



is Student Handbook was written to assist students in understanding the requirements for the Master of Arts Degree offered by the Rehabilitation Counseling and Disability Sciences (RCDS) within the Department of Child & Family Studies (CFS). It does not replace the University of South Florida Graduate School Catalog. It

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# Faculty and Staff

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## Emeritus Faculty

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# Background Information

## Introduction

USF celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the Rehabilitation Counseling program at the University. Over the past 50 years our program has grown and evolved. During this celebratory year, we launched our fully online master's program in Rehabilitation Counseling and Disability Sciences. This discipline is both a separate allied health profession and specialty within the field of counseling. Graduates work in many different human service settings, including state and federal rehabilitation programs, not-for-profit rehabilitation organizations, private for-profit rehabilitation companies, drug and alcohol treatment programs, and various agencies servicing people with disabilities. The discipline emphasizes training in vocational, educational, psychological, social and medical aspects of disability; interpersonal counseling; addictions and substance abuse counseling, wellness, and case management.

## Program Mission, and Outcomes

The mission of the Rehabilitation Counseling and Disability Sciences program is to improve the quality of life for people with disabilities and their families by educating graduate students with the essential skills, knowledge, and dispositions needed to become ethical, responsive, and culturally competent professionals working in the field of human services.

## Objectives

The purpose of this program is to prepare professionals to work with the growing population of people with disabilities in the U.S. with an emphasis on advocacy and contemporary state of the art research, and assistive technology in disability sciences.

1. Educate and empower students to advocate for disability rights and support disability justice for clients who belong to other marginalized populations.
2. Increase the number of high-qualified professionals working with people with disabilities.
3. Increase the number of students who possess the requisite knowledge and earn credentials to become certified rehabilitation counselors working within the healthcare workforce.

## University Recruitment and Diversity Policy & Procedure

USF is committed to promoting globally-competitive undergraduate, graduate and professional programs that support interdisciplinary inquiry, intellectual development and skill acquisition. Every department and administrative unit at the university – from the cashier's office and physical plant, to academic departments and residence life – is committed to student success. Through a series of programs and initiatives, the university strives to create a positive teaching and learning environment designed to engage students and enrich all aspects of the student experience.

USF's academic programs are designed to meet the needs of all learners, including traditional learners, special needs learners, adults interested in advancing their careers, veterans and distance learners. The University offers over 90 undergraduate majors and over 90 degree programs at the graduate, specialist and doctoral levels, including the doctor of medicine. Undergraduates are strongly encouraged to take advantage of a wide range of undergraduate research opportunities and study abroad programs.

The University has 13 colleges falling under the Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs. From Medicine and the Arts to Marine Science and Business, each college offers an extensive range of degree and specialty programs, many allowing students to focus on a particular discipline while exploring other areas of interest across the university.



## Transfer Credit

Graduate Studies will accept coursework constituting up to 40% of the Rehabilitation Counseling and Disability Sciences Program at the discretion of the Program Director. The following rules apply to all transfer credits:

- Courses that were completed to meet the requirements for another degree cannot be counted as transfer credit toward a second degree.
- Students must petition through the Graduate Transfer Course Form to have transfer credits accepted into the graduate program, and students are responsible for providing a syllabus for each course to be considered. The Graduate Transfer Course Form can be found at [www.usf.edu/graduate-studies/forms.aspx](http://www.usf.edu/graduate-studies/forms.aspx). This must be completed and submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies preferably in the first semester, but no later than the second semester the student is enrolled in the graduate degree program.
- A grade of B or better must be earned in order for transfer credits to be approved.
- Field placement coursework will not be accepted as transfer credit under any circumstances.
- Transferred courses must be at the graduate level and acceptable to the program.
- Courses that were earned seven or more years before the student applied for admission to the program will not be accepted as transfer credit.

Can I have required courses waived in the program?

Maybe. Direct equivalent courses from the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) accredited graduate programs may be waived at the discretion of the Program Director. Courses will not be waived for work experience.

## GPA Requirements and Probation

All graduate students are required to maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA. A GPA of less than 3.0 will result in probationary status. Graduate Studies require a written plan to remove the student from probation. Students on probation must attain a minimum 3.0 GPA by the end of the following semester to avoid continuing probation.

If a student remains on probation after two semesters, the department may recommend:

1. The student withdraws from the program;
2. Graduate Studies dismiss the student from the program Academic Performance

### Academic Performance

Effective in the 2016-2017 Graduate Catalog, all core and elective courses require a grade of 3.0 or better to be accepted toward a student's program of study. Failure to achieve a grade of 3.0 will require the student to repeat the course and earn a 3.0 or better in the course. No grade forgiveness applies at the graduate level and all grades will appear on the student's transcript. In such cases, a student may not substitute the course with one taken at another university or via an on-line program. Any student who has earned less than a "B" in a course and/or has been notified of continued poor academic performance (missed assignments, excessive absences and/or "I" grades) will be referred to their program academic

# USF Graduate Catalog, Section 7 Academic Policies & Regulations

More detail on the items below can be found at the following link: <https://catalog.usf.edu>

- Academic Policy Information
- Student Responsibilities
- Student Conduct
  - » e program expects all students to conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times inside and outside of the classroom. is includes appropriate attire in the classroom and at the eld placement site, punctuality, professional social media, and the like.
- Academic Integrity of Students
- Disruption of Academic Process
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approved leave of absence are not subject to the enrollment requirement for the time approved for the leave. A graduate student who is not registered and enrolled for a minimum of six (6) credits in a 12-month period is automatically placed in inactive status. Students must be readmitted to the degree program to continue their studies.

Readmission is at the discretion of the program and is not guaranteed. Full-time enrollment requires registration for a minimum of nine (9) semester hours during fall and spring, and six (6) semester hours during summer. Students may take up to 15 credit hours per semester; however, enrollment in more than nine (9) credit hour during any one (1) semester is strongly discouraged, and must be approved by the student's advisor. Request for approval to enroll in more than 9 credit hours must be submitted in writing to the student's advisor.

Due to CACREP accreditation standards, academic standards and limited resources, course enrollment caps may be implemented by the program. Due to demand by full-time and part-time student registration in any given semester, course access cannot be guaranteed. While the Program attempts to schedule courses consistent with projected needs, students may occasionally experience delays in accessing one or more courses needed for graduation.

## Curriculum

### Course Requirements

Courses are offered fully online. Content courses are typically offered in an asynchronous online format, while clinical courses may have synchronous sessions. These live sessions will be offered during a weekly evening session. Students will be notified of the live sessions in the course syllabus. The program is 60 credit hours. Students participating in the RSA Scholars Program will be responsible for two additional courses that will also be taught online. Contact the RSA Scholars Coordinator for more information.

### Field Training Component

The master's program includes two field placement courses of one semester each. Practicum (RCS 6803) requires about 15 hours per week (minimum of 100 hours each). The second field experience is the Internship (RCS 6825) and requires 40 hours per week (minimum of 600 hours total) in an approved agency. Students must register for all field placement courses through the Program. Faculty review student readiness for initial field placement success once students have completed their first semester in the Program. A Student Readiness for Field Placement form is completed at that time for each student. See Appendix A.

The Program must have an approved affiliation agreement with an agency before a student can be placed there and the agency must be able to provide the student with one hour of individual supervision each week, counseling experiences, and the opportunity to obtain audio tapes from consenting clients in Practicum. All sites must be approved in advance by the program coordinator and a semester notice is required. Students are responsible for locating a field placement experience and interview for that position. The Program maintains a list of approved agencies for field placement as some human service agencies cannot provide the required experiences. Students may review the approved list here via our Intern Placement Tracking System.

Students must successfully complete RCS 5780 Legal/Ethical Issues and MHS 5020 Counseling Skills and Techniques by earning a grade of 3.0 or better, and be in good standing in order to be permitted to register for field placement courses. The student should review the Field Placement tab located on our website to learn about the field placement process.



## Liability Insurance

USF provides students with liability insurance coverage, free of charge. Liability insurance is required even if the site is the student's place of employment and insurance is provided. A copy of the certificate will be provided to the site supervisor at their request.

Students employed in a human service position may, with Program review and approval, use their

# General Information

# Problem Resolution Process

The Rehabilitation Counseling and Disability Sciences Program is committed to resolving issues at the earliest possible point. The Problem Resolution Process is internal to the Program and is not meant to replace the University Academic Grievance Procedure (AGP). If at the end of the Program's Problem Resolution Process when final action is taken that affects a student grade, and a student feels that s/he has been treated in a manner that violates university policy, the student may file a formal Academic Grievance. The Academic Grievance Process provided in USF Policy 10-002:

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### If the concern is field-based:

1. The student will discuss the concern with the agency field supervisor within business 7 days.
2. If a resolution is not reached within business 7 days of discussion with the field supervisor, the student will contact the course instructor and state the concern.
3. The student will request a field visit via phone or face-to-face as an intervention to address the concern within business 7 days. The course instructor will document the action plan. A copy of

6. The Director will take the concern under review and consult the Department Chair if necessary. If the issue is resolved satisfactorily, the student will be notified in writing and a copy of the notification will be placed in the student's file. If the student is dismissed, he/she will be notified via certified mail.

### If the concern is agency-based

1. The student and/or the field supervisor will identify the problem and create a written plan to resolve it.
2. If the problem is not resolved, the student and/or field supervisor should consult with the course instructor and make another attempt to resolve the problem.
3. If the problem is still not resolved, the course instructor will facilitate a meeting between the student and the field supervisor. This meeting may also involve the Field Placement Coordinator if necessary. At this meeting, a written contract with time frames for resolution will be developed to address the problem. The course instructor will distribute copies of the written contract to the field supervisor, Field Placement Coordinator and student within five business days following the meeting.
4. If the problem remains unresolved, and the contract mandates the student's removal from the placement, the Program Director will notify the student of that action. If further review of unsuccessful contract mandates is necessary, the Department Chair will be notified.

NOTE: The field placement Agency may request USF to withdraw any student whose conduct or work performance is not in accordance with the Agency's policies and standards. Although the Program strongly prefers prior notification of a withdrawal it is not required.

## Policy for Changing Field Placement

Field placements are chosen after a thoughtful process that includes the student, the agency, and the Field Placement Coordinator. Once a field placement has been confirmed, it is expected that the student will complete the entire placement at that agency. Disruption of a field placement is not taken lightly. The course instructor, the field supervisor, the student and the Field Placement Coordinator will make any needed placement changes jointly. Other individuals, such as the student's academic advisor or the agency director, also may be asked to participate in the decision. Students who leave an field placement without prior approval of their Field Placement Coordinator and Instructor risk failing the practicum or internship course.

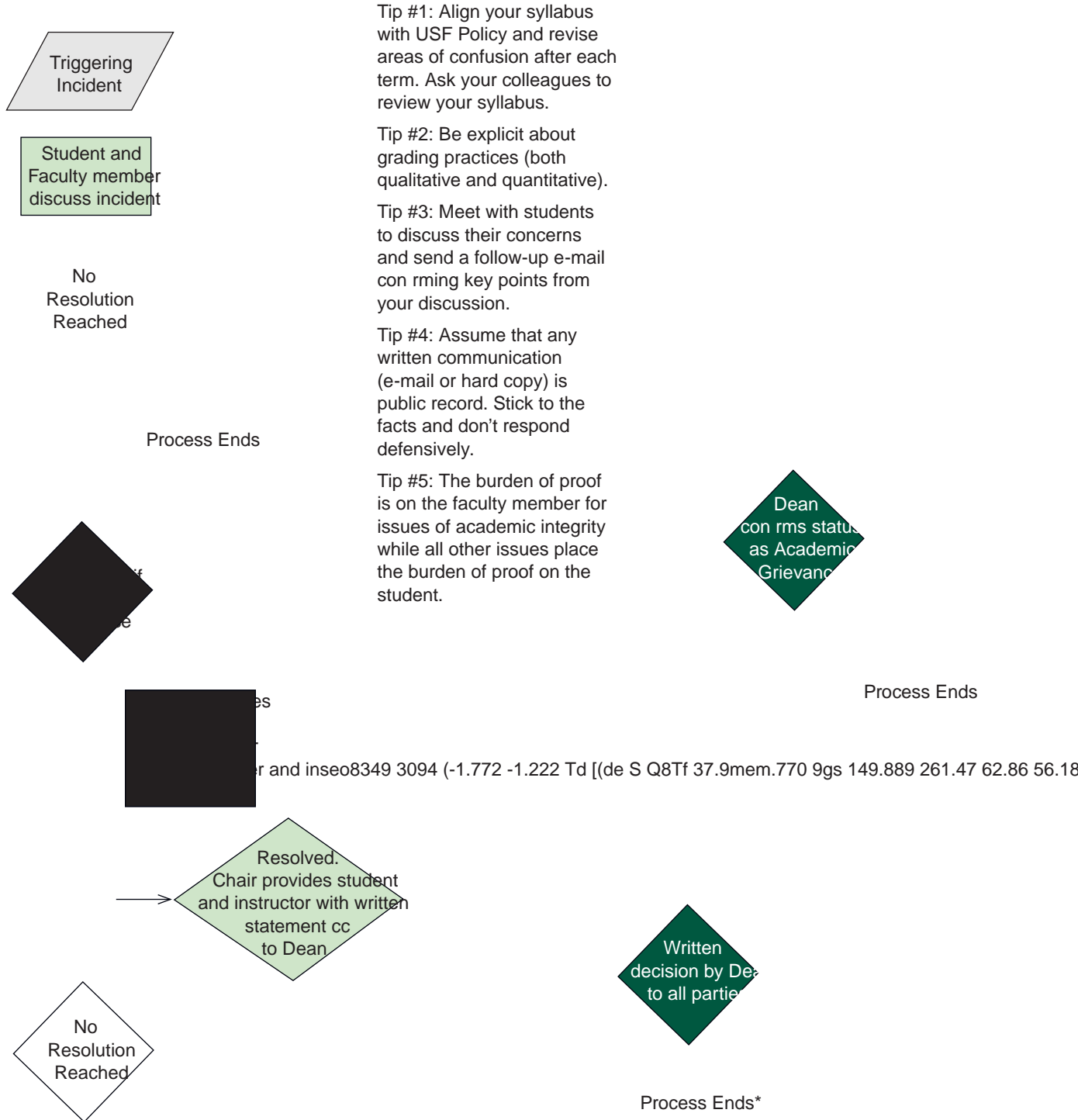
## Retention, Remediation, and Dismissal

If a student is deemed at risk in terms of failure due to academic skills deficits, professional skills deficits, or personal issues that interfere with the ability to function in the role of a professional counselor, a remediation plan will be developed and implemented. Remediation can involve repeating classes, other required professional development activities, and attending personal counseling. The program faculty will develop the goals for the plan, identify the required target measures of accomplishment and documentation of goal attainment, and the timeframe for completion. Students who are mandated to attend personal counseling will be required to sign a release of information that will allow the faculty to obtain information about the number of sessions attended, willingness to address the identified concerns, and progress toward the identified goals. Personal information will not be shared with the faculty. Failure to complete the remediation plan will result in removal from the program.

# Academic Grievance Procedure – Department

(USF Policy 1 0-002) <http://regulationspolicies.usf.edu/policies-and-procedures/pdfs/policy-10-002>

An “academic grievance” is a claim that a specific academic decision or action that affects that student’s academic record or status has violated published policies and procedures, or has been applied to the grievant in a manner different from that applied to other students.



Tip #1: Align your syllabus with USF Policy and revise areas of confusion after each term. Ask your colleagues to review your syllabus.

Tip #2: Be explicit about grading practices (both qualitative and quantitative).

Tip #3: Meet with students to discuss their concerns and send a follow-up e-mail confirming key points from your discussion.

Tip #4: Assume that any written communication (e-mail or hard copy) is public record. Stick to the facts and don't respond defensively.

Tip #5: The burden of proof is on the faculty member for issues of academic integrity while all other issues place the burden of proof on the student.

# Appendix A

## Student Readiness for Field Placement Form

Rehabilitation Counseling and Disability Sciences Program Clinical Sta Meeting

Student Readiness for Field Placement Student:

Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Somewhat agree 3	Agree 4	Completely Agree 5	
					Student demonstrates maturity and professionalism.
					Student appears willing and open to feedback.
					Student is proactive in asking for help when needed.
					Student demonstrates good listening skills.
					Student demonstrates the ability to work with others.
					Student demonstrates the capacity for self-awareness and insight.
					Student demonstrates the capacity for reliability and self-direction.

Poor 1	Fair 2	Averagee 3	Above Average 4	
				Overall student progress
				Grades / progress in coursework
				Dispositional t to engage in eld experience
				Proceed with eld placement
				Needs further review

Comments:

# Appendix B

## Certification and Affiliation

### Rehabilitation Counselor Certification

Graduates of the program are eligible to sit for Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) national examination. Students may apply for the examination with the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification. Due to advanced application deadlines, students may apply for the examination after completing 75% of their course work. After passing the examination and completing the M.A. degree, the CRC designation will be awarded. The CRC is an important credential in many agencies such as the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and facility settings such as those accredited by the Commission on the Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF).  
<http://www.crccertification.com/>

### National Board of Certified Counselors

This organization offers the National Counselor Examination for Licensure and Certification (NCE) and the National Certified Counselor (NCC) credential. At the time of this writing 33 states, including Florida, have adopted this examination as part of their credentialing process.

National Board of Certified Counselors <http://www.nbcc.org/>

### Professional Associations

It is strongly recommended that students join one or more professional associations in the counseling field. Membership in the associations is of critical importance to the profession at large, and has many important individual benefits including professional journals, professional meetings, in-service training information, newsletters on current developments in the profession, malpractice and other forms of insurance. The major professional associations in the field are the American Counseling Association (ACA) and National Rehabilitation

### Association (NRA)

Both organizations have divisions for rehabilitation counselors. The American Rehabilitation Counseling Association (ARCA) is a division of ACA, and the National Rehabilitation Counseling Association (NRCA) is a division of NRA. Applications and additional information may be obtained from their respective websites:

American Association for Marriage & Family Therapy	<a href="http://www.aamft.org">http://www.aamft.org</a>
American Counseling Association	<a href="http://www.counseling.org/">http://www.counseling.org/</a>
American Family Therapy Academy	<a href="http://www.afta.org">http://www.afta.org</a>
Board of Clinical Social Work, Marriage & Family Therapy and Mental Health Counseling	



# Appendix C

## Sample Graduation Certification Form

College of Behavioral and Community Sciences  
Certification Form

MASTERS OR DOCTORAL DEGREE CANDIDATE CERTIFIED FOR GRADUATION  
SEMESTER (enter Fall/Spring/Summer 20XX) \_\_\_\_\_

1. Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_ U

Degree Program M.A. Major Field Rehabilitation Counseling & Disability Sciences

2. Date of Admittance to Program as Degree Seeker \_\_\_\_\_  
If graduating under of a subsequent catalog, indicate year of catalog \_\_\_\_\_

3. Prescribed Curriculum (for students admitted under Fall 2017 catalog & after)

Courses Required Pfx.-No.-Title	Indicated Waiver or Course Substituted	Sem. Hrs.	Grade
RCS 5035 RC: Concepts & Applications		3	
RCS 5780 Legal/Ethical Issues & Prof. Standards		3	
MHS 5020 Counseling Skills & Techniques		3	
RCS 5080 Medical Aspects of Disability		3	
RCS 6408 Diagnosis & Txt of Psychopathology		3	
RCS 6301 Career & Lifestyle Assessment		3	
RCS 6440 Social & Cultural Foundations of Counseling		3	
RCS 6643 Advanced Case Management.		3	
RCS 6407 Counseling Theories & Practice		3	
RCS 6803 Practicum		3	
RCS 6510 Group Theories		3	
RCS 6705 Disability Justice & Trauma-Informed Care		3	
RCS 6220 Individual Evaluation & Assessment		3	
RCS 6456 Counseling Approaches for Substance Abusers		3	
RCS 6825 Internship		6	
MHS 5480 Human Growth & Development		3	
RCS 6476 Human Sexuality		3	
RCS 6740 Research & Program Evaluation		3	
RCS 6255 Applications of Assistive Technology		3	

Total Number of Graduate Hours required:

a) Overall 60      b) at 6000 level 6

If this student has less than the required number of hours at the 6000 level, give the prefix and number of the course(s) substituted and state who authorized the substitution.

5. Comprehensive Examination: Date successfully passed: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Thesis/Dissertation Required: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No X ( ) Other Project?

7. If thesis/dissertation required: (1) Title: \_\_\_\_\_

(2) Has student successfully passed oral defense of thesis/dissertation? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Not required

(3) Has student presented thesis/dissertation to Dean of Graduate School? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

8. Language/Tools of Research \_\_\_\_\_

9. Major Professor, Advisor, or Committee Chair's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Approval of program by same: (Signature) \_\_\_\_\_

10. Approved for Degree: \_\_\_\_\_

Date

Program Director Chih Chin Chou, PhD





