

## REHABILITATION EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Rehabilitation Education and Training (RE&T) is a constellation of projects within the University of Hawaii's College of Education. All projects in RE&T represent a comprehensive and integrated approach to the provision of rehabilitation education and training to rehabilitation personnel in Hawaii and the Pacific Basin.

The four projects are:

1. *Rehabilitation Counselor Education (RCE)*. A two-year Master's degree program for rehabilitation counselors.
2. *Rehabilitation Facility Training (RFT)*. A non-degree extension series for personnel employed by rehabilitation facilities in Hawaii and the Pacific Basin.
3. *Pacific Rehabilitation Continuing Education Program (PRCEP)*. A coordinated,

individualized program of continuing education for rehabilitation personnel throughout Hawaii and the Pacific Basin.

4. *Rehabilitation Evaluation and Adjustment Facility (REAF)*. A program of unique vocational/psychological evaluation and personal/social adjustment services to disabled clients. This project also serves as a training laboratory for the listed projects and for Hawaii Vocational Rehabilitation and Services for the Blind Division (HVRSBD) in-service training.

This article will present each of the RE&T projects in terms of its goals, its activities, and issues it confronts in its rehabilitation education and training efforts.

### Rehabilitation Counselor Education

#### Esther Brummer

The University of Hawaii Rehabilitation Counselor Education (RCE) program is the only local source of professionally-educated rehabilitation manpower to serve Hawaii and the Pacific Basin. Funded by the federal Office of Rehabilitation Services since 1971, RCE has become a recognized entity within Counseling and Guidance, the College of Education, and the rehabilitation community. Even as it prepares new Master's

degree rehabilitation counselors, however, RCE is evolving, developing new ways to meet the changing needs of agencies and their clients. This description of RCE will focus upon foundations of the program, constants which are not subject to change; and, upon current trends, modifications being undertaken to enhance the quality of the program and its graduates, and to adapt to our unique geographic and cultural area.

### **Foundations of Rehabilitation Counselor Education**

Rehabilitation counselors require thorough understanding of the psychological, social, and economic principles of human behavior. They need to develop a coherent, flexible view of human beings; how and why they act and interact as they do, what intrapersonal and environmental factors promote or impede growth. The Counseling and Guidance core curriculum provides basic professional knowledge of personality and counseling, psychological and vocational assessment, vocational development, and research.

Since rehabilitation counseling is a discrete area of specialization within the counseling discipline, certain specialized knowledge and skills are necessary for its practice. RCE courses introduce the student counselor to the history, philosophy, and legislative mandate of rehabilitation counseling. Causes and consequences of disability are studied in depth. Principles and techniques of counseling in rehabilitation settings are presented and practiced throughout the two-year program.

Curriculum content is a necessary, but not sufficient, requirement for developing professional competence and identity for rehabilitation counselors-in-training. Clinical practice is of equal importance and is emphasized equally in the RCE program. During each of their four semesters in the program, students apply classroom-acquired principles in a community rehabilitation setting. Supervision is provided by both university faculty and agency practitioners. Clinical practice affords opportunities for experience and integration of rehabilitation counseling theory and methods with the realistic demands of the work environment. All students are required to spend at least one semester with Hawaii Vocational Rehabilitation and Services for the Blind Division. Other agencies used as fieldwork sites include: Rehabilitation Evaluation and Adjustment Facility, Fort Ruger Association for Retarded Children Day Activities Center, Goodwill Industries, Inc., Honolulu Community College, Lanakila Crafts, The Rehabilitation Hospital of the Pacific, Salvation Army, Veterans' Administration, and Waimano Home and Training School.

Cooperation with community rehabilitation agencies is another foundation of the RCE program. As described, facilities are vitally involved with rehabilitation counselor preparation through providing and supervising students' clinical practice. Rehabilitation personnel offer continuing consultation to RCE staff regarding program objectives, procedures, and outcomes. Hawaii Vocational Rehabilitation and Services for the Blind Division, other public and private rehabilitation agencies, and consumers of rehabilitation services were important in selecting the following priorities for development and will be critical resources for implementation, as well.

### **Developments in Rehabilitation Counselor Education**

To serve first the most severely disabled applicants for service is the current thrust in rehabilitation legislation and practice. Rehabilitation counselor preparation must respond to this mandate by developing course content and opportunities for supervised experience to enable counselors to serve these clients skillfully and efficiently. RCE is implementing new courses and new emphases within existing courses on job placement, consumer advocacy, and vocational evaluation and adjustment for severely disabled individuals. What kind of work is possible for those who are severely physically limited, and what kinds of environmental modifications need to be made? How can agencies best elicit and use information from recipients of their services? How can counselors assist their clients to be heard over the constant hum of the human service bureaucracy? Such questions have been and are being asked continually, and the answers integrated into the professional training curriculum.

Another RCE program development is incorporation of a competency-based format. Discrete competency-based units or modules will allow most efficient use of faculty effort and student time toward the objective of producing the best-prepared rehabilitation personnel possible. Evaluation of student performance and program outcomes will be refined. Of course, community rehabilitation practitioners will contribute to the development of these modules by helping RCE