Minutes

Present: Kathy Powers, Miranda Levy, Trula Nicholas, Misty Carpenter, Beth Boland, Kurt Johnson, Elizabeth Scriven, Peter Fox (by phone - policy analyst for OVRS), Karolyn Barnes, Alexa Burns.

Not in Attendance: Andres Aguirre, Cathy Cottingham, Jana Finkbonner, Laurie Ford, Dona Fuerst, Sheila Hoover, Keith Klinger, Eva Larrauri, Teresa Pitt, Connie Salo, Erica Johnson.

Introductions: Beth Boland convened the meeting and introduced two new members: Kathy Powers of Orion Industries, a community rehabilitation provider, and Jana Finkbonner, from North Intertribal Vocational Rehabilitation.

Review of Minutes of April 15, 2011 – accepted as presented

Announcements: The CORE Self-Study is due December 1. The program faculty and staff are pulling together evidence. Two items are being brought to the Advisory Committee for discussion and recommendations: the Program Evaluation Plan, and a revision of the Mission and Objectives.

Updates:

TACE – No report. Kathe Matrone is at the Institute on Rehabilitation Issues in Washington, DC

University of Washington – Kurt Johnson. They have received a grant of $850,000 to establish an Americans with Disabilities Act Knowledge Translation Center. It is to be the data coordinating center for the network of ADA Centers. They were also re-funded for the regional ADA Center.

Alaska DVR – no report.

Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation Services – Peter Fox. He is filling in for Pam Prichard, who has taken a job with another agency. The picture in Oregon is fairly stable.

Washington Department of Services for the Blind – No report.
Washington Division of Vocational Rehabilitation – No report.

Veterans Affairs, VR&E Division – Karolyn Barnes: Some laws (Chapters 31 and 33) have changed, and it is not yet clear whether certain individual Veterans will get money only or guidance as well. The VA recently hired two counselors, one in Portland and one at the VA Hospital. They will be taking on one more person as an intern. They are only taking one intern at a time. There is an opportunity to be hired nationally, but it would require relocating. Working in a location other than the one you prefer increases your likelihood of transferring to a position in the location you desire.

WWU Human Services Program – Trula Nicholas. The program is going strong in 3 locations: Bellingham, Everett, and distance. There are two full cohorts in Bellingham, one in Everett, plus one distance cohort.

WWU Rehabilitation Counseling Program – Beth Boland: The program admitted 22 new students in the fall. Woodring College of Education has a new Dean – Francisco Rios, from University of Wyoming. He comes from an environment that used distributed leadership styles, and he is very responsive to Human Services and Rehabilitation. He is meeting with every tenured faculty member and every staff member. He has come into classes to welcome students. He has a commitment to social justice and community involvement. Recruiting is under way for an Associate Dean. Individuals with a background in Human Services or Rehabilitation are encouraged to apply. Consideration is being given to combining with two divisions within Woodring - Teacher Education and Educational Leadership.

Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation – no report.

Community Rehabilitation Providers – Kathy Powers. Because of their relationship with VR, CRP’s are subject to serious financial impact when VR funds are limited. Secretary of the Washington Department of Social and Human Services, Susan Dreyfus, conducted town hall meetings about some proposed budget cuts, which include suspending prescription drugs, in-patient drug treatment, and mental health services. Kathy is a member of the Community Employment Alliance, which is a group of private providers and non-profits. They have a lobbyist and are in the process of choosing what issues to rally around. As Washington DVR caseloads have increased to 150, CRP’s are seeing clients more frequently.

There was a general discussion on the implications of the financial situation. There are opportunities for students to get involved. A powerful way to have influence is to identify people who would be affected by funding cuts and encourage them to speak out. Individual recipients of services are seen as not tainted by political affiliation. Trula has complete list of proposed cuts.

Human Services has a project called Lobby Day. It takes place every year, on President’s Day. Students carpool to Olympia and meet with legislators. Kathy Powers has some tips on how to talk to legislators. Legislative aides are gatekeepers – the ones to develop relationships with. Liz Jennings, adjunct faculty member does educating on this. SRCA was asked to organize something. Kurt Johnson is willing to be involved.
SRCA Updates – Misty Carpenter, Elizabeth Scriven, and Miranda Levy. Sandy Brown from WWU Career Services Office came to do interviewing and resume workshops. There was not a big turnout. The PowerPoint slides from her presentations are posted on SRCA website. SRCA is exploring community involvement and volunteer opportunities. They are planning to organize groups to go help out, and develop relationships in the process. Everett DVR is willing to consider internships. A general meeting of SRCA is coming up in two weeks. SRCA is planning an event on December 16 (Friday of finals week). They are arranging for Silvertips tickets.

Student complaints/praise – Second-year students do not like having class on Wednesday, and four-hour classes are not fun. Students miss electives, to complement a wider range of career opportunities. Beth responded that the program would need to be increased to 90 credits to accommodate electives. There is the possibility of offering 2 tracks – generic and specialized. This would complicate financial aid. Counselor licensure does not require additional hours, but the program in its current form does not cover in depth psychopharmacology, family issues, or pediatrics. There is a need to strengthen the family curriculum, possibly using group class. Students want more training on DSM. There was discussion about why so much time is spent on out-dated counseling theories, when there are new approaches that are more relevant to rehabilitation counseling. Motivational Interviewing is a technique, not a theory. It requires practice under supervision. CORE and CRC require the content in the theories class, so it can’t be substantially revised. Rogerian theory is the basis for MI. Beth’s intention is that the curriculum empowers students to figure that out and create their own approach. Evidence-based is the new focus. Research class has been moved to first quarter of the program, to help students understand this.

Regarding Practicum and Internship – students would like an information session in the summer to begin planning. Beth acknowledged that this is a missing component. Students are having a hard time finding internships, due to funding cutbacks. The annual survey sent to RSA Scholars asks if the graduate is willing to supervise an intern. Students could help tabulate this information. Students can also get list from the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification on who in their area is a CRC.

Program Discussion:

Applicant Report – Beth. The program is continuing to recruit more males. New students live closer to Everett. Carpooling is helping some of the more distant students with the commute. There is a solid group of students – first year and second year. There were 32 applicants for Fall 2011. 22 were admitted. Three applicants who did not get admitted this year were offered admission for next fall. There were several other good candidates, whose grade point average would have required a provisional slot. They were encouraged to reapply. April 1 is the priority deadline. Beth wants to wait till April 1 to interview and admit. It is her intention at that time to accept those who are clearly good candidates, and hold on the decision for others. There was a consensus among Advisory Committee members that they like this idea. Who are we attracting? DVR clients. L&I folk with concerns about legislative change. This year Beth accepted the more experienced L&I folks. She deferred acceptance to next year for the less experienced.
Other sources are graduates of the Human Services BA program, and Veterans. There is now a background check process. Another potential issue is with people coming in who are consumers of services, along with people working in the field. This raises interesting ethical concerns, especially around confidentiality. Another potential issue for students who are already working in the field is receiving conflicting information what they are learning about best practices vs. what the supervisor says.

**CORE Reapplication process** – The goal is accreditation for 8 years. There have been 2 standards changes since the program’s last accreditation, which has required some revisions. Beth is a site reviewer, so she is familiar with the requirements.

The Self-study, in electronic format, is due December 1.

Two reviewers come to do the site review. One reviewer is from the University of North Texas and the other one is from the University of Memphis. Before the site review, they receive the Self-study, which is being prepared in the format of a website and moved to a CD.

Beth handed out the site review agenda. During their visit the reviewers will be talking to multiple stakeholders. They will be spending a day in Everett and a day in Bellingham.

They will meet with high-level administration, to determine whether this program is valued. They want to meet with the Advisory Committee. It consists of alumni, employers and students, which is viewed favorable. They will want to know what input you have into curriculum development and other aspects of the program. They will want to know what you do at meetings. The session with the Advisory Committee will take place on Wednesday, February 22, at 11:45 am. This will be a luncheon meeting.

The reviewers will also meet with instructors, students, the librarian, and the director of disability services. They will have lunch with the Dean of Woodring, and then meet with Dean of the Graduate School and the Provost.

There will be an exit interview. The site reviewers will write a report. In July, there will be a Commission on Standards and Accreditation meeting, at which the report will be presented. This report will include things that must be done (conditions of Accreditation), and recommendations that would strengthen the program (optional).

Beth presented a draft revised Program Evaluation Plan. The plan was revised to be in line with the mission and objectives and the revisions in the CORE standards. Kurt Johnson suggested using continuous quality improvement language. The Advisory Committee was asked to look it over and submit their recommendations by e-mail.

Beth also presented a revised Mission and objectives. Several changes in wording were agreed upon. A significant one was changing “assists individuals with disabilities” to “partners with individuals with disabilities.”
In relation to a need to update the recruitment plan, the following sources were suggested: State VR programs, alumni, widely publicizing the Information Sessions, Gradschools.com, being an institutional member of NCRE, using the RSA website, recruiting fairs, Human Services faculty, leaving recruiting materials with program coordinators, the University Center, Idealist.org, gatherings of veterans. Get students to go to recruiting fairs and assist. The Human Services brochure indicates a BA in Human Services is the pathway to the Master’s in Rehabilitation Counseling. This is good. Other places to contact include: the NW ADA and TACE Advisory Committees, various departments at Harborview, marketing to healthcare professionals in hospitals, and through the Community Employment Alliance. It is important to keep in limelight.

Retention Policy includes professional competency requirements. The Comprehensive Exam is the final test of applied critical thinking.

A department case conference procedure is being developed. The steps include the chair being notified, evaluating what is known, and deciding whether to schedule a case conference or terminate a student immediately. Three faculty will be on call to be in a conference. Within 10 days, evidence will be gathered, the student gets to present, a recommendation is made to the chair, and a final decision is made.

Next Meeting: February 22, 2012, 11:45 am (for CORE Site Review). At that time it will decided whether another meeting is needed for the Spring.