

C&R NEWS

Counseling & Rehabilitation Program News

Learning Community Saturday

Each major semester, the Counseling and Rehabilitation Program hosts community partners, alumni presenters, faculty, counseling agencies from all over the state as well as our entire student population for a 1-day conference held at 15 Med Park in Columbia. This semester's event included presentations titled "Building Careers, Changing Lives: SC Vocational Rehabilitation Department Overview," "From Poverty to Prison to PhD: A Change Must Come," and "Deaf Awareness and Advocacy 101" as well as research presentations courtesy of the program's Graduate Assistants.

In addition to providing valuable experiential learning opportunities through these presentations students also engaged in personal and professional development activities designed to promote professional identity, organize thinking regarding present professional status and accomplishment, solidify future plans, and aid in professional presentation during interviews.

Should you or a colleague wish to engage in our next Learning Community Saturday event during the Fall 2024 semester on October 12th, feel free to reach out to Patrick Demery at patrick.demery@uscmed.sc.edu for additional information.



This issue:

Professional Speaker Series

PAGE 01

Learning Community Saturday

PAGE 02

Student Spotlight

PAGE 3

Faculty Spotlight

PAGE 04

Preparation for Practicum and Internship

PAGE 05

Literature Highlight, Wellness Corner

PAGE 06

Pet of the Month & APA Tips

PAGE 07



C&R Professional Speaker Series Presents: Dr. Rick Balkin

On February 23rd, the Counseling and Rehabilitation Program welcomed Dr. Rick Balkin as the first professional speaker of the new year. Dr. Balkin is a professor and department chair of leadership and counselor education, as well as a coordinator of educational research and design, in the School of Education at the University of Mississippi.

Over the past 30 years, Dr. Balkin has created an exceptional career that has included working with teenagers in crisis, helping underserved populations, and becoming an expert on practicing forgiveness with the publication of his books: "[Practicing Forgiveness: A Path Towards Healing](#)" and "[Counseling Research: A Practitioner-Scholar Approach](#)."

Dr. Balkin virtually delivered his presentation entitled "Exploring Contemporary Issues in Counseling" to both a live and virtual audience. We look forward to passing on details soon regarding our next big guest speaker, Dr. Amanda Giordano, who will be delivering a presentation entitled "Best Practices in Addictions Counseling" on October 11th.



Save the Date

[March 1st, 2024](#): School of
Medicine's Annual Semi-
Formal

[April 19th, 2024](#): Our
Graduate Assistants will be
presenting their work at
Discover USC!

For more information about
this event, click [here](#).

[May 2nd, 2024](#): Graduate
Professional Hooding
Ceremony

[May 3rd, 2024](#):
Commencement Ceremony

[October 11th, 2024](#): Speaker
Series featuring Amanda
Giordano.

[October 12th, 2024](#): Fall
Semester Learning
Community Saturday



Student Spotlight



Aileen Pagán-Welch was born and raised in the Bronx, New York City. She was raised bilingual, speaking Spanish and English, before being diagnosed as Deaf as a child. She quickly adapted and became fluent in American Sign Language. Aileen graduated from the Rochester Institute of Technology, having earned both a bachelor's and master's degree while enrolled there.

In 2020, after settling into the Columbia area with her family, she began working with the SC Vocational Rehabilitation Department. Aileen serves as the Regional Rehabilitation Counselor for the Deaf and works with Deaf adults and Deaf transition students in the Midlands area of SC. She provides rehabilitation counseling services, assists with obtaining and maintaining employment, provides access to training and evaluation, provides services such as ASL interpreters for classes or job interviews, counsels about post-secondary education options, teaches self-advocacy skills and much, much more. Being trilingual, the ability to use direct communication with clients, as well as personal experience and identity with Deaf culture, has allowed her to support clients in obtaining educational and career opportunities. A leader in the Deaf community, she also serves as a Board member for both the SC Association for the Deaf (SCAD) and Beginnings, SC, with the intent of creating positive change for the Deaf community. An avid student, Aileen is continuing her education and is in her second year at the USC Rehabilitation Counseling program. Many of the classes she has completed recently, such as theories and techniques, LGBTQA+ perspectives and impacts, multicultural considerations, and ethics are helping to shape the kind of counselor she wants to be: compassionate, empathetic, non-judgmental, self-aware and considerate of diverse multicultural experiences.

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Faculty Spotlight



Dear Learning Community,

I'm thrilled to share some recent publications I've been working on that might interest you.

The first one was on understanding how rehabilitation educators assess students, which dives into an important part of the job for educators in rehabilitation programs. These educators have to evaluate how well students demonstrate professional attitudes and behaviors. We used a theory called the Theory

of Planned Behavior to see what influences these assessments. We talked to 52 educators across the U.S.

What we found is that most educators have positive feelings about their role in assessing these behaviors, which matches up with what the Theory of Planned Behavior suggests. The things they believe and what they think is expected of them really shape how they assess. Our study explained about 57% of the reasons behind their assessments. We also talk about what this means for rehabilitation programs.

The second publication offers a new way to understand dealing with long-term illness. It introduces a fresh idea called the Virtue-Based Psychosocial Adaptation Model (V-PAM). This model suggests that when people face long-term illness or disability, they can learn and grow through five qualities: Courage, Integrity, Practical Wisdom, Committed Action, and Emotional Transcendence.

While a lot of attention has been on testing and validating this model, our paper takes a step back to explain the theory behind it. We talk about how this model can guide how we help people in counseling, focusing on how people can learn and grow through tough experiences.

The idea here is that counselors can use V-PAM as a guide to figure out how to help people dealing with long-term health issues. By working together with patients, counselors can really make a difference in how they cope and grow.

These papers are important because they shed light on how educators in rehabilitation programs assess students and offer a new way of thinking about helping people with long-term health issues. I'm excited to share these ideas with you all.

Best,

Dr. Richardson

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Students Prepare for Practicum and Internship

During the week of February 26th, the program will be holding our Spring Pre-Practicum Faculty Meetings (PPFM). This is a significant milestone for students as they prepare for their practicum/internship experiences. They will have the opportunity to showcase their growth, discuss their practicum/internship goals and interests, and receive valuable feedback from faculty. It's a time for reflection, preparation, and celebration as they get ready to move forward in their counseling journey.

The counseling practicum in clinical rehabilitation provides students with their initial supervised clinical practice experience. It consists of field placement activities and seminar sessions conducted by the Practicum Coordinator. Practicum is a prerequisite to internship.

The clinical rehabilitation counseling internship provides students with the opportunity to develop advanced clinical rehabilitation counseling skills and to gain sufficient experience to function effectively in entry-level clinical rehabilitation positions. The internship provides an opportunity for students to perform, under supervision of the internship supervisor and an assigned site supervisor, a variety of clinical counseling activities that a clinical rehabilitation counselor is expected to perform.

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Literature Highlight



USC’s Counseling and Rehabilitation Program was fortunate to welcome Dr. Brown as a guest speaker at our most recent Learning Community event as he presented on his topic titled “From Poverty to Prison to PHD: a change must come”. Dr. Homer Brown is a Pastor, Adjunct Professor and Director of Counseling & Mental Health Services who has dedicated over 12 years of his life to Influential Leadership, Counseling, Education and Therapy for Couples, Families and Children.

In addition to his work as Clinical Director and an Independent Counselor at Coastal Behavioral Therapy, Dr. Brown recently released a new book titled “Finishing Better Not Bitter: Overcoming Past Hurts While Getting Better All the Time”. Take a look at Dr. Brown’s book, available on Amazon in paperback or on Kindle.

Wellness Corner

Research has found that exercising can improve our mental health by reducing anxiety, depression/negative mood while improving self-esteem and cognitive functioning. Try tracking your steps as a way to challenge yourself to reach your desired step goal!

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Pet of the Month

Meet Roscoe!

Roscoe is a mutt that was found living as a stray. He is an old man living inside a dog's body, in the sense that he seems human at times (you have to experience it in order to understand), but you can tell exactly what he's thinking and/or feeling just by his facial expression. When he's not relaxing on the couch, Roscoe likes to play hide and seek- he always wins.

To share your Wellness tips and to have your pet(s) shared in our next newsletter, complete this [form](#)!



APA Writing Tips

Headings: How to Format

The number of levels of headings needed for a paper depends on its length and complexity - three is average.

APA-style headings have five possible levels:

Table 2.3 Format for the Five Levels of Heading in APA Style

Level	Format
1	Centered, Bold, Title Case Heading Text begins as a new paragraph.
2	Flush Left, Bold, Title Case Heading Text begins as a new paragraph.
3	<i>Flush Left, Bold Italic, Title Case Heading</i> Text begins as a new paragraph.
4	Indented, Bold, Title Case Heading, Ending With a Period. Text begins on the same line and continues as a regular paragraph.
5	<i>Indented, Bold Italic, Title Case Heading, Ending With a Period.</i> Text begins on the same line and continues as a regular paragraph.

Note. In title case, most words are capitalized (see [Section 6.17](#)).

Note, because the first paragraphs of a paper are understood to be introductory, the heading "Introduction" is not needed (APA 7th edition, p.47).

CHECK OUT OUR SOCIALS

