Program Director Self-Study Report  
For Program:  
Bachelors of Science in Vocational Rehabilitation

Submitted by Program Director Name:  
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Planning and Review Committee

The Bachelors of Science in Vocational Rehabilitation (BSVR) at UW-Stout is a unique program and prepares students for a variety of professional careers serving persons with barriers related to characteristics such as disabilities, aging, offender status, or insufficient economic resources. According to the Chair of the Rehabilitation Education focused committee on Undergraduate Standards and Accreditation committee, there are approximately 54 undergraduate rehabilitation programs, with 2 of these located outside of the United States. There are 29 registered undergraduate rehabilitation programs listed by the professional accrediting body. UW-Stout BSVR is unique among those programs. Many programs focus on graduate education preparation or simply expose students to disability issues and experience. Conversely, UW-Stout BSVR offers a solid core of generalist professional preparation courses. Many other rehabilitation programs are co-located with doctoral programs so most undergraduate classes are taught by graduate assistants. At UW-Stout, core undergraduate courses are taught by Ph.D. level faculty or by the Program Director.

UW-Stout BSVR is also unique in the Midwest. UW-Madison offers an undergraduate degree but focuses on preparation for graduate study rather than on preparing professional practitioners. The two other Midwest programs, Northern Illinois and Southern Illinois, prepare practitioners at the undergraduate level but are much more restrictive in the scope of preparation (one program focuses exclusively on deafness and the other on communicative disorders). The undergraduate UW-Stout VR program offers broad preparation in rehabilitation service provision with a unique array of specialty options including 10 different concentrations.

The BSVR program responds to the needs of society. There is a growing need for rehabilitation professionals in our society as the population ages and as advances in medicine and technology allow persons with more significant disability to live longer, fuller lives. Economic conditions have displaced many people creating the need for effective career and job development services. At the state and county levels, budget issues create a greater emphasis on rehabilitation of offenders versus incarceration, as well as coordination of services and supports so that older persons and those with more significant disabilities can remain in their own homes, rather than in more institutionalized and costly settings. BSVR graduates work as residential counselors, special education teachers, correctional and law enforcement officers, home-care coordinators, employment specialists, or in other human services rehabilitation areas. As a result rehabilitation is identified by the most recent Wisconsin Department of Labor projections and Bureau of Labor Statistics as among the fastest growing occupations in Wisconsin and in the United States.
1. UW-STOUT’S STRATEGIC PLAN

The mission of the University of Wisconsin-Stout is career-focused, comprehensive polytechnic university where diverse students, faculty and staff integrate applied learning, scientific theory, humanistic understanding, creativity and research to solve real-world problems, grow the economy and serve a global society.

UW-Stout Enduring Goals:
1. Offer high quality, challenging academic programs that influence and respond to a changing society.
2. Preserve and enhance our educational processes through the application of active learning principles.
3. Promote excellence in teaching, research, scholarship and service.
4. Recruit and retain a diverse university population.
5. Foster a collegial, trusting and tolerant campus climate.
6. Provide safe, accessible, effective, efficient and inviting physical facilities.
7. Provide responsive, efficient, and cost effective educational support programs and services.

Focus 2015 Goals
• Develop knowledge, respect and validation of differing values, cultures and beliefs in students, faculty and staff
• Expand early and ongoing experiential learning opportunities including undergraduate applied research and entrepreneurship.
• Focus on Sustainability: Implement key elements of the presidents Climate Commitment and Educational and Applied Research Initiatives.

1.1 Describe how the program relates to UW-Stout's Strategic Plan.

UW-Stout BSVR is a high quality professional preparation program that offers dynamic, responsive education to meet the changing needs of a diverse society. The program prepares students for careers in varied settings serving a range of disenfranchised or vulnerable groups. Rehabilitation is an evidenced based practice with more than 50 years of robust research that is the base for the training within the program. The program relies on applied learning methods such as case activities, interaction with consumers and professionals in the field, as well as laboratory and field site experiences throughout the program. This ensures that students can be flexible in application of foundational knowledge so that throughout their careers, they can adapt methods and strategies to meet emerging needs and can influence outcomes for individuals and the larger system where appropriate.

1.1.1 Describe early and ongoing experiential learning opportunities to students within the program.

Students become engaged in experiential learning very early in the BSVR program. Students in the two introductory classes, REHAB 101 (Intro to Rehab) and REHAB 102 (Community Resources) complete an 8 hour Service Learning Project and an Agency Site Visit which provide student the opportunity to develop an awareness of the variety of community agencies and the services they provide as well as to give back to the community.
Students are then required to complete three (3) experiential learning courses within the BSVR program prior to graduation.

1. **Rehab Practicum**: Sophomore year, students are required to work 100 hours with an agency related to rehabilitation or program concentration.
2. **Field Experience in Rehabilitation**: Junior year, students are required to work 160 hours with an agency related to rehabilitation or program concentration.
3. **Advanced Practicum**: Final semester senior year, students are required to work 160 hours with an agency directly related to their concentration or area of study within the program.

These three (3) experiential learning courses provide students in the BSVR program the opportunity for career exploration, demonstration of professional and ethical behaviors on the job, and demonstration of core professional competencies prior to graduation.

1.1.2 What are the initiatives used to increase and support program enrollment, student retention and graduation rates?

The BSVR Program works closely with the Office of Admissions to increase and support program enrollment with related activities that include Campus Preview and Multicultural Student Days, meetings with interested High school and transfer students and Freshmen Orientation meetings. The BSVR program has also developed articulation agreements with technical and two-year colleges to increase transfer student enrollment. Program webpage additions also serve to attract potential students. The Program Director also serves on the Chippewa Valley Technical College (CVTC) Substance Abuse Advisory Board and the Inver Hills Community College Human Services Advisory Board.

To increase student retention and graduation rates, each semester the BSVR Program Director conducts a transcript review for all students. The Program Director and Faculty Advisor follow up with all students that receive below a C in required courses, with a course grade too low to be used toward graduation, as well as with all students with low semester or cumulative GPAs. Efforts are made to help such students generate ideas for enhanced academic success. In addition, the Program Director follows up with students who are no longer enrolled in the Program, to discuss their current status and to help them make realistic plans. The transcript reviews in 2010-2011 revealed that 21 students received low semester grade point averages or received less than a C in some class. Each student received an email discussing consequences if good progress was not maintained, and an offer of assistance in making schedule adjustments or other strategies for improved success. Students that earned less than a C in a required class, were reminded by email to adjust their schedules for repeat, and were encouraged to work with the instructor, program director and/or advisor to enhance their success. Students are also encouraged to use available university resources, such as the Math and Writing labs to assist with academic problems. Finally, the BSVR Program Director works closely with both Disability Services and the Dean of Students Office if student health, disability or personal issues arise to ensure that students get appropriate accommodations and services to ensure academic success. The program also uses experiential course tracking to identify problems.
students may have when applying competencies in the professional setting. Students take experiential courses in the second, third and fourth year of the program. This allows for corrective action if necessary at each level of experiential courses, and ensures that students have mastered and demonstrated the core program competencies prior to graduation.

In fall 2011, the BSVR program began a Learning Community to increase student retention. Incoming freshmen are enrolled in designated learning community sections of REHAB 101 Introduction to Rehabilitation and BIO 132 Human Biology. Originally the intent was to include ENG 101 and MATH 118 as well, however many freshmen need to take remedial English and Math which then created problems with having all learning community freshmen in the same courses. A Learning Community is planned for fall 2012, with changes incorporated from lessons learned during the initial Learning Community rollout.

Advisement is also a mechanism used to increase student retention and graduation rates. Each semester the BSVR program conducts group advisement sessions, where all program faculty and former graduate students assist students with course selection. Students also have an assigned faculty advisor to assist with selection of courses, address student concerns, and to identify and rectify academic problems. The Program Director is advisor for all seniors in the program. Students are required to meet for individual advisement their last two semesters in the Program to ensure that students have met all graduation requirements and to improve graduation rates for students in the program.

1.1.3 Respond to the program facts and your program’s creative endeavors related to the diversity aspects of Inclusive Excellence: “UW-Stout’s plan to intentionally integrate diversity efforts into the core aspects of everything we do. Diversity is broadly defined and includes, but is not limited to, race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age and disability status.”

The field of Vocational Rehabilitation was developed specifically as a mechanism to enhance inclusivity for all disenfranchised populations. The rehabilitation philosophy, principles and practice are premised on individualized services that address personal, social and systemic barriers that otherwise prevent optimal functioning in meaningful life roles and in the community. As a result, the UW-Stout BSVR program was designed to ensure that students have the knowledge, skills and abilities to provide services that respond to all individual and background characteristics of the persons served. The Program provides repeated and continuous exposure to the experience of difference, whether as a result of demographic differences (e.g. age, gender, sexual orientation), culture (e.g. race, ethnicity, geography), or life experience (e.g. disability or health status, criminal history, economic or employment status). A variety of mediums are used within courses including: field trips, first person accounts, film or video, case studies, laboratory exercises, small and large group discussion, contacts with professionals, rehabilitation club activities, etc. Class and laboratory activities are supplemented by previously referenced field work integrated at all levels of the Program to provide real life experience to understand how such characteristics impact the lives of people served. Throughout the program, student personal and professional development is supported related to the attitudinal and affective domain to ensure
students are equipped to effectively advocate for and to promote change related to inclusion.

Program attention in this area extends beyond formal academic training. The nature of rehabilitation work requires that professionals be fully vested in inclusivity. Informal interactions, peer relationships and the development of friendships with individuals from diverse backgrounds are critical formative experiences. The BSVR program and the field as a whole, continue to attract high numbers of persons with visible and invisible disabilities. The BSVR program continues to have one of the highest minority enrollments of any UW-Stout undergraduate program, with 11% of students of racial or ethnic minority status. This helps create an inclusive and diverse learning environment in the classroom for all students in the program.

1.1.4 Describe the environmental sustainability initiatives of your program: “UW-Stout’s attempt to make students, faculty, and staff more aware of the importance of sustaining our environment through energy conservation, waste reduction, and other measures that will not bring harm to the environment, and to provide students with innovative research opportunities in these areas.” BSVR students take general education classes that focus on environmental sustainability concepts. Within the program, students are repeatedly challenged to consider social and political contexts that affect service delivery. This training has broad application for leading a responsible life and actively engaging as a responsible citizen. While not specifically oriented to environmental education and action, program competencies challenge students to wrestle with concepts related to resource sufficiency. Repeatedly students are reminded of their obligation to align actions with the public good including avoiding duplication of efforts or waste of resources. Students are also continuously challenged to align actions with professional ethics and standards. Such reflective professional practice has implications for conduct in the student’s personal life. This in turn should allow students to benefit from the understanding developed in the general education curriculum and thus lead to actual behavior to support environmental sustainability.

1.1.5 List various training and development opportunities of core faculty teaching within your program.

All core Rehabilitation faculty are Certified Rehabilitation Counselors (CRCs). To carry the Rehabilitation Counselor credential, each CRC must document 100 hours of continuing education in each five year period. These 100 hours of training/professional development includes 50 hours of specified domain content and 10 hours of ethics training.

The Department of Rehabilitation and Counseling is very proactive in the use of professional development goals for each faculty member. The Department annually supports each faculty member to participate and present at a national and a state conference. All Rehabilitation faculty engage in service activities within the professional organizations and in the local service delivery arena. Individual faculty also receive departmental support to go to training, purchase texts or materials specific to their teaching assignments so courses can stay current. Finally, faculty participates in university sponsored Scholarship of Teaching & Learning activities. The
Department has also sponsored specialized training specific to enhance the quality of teaching and educational programming (e.g. training on Qualtrix, Adobe Captivate).

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAM

2.1 Curriculum Design

2.1.1 State the program objectives.

Statement of Program Objectives: The Department of Rehabilitation and Counseling provides academic and experiential coursework leading to a Bachelor of Science Degree in Vocational Rehabilitation. The mission of the BSVR program is twofold: first, to prepare men and women for careers as specialists in a variety of rehabilitation settings. A second objective is to provide a comprehensive broad based education for those persons wishing to pursue advanced professional study in rehabilitation. All students enrolled in the program must also complete a concentration, specialization, or minor as a requirement of the program.

Description of Program Objectives: There are three basic objectives of the BSVR program:
1. Students will have a thorough understanding of the “Foundations of Rehabilitation,” which includes philosophy, values, and professional ethics.
2. Students will have a comprehensive understanding of people and disabilities as they relate to rehabilitation.
3. Students will understand and demonstrate professional behaviors in the application of the rehabilitation process as it applies to persons with disabilities or who are disadvantaged.

Expected “Competencies” upon graduation:
1. Understand the underlying philosophy of rehabilitation in America.
2. Understand the historical significance of legislation in the development and evolution of the vocational rehabilitation movement.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the rehabilitation process.
4. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of factors related to the assessment of persons seeking vocational rehabilitation.
5. Understand the medical, psychological, social, behavioral, and vocational implications of disability.
6. Demonstrate knowledge of the importance of planning in the rehabilitation process.
7. Become familiar with the components of the vocational evaluation process. This process includes using data to understand current function as well as requisite function for success consistent with person’s chosen goal. Then analyzing gaps between current and requisite function to identify steps necessary to allow person to succeed with chosen goal.
8. Become aware of organizational behaviors of community agencies and resources devoted to helping persons with disabilities through vocational rehabilitation and independent living services.
9. Demonstrate skill in communicating professionally and effectively with clients, referral personnel, colleagues, and representatives of rehabilitation resources.
10. Demonstrate knowledge of job analysis, job development and job placement techniques.
11. Understand the importance of testing in the vocational evaluation process.
12. Understand case management and caseload management as they apply to the rehabilitation process.
13. Understand group behaviors.
14. Operate as a team member in working with other professionals.
15. Understand how people change and how behaviors can be adjusted within a variety of environments. (Disability Adjustment)
16. Understand the current and future rehabilitation business environment.
17. Understand the needs of the diverse client population.
18. Understand elementary theories and techniques of personal and vocational counseling.
19. Understand the family’s impact on the client and the rehabilitation process.
20. Understand and promote the concept of maximizing client independence.
21. Understand the ethical and professional responsibilities of the rehabilitationist.
22. Understand the importance of advocacy and improvement in the rehabilitation process.
23. Understand the role and function of rehabilitationist.

2.1.2 What are the initiatives used to determine the need for program revision, including but not limited to program enrollment, student retention or student graduation rates.

There are many initiatives used to determine the need for revision to the BSVR program, keep up to date with professional standards, and meet the needs of a changing workforce. The following initiatives are also used to address graduation rates for the program, which has been at nearly one hundred percent over the past five years.

- Stout faculty leadership at the national level has helped to set accreditation standards and practices for undergraduate Rehabilitation programs. The program in turn has been aligned with those standards and practices.
- Feedback from BSVR Program Advisory Committee, with members from public, private and non-profit agencies.
- Formal and informal follow up with and feedback from employers and past graduates working in the rehabilitation field.
- Experiential course contacts at both the undergraduate and graduate levels that promote understanding of emerging service delivery issues and specific employer recommendation.
- Rehabilitation faculty leadership in professional organizations at both state and national levels.
- Rehabilitation faculty involvement and service on a variety of community agency boards that provide direct services to consumers/clients.

Enrollment in the BSVR program is also a major determining factor in program revisions. In the past two years, the Department has addressed retention by prioritizing introductory courses. These courses are only taught by core Rehabilitation faculty to ensure consistency and to address student academic or developmental issues early in the program. In a short time this move has demonstrated both an increase in student performance and retention in the program.

2.1.3 Is your program defined as a distance learning program (yes/no)? No, the BSVR program is not a distance learning program.
2.1.4 Give examples and explain the ways in which the program intentionally integrates diversity efforts, functions and contributes to the program.

The BSVR has one of the highest minority enrollments of any undergraduate program at UW-Stout. Minority student representation in the program in itself helps to raise awareness of diversity issues and create an inclusive classroom environment. This is also true when it comes to representation of persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities have historically been drawn to the program and similar to minority students, the presence of persons with both visible and invisible disabilities creates a climate of awareness and acceptance by other students in the program. BSVR Program Advisory Committee has been revised to include more student input, with a minority student, as well as a transfer/nontraditional and traditional student. The website and key leadership roles for the Program also reflect diverse student participation. The Voc Rehab Club, a student run organization in the program, also promotes diversity in scholarship fundraising and service to the community, especially to persons with disabilities.

The three experiential learning courses within the BSVR program place students in a variety of setting that help to raise awareness of diversity issues in society and expose students to a variety of diverse populations. Finally, Rehabilitation faculty continually address diversity in the classroom and the focus of the program is to teach students to work with disenfranchised populations.

2.1.5 UW-Stout “programs are presented through an approach to learning which involves combining theory, practice and experimentation” (Mission Statement). Briefly describe the components of your program where students participate in scholarly activity such as: research, scholarship, experiential learning and creative endeavor.

Students in the BSVR program have assisted Rehabilitation faculty in presentations at both state and national conferences. A study of the Dunn County Diversion Court has provided a revolving opportunity for BSVR students to engage in research that impacts funding and services at the local level.

Since rehabilitation focuses on enhanced life and outcomes for people served, graduates must be very creative to meet the complexity and diversity of human needs and concerns present in their work. Lab activities replicate demands in the field with safe learning and practice exposure, and as a result students are equipped to provide services. Additionally lab courses provide student with direct weekly opportunity to apply what they’ve learned in lecture, and promote development of knowledge and skills relevant for success of hard to serve populations. Required field experience occurs at all levels of the program. Students have the opportunity to practice what they’ve learned in the classroom with guided analysis via seminar or weekly reports to identify best practice gaps. Students are also offered support in identifying solutions to enhance service delivery.

2.1.6 Does your program currently have an accreditation or certification agency that reviews the program? If so, which agency and to what extent do they influence the structure of the curriculum?
Currently BSVR is a registered program through the Commission on Rehabilitation Education (CORE). In 2010 UW Stout BSVR was selected as one of two undergraduate rehabilitation programs to pilot standards and processes for full accreditation at the undergraduate level. Accreditation is expected in July of 2012. Feedback from accreditation self-study and site visit identified numerous program strengths. Concerns were expressed about campus physical accessibility, and the need to specify Internship site supervisor qualifications. New bus service allows students to use accessible student housing on North campus. Classroom assignments in the VR building have helped to reduce the need for students to navigate hills with excessive slope. Program Director and faculty continue to work with campus committees (e.g. ADA) to address physical barriers. Faculty teaching assignments have been shifted to ensure consistent experiential course assignment. Sites and supervisors are approved by faculty teaching experiential courses. Generally site supervisors must have 2 years of experience in their current position to be approved, although instructor approval allows supervision in even the newest practice areas (e.g. emergence of ADRCs since last PRC report). Accreditation standards will continue to be incorporated in program improvement plans and efforts. Faculty and Program Director consult standards when considering any program or curricular change to ensure continued compliance.

2.2 Faculty/Academic Staff Expertise

2.2.1 List the key people in the curriculum. A key instructor is one who teaches at least one required professional course in your program.

Kyle Kleist MS, Lecturer, BSVR Program Director
Kathleen Deery PhD, Professor
David Delambo RhD, Associate Professor
Susie Eberhard PhD, Professor, Department Chair
Debra Homo PhD, Associate Professor, MSVR Online Program Director
Michelle Hamilton PhD, Associate Professor, MSVR On-Campus Program Director
DeLeana Strohl PhD, Assistant Professor
Daniel Kelsey ABD, Assistant Professor

2.2.2 What additional areas of faculty/academic staff expertise are currently needed?

Currently the BSVR program is short one ¾ time position, with the diversion of a Rehabilitation faculty member serving as the Associate Dean of the College of Education Health and Human Sciences. This loss to the Program is aggravated due to high administrative demands within the department that divert rehabilitation faculty teaching effort. With the new .25 NSF grant administration allocation, as well as the duties of department chair and 3 rehabilitation program directors, a total of 1.25 Rehabilitation faculty FTE is removed from instruction. This then cumulatively results in an instruction deficit of 2 FTE rehabilitation instruction positions. Although there are currently two faculty members with extensive experience in Vocational Evaluation, both of these faculty members are highly involved in the graduate MSVR program. An additional faculty member with experience in Vocational Evaluation and Assessment that could focus on undergraduate courses is needed. This would help offset administrative demands and allow core faculty to teach BSVR courses with less
adjunct instructor reliance.

2.3 Facilities

2.3.1 What special facilities and or capital equipment currently available are utilized and how do they strengthen this program? What additional facilities (special classrooms, labs, additional space involving minor construction) have been requested and has that been filled?

Students in the BSVR program utilize the Vocational Evaluation, Counseling Process Independent Living Skills labs. The Vocational Evaluation lab provides students with up to date computer based testing and evaluation materials. This allows them to stay current with the profession. The Counseling Process lab provides up to date recording equipment for taping sessions and provides a therapeutic learning environment for acquisition of basic counseling skills. Both labs have recently been updated with lab modifications. The Department will be funding purchase of 2 iPads so that students can be trained in emerging relevant disability accommodation applications. There is a need for updated assistive technology in the Independent Living lab. The lab is used in training for Mental Health and Rehabilitation students in COUN 494/694 and in Rehab 355/555. Changes are also planned to expand the Independent Living class to a 3 credit offering so up to date technology is critical.

2.4 Resources for the Program

2.4.1 Evaluate as to currency/up-to-datedness, quality, relevance, and quantity of the library resources to support the program. List or describe any information or service needs created over the past three years by concentration and course changes and include a brief statement as to how these needs have been met by the library.

Library resources provide stellar services in support of the BSVR Program. Students have always been provided with up-to-date, high quality, relevant, and sufficient quantity of resources to meet the needs of the students in the program. Each semester library staff provides an outstanding presentation to students on how to use library resources and a listing of resources specific to the BSVR program. Additionally, Instructional Resources has always been generous in allowing the program to keep additional resources and understanding the unique needs of the program.

2.4.2 List any special resources used to meet program and/or student needs such as: Academic Computing, Instructional Technology Services for curriculum materials development, ASPIRE, Research Center, Media Self-Instruction Lab, Academic Skills Center, etc. List or describe any other resources which are needed to meet the program objectives with a brief statement as to how these would enhance or maintain the concentration quality.

As previously noted, special resources used by students in the BSVR program are the Vocational Evaluation, Counseling Process and Independent Living Skills labs. The program also works closely with students in the ASPIRE program and refers students to the Academic Skills Center to address academic needs and concerns. The Program Director and other Rehabilitation faculty also work closely with Disability Services, as
there are many students with a variety of disability related accommodation needs within the BSVR program in comparison to other undergraduate programs at UW-Stout.

2.5 Assessment in the Major

2.5.1 Attach your most recent Assessment in the Major report.

3. Supply evidence of the quality of the graduates of the program.

BSVR graduates are in high demand with excellent placement rates. As is evidenced above, student performance in the capstone experiential course Advanced Practicum demonstrate that graduates have mastered program competencies and are well positioned to succeed and to make significant contributions in the field. Feedback from alumni and employers demonstrates that students

3.1 Describe the demand for graduates and anticipated changes or trends in such positions/roles.

As has been referenced throughout the body of this report, employment trends are very strong for rehabilitation as a field. Graduate employment rates have consistently been at or near 100%. In the last two employment surveys conducted by UW-Stout Career Services employment rates were 98% and 100% respectively. Due to the nature of BSVR training and the focus on meeting changing societal needs, it is expected that employment will remain strong as it is currently and has been historically. Examples of employment trends not elsewhere described include the personnel crisis in the state federal rehabilitation system that has been identified by the federal government. BSVR graduates are now being hired as case coordinators to address personnel shortage. Students are also entering graduate training to practice as rehabilitation counselors within that system. The recent Health Care Act has also allowed undergraduates to practice and to bill as Substance Abuse Counselors. It is expected that this is an employment area that will continue to grow. National role and function studies conducted by the accrediting body will continue to inform the program about changes in the professional role. Mechanisms to incorporate feedback from constituencies, employers and alumni described throughout the body of this report also help to continuously adapt the program to reflect changes in graduate roles and positions. Finally, recent trends in allowance of Medicaid and Medicare funds for community based rather than institutionalized services have created a demand for graduates working with older adults and persons with disabilities in community based service programs.

3.2 Interpret the data from the Planning, Assessment, Research and Quality (PARQ) office of the alumni follow-up surveys.

- Student responses were low in the 5 year (3%) and 2 year (4%) General Survey and Program Specific surveys. Generally, alumni response rates were average in comparison to response rates for all programs at the U, but low in comparison to program history at 24% for alumni out 5 years (2004 grads) and 36% for alumni out for one year (2008 grads). Responses to survey items for both groups were generally at least at a moderate or acceptable level, with means at 3 or higher on a scale of 1-5. Means for students out of the program for 5 years trended higher than for graduates
out in the field only one year. Both groups rated the program as effective (1 year - 4.06/ 5 year - 4.17), their own preparation as better than others at time of hire (both groups had a mean rating of 4). Value of education (1 year - 3.33/ 5 year - 3.92). Employment rates were consistent with the Career Services survey. In this more extensive survey, there were still 2 of the 2008 graduates looking for work. Of the graduates out 5 years, there were 2 homemakers and 1 other person who was unemployed but not seeking work. Both groups indicated that jobs were directly related to training (1 year - 4.42/ 5 year - 4.3). Mean salaries were higher than the Career Services placement survey result, with first year alumni mean wage at $37,400 & 5 year mean wage of $40,125 after removal of a part-time salary. Positive comments tended to cluster around relationships with faculty and classmates, small classes and individual attention, and focus in education on what is needed for success in field. Areas for improvement mentioned cheaper tuition and more access to online program, better services through Career Services, keeping good teachers, and several comments specific to concentration (e.g. Special Education certification). Surveys and reporting for the general education components were not consistent with past reports so there is limited ability to draw conclusions from data until patterns emerge.

Results of a program survey developed in cooperation with the Program Advisory Committee were also reviewed. Of the 1 year alumni only 4 provided suggestions and 3 described ways to improve concentration training. There were more responses from the students out since 2004 with 5 of 12 providing input. The low number of responses makes it hard to generalize from input, but results were discussed with faculty and program committee.

Response to the Employer Survey was extremely low with no responses in the 2 year and two responses in the 5 year. However, the two employers that did respond rated students very highly. Students had a mean rating of 4.5 – 5 for educational preparation, communication, analytical reasoning, creativity and critical thinking, leadership, and interpersonal skills. This was also true for preparation of students in comparison to other employees. Although response rate was low, ratings and comments are very consistent with results from prior years. Specifically employers rate BSVR graduates as well qualified and better prepared than students from other schools or from other programs. The mean rating was 4.5 – 5 for preparation for professional employment, familiarity with current methods, familiarity with current technology, and knowledge of specific skills required for the position.

3.3 Interpret the major results from your Program Specific Surveys (students, faculty and advisory committee) conducted by the Planning and Review Committee.

Mean ratings for faculty within the program were good to excellent across survey areas. Concerns were noted related to facilities: specifically classroom and laboratory size, wireless access and electrical outlets, furniture that fits class activities and accessibility for students with disabilities. Narrative comments described large class sizes as a barrier to achieving course and program goals. Concerns were also expressed about the diversity of student employment goals, specializations, and the difficulty of fostering the rehabilitation focus of all students during their time in the program. Strengths noted were the quality and expertise of faculty who are collegial and connect with students in the program to foster a culture of collaboration and inclusion, as well as excellent program direction. Faculty
present, publish and hold leadership positions in the profession which helps to maintain the stellar reputation of the Program. The applied competency based training that results in excellent work preparation as well as the responsiveness of the Program in meeting changing societal needs were also identified as program strengths.

- Key faculty outside the department had responses similar to faculty within the department, with mean survey ratings in the good to excellent range. Concerns focused on excessive numbers of students in the program and size of sections impeding discussion and teaching activities, and thus affecting rigor. Strengths echoed those of faculty within the program and included quality improvement applied continuously, applied learning based on demands in field, connection with community, sincere and experienced students, knowledgeable and caring faculty/staff, as well as strong support for students.

- Advisory Committee response rate was lower (55%) but showed that the committee meets regularly and often enough and that members are informed so that input is not only valuable, but incorporated in program efforts. Recommendations included efforts to target freshmen retention and student writing competence both are areas with recent program action, as well as concern about the number and name relevance of specialty areas in the program. Strengths included diversity of members, responsiveness to needs of society, breadth of training and many experiential opportunities, outstanding program direction and faculty, resulting in graduates that are properly trained and have a great reputation in the workforce.

- Student response rates (33%) were lowest compared to response rates for other key BSVR constituencies surveyed. More seniors (N=31) than Juniors (N=15) responded. BSVR student responses were slightly less strongly in agreement than other students that the program enhanced critical thinking skills (4.24 BSVR compared to 4.31 for all students) and problem solving skills (4.22 BSVR compared to 4.25 for all students). Results were at the mean for redundancy (3.67) and reasonable program length (4.02). In all other areas BSVR student responses were more positive than the mean student responses across other programs. Narrative responses showed that student perceived weaknesses related to program size and resources, specifically concern about scheduling conflicts and sufficient offerings of classes with enough seats to keep on track for graduation, adequate numbers of faculty to ensure a breadth of exposure, and use of adjuncts. There were two students who referenced relevance of training for criminal justice jobs, there were also comments about repetition of information or redundancy in class content, several students felt that there were excessive experiential demands, as well as two students who referenced advisement more specifically getting help with concerns outside the major and another who referenced need for help finding experiential sites and work after graduation. Recommendations for program improvement echoed responses when students were asked about program weaknesses. In a follow up question specific to redundancy, one student indicated that all repetition was necessary, another referenced general education classes and two students responded that there was unnecessary repetition in psych testing and vocational evaluation. Since this was an area that emerged in the last program review, faculty met and reviewed all curriculum and course content. Effort was made to have the same faculty always teach the assessment and evaluation courses. Faculty determined that while student perception might be that content is redundant, student performance in those classes demonstrates that students need the repetition to master the material. Reported
strengths included references to hands on and practical experiences throughout the
program, with education that is very focused and organized to prepare students for a
range of career options and that supports their personal and professional growth.
Many responses related to the experienced, dedicated, knowledgeable, passionate,
accessible and respectful instructors, and there was also acknowledgement of the
excellent program director.

4. Supply evidence of continuous improvement efforts of the program.

As per survey responses from all constituencies, the program director and instructors work
hard to keep education relevant and responsive to emerging demands in society and thus
within the field. Among recent improvements that address issues within the body of this report
are faculty efforts to examine all courses for redundancy. While there is some student
perception of redundancy, gaps in student competence in advanced courses validates
repetition of content to ensure mastery. Achievement in the final experiential course when all
competencies must be demonstrated suggests that any repetition is successful in
accomplishing program objectives. Other evidence includes recent changes in concentrations
(e.g. updating and changing the name of the previously titled rehabilitation technology
concentration and addition of a Substance Use Disorder concentration). The program is also
targeting retention with the development of a Learning Community for freshmen in the
program and competency of all program students writing skills (writing requirement and
addition of credit to focus on written skill demonstration in Field Experience). The
Assessment in the Major report is developed each year and reflects input from all stakeholder
groups. That report anchors improvement goals and provides an annual progress check on
achievement of the goals set in the previous report.

4.1 Describe the strengths and unique features of your program that distinguish it from
similar programs. What are the weaknesses of the program?

Program Strengths:

- The Rehabilitation philosophy provides students going into a variety of helping
  professional roles with vulnerable and disenfranchised persons with the academic
  and professional experiences needed to bring about positive behavior change with
  individuals.
- The program does a excellent job with student advisement. On Advisement Day
  each semester, the program provides group advisement meeting for freshmen,
sophomores, and juniors. All Rehabilitation faculty and former undergraduate
  student enrolled in the MSVR program assist student with selection of courses.
  Additionally, all freshmen, sophomores, and juniors are assigned a faculty advisor,
  and Program Director provides one on one advisement to all seniors.
- The Rehabilitation faculty has extensive professional experience working with a
  variety of different agencies and engages in continuing professional development.
- Students are provided training and experience in their experiential learning courses
  that build professional competencies and provide career awareness.
- Student hands on learning is a cornerstone of the program and is emphasized
  through class activities, as well as in lab based and experiential courses.
- Availability of Rehabilitation faculty to assist students in professional and personal
development that effects in the program and ultimate performance in the
professional role.
• Program has articulation agreements with two year colleges that promote and support enrollment.
• Use of campus resources with courses from a variety of disciplines integrated into concentrations to support student learning.
• Students and employers have continually rated the program very positively and indicate that learning objectives mirror the professional competencies in the field.

Program Weaknesses:
• Currently there has been a growth in program size that has resulted in larger class sizes. This has created barriers to inclusive and creative learning within the classroom, especially for lab based courses within the program. There is need for additional program faculty.
• Course offerings and scheduling outside of the BSVR program have created access problems. Students have difficulty getting needed courses especially those within specific concentrations. Some courses are not offered on the timetable indicated in the course catalog or are offered during Winterm and summer. This can create a financial obstacle for students that rely on financial aid to cover tuition.
• Continued emphasis on development of student writing skills. This was an area that employers identified for improvement. Curricular changes were implemented this year, and additional Field Experience credit now focuses on writing skill feedback. Steps are being taken to monitor results.
• Integration of students with diverse viewpoints (i.e. Criminal Justice) into the program and rehabilitation philosophy.
• Identify and address overlap and redundancy of information and content within Rehabilitation courses. Work with students to ensure that they provide feedback about perceived overlap on course evaluations outside of rehabilitation courses.
• Continue to improve student advisement. Although this is program strength as well, some students still feel they receive inadequate advisement.

4.2 Submit evidence of program response to the concerns and recommendations in your previous program review.

Issues of Concern

1. **The ability to maintain up-to date and functional laboratory equipment/tools, the program webpage, as well as sufficient open lab times continue as a priority.**  
Program Response: Repeated funding for laboratory modification proposals have helped to update lab equipment. The website has been updated and Access funds have been used for graduate assistants to allow sufficient open lab time. None of these issues emerged in the recent program review. Physical lab and classroom space is an emergent issue.

2. **Concern exists with regard to the extent of course overlap with courses like Psychometric Testing and Evaluation, as well as Caseload Management and Introduction to Vocational Rehabilitation.**  
Response: All coursework was reviewed by faculty and has eliminated any overlap concerns in the Intro and Caseload classes. Psychometric Testing and Vocational Evaluation were deemed to have overlap and repetition that is critical to build student competence.
3. Feelings expressed primarily by the special education concentration students indicate that some faculty/staff do not possess the appropriate technical/teaching skills, and also that students were uninformed about e-portfolio requirements.

Response: Efforts were made to work closely with SpEd faculty. No similar problems were noted in this review.

4. Development of new concentrations coupled with the influx of new faculty has required additional attention to the adequacy and consistency of program courses, as well as of student advisement.

Response: Considerable investment has been made in orienting faculty and advisors. Recent review identifies faculty and advisement/support as program strengths.

5. Integration of new concentrations (i.e. Criminal Justice) continues to be of concern.

Response: Considerable attention has been paid to integrating students within the various concentrations. This begins in the Introduction to Rehabilitation course so students can recognize the relevance of rehabilitation training. Some concerns continue about ensuring that students understand the uniqueness of Criminal Justice training at Stout as it relates to the ability to be successful when working with the varied populations present within the CJ system. Efforts are made by faculty and Program Director working with Admissions and the Advisement Center.

6. Various competencies relating to conducting research, use of math or statistics, and appreciating the need for racial equity received somewhat lower, although still positive ratings.

Response: Faculty emphasizes the need for inclusiveness throughout the program. Student ratings of sensitivity to race and ethnicity were above the mean for other reviewed programs.

7. By not being registered with the Undergraduate Rehabilitation Registry, the program is unable to demonstrate compliance with prevailing professional standards, which may negatively impact future student recruitment efforts.

Response: Program is now on the Registry. The Program was selected as one of two exemplary programs to pilot the full accreditation process.

Recommendations for the 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.

Response: Accomplished as per above. Remaining duplication deemed necessary.

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

Response: Accomplished as per steps.

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

Response: Accomplished and continuing with new faculty hires.
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.*

Response: Active steps taken as per above.

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

Response: Accomplished as per above.

**Recommendations for the Chair of the Vocational Rehabilitation Department**

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

Response: Accomplished as per above.

**Recommendations for the Dean, College of Human Development**

1. *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 updating and presentation of materials on Program webpage.*

Response: Accomplished as per above.

4.3 In the next seven years, what are the major improvements or changes you plan to implement to improve program quality?

The BSVR program will continue to work with the professional body related to credentialing undergraduate Rehabilitation professionals. The Program Director will also continue to monitor and manage program enrollment and its impact on class size, course offerings, and quality of instruction. Currently the BSVR Program Director and Rehab and Counseling Department Chair are working with the Social Science and Human Development and Family Studies departments to explore the development of Criminal Justice and Social Work standalone majors at UW-Stout and the impact this would have on faculty resources and educational quality.

5. Attachments-Please include electronic links.

5.1 Submit any other information or documentation that may be helpful to the Planning and Review Committee in reviewing the quality of the program including interpretation of data from Institutional Research and PRC data.

5.2 Links of specific program information to be included:

  - BSVR program Concentration Plan Sheets [http://www.uwstout.edu/programs/bsvr/ppc.cfm](http://www.uwstout.edu/programs/bsvr/ppc.cfm)
- Individual program facts
  - UW-Stout Fact Book, BSVR Program size
http://www.uwstout.edu/parq/upload/factbookcurr.pdf, page 21
  o UW-Stout Fact Book, BSVR Program degree’s conferred
    http://www.uwstout.edu/parq/upload/factbookcurr.pdf, page 35

  • Current program advisory committee
    o (http://www.uwstout.edu/provost/progcommittees.cfm)

  • Other items requested by the consultant
    o No additional items have been requested by the consultant