



COMMISSION ON REHABILITATION
COUNSELOR CERTIFICATION

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CRCC Presents Northern Illinois University's Rehabilitation Counseling Graduate Program with Center of Excellence Award

SCHAUMBURG, IL – The Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC) is proud to announce that the Rehabilitation Counseling Master's Program at Northern Illinois University has been recognized as a Center of Excellence for its outstanding contributions to the preparation of future Certified Rehabilitation Counselors (CRCs).

This distinction honors academic programs that demonstrate exceptional commitment to high-quality education, student success, and alignment with the competencies required in today's evolving rehabilitation counseling profession.

“Programs like Northern Illinois University's Rehabilitation Master's Program are essential to the future of the rehabilitation counseling profession,” said **Pam Shlemon, President/CEO of the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification**. “By rigorously preparing the next generation of Certified Rehabilitation Counselors (CRCs) with both clinical expertise and real-world application, NIU is not just educating students. It is directly strengthening the workforce and ensuring individuals with disabilities have access to highly qualified professionals who can guide them toward meaningful employment and independence.”

To qualify as a Center of Excellence, programs must meet several criteria, including:

- A curriculum reviewed and approved by CRCC
- Instruction led by faculty with backgrounds in rehabilitation counseling or clinical rehabilitation counseling
- Encouragement of the CRC Exam as a comprehensive assessment
- Demonstrated student success, with an average pass rate of 65% or higher over two years
- Ongoing engagement between CRCC and students, faculty, and program leadership

“We are honored by this recognition from CRCC,” said **Amanda McCarthy, Ed.D., CRC, CVE, LCPC, Associate Professor and Clinical Coordinator in Northern Illinois University's Rehabilitation Counseling program**. For more than 50 years, our program has been built on the belief that strong professional preparation equips our students to advocate for and meaningfully support people with disabilities and their families. Students are entering a profession that changes lives, and being named a Center of Excellence reinforces our commitment to helping students step

into that work with confidence and compassion, just as generations of alumni have done before them. We are deeply grateful for our ongoing partnership with CRCC and for their dedication to elevating the rehabilitation counseling profession.”

Certified Rehabilitation Counselors (CRCs) are nationally accredited, graduate-level professionals and experts in rehabilitation and disability services. CRCs work directly with individuals with all types of disabilities, visible or invisible, physical, intellectual, cognitive, or mental, to achieve their personal, educational, and career goals. They’re prepared to foster success for all clients, whether they’re navigating a lifelong disability or working through transitions after an injury, illness, or newly acquired condition.

As a Center of Excellence, Northern Illinois University joins a distinguished group of institutions dedicated to advancing best practices in rehabilitation counseling education and strengthening the pipeline of qualified professionals entering the field.

About the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification® (CRCC)

CRCC® is the world’s largest rehabilitation counseling organization dedicated to improving the lives of individuals with disabilities. CRCC promotes quality rehabilitation counseling services through its nationally accredited Certified Rehabilitation Counselor® (CRC®) certification program, continuing education opportunities, and advocacy for ethical and professional standards. CRCC serves rehabilitation counselors and related professionals across the United States and internationally who work to support independence, employment, and community participation for people with disabilities.

Media Contact:

CRCC

Taylor Bauer, Director of Marketing and Communications

tbauer@crccertification.com

847-944-1308