

REHABILITATION AND HUMAN SERVICES, B.S. (EDUCATION)

Seven Penn State campuses are scheduled for closure after Spring 2027: DuBois, Fayette, New Kensington, Mont Alto, Shenango, Wilkes-Barre, and York. New students are not being admitted at these campuses.

Begin Campus: Any Penn State Campus

End Campus: University Park

Program Description

This RHS major helps prepare students for entry-level positions in a variety of human service settings, particularly settings that provide services to persons with physical, emotional, and/or mental disabilities. Graduates pursue employment in a variety of settings including rehabilitation hospitals, drug and alcohol programs, geriatric service centers, community mental health programs, programs for people with intellectual disabilities, justice system, and schools. Increasing opportunities are available in private for-profit insurance programs for the industrially injured, and in employee assistance programs within business and industry. Well-planned use of electives and internships allows for specialization. The internship is provided under the supervision of professionals in human service agencies. These intensive "hands-on" experiences are frequently avenues for employment since the internship is completed during the senior year. Students may not go on internship until they have successfully completed all other course work. Students are encouraged to participate in volunteer experiences that provide opportunities to work with people with disabilities. Students are encouraged to declare a minor in a related area and should be discussed with the student's adviser. The major also helps prepare students for graduate study in many human service professional disciplines such as rehabilitation counseling, school counseling, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and social work.

What is Rehabilitation and Human Services?

Rehabilitation and Human Services (RHS) is an interdisciplinary field dedicated to improving the well-being of individuals and communities by addressing the barriers that prevent full participation in everyday life. These barriers may include mental health challenges, disability, chronic illness, substance use, trauma, educational inequities, and limited access to resources. RHS professionals work across a wide range of settings and draw on knowledge from education, health sciences, social services, and public health. At its core, the field emphasizes advocacy, collaboration, and person-centered practice, empowering individuals across the lifespan to achieve greater independence, resilience, and quality of life.

Students learn how to support individuals through rehabilitation, advocacy, prevention, and community-based services. Coursework emphasizes understanding the social, psychological, cultural, and systemic factors that influence health, disability, and community participation.

Graduates pursue careers in fields such as:

- Disability and vocational rehabilitation services
- Community mental health and behavioral health programs

- Addictions and recovery services
- Youth and family services
- Case management and social service delivery
- Community-based nonprofit organizations
- School and college student support services
- Corrections and justice-related rehabilitation programs

Many RHS graduates also continue their education in graduate programs such as counseling, social work, psychology, occupational therapy, physical therapy, public health, and related helping professions.

You Might Like This Program If...

- You are passionate about supporting individuals with disabilities and promoting inclusion in communities and schools.
- You want to work in human services, behavioral health, rehabilitation, or community-based support systems.
- You are interested in advocacy, social justice, and improving access to services for underserved populations.
- You want hands-on experience through internships, service learning, and community partnerships.
- You plan to pursue graduate study in counseling, social work, rehabilitation, occupational therapy, public health, or related helping professions.
- You want a career focused on helping individuals and communities improve well-being, independence, and quality of life.