

CORE News

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Council on Rehabilitation Education

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President's Update



Tom Evenson, CORE President

Happy New Year to everyone interested in CORE and rehabilitation education!! It has been a fast year since the last publication of CORE NEWS and much progress has been made during that time. Most important was the successful completion of CORE's review and update of the Standards for Accreditation. That was a

monumental task and so much credit goes to Amos Sales and Paul Leung as co-chairs of the committee along with our colleagues Chris Reid, Nancy Crew, and Cherie King who served with them. Not enough credit could be given to Marv Kuehn for his meticulous oversight of the process and the quality of administrative support and guidance that he provided. The contributions of these individuals truly go beyond the ordinary in terms of service to the profession.

Clearly, the standards review wasn't the only major "accomplishment" during the year. The progress that CORE has made in terms of preparing for its comprehensive review by CHEA (Council for Higher Education Accreditation) is another highlight. This process by CHEA is to CORE what the 8-year reaffirmation review by CORE is to our respective academic programs. It is thorough and CHEA is rigorous in its review. The process is more complicated than it has been in the past because CORE is requesting a "change of scope" to include the accreditation of undergraduate programs in rehabilitation

In This Issue

CORE Executive Director Retires.	4
Annual Report	6
Undergraduate Report	12
Topics for Consideration.	13
Category R—University List.	15
Membership Changes.	15

services. As you may know through the *Chronicle of Higher Education* and other resources, accreditation in general has come under increasing scrutiny because of concerns about its relevance and its effectiveness in assessing the quality of academic programs. CHEA is particularly interested in CORE's ability to monitor student learning outcomes within the programs it accredits. The CHEA process will continue into the fall but the feedback that CORE has received so far on what we have submitted has all been favorable. Credit for CORE's progress with CHEA goes almost entirely to Marv Kuehn who has devoted hours and hours to ensuring that CORE is fully prepared for the review.

I would continue with the list of what has taken place with CORE over the last year...but that would mean that you would have it twice. Marv has done an exceptional job detailing this year's CORE journey in his Executive Director's column. There is no need for me to attempt to cover that broad territory. Instead, I would like to use a little space in this issue to briefly identify three important opportunities for CORE over the next year.

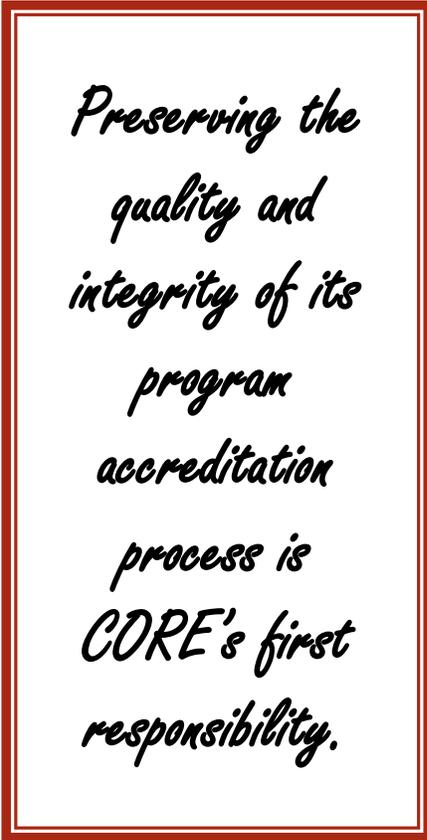
First, preserving the quality and integrity of its program accreditation process is CORE's first responsibility. It is also an opportunity for CORE to build on this strength by making it increasingly better. The opportunity to do that is related to CORE's new standards and student learning outcomes. Additionally, while the Administrative Office has a reputation for accessibility to programs, CORE has been attempting to expand its services to constituents through strong site reviewer training, a comprehensive website, and special training for program directors preparing for a self-study. Finally, the level of self-scrutiny that is a part of a 10-year CHEA review has a kind of

"cleansing" effect that inevitably brings increased effectiveness and efficiency.

There are a number of challenges that will directly affect the goal of continued improvement of the accreditation program. The first one is the loss of Marv Kuehn as Executive Director and the consequent need to fill that position with the right person. Another is the goal of reaffirmation by CHEA. While progress has been steady thus far, the process won't be over until we meet with them and receive their

final approval. Making it more "interesting" this year than others is the fact that CORE is requesting to change its scope to allow for the accreditation of undergraduate rehabilitation education programs. Anticipating an affirmative response from CHEA to that request, CORE takes on the challenge of launching a new accreditation program. The weight of this responsibility has been lightened significantly because of the extensive preparation that David Perry and members of the Commission on Undergraduate Accreditation have engaged in over the past three years. Another important issue for CORE is the increasing scrutiny that all accrediting bodies are experiencing as university, state and federal entities seek

verification of the relevance, effectiveness and value of independent accrediting processes. We welcome the chance for accountability and will respond thoroughly. The challenge will come in terms of the resources that may be necessary should the accountability responsibilities expand. Other accreditation-related initiatives on the CORE horizon include improved guidelines for on-line education programs, a consultant referral system for rehabilitation education programs and improved accreditation reviews.



*Preserving the
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A second major issue that has occupied and will continue to occupy CORE time, energy and resources is the matter of counselor licensure and expanding rehabilitation counselors' access to practice. CORE has worked closely with ARCA, NRCA and CRCC to respond to events and issues that have the potential to impact employment opportunities for professional rehabilitation counselors. It is now apparent to almost everyone that if rehabilitation counselors are going to have their rightful place in the practice world, we are going to have to advance the licensure of all qualified counselors. Along with ARCA, NRCA and CRCC, we have been working on a response to the exclusion of licensed rehabilitation counselors among those identified as qualified as mental health specialists within the Veterans Health Administration. Just before its holiday break, Congress passed legislation that will authorize counselors to practice independently under TRICARE by June of this year. The Department of Defense will develop the criteria for independent practice by counselors within TRICARE. CORE is collaborating with ARCA, NRCA and CRCC to ensure that licensed rehabilitation counselors are not overlooked in those criteria.

TRICARE and the VA are opportunities that are happening right now and it is critical for the rehabilitation counseling community to be direct players in these developments. With a lot more work we can be successful. Even if there is success in expanding access for rehabilitation counselors within TRICARE and the VA, the challenges will not end with these two initiatives. There will be other openings, such as Medicare, as recognition of the counseling needs of an aging population of consumers increase. Collectively, these developments constitute a major opportunity for the profession of rehabilitation counseling. Effectively responding to that opportunity (as opposed to reacting to it) requires comprehensive actions on the part all organizations that support the rehabilitation counseling profession.

A place at the proverbial licensure table requires that we demonstrate the indispensability of rehabilitation counseling—both in terms of

quality and impact on people. We have the quality and we have the numbers to demonstrate that impact. But it is going to take more than the handful of individuals who comprise the current leadership of our rehabilitation organizations to *communicate* that potential. It will require major participation on the part of rehabilitation counselors. We also need to recognize that the matter of accessibility goes way beyond just rehabilitation counselors. We need the support of counselors outside of our profession...and they need our support in expanding the rights and opportunities of all qualified counselors. Progress with licensure will not happen without that collaboration and mutual support. As we advocate for ourselves, we are going to need to become committed to actively advocating for the inclusion of all qualified counselors.

The last opportunity that I wanted to mention here relates to developments that are “waiting to happen” in terms of rehabilitation education on a global level. That’s not entirely true because there are many specific examples of internationally-based rehabilitation education initiatives. What has not happened, however, is a collective effort on the part of rehabilitation education and training programs to collaborate together for the expansion, improvement, and advancement of rehabilitation education. A very successful meeting of the International Rehabilitation Counseling Association (IRCA) took place in Los Angeles in September. Representatives, and in most cases multiple representatives, came from Canada, Taiwan, Ireland, Japan, UK, South Korea, Australia, Sweden and China. As is frequently the case with new ideas, there was a lot of fire and excitement in the room. Liaisons were formed and relationships developed. The IRCA meeting seemed a little different. There was recognition that it might be the right time for rehabilitation professionals, educators and researchers to appreciate the scope of their relevance and significance throughout the world. There was also recognition of the practicality, possibility, and responsibility to share and collaborate across cultural lines in ways that impact the lives and careers of people with disabilities and their families. There was acknowledgement of the fact that not all of us do things the same way.

There are different preparation requirements. There are different practice requirements. There are different priorities in terms of skills and knowledge. But, rather than viewed as impediments that preclude anyone doing anything “right” (because they don’t do it “our” way), that fact was simply viewed as a part of reality around which we need to work. Except for some special partnerships, we have put off the collaboration for too long.

Everyone interested in international collaboration was interested in quality. The priority is on quality practice, quality research and quality preparation of rehabilitation professionals that will collectively make the greatest impact on individuals with disabilities. The responsibility and opportunities for CORE are obvious. Others look to entities like CORE and CRCC for ideas and guidance because we’ve already been down the road. There is little point in re-inventing the wheel. We can play an important part in helping to develop international standards, practices, and guidelines that can help maximize the overall advantages of mutual collaboration by rehabilitation educators, researchers and professionals.

To close this up, let me add that the future of CORE will be directly influenced by the involvement and feedback of professionals working in the rehabilitation counseling field and the commitment of TIME and vision by individuals that serve on the Commissions and CORE. The completion of the Standards Review Project was a very important activity. The benefits from updated standards will result in greater acceptance by the broader counseling field and rehabilitation counseling professionals that provide specialized (disability- related) counseling services, and agencies/organizations. There are, however, other challenges in higher education and the employment sector that will require increased monitoring. The qualifications of the providers of counseling services have received increased attention in various discussions and venues at the national level and must be evaluated for the implications for CORE accredited preparation programs.

All accrediting organizations are going to face some new challenges as increasing national attention is being given to outcome-based standards and how their assessment relates to program accreditation decisions and program quality. Recent discussions on the merger question and issues related to qualifications of applicants for various counseling positions have pointed out the need for increased attention to identity concerns and the need to focus on some new priorities. We must also address more than just preparation standards for professionals who provide rehabilitation and counseling related services. CORE must find more ways to offer consultation to programs in addition to monitoring compliance with standards to help programs improve. Results of the recent survey on CORE priorities clearly indicate increasing concerns about our professional identity, employment qualifications, and image in the world of counseling and rehabilitation related services. These concerns are being addressed with optimism, increasing cooperation, and communication among professional rehabilitation related organizations.

CORE Executive Director Retires

(Effective December 1, 2010)



It is appropriate that this publication is called "CORE News" because there is especially noteworthy news in this issue. After 22 years of involvement with CORE, Marv Kuehn is moving away from his leadership role in the organization. It is a most important decision for CORE because Marv has made such a significant impact on CORE for so many years. He has served in just about every capacity there is from Commission member, to CORE Board member, to CORE President to CORE Executive Director. In fact, from the perspective of many program coordinators, site visitors, and many of our external constituencies, Marv is CORE as far as they are concerned.

It is clear that Marv's absence will leave a prominent void for CORE. But...after reviewing some of the issues that CORE will need to address in the near future and evaluating his ability to provide meaningful contributions to key projects and priorities anticipated for the near future, Marv believed it was time to retire from his role as CORE's Executive Director effective December 1, 2010. Marv's retirement announcement was accepted by the CORE Board on July 18, 2010. He also retired from his faculty position at Emporia State in May, 2010. However, a bit of good news is that, after some discussion, Marv he has agreed to continue to assist CORE by working with the Board and Sue Denys to complete a number of critical projects--transition to the new Standards, preparation for CORE's review by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), Undergraduate accreditation, and on-going program correspondence related to the accreditation review process for 2011, until a new Executive Director can be identified and trained.

Amidst the new standards revisions and CHEA reaccreditation, Marv has been focusing significant energy on the challenges that all

other accrediting organizations are currently facing including increasing national attention on developing outcome-based preparation standards as well as how program assessments relate directly to program accreditation decisions. He has also been addressing CORE's response to emerging congressional concerns about the quality of education experiences in distance education programs and for-profit education institutions and organizations. Finally, CORE's recent consideration of the merits of a merger with CACREP have influenced CORE to focus on the need for increased attention to identity

issues and its advocacy role on behalf of rehabilitation counseling's relationships with other counseling organizations.

From Marv's perspective, CORE faces a number of significant challenges and opportunities relative to advancing the rehabilitation counseling profession. Among these issues, he includes: changing employment roles and opportunities for rehabilitation graduates; evolving hiring trends of rehabilitation-related employers; rehabilitation counselor eligibility for state licensure credentials; the trend toward consolidation of academic programs and departments; the need to market the value of

rehabilitation services and organizations; expanded recruitment of students into rehabilitation careers. Clearly, CORE is not solely or even primarily responsible for all of these issues. But CORE does have a leadership role in supporting and motivating rehabilitation partners to focus on responding to the issues in ways that advance the profession. He believes that future priorities for CORE include an increased focus on professional identity and the value of rehabilitation services versus

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-Marv Kuehn

accreditation preparation standards and procedures.

One of the things that Marv noticed most over the last several years is that the time required to be effective in the position of Executive Director has progressively increased. He expects that to increase even more in the near future. On paper, the Executive Director's job description is "quarter-time." In reality, Marv has found that it more closely approximates a "three-quarter-time" job. He believes that it may be time for CORE to discuss expectations of an Executive Director and design (and fund) the position in a way that ensures adequate time, skills and resources to provide everything that CORE needs as it meets its new challenges. In short, he believes that CORE needs to look "down the road" as priorities change and expand.

In his role as Executive Director, Marv had a reputation of being particularly supportive of site reviewers who sometimes struggled with how to write reports and evaluate program information. He provided encouragement, guidance and instruction rather than criticism and pressure to the reviewers. In a similar way, Marv was meticulous in his efforts to keep Board members informed and aware of potential problems. Like his relationships with site reviewers, his communication with Board members required sensitivity, patience, and sometimes a sense of humor. Marv's counseling/relationship skills were also critical in his success in communicating with program coordinators who were new, confused...or simply unhappy.

Marv expressed his appreciation for the confidence and support that so many rehabilitation educators have given to him during his 22 years of involvement with CORE. The confidence and appreciation he has enjoyed is a direct product of Marv's work ethic and focused commitment to the good of CORE. His commitment was manifested through his consistent attention to administrative policy concerns, his ability to understand and interpret standards, his meticulous editing of accreditation review reports, and his willingness to share rather than "impose" his ideas and insights. He

was diplomatic and provided perceptions candidly but never in an arrogant manner. He believed that sharing information about issues on which Board members may not fully understand was one of his primary responsibilities as CORE's Executive Director.

In discussing his retirement, Marv said he believes CORE has been very successful in addressing its mission, and he was grateful to have had the opportunity to participate in the positive things CORE has accomplished, particularly over the last 10 years. His involvement with the Commission and CORE has been very rewarding for him and he indicated he will miss the interactions with everyone dedicated to promoting rehabilitation education in the broadest sense.

Marv stated, "I have the highest regard for many of the professional leaders and colleagues I have worked with in recent years on CORE as well as NCRE, ASPA, and others. I had the opportunity to interact with individuals in a way that made me really appreciate their unique contributions to rehabilitation counseling and rehabilitation education; each demonstrated expertise, insight, and professionalism in different ways. Thanks again for allowing me to work with you as we have all worked to improve program quality and to enhance the unique preparation guidelines of undergraduate rehabilitation-trained students and the standards for graduate level rehabilitation counseling programs. I have sincerely enjoyed the last 22 years of involvement on the Commission, CORE, and serving as Executive Director. I hope I have made a positive difference."

Annual Report of the Executive Director

Marvin D. Kuehn
December 23, 2010

The activities during the last twelve months have included a number of issues and have resulted in the review of questions and concerns regarding the following:

1. revision of accreditation standards (outcome-based standards, preparation guidelines, faculty qualifications, program evaluation questions, teaching/advisor loads);
2. interpretation of practicum and internship guidelines;
3. improving site visitor training and site visit procedures;
4. the need to develop strong rationale for anticipated accreditation of undergraduate programs in rehabilitation services; and
5. identifying and preparing materials needed for the CHEA Reaffirmation Application and a request for Change of Scope of accreditation activities.

Based on the questions and concerns that I have received over the last few months, many programs appear to be concerned with examining options for curriculum changes or program mergers due to funding issues and consolidation of resources within universities. Some programs report they are losing faculty lines when individuals retire, and students are asking challenging questions about the importance of certification and licensure and the focus of curriculum offerings.

In this report I have summarized the activities and responsibilities of the Executive Director and the accomplishments of CORE during the last 12 months. Much of my time was spent in answering questions via the phone or email, clarifying standards, assisting various committees of CORE, and preparing communications to individuals and professional organizations. Sue Denys, Administrative Assistant in the CORE Office, and I focused our efforts on addressing administrative concerns and organizational policy, promoting greater understanding of issues, monitoring and developing materials to make the accreditation review process more efficient, and updating the CORE website. The past six months have been hectic but I believe much progress has been made and priorities are emerging and a sense of optimism is clearly present.

The efforts of many CORE and Commission members have resulted in several significant accomplishments and have promoted valuable discussion for the identification of some important priorities and positive outcomes that will enhance the success of CORE in the future. *The following activities reflect the major priorities of CORE during the past year:*

Review of CORE Standards

The revision and update of CORE's standards for accreditation of rehabilitation counseling programs has been a lengthy and intricate process. Dr. Paul Leung and Dr. Amos Sales, Chairs of the Standards Review Committee (SRC), directed the standards review process. The procedures and timetable for the project were announced in October 2008 and revised standards were approved by CORE in October, 2010. The SRC sought feedback from interested professionals for almost two years. Changes were guided by significant input from the field, research primarily focused on employed certified rehabilitation counselors, and survey results on specific curriculum areas and learning outcomes that "must" be addressed within an accredited rehabilitation counseling program as opposed to those that are simply "preferred." In addition to addressing the breadth and diversity of work settings for rehabilitation counselors, the accreditation standards must consider similarities and differences among the employment settings and the functions frequently performed by rehabilitation counselors and other mental health providers/counselors.

Underlying the entire standards review process was the responsibility for ensuring that new accreditation standards support the needs and interests of rehabilitation counselors in terms of curriculum, internship experiences, specialization areas, employment settings, and long-term career opportunities.

Preparation of the CHEA Report and Development of Undergraduate Commission

The process for seeking reaffirmation of the Graduate Commission on Accreditation and Standards has required some additional coordination and planning. CORE requested that the reaffirmation be conducted at the same time as a request to change the scope of CORE to include accreditation of undergraduate programs in rehabilitation services. This effort was formally started in January of 2010, and the first formal request from CORE was submitted to CHEA on August 16, 2010. Several individuals have been asked to contribute information and background to respond to many questions and sources of information that will justify and document the requests being submitted. The reaffirmation process is a requirement of CHEA accredited programs that must be addressed/updated every 10 years.

After the by-laws were changed in August 2008 regarding the general structure of the new undergraduate Commission, information was obtained from the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) regarding procedures to change the current recognized scope of accreditation of CORE that would permit the accreditation of undergraduate rehabilitation education programs. This change required CORE to submit a new statement on the mission and scope of CORE. The Change in Scope of CORE is a new process for CORE and has been discussed for several years. This process will be on-going for the next two years with anticipated final decisions on the two requests in April 2012.

Student Learning Outcomes, Assessment, and Quality

Most everyone is aware of the emphasis that is being communicated to universities from national accrediting groups like CHEA, NCATE, and the Department of Education on assessment and student learning outcomes. There has been a lot of criticism of accreditation organizations by the

Department of Education about how standards are ASSESSED. Academic programs have been good at collecting data but have not been very convincing with traditional assessment approaches at measuring competency, dispositions, and outcomes. What are students learning and how do we know that? How are critical thinking, analytical reasoning, written communication, and problem resolution concepts being emphasized in curricula? Do the outcomes provide evidence of QUALITY in programs? These questions are examples of the type of questions CHEA may request CORE to explain and articulate in our reaffirmation recognition application.

To address these concerns, a major change was proposed by the Standards Review Committee of CORE for Section C of CORE Standards early in 2009. The new proposed format articulates the Standards in a different manner so that programs seeking accreditation may need to re-focus curriculum objectives and expectations to student learning outcomes to demonstrate compliance with CORE Standards. The new format will illustrate how outcomes should be stated so that the expectations are clear and will emphasize that outcomes should be linked to KNOWLEDGE domains in each of the 10 curriculum areas of Section C of CORE Standards.

Administrative Services for CORE

Recently CORE was informed that, due to rising expenses, the 2010 contract with the Consortium for Professional Credentialing (CPC) for personnel services and related administrative expenses would need to be revised due to financial considerations. The increase in costs was significant and unexpected. CORE has had a long and successful history of services from organizations providing administrative support to CORE. Due to increasing expenses CORE voted to explore other possible options for management services, possibly not in the Chicago area. The administrative office of CORE has been in the Chicago area for over 30 years.

A screening committee was appointed to develop a process to solicit and obtain proposals from organizations that might be interested in providing management services for CORE. A comprehensive plan was developed and after much planning and evaluation CORE received three viable proposals for consideration. After the review of proposals a decision was made, following the guidelines developed by the review committee, to recommend to CORE in July, 2010 that a new administrative services contract/agreement be negotiated with the current provider of services, the Consortium for Professional Credentialing (CPC) for the coming year.

CRCC/CORE Partnership Work

Efforts continued during the year to identify states where licensure laws appear to discriminate against professional counselors who only possess the CRC credential and do not accept CORE accreditation as equivalent to CACREP accreditation. This was an important effort and the collaboration was time-consuming. Linda Shaw, Immediate Past President of CORE, has worked closely with Cindy Chapman at CRCC as this project has evolved.

Improving Accreditation Reviews

Formal review of programs in 2010 resulted in minimal problems and, from an administrative perspective, it has been a good year. The Commission and the CORE Board are doing a better job, each year, in editing reports, and CORE is doing a better job in preparing site reviewers with updated site visitor training. Unfortunately, some “older reviewers” have not participated in new training that emphasizes (1)

questions/information where follow-up is needed during a site visit, and (2) the preparation (writing) of site visitor reports. Additional emphasis is being given to training of reviewers on writing site visit comments to responses to standards provided in Self-Study documents and to comments of individuals during the site visit. Revision of the Site-visitor Training Manual also resulted in improved understanding of what is expected in

accreditation reports and will help site reviewers, the Commission, and CORE in making accreditation decisions in the future.

During the past year, concerns were noted from program coordinators about the performance/competence of some site reviewers. CORE asks program coordinators and faculty for an evaluation of the review process and the preparation and feedback provided by the site reviewers; whether the recommendations received were helpful; and if the reviewers were fair, impartial, and cordial. Last year it was recommended that the site visitor

evaluation form be reviewed and that the Executive Director, in consultation with the CORE Administrative Assistant, provide appropriate constructive feedback to site visitors about their reports, the site visit, the evaluation comments of program faculty during the site visit, and comments from the other site reviewer on their preparation and contributions during the site visit.

This has been a difficult task for several reasons. The honesty of reviewers is often of limited value and even sometimes unreliable, and program coordinators are often reticent to make any negative comments until after they know the decision of CORE on the status of their respective

Developing consistency in accreditation reviews continues to be a challenge for site reviewers.

programs. It is hoped the feedback process could be seen as educational and constructive rather than critical or adversarial. The assumption was that feedback would not be shared with site reviewers until after the final accreditation decision is made by CORE. Providing constructive feedback to reviewers is a challenge as maintaining confidentiality of the feedback source of comments is often difficult. Making expectations of reviewers clear and the continuation of procedural reminders to them should improve the evaluation of the process and reviewers.

Developing consistency in accreditation reviews continues to be a challenge for site reviewers. CORE does not want to be too prescriptive but the interpretation of some standards continues to be problematic at times. New guidelines were approved in July 2009 to help in writing comments for Preliminary Review Committee Reports. These Guidelines have been incorporated into the Site Visit Manual and are reviewed each year after the Annual CORE Meeting. These concerns have been a major focus of the Program Review Committee which was established last year; it has been facilitated by Dr. Cherie King, Chair of the Graduate Commission on Standards and Accreditation.

With the implementation of new accreditation standards additional training will be necessary as more attention may be required for clearly identifying the evidence that outcomes have been achieved and can be demonstrated for the new standards that have been adopted. Survey instruments will need to be modified and site visitors will need to give more attention to rationale and justification for assessments for individual standards. An additional factor that is on the horizon is the intention of CORE to implement guidelines for the submission of on-line Self Studies hopefully in 2012.

Recognition of Site Visitor Contributions

The delivery of training opportunities has been very successful in the past; however, it

was felt that CORE needed to examine/evaluate the learning that occurs and/or outcomes of our efforts to be sure we are enhancing the mission of CORE accredited programs in the most effective manner. Based on this expanded training and feedback received during the annual meeting in July 2010, it was decided that the Commission and CORE need to re-examine several issues related to the writing of site visit reports. The concept of developing an Academy of Site Reviewers that provides meaningful recognition of reviewers has been suggested as one factor to increase recognition of the contributions of site reviewers.

Website Update

The CORE website is continually being updated and a slightly different format this year was adopted to minimize major changes in the future. Our website is information-driven and is not “glitzy” nor does it include pictures, etc. CORE has learned a little about the problems in transferring a webpage from one university to another and the issues that have to be resolved. There is still narrative and information that needs to be written and edited and progress is being made on these tasks. Maintaining an organization website is a time-consuming activity as there is much information that individuals desire to have available. Since it takes time and also requires someone with technical expertise in website design it is a challenge to find individuals willing and who have a good understanding of the needs of the programs and faculty represented in accredited programs. CORE needs to discuss the priorities and what type of information or service is most needed to keep member organizations and others informed. CORE needs to determine how much money it is willing to allocate for this organization service or benefit.

Information About Marketing RC and CORE

Revision of two components of the AMA Health Professions Career and Education Directory related to rehabilitation counseling was completed in January 2010.

Information was submitted on (1) the history, structure, and purpose of CORE; and (2) background about the history, job description, employment characteristics and outlook, and education programs that prepare professional rehabilitation counselors. Some data from old directories was almost 20 years old; it is hoped these revisions present a more up-to-date picture of CORE and rehabilitation counseling.

Accreditation Status – On Probation

Last year the question was raised about creating another accreditation status for accredited programs that should perhaps be placed on probation. CORE did not have a status for this purpose nor a written process for how CORE would conduct a formal review of a program when there is information that indicates the program may not be in compliance with CORE standards. Information has been obtained from some other ASPA member organizations on how these organizations handle these types of issues. Several new issues were identified for the policy. It was approved by CORE this past year and includes three main areas: (1) why a probation status might be appropriate, (2) the meaning of substantial complaints, and (3) procedures for reporting and acting on substantial program changes. These policies are now included in the updated Accreditation Manual on the CORE website.

Website Accessibility Interpretation

Recently two program coordinators requested clarification on the expectations of CORE regarding accessibility as stated in the last sentence of Standard A.1 which states: *These statements shall be in accessible format and meet national website accessibility standards.* The question seemed to revolve around what evidence the program needs to provide.

The determination of program accessibility usually occurs during the site visit when reviewers meet with a university or program webmaster. To evaluate this Standard reviewers are encouraged to ask for a demonstration of program website accessibility. Site reviewers do not have to be experts in website accessibility. CORE adopted a policy about website accessibility in 2009 and it is now included in the policy section of the CORE Accreditation Manual.

Changes in Self-Study Preparation

CORE adopted a policy that programs could submit the SSD electronically (on-line), but it was decided that CORE needed to develop some specific written guidelines to assist programs in preparation. Feedback from a few site visitors who have reviewed CD discs indicated that it saves space, but in many cases, “hard copy” may still be needed so materials can be compared and reviewed quickly. Information on disc only also ties a reviewer to a computer. Related to the Self-Study is the conversion from hard copy of survey response data to on-line survey responses to increase efficiency and save staff time and resources.

The question to be resolved is when, in light of the Standards Review Project, the conversion should occur. Making the changes in the process and how to submit responses in the on-line Self Study will take some time and careful planning will be crucial. It is hoped that the new accreditation surveys using the new Standards will be completed by May 1 and the adoption of the new On-line Self-study guidelines by June 1. Program Coordinators will use the new surveys for students, graduates, and employers of graduates and the guidelines for the On-line Self-studies which are due in the CORE Office by December 1, 2011.

Marketing an Accredited Program

A potential issue has arisen about accredited programs advertising both on-line and campus-based degree programs at one institution (an on-campus program and a distance education program). CORE

accredits a rehabilitation counseling program for the institution and not a campus or satellite program. Several accredited programs at institutions offer distance education courses or collaborative courses at more than one site. CORE does require that if the rehabilitation counseling program is offered at more than one site that the program provided must be the same as the “on-campus” program. All CORE Standards apply to both programs including faculty qualifications, practicums, internships, program evaluation, graduate requirements, and curriculum, etc.

An institution may advertise that they offer an accredited program in rehabilitation counseling. If the program is offered and advertised to be available on two separate campuses, they must be the same length, and meet all the accreditation standards of the on-campus program. There can be only one accredited RC program at a university. CORE does not accredit the “delivery” (face-to-face or distance education/on-line) of a program. The academic model (cohorts or open enrollment programs) for delivering courses may be different.

SUMMARY

For the two Commissions and CORE to be successful and relevant, the leadership and members must be provided up-to-date information and be knowledgeable about the issues that influence the accreditation process and employment opportunities and challenges for graduates. CORE had outstanding leadership from the Executive Committee (Evenson, Dwyer, Reid, King, and Nunez). David Perry has now joined the Executive Committee since he is the Chair of the new Undergraduate Commission on Standards and Accreditation. Tom Evenson, current President, has continued this past year to provide vision, focus, and commitment. CORE has been fortunate to have Sue Denys serve as the CORE Administrative Assistant in the CORE Office; her knowledge of the history and priorities of CORE have been instrumental in the overall efficiency and organization of

activities and responsibilities throughout the year.

I realize my reports may seem lengthy, but I believe I have an obligation to provide the faculty of CORE accredited programs, and others with an interest in CORE accreditation, with information that clearly indicates the impact CORE has on rehabilitation education. My intent is to remind everyone of what has been happening, what CORE has identified to be the major issues for the accreditation of programs, what has been accomplished, and what might need to occur to maintain a viable, pro-active accreditation organization in the future.

Undergraduate Report

David C. Perry, Ph.D., CRC,
Chair of the Commission on Undergraduate
Standards and Accreditation

This past year has seen a number of significant developments in undergraduate rehabilitation education. CORE continues to provide an Undergraduate Registry of programs that meet national standards. Currently, 29 programs are approved for the Registry, and new programs are encouraged to seek this level of recognition (please see CORE website). However, most of the work done by CUSA in 2010 was directed toward developing an undergraduate accreditation process. Some of the more significant events that occurred in 2010 were:

1. Undergraduate curriculum and program standards were approved by CORE.
2. CORE presented a change of scope request to the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), which includes undergraduate accreditation as part of CORE’s mission.
3. Two undergraduate programs participated in the site review process as part of a pilot study for the CHEA application.
4. New commissioners for the Commission on Undergraduate Standards and Accreditation

(CUSA) are being recruited from relevant constituencies.

The process of writing comprehensive curriculum and program standards has taken a number of years. In an effort to be inclusive and transparent, there have been at least three face-to-face meetings each year for the last five years where undergraduate educators have met to work on these standards. There also have been several opportunities to review these standards on-line and make suggestions for revisions. The standards were based in part on a role-and-function study that assessed the professional responsibilities of bachelor's-level rehabilitation workers. In June of 2010, at an undergraduate conference held at Maryville University in St. Louis, a draft of these standards was approved. This draft was presented to the CORE Board and they approved the standards at their July 2010 meeting.

The CORE Board also gave their approval to the CHEA change of scope request. This is an ongoing process that is required to meet the rigorous process of documenting the need for and the methodology that would be utilized for undergraduate accreditation. The process of gaining approval from CHEA was started in November 2010 and will not be completed until 2012.

To help support the CHEA request, a needs assessment of undergraduate rehabilitation program coordinators was conducted in the spring of 2010. Thirty four programs were surveyed and 28 responses were received. Of the 28 participants, 15 (54%) said they were Very Likely to seek accreditation and another 9 (32%) said they were Somewhat Likely to seek accreditation of their programs. In addition, the results indicated that program coordinators believe that undergraduate accreditation would make their programs more competitive, that recruitment and retention would be strengthened, that graduates would be more employable, and that external funding would be enhanced.

CHEA recommends that a pilot study be conducted to demonstrate the feasibility of new

accreditation methodology. CUSA conducted this pilot study with two well-established undergraduate programs last fall: the University of Wisconsin-Stout in Menomonie, and Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio. These programs conducted extensive self studies and participated in two-day on campus site visits. Faculty, administrators, students, employers, and site visitors all agreed that the process worked well and constructive feedback was received that will lead to continued improvements.

The CORE Board has also approved a process for expanding CUSA membership to make it more representative of the field. Professional organizations and consumer groups that have an interest in undergraduate rehabilitation education have been contacted and invited to nominate new commissioners. A number of organizations have agreed to participate and the first meeting of the new CUSA is planned for July 2011.

I would like to extend my appreciation to all rehabilitation educators who have participated in these important developments for our field. I would especially like to thank the current CUSA commissioners: Dr. Karen Barrett, Dr. Michelle Marmé, Dr. Regina Robertson, and Dr. Chrisann Schiro-Geist. These individuals have provided the leadership and guidance that has made these accomplishments possible. I would also like to thank Dr. Marvin Kuehn, Ms. Sue Denys, and the entire CORE Board for their support and encouragement.

Topics for Future Consideration?

Emphasis on Program Consultation

One topic that CORE may address in the future is exploration of ways to provide more consultative assistance to programs versus program evaluation only. Other national accreditation organizations are discussing this initiative as well. Efforts to provide more consultation service would be consistent with

the mission of CORE and would provide substantive assistance in helping programs improve the quality and scope of their programs. One concern has been the role of suggestions/assistance. The focus of suggestions must include options or alternatives, not just an opinion. In the past there has been reluctance to provide suggestions to programs; site visitors have not been encouraged to offer “consultation” as it can be interpreted as bias. Some feel this could be of significant value to programs who want assistance/suggestions to improve curricula and policies. The reluctance may be the lack of guidance by CORE on how constructive consultation (feedback) can be provided without invoking fear or criticism by program faculty members or reviewers. Should CORE give more attention to recommendations and consultation?

Interpretation of Standard E.5

Standard E.5 refers to full-time RCE program faculty. Do part-time RCE program faculty or adjunct faculty have to meet all the E.5 sub-standards? It appears that more and more programs are hiring faculty who can teach in multiple programs in a department (other Masters Degree programs or both graduate and undergraduate rehabilitation programs). Some of the faculty appear not to be certified but are licensed, sometimes as counselors and sometimes as psychologists. Does CORE need to provide more guidance to programs and site visitors on what is expected regarding the qualifications of faculty involved in a program or do CORE Standards on faculty need further revision?

Qualifications of Faculty in Distance Education (On-Line) Programs

Should the qualifications specified by CORE for part-time, adjunct, and full-time faculty teaching in either on-campus or distance education (on-line) programs be the same? In January 2007, CORE passed a policy that all faculty teaching for a program must have obtained the CRC or provide rationale or justification for faculty not possessing the CRC. Should additional curriculum questions be asked during the site visit? If so, what? Are there other ramifications

related to practicum and internship standards for on-line programs? Should the requirements be the same as for an on-campus course? If CORE accredits a program, is the delivery of the program an issue? In the past, CORE has said it is not. How does CORE evaluate quality and evidence of program compliance in on-campus and on-line courses?

Qualifications of Program Coordinator

Another topic that has resulted in questions is related to Standards E.4 and E.5. One of the most frequently asked questions about program coordination is: Does a program coordinator need to be a full-time faculty member working with the program? i.e., could a program have two faculty sharing the responsibility or could one part-time faculty member in the RCE program serve as coordinator? CORE discussed this question in January 2009 and agreed that shared responsibility for program coordination could be acceptable. Should there be other qualifications for a program coordinator?

Recognition of an RCE Program

During the past year there have been a few inquiries asking about whether a program can continue to be accredited if it becomes a track in another degree program (e.g., a track in a mental health counseling degree program). Are there any negative implications? CORE currently accredits a number of programs that do not have the words “rehabilitation counseling” in the degree. Are current requirements to be accredited by CORE appropriate or should they be re-visited? Why are institutions considering this option? Is the number of students interested in rehabilitation counseling declining? With the emphasis on licensure, are employment options changing? What is most important to prospective students in selecting a graduate degree program in counseling?

Category R—University List

Provided by: Charlene Dwyer, Ed.D.

“CRCC is providing this list as a resource for individuals interested in pursuing CRC certification under Category R eligibility criteria. The universities below have indicated they are developing or considering developing a post-graduate advanced certificate or degree program that would meet Category R eligibility requirements. This is not an endorsement of any particular university or program. Please contact universities directly for details.” The following is a brief list of Universities:

Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, FL

Hofstra University, Hempstead, NY

Mississippi State University, Starkville, MS

Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico,
Ponce, PR

San Diego State University, San Diego, CA

Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL

Springfield College, Springfield, MA

University of North Texas, Denton, TX

University of Texas Pan-American, Edinburg,
TX

Utah State University, Logan, UT

Virginia Commonwealth University,
Richmond, VA

Wright State University, Dayton, OH

For more information please see this direct link for the full PDF from CRCC.

http://www.crccertification.com/filebin/pdf/CRCC_CategoryR_UniversityList_1-11.pdf



Commission on
Rehabilitation Counselor
Certification (CRCC®)

[.core-rehab.org](http://www.core-rehab.org)

Membership Changes on the Commissions and CORE

The following individuals completed service to CORE or were nominated and approved or will be approved by CORE to serve on one of the Commissions or CORE Board effective July 18, 2010:

NEW MEMBERS OF CORE

Charles Palmer, NRCA Representative
William Gibson, NCSAB Representative

NEW MEMBERS OF GRADUATE COMMISSION

open, NCRE Representative
Connie McReynolds, NRCA Representative
Lynn Horwatt, Dept. of Veterans Affairs

COMPLETING SERVICE ON CORE

Chris Reid, Vice-President of CORE,
Representative from NRCA

COMPLETING SERVICE ON THE GRADUATE COMMISSION

Chuck Degeneffe, NCRE Representative
Ted Daniels, NANWRW Representative
Dorothy Williams, Dept. of Veterans Affairs

INTERIM MEMBERS OF COMMISSION ON UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

David Perry, Chair
Regina Robertson, Secretary
Karen Barrett, Vice-Chair
Chrisann Schiro-Geist, Treasurer
Michelle Marme, Public Member

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF CORE

Tom Evenson, President
Patty Nunez, Vice-President
Charlene Dwyer, Secretary
Susan Sherman, Treasurer
Cherie King, Chair of Graduate
Commission
David Perry, Chair of Undergraduate
Commission

Marv Kuehn, Executive Director of CORE,
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*Professional Preparation Standards for
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Rehabilitation and Disability Studies*