

Program Revisions & Changes

1. If approved, what term should the proposed change start?

Fall 2022

2. List the departments that have a vested interest in this proposal.

- Rehabilitation Psychology and Special Education
- Educational Policy Studies
- Health Promotion and Health Equity
- Psychology and/or Educational Psychology
- Sociology and/or Social Work and/or Gender and Women's Studies

Rationale and Justifications

3. What is the rationale for this change?

The change provides a much stronger focus on rehabilitation psychology relative to the current approved program, while continuing to have a strong basis in related course requirements in Counseling Psychology, Psychology, Educational Psychology, Sociology, Social Work, and Gender and Women's Studies.

The proposed **Related Course Requirements** specify 12 credits in **Psychology and/or Educational Psychology**, which has been reduced from 18 credits in the current approved program but still includes PSYCH 405 Abnormal Psychology, and 6 credits in **Sociology and/or Social Work and/or Gender and Women's Studies**, which has been reduced from 9 credits, also with the addition of Gender and Women's studies as an option. In addition, the current 3 credits in Educational Policy Studies in the current approved program has been eliminated. Psychosocial theory and research, the intersection between psychology and sociology, are the foundations for understanding the impact of and adaptation to disability, so they have remained as a prominent part of the degree requirements, with the addition of Gender and Women's studies as an option. However, the courses available specific to Rehabilitation Psychology have been substantially expanded in recent years, resulting in the decision to reduce the Related Course Requirements from a total of 30 credits to 18 credits.

The proposed **Didactic Core in Rehabilitation Psychology** has been expanded from 18 to 21 credits, moving RP&SE 300 Individuals with Disabilities, which has a special education focus, to Rehabilitation Psychology and Special Education Electives, and adding three courses in health and rehabilitation professions, health promotion, and self-management of chronic illness and disability, while retaining coursework in foundations of rehabilitation psychology, applications, biological, psychosocial, and vocational aspects of disabilities, and clinical communication skills. These core requirements are viewed as providing a much stronger foundation in rehabilitation psychology in relation to the current approved program.

The **Supervised Field Experience** requirement has been increased from 6 to 9 credits, as this component of the program has been viewed as a significant strength of the major, worthy of added emphasis.

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The **Rehabilitation Psychology and Special Education Electives** requirement has been expanded from 6 to 12 credits, and the potential list of courses that may be taken to satisfy this requirement has also been expanded from 8 courses to 12, providing options in more specific content related to rehabilitation psychology, including substance abuse and disability, special education, positive psychology and well-being, behavior analysis, sport psychology, case management, augmentative communication, assistive technology, forensic rehabilitation, and corrections and disability. Some of these courses are currently being offered as special topics, with new course proposals in the approval process.

4. What evidence do you have that these changes will have the desired impact?

These changes are being considered based on current and postgraduate student feedback, as well as faculty involvement in leadership roles and research that keep the program abreast of emerging areas in rehabilitation psychology.

Diversity & Inclusion

5. Describe how the proposed program curriculum and learning outcomes will advance inclusive excellence. Discuss specific components and requirements within the curriculum that will offer students opportunities and learning activities to engage in diversity with respect to perspectives, theories, practices, and populations different from themselves. If internships or clinical, practicum, or experiential learning experiences will be required, discuss how students will have access to diverse practice settings.

The rehabilitation psychology undergraduate program trains students with diverse academic and career interests who can contribute to the general needs of the rehabilitation field. The program prepares students to promote social justice and support the independence and full inclusion of people with disabilities in employment and the community.

Through the proposed **Didactic Core in Rehabilitation Psychology**, students will be expected to develop a foundation understanding of the context of disability and rehabilitation practices as it relates to multiculturalism and social inclusion; social justice and social change; community engagement; treatment and rehabilitation; and evidence-based practices.

The proposed **additional electives requirements** (e.g., RP&SE 660 Technology Assisted Care, RP&SE 660 Forensic Rehabilitation, and RP&SE 660 Corrections and Disability) will promote students' knowledge of professional preparation requirements for and awareness, sensitivity, and competence in working with a diverse client population in diverse human services and rehabilitation settings.

The extension of **the supervised field experience requirements** will help students engage with the healthcare and rehabilitation services professional community to develop knowledge of the health and human services delivery systems, and professional skills in communication, teamwork, problem solving, and ethical issues. Further, the field-based experience will help students develop a perspective that allows them to engage in all practice decisions with multicultural sensitivity and practice cultural humility. More than 500 rehabilitation psychology internship placements occurred at over 125 internship sites during the four-year period from

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Fall 2017 through Spring 2021. The various internship sites provide students with access to diverse practice settings.

- 6. Discuss how the proposed program will actively pursue an equity in student recruitment, access, retention, and degree completion. Describe specific strategies to identify and recruit a diversified student population for programs that do direct admissions. Include evidence-based and effective practices. Provide examples of academic and student support services that will be implemented to support student learning success and completion.**

Recruitment efforts for a diverse cohort of students include reaching out to on-campus student groups such as SOAR and various student organizations with high numbers of students from underrepresented groups. We also utilize available career fairs and events where possible to recruit and admit applicants from underrepresented groups. For example, this spring semester, our faculty and staff presented at Major Discovery Week hosted by the UW Career Exploration Center and the Health Professions Expo hosted by the UW Center for Pre-Health Advising. We are currently working with the School of Education Office of Undergraduate Academic Advising for Diversity and Inclusion, and other groups to increase efforts for recruiting and admitting students from traditionally underrepresented groups.

The rehabilitation psychology program is currently developing an expanded outreach and recruitment plan to increase the number of undergraduate majors, including students from traditionally underrepresented groups. We have submitted a School of Education marketing request and will include our advisory committee partners in the development and implementation of our undergraduate recruitment planning.

There are several academic and student support services implemented to support student learning success and completion. Students who are listed as pre-Rehabilitation Psychology and Special Education receive emails each semester regarding RP&SE courses that are offered in the upcoming semesters as well as application and admission requirements and deadlines. Admitted rehabilitation psychology students receive 4-5 emails each semester regarding advising opportunities, future course offerings, and program updates from the Student Services Coordinator. Newly admitted rehabilitation psychology students are invited to an internship and program orientation within a month of their admission offer. At this meeting, new rehabilitation psychology students meet with the internship coordinator and the RP&SE Student Services Coordinator to discuss course sequence, internship guidelines, and to ask general questions about the program.

Students are given the opportunity to connect with other School of Education students through the "School of Ed Den" on Microsoft Teams. This all-inclusive SoE student-focused group encourages student interaction through virtual social events. Participation in the "School of Ed Den" is encouraged via email to all rehabilitation psychology students.

Rehabilitation Psychology students are assigned a university supervisor during their internship. Students receive internship supervision and support from the university supervisor through participation in weekly classes focused on the internship experience, as well as two to three internship meetings with the student, agency supervisor, and university supervisor throughout the semester. Students also submit reflection papers, weekly logs, and other assignments related to their community-based learning, which provide further opportunities to identify

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student supervision needs. Internship classes are designed to be small to allow time for the internship supervisor to be available for individual support outside of class as needed. The internship coordinator and university supervisors meet and communicate regularly to discuss student progress and any additional ways to support students in their professional development.

Time-to-degree for program graduates has dropped slightly and remains very close to 4 years on average. Targeted minority students were taking slightly longer to degree completion in 2018 (4.5 years to degree) but were down to approximately 4.0 years in AY 2020/21.

We have several goals for recruitment, admission, and yield going forward. Given the need for well qualified people to work with persons with disabilities and chronic illness, we seek to continue to recruit students commensurate with our internal available resources. We also recognize the need to maintain or increase racial diversity within the current cohorts and seek to recruit and admit higher numbers of students from underrepresented groups. Our diversity efforts will also focus on identifying ways to analyze practices and trends in RP program enrollment of students with disabilities. Finally, we would like to continue to develop our admissions and candidate yield process to more easily project needed resources – to assure that we have the level of resources that corresponds to the size of the program on a year to year basis.

- 7. Consider how the proposed program will ensure equity in recruiting and hiring of faculty, instructional staff, and staff who will oversee the program curriculum, professional/career development experiences, and research/scholarship where relevant.**

The department of RP&SE, along with the rest of the School of Education, makes a continuous effort to recruit, employ, and retain diverse faculty to create and support an inclusive learning community. The SoE Strategic Plan for Inclusive Excellence outlines our foundational values of inclusive excellence, defines the four essential pillars of inclusive excellence, surveys the current state of inclusive excellence within the SoE, and provides a detailed path forward for implementing inclusive excellence within the SoE. In our recent hires, we systematically searched for diverse faculty candidates in particular by personally reaching out to potential candidates from diverse backgrounds and encouraging them to apply.

- 8. Note any plans or strategic initiatives at the university that are closely linked with the development of the proposed program. Note how efforts will align with the appropriate and applicable accreditation standards that address diversity where relevant. To the extent that the response to questions related to diversity, equity, and inclusion are connected to plans at the department, school/college or university, make those connections explicit where relevant.**

The RP program provides students multiple opportunities to embody the Wisconsin Experience. Current students take RP&SE 630 Internship in Rehabilitation or Special Education, a community-based learning course that requires a minimum of 240 hours of internship experience, often with multiple local agencies that assist or serve individuals with disabilities and their families. In the revised RP curriculum, students will complete 360 hours of internship experience.

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Students are encouraged to interact with faculty inside and outside the classroom. In the recent student experience survey, multiple students noted that the faculty were their favorite part of the program.

Resources, Budget, and Finance

- 9. Given considerations associated with the proposed change, describe the academic unit's fiscal capacity to support the instructional and curricular requirements, academic and career advising, student support services, technology needs, and relevant assessment of student learning and program review requirements. Is there sufficient capacity in the curricular and academic support services to meet the additional workload? For research graduate programs, include information on how the program will be administered and how student funding will be handled. For undergraduate programs, include information on academic advising, career advising, student support services.**

The total credits in the proposed curriculum, beyond the University General Education and School of Education Liberal Studies Requirements, have remained at 60 credits. The program has submitted a request for a new faculty hire to fill a sixth position to more adequately staff the B.S., M.S., and Ph.D. degree programs. When a recent faculty vacancy occurred, permission was received to search not only for a replacement but also for a sixth tenure-track position, but only one of the two positions was filled for the current 2020-21 academic year.

Academic advising is discussed in our response to Question 6 above. The program will continue to coordinate academic advising services among the rehabilitation program faculty, RP&SE student services coordinator, and School of Education, Education Support Services advisors.

The School of Education Career Center is a valuable resource for the rehabilitation psychology program and students. Career consultants from the Career Center are invited each semester to attend rehabilitation psychology classes, such as the RP&SE 501 Rehabilitation Counseling Psychology - Applications course, to teach a guest lecture on the application process for jobs and graduate programs, provide example materials, and share information with students about the various Career Center resources that are available to them.

- 10. Does the program or change require substantial new resources other than those just described? Describe the needs. Confirm that the dean is committed to providing the resources.**

The program change will not require substantial new resources other than those described.

Admissions/How to Get In

- 11. Are any admissions requirements being updated? If so, what?**

The admissions requirements are being updated to reflect the new program requirements in the Four-Year Plan. The current requirement for completion of RP&SE 300 Individuals with Disabilities will change to completion of RP&SE 125 Health and Rehabilitation Professions. The other admissions requirements will remain the same (2.5 GPA and 54 credits completed), and there will be no change to the requirement for students to complete a background check.

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Students will no longer need to complete a formal application to the program. Students can declare RP as a major once they reach 54 credits, have a 2.5 GPA, and have completed or are currently enrolled in RP&SE 125. Students will be required to meet with a School of Education ESS advisor or the RP&SE Student Services Coordinator prior to completing a declaration form. After students have submitted the declaration form, an automatic email will be sent to them regarding the required background check.

Four Year Plan / Plan of Study

- 12. Please attach a Four Year Plan with updated program requirements, if applicable.**

Attachment – Four Year Plan with updated program requirements

Academic Program Assessment Plan

13. **Summarize the assessment plan.** *(Kayla will do this)*
14. **Upload revised/updated assessment plan if program requirements are revised.** *(Kayla and faculty will update assessment plan together)*