Lewis College of Human Sciences

M.S. IN REHABILITATION AND MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

DIVISION OF COUNSELING AND REHABILITATION SCIENCE

Proudly accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling & Related Educational Programs (CACREP).
M.S. in Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling

The mission of the Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling program is to prepare master’s degree students to perform a vital role as counselors who have specialized knowledge and skills for both mental health and rehabilitation service delivery. This includes the ability to serve persons with a diverse array of mental health or disability-related problems impacting the individual and the family, in a variety of clinical settings and with respect for the influences of multicultural factors, such as cultural, ethnicity/race, age, religion, gender, and sexual orientation. Students also receive specialized training in the vocational, educational, and personal adjustment of persons with physical, mental, and emotional disabilities.

This is a 60 credit-hour degree program, typically completed over the course of two years. Principles and practices are taught with an emphasis on psychiatric rehabilitation, counseling theory, individual and group counseling skills, assessment and diagnosis of mental disorders, the medical psychosocial aspects of disability, and personal growth and career development. Visit our website for more details: humansciences.iit.edu/psychology.
Practica and internships

Illinois Tech has developed strong working partnerships with more than 200 community rehabilitation and mental health providers in Chicago including state and federal agencies. This large pool of providers gives you the opportunity to work with persons with mental health concerns and/or physical, cognitive, or emotional disabilities in a variety of rehabilitation and mental health counseling practice settings.

A few of the fieldwork placements available to you at community-based mental health and rehabilitation facilities in the Chicago area include:

- Jesse Brown Veterans Affairs Medical Center
- Ada S. McKinley Community Services
- Anixter Center
- Thresholds Psychiatric Rehabilitation Centers
- The Chicago Lighthouse
- Asian Human Services, Inc.
- Sertoma Centre, Inc.
- Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center
- Trilogy Behavioral Healthcare

Employment outlook

Since 1966 Illinois Tech has graduated highly successful rehabilitation and mental health counselors who have thrived in public and private rehabilitation and mental health agencies around the country. Our graduates are having an impact in:

- Community mental health facilities
- State, federal, and private rehabilitation agencies
- Hospitals
- Correctional institutions
- Public schools
- Rehabilitation centers
- Private practice

Licensure

As an Illinois Tech Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling graduate, you will be eligible to become a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC), a distinguished certification recognized nationwide. You will also be eligible for counseling licensure as a Professional Counselor and a Clinical Professional Counselor within the state of Illinois.
Funding opportunities

Limited funding opportunities are available for full-time students, including scholarships, fellowships, grants, and teaching assistantships. You will work closely with faculty members to determine what opportunities would be most appropriate for your academic success.

Working Professionals option

The Working Professionals option allows individuals to complete the M.S. in Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling program in three years by taking a reduced course load each semester with opportunities for distance learning. Many courses are offered in the evening and via distance education, and the required fieldwork experiences are often completed (with approval) at your qualifying place of employment. This option is great for people who are currently providing direct services to persons with chronic illness, disability, and/or mental health issues.

ALUMNA PROFILE

Lindsay Sheehan
Degree Years: M.S. 2011, Ph.D. 2016
Hometown: Chicago, Illinois

After graduating with her bachelor’s in psychology, Lindsay Sheehan found a role in the vocational rehabilitation department of Trilogy, Inc., an agency serving adults with psychiatric disabilities. While working at Trilogy, she met a student volunteer from Illinois Tech who introduced her to the rehabilitation and mental health counseling master’s program.

“At the time, I didn’t even know Illinois Tech had a psychology program,” she says. “After doing some research, I was convinced that the program was perfect for me because of the dual mental health and vocational focus. The flexible course schedule also allowed me to continue working at Trilogy and simultaneously balance my family responsibilities.”

In the M.S. program Lindsay says she really valued the opportunity to learn from the other students in her cohort. “Everyone came to the program with different backgrounds and experiences,” she explains. “Having primarily worked with individuals with serious mental illness, I really enjoyed learning about the experiences of my classmates who had worked with other disability populations.”

Learning about the application of research was also an important aspect of the program for Lindsay. “The assignments that related to evidence-based practices in rehabilitation and discussions about how to evaluate research and translate the research into practice were especially valuable to me,” she says. “I realized the important role that master’s students have in bringing their knowledge of the latest research into internships and employment sites.”

With encouragement from a professor, Lindsay decided to pursue her interests in the research side of rehabilitation science and went on to complete Illinois Tech’s Ph.D. program in Rehabilitation Counseling Education. She is now a senior research associate at Illinois Tech, where her current research focuses on the stigma of mental illness, the stigma of suicide, and ethnic health disparities for adults with serious mental illness. She also writes grants and teaches one course for the master’s program each semester.

When asked what she would tell prospective students about the M.S. program at Illinois Tech, Lindsay says, “One of the biggest benefits of the program is that it focuses on both mental health and vocational rehabilitation. Coming out of the program, you will have more employment options than you would have in other similar master’s programs. The faculty are very experienced and committed to the rehabilitation and mental health counseling fields. I encourage anyone to get involved in faculty research, join professional counseling organizations, and be involved in advocacy for people with disabilities.”
Application process for the M.S. in Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling

Applications are accepted for the fall term only. Applications and supporting documents must be received by March 15. Minimum requirements for admission include:

- Bachelor’s degree with a minimum of 18 credit hours in psychology or a closely related field
- Minimum GPA 3.0
- Three letters of recommendation (at least two academic)
- Professional statement
- Transcripts from all post-secondary institutions

All applications are evaluated on the basis of such factors as GPA, recommendations, and the professional statement. (GRE scores are not required.) Finalists will be contacted for a personal phone interview.
Faculty research interests

Patrick Corrigan, Distinguished Professor of Psychology
Stigma and discrimination experienced by people with health conditions, mental illness, and disabilities; psychiatric disabilities and rehabilitation

Nicole Ditchman, Associate Professor
University of Wisconsin-Madison, Ph.D. (2010), CRC, LCPC
Assessing meaningful community engagement; school-to-work transition for youth with disabilities; community participation outcomes for individuals with cognitive disabilities; factors that contribute to sense of community, belonging, and reciprocity in social relationships; wellness and positive psychology; mental health counseling

Kelly A. Kazuakauskas, Clinical Assistant Professor
Rehabilitation and mental health counselor competency and training; clinical supervision in rehabilitation counselor education and practice; rehabilitation counselor ethics

Frank J. Lane, Associate Professor
University of Florida, Ph.D. (2006), CRC, LCPC
Neuroscience, neural implantation, psychological implications of restored sensation and perception, ethics, informed consent, and qualitative methods

Jonathon E. Larson, Associate Professor
Roosevelt University, Ed.D. (2006), CRC, LCPC
Employment for individuals with severe mental illness; evidence-based practice dissemination; psychiatric rehabilitation; staff burnout; rehabilitation leadership; mental illness stigma

Eun-Jeong Lee, Associate Professor and Director, Division of Counseling and Rehabilitation Science
University of Wisconsin-Madison, Ph.D. (2007), CRC, LCPC
Co-existing disability and mental health issues; positive psychology and wellness among people with chronic illness and disability (CID); issues facing family and caregivers of people with CID; multicultural issues related to help-seeking behavior; vocational rehabilitation

Lindsay Sheehan, Senior Research Associate
Ethnic health disparities; community-based participatory research; suicide stigma; mental illness stigma; disclosure of stigmatized health conditions
Informing the Future: New Worlds of Possibility at the Intersection of Humanity and Technology

For more information, contact:

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Web: humansciences.iit.edu/psychology

Illinois Institute of Technology, also known as Illinois Tech, is a private, technology-focused, research university offering undergraduate and graduate degrees in engineering, science, architecture, business, design, human sciences, applied technology, and law.

One of 22 institutions that comprise the Association of Independent Technological Universities (AITU), Illinois Tech offers exceptional preparation for professions that require technological sophistication, an innovative mindset, and an entrepreneurial spirit.