered with the Commission on Rehabilitation Education (CORE), and is in the process for full accreditation, anticipated in Summer of 2012. Sources: Self-study, website

4. The program offers 10 concentration areas plus an individualized concentration option, which makes the program unique amongst its peer programs, and provides a wide variety of options for students with diverse career orientations. Sources: Self-study, website, student surveys, key instructor surveys

5. Students have a variety of academic as well as field-based experiences focused on both career awareness as well as professional development. Sources: Self-study, website, student surveys, key instructor surveys

6. A primary emphasis of the program is focused on hands-on, experiential coursework and experiences, which aligns well with the polytechnic mission of the institution. Sources: Self-study, curriculum summary, program plan and course sequence, alumni surveys.

7. Faculty has expertise across a variety of domains related to this broad field, and sustains a commitment to continuing professional development. Sources: Key instructor surveys, self-study, website

8. Program faculty are perceived as passionate, professional and enthusiastic. Sources: Student surveys, program advisory input

9. Program faculty provides intensive student advisement opportunities, including both individual and group advisement events. Sources: Self-study, student surveys, key instructor surveys

10. The Vocational Rehabilitation program promotes student enrollment in a variety of ways, including proactive articulation agreements with regional two-year colleges. Sources: Self-study, program advisory input

11. The program is well regarded by employers and within the professional community. Sources: program advisory input, alumni surveys, employer surveys
**Issues of Concern-Indicate Source:**

1. Size of student enrollment resulting in limited course accessibility and student's ability to follow their prescribed course sequence. Sources: Self-study, Faculty surveys.

2. Ability of program faculty to keep up with effective student advisement based on large student enrollments. Sources: Self-study, Faculty surveys.

3. Organization of student program plans and course sequences as integrated with required coursework housed in other programs. Sources: Student surveys.

4. Student's understanding of perceived areas of content overlap across program courses. Sources: Self-study, Faculty surveys, Student surveys.

5. Continued facilitation of student's professional writing skills. Sources: Self-Study.

6. Up-to-date technological resources, lab equipment and training tools. Sources: Self-study, Student surveys, Employer surveys.

7. Physical accessibility to classrooms utilized by BSVR program. Source: Student surveys.

**Recommendations for the Program Director:**

1. Work with program faculty to identify a robust but realistic student enrollment goal that allow for adequate student access to required coursework and effective student advisement for program faculty.

2. Facilitate collaboration with directors/representatives from related programs to coordinate course schedules that maximize student program plans and course sequences.

3. Program faculty has worked diligently over time to minimize redundancy and content overlap across courses. This process has identified some necessary areas for planned overlap in order to master and/or generalize skills. Program faculty may benefit from strategic planning and communication with students about this necessity, in order to increase understanding context on the issue.

4. Support program faculty in their continued efforts to increase student professional writing skills.

5. Work with program faculty to identify resources to support up-to-date technological resources, lab equipment and related training tools. This may include grant proposals for lab modifications and other related institutional resources.

6. Continue to work with institutional departments, including facilities and ADA representatives, to maximize access to relevant campus buildings.
**Recommendations for the Chair of Department:** Vocational Rehabilitation

1. Support the efforts of the BSVR in pursuit of full accreditation from the Commission on Rehabilitation Education (CORE), anticipated Summer of 2012.

**Recommendations for the Dean of the College of Education, Health and Human Sciences and School of Education**

College of Education, Health and Human Sciences:
1. Work with the department and program to identify and secure funding-based opportunities that will assist the B.S. Vocational Rehabilitation program with the updating of its lab-based facilities as well as physical accessibility issues to buildings, consistent with CORE accreditation priorities.

School of Education:
1. Support facilitation between BSVR program and Special Education concentration faculty and coursework, accordance with DPI standards, e-portfolio requirements, etc.