Auburn University – Vocational Evaluation Forensic Certificate Program
Implementation & Outcomes Survey Year 2
RSA Innovative Grant
October 2022

RSA Innovative Grant Purpose

The Vocational Evaluation Forensic Certificate (VEFC) aims to improve employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities by focusing on the employment of those working in vocational rehabilitation (VR). The main outcome of the VEFC is to reduce the number of VR vacancies by providing evidence-based practice (EBP), as well as greater forensic, vocational evaluation, and employment expertise to professionals and paraprofessionals. By allowing students and professionals with a bachelor's degree or higher into the program and providing financial funding, those enrolled in the VEFC can participate in on-campus or distance education courses related to forensic rehabilitation and vocational evaluation. Administered through the Department of Special Education, Rehabilitation, and Counseling (SERC) in the College of Education, this program requires one year of coursework that, upon completion, results in a graduate training certificate that will advance the field of vocational rehabilitation and improve employment outcomes for professionals and ultimately consumers.

Implementation & Outcome Survey Purpose

The Implementation and Outcome (I & O) Survey is a method of gauging the efficiency and effectiveness of the grant program in accomplishing its goals and objectives. As a component of the third year workplan, the I & O Survey was sent to students, faculty, staff, alumni, advisory board members, and other stakeholders in August and September of 2022 to evaluate the goals from year two. The covered period of year two (October 1, 2021 to

September 30, 2022) included the first ever cohort of the VEFC, specifically including course completion and implementation of the continuous feedback loop that was prepared in year one. This self-report survey allowed those involved with the VEFC to evaluate the program on its effectiveness and efficiency in meeting each of its objectives, in addition to providing feedback about the program outcomes that have been accomplished thus far. The following sections provide the survey results of the Year 2 (2022) I & O Survey.

Results of the Implementation Survey

All data were collected using Qualtrics, a web-based survey instrument, and analyzed using SPSS statistical software. The survey invitation was initially sent during the last week of August 2022 and remained open for about four weeks, with five reminder invitations sent within that time period. A total of 38 completed surveys were obtained of the 71 contacts, resulting in about a 53% response rate.
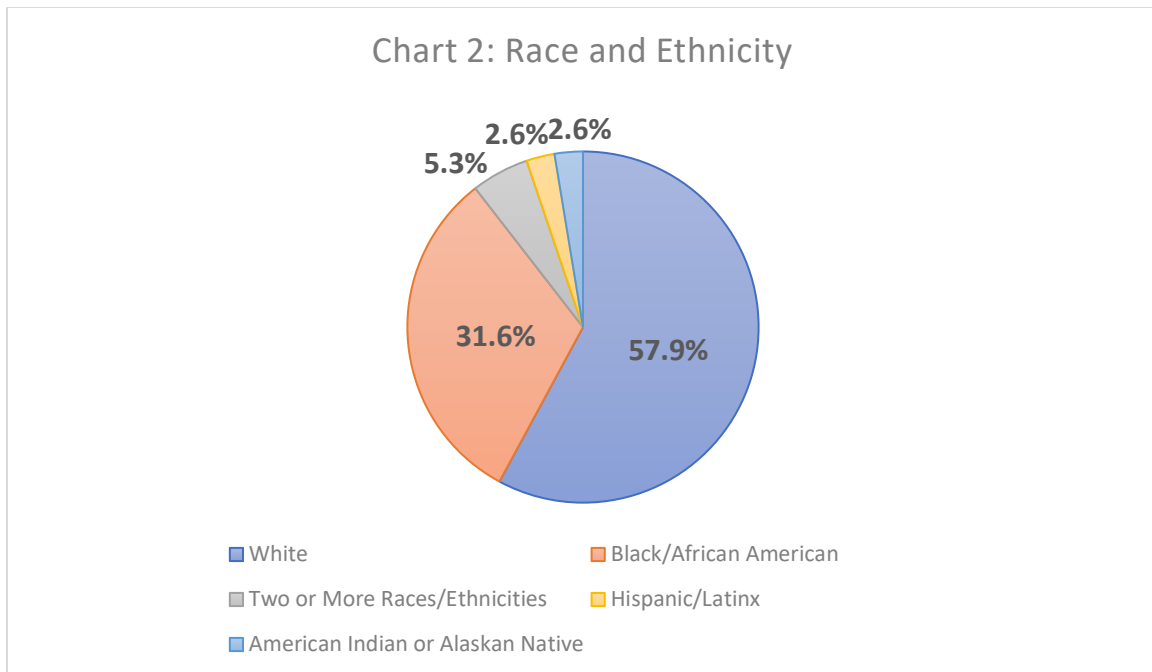
Findings: Demographics

Survey participants were asked to provide their gender, race/ethnicity, occupation, years of experience, and primary affiliation with this project. As individuals may have multiple roles within the project, respondents were permitted to provide more than one response to primary affiliation. As displayed in *Chart 1: Gender*, most of the respondents were female (*N* = 29, 76.3%), with males representing 23.7% (*N* = 9).

Chart 1: Gender

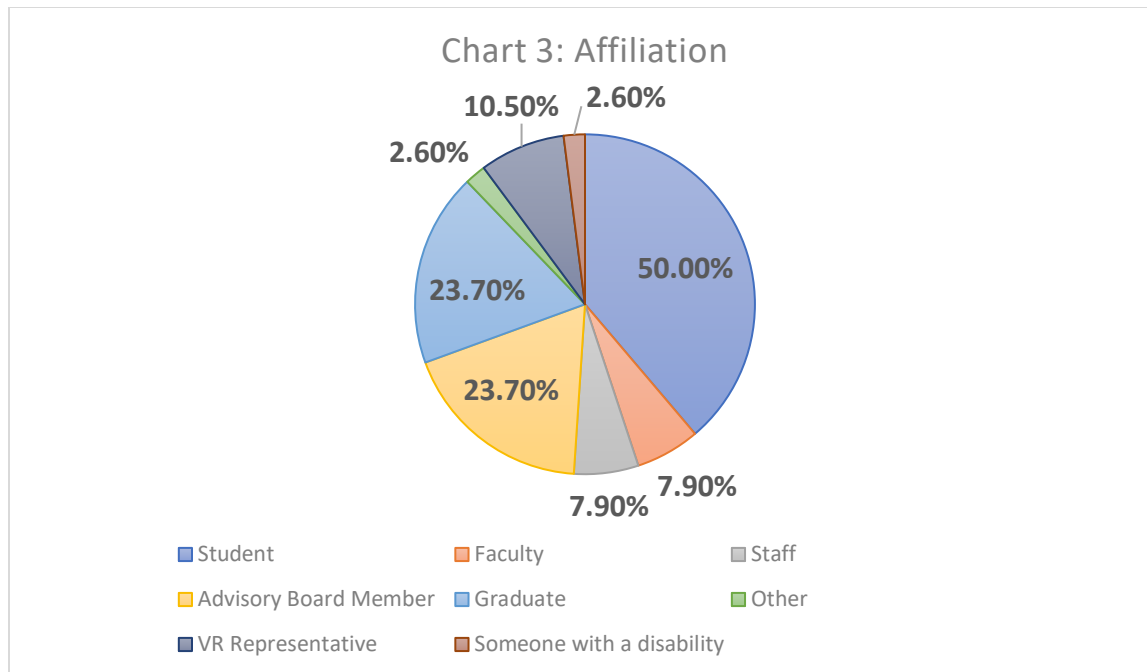
23.7%

76.3%

■ Male ■ Female
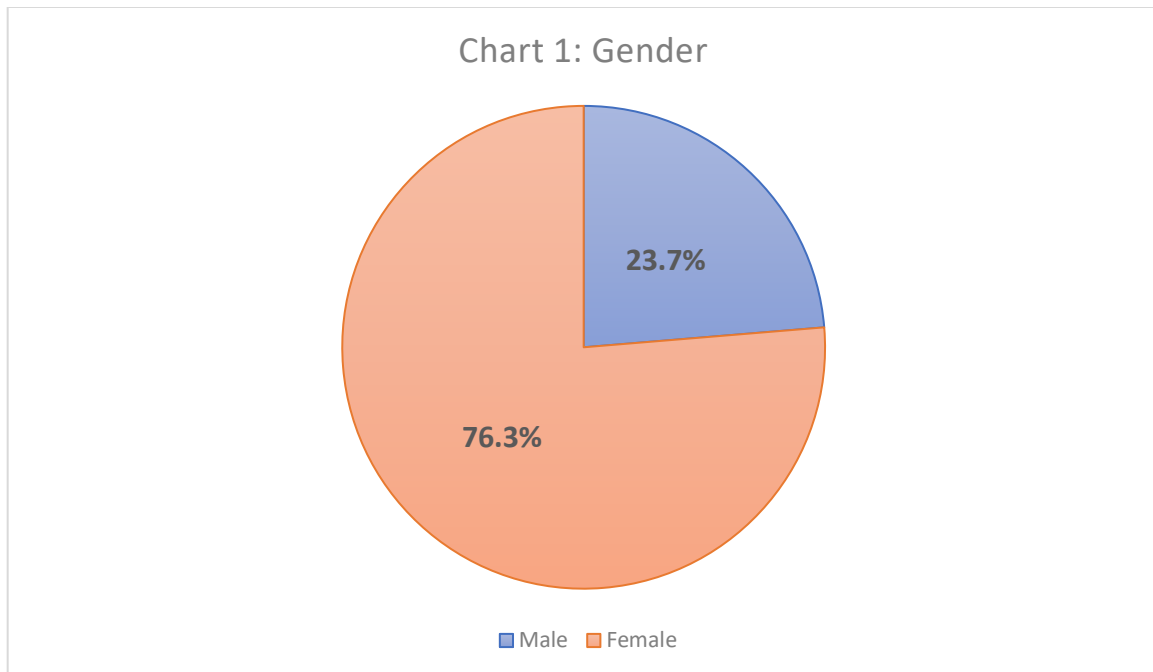
In terms of race and ethnicity, respondents could choose among the following:

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Hispanic or Latinx
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- White (neither Hispanic nor Latinx)
- Middle Eastern
- Two or more races
- Prefer not to say
- Other

Chart 2: Race and Ethnicity shown below indicates that all respondents provided

information related to race and ethnicity. Results indicated that 57.9% (*N* = 22) of the

respondents identified as White (neither Hispanic nor Latino/a), 31.6% (*N* = 12) as Black or

African American, 5.3% (*N* = 2) identified as being of two or more races, 2.6% (*N* = 1)

Hispanic or Latinx, and 2.6% (*N* = 1) as American Indian or Alaskan Native.

Chart 2: Race and Ethnicity

- White — 57.9%
- Black/African American — 31.6%
- Two or More Races/Ethnicities — 5.3%
- Hispanic/Latinx — 2.6%
- American Indian or Alaskan Native — 2.6%

When asked about their affiliation to the program, respondents were able to select as many options as necessary to accurately reflect their roles within the VEFC. *Chart 3: Affiliation* shown below illustrates that half of the respondents (50%; *N* = 19) were current students. Another 23.7% (*N* = 9) of respondents were graduates from the past, Year 1 cohort. Nine respondents (23.7%) were members of the advisory board. Four (10.5%) respondents were a vocational rehabilitation representative/counselor. Three (7.9%) respondents were faculty as well as another three (7.9%) respondents were staff members. Lastly, there were two respondents that reported as being either someone with a disability or in the "other" category, each with one respondent (2.6%) respectively. In viewing the information in *Chart 3: Affiliation*, it is important to note that respondents were permitted to select more than one category of affiliation. For this reason, the sum total of responses in certain categories is higher due to multiple responses.

Chart 3: Affiliation

- 50.00% Student
- 7.90% Faculty
- 7.90% Staff
- 23.70% Advisory Board Member
- 23.70% Graduate
- 2.60% Other
- 10.50% VR Representative
- 2.60% Someone with a disability

To identify primary occupation, participants were able to choose one from the following:

- Faculty
- Administration
- Rehabilitation Counselor
- Lawyer/Judge
- Forensic Rehabilitation Counselor
- State Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor
- Vocational Evaluator
- Student
- Other

Chart 4: Primary Occupation shown below illustrates that "Other," "Student," and "State Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor" were selected at equal rates (23,7%; *N* = 9). The occupations of Rehabilitation Counselor, Forensic Rehabilitation Counselor, and Vocational Evaluator all included three respondents each (*N* = 7.9%). Lastly, the final occupation that was

selected was Faculty, which featured 2 respondents (*N* = 5.3%). For the "Other" option,

respondents were able to provide their title. These included the following:

- CRC for Workers Compensation
- Evaluation Specialist
- Instructional Designer
- Nonprofit program director
- Outpatient Therapist
- Rehabilitation Instructor
- Social Worker
- Unemployed

Chart 4: Primary Occupation

5.3%
7.9%
7.9%
23.7%
23.7%
23.7%
7.9%

- Faculty
- Rehabilitation Counselor
- Forensic Rehabilitation Counselor
- State Vocational Rehabililtation Counselor
- Vocational Evaluator
- Student
- Other
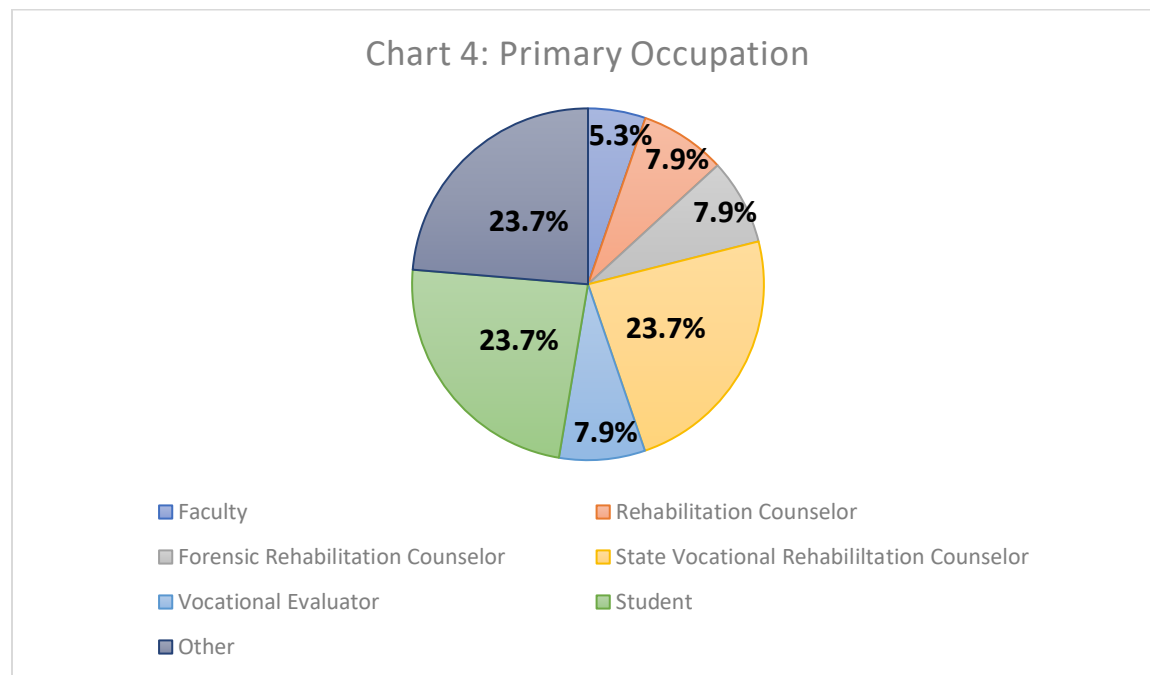
Participants were able to indicate the number of years of experience in their

occupation. The choices available for this section included "Less than 5 years", "5-10 years",

"10-15 years", "15-20 years", and "More than 20 years". Participants could only choose one

response. *Chart 5: Years of Experience* displays the participants' responses. Most of the

participants indicated "Less than 5 years" (36.8%; *N* = 14), followed by "5-10 years" of

experience (21.1%; $N = 8$) and "More than 20 years" (21.2%; $N = 8$). Other responses included

"10-15 years" (13.2%; $N = 5$), and "15-20 years" (7.9%, $N = 3$).

Chart 5: Years of Experience
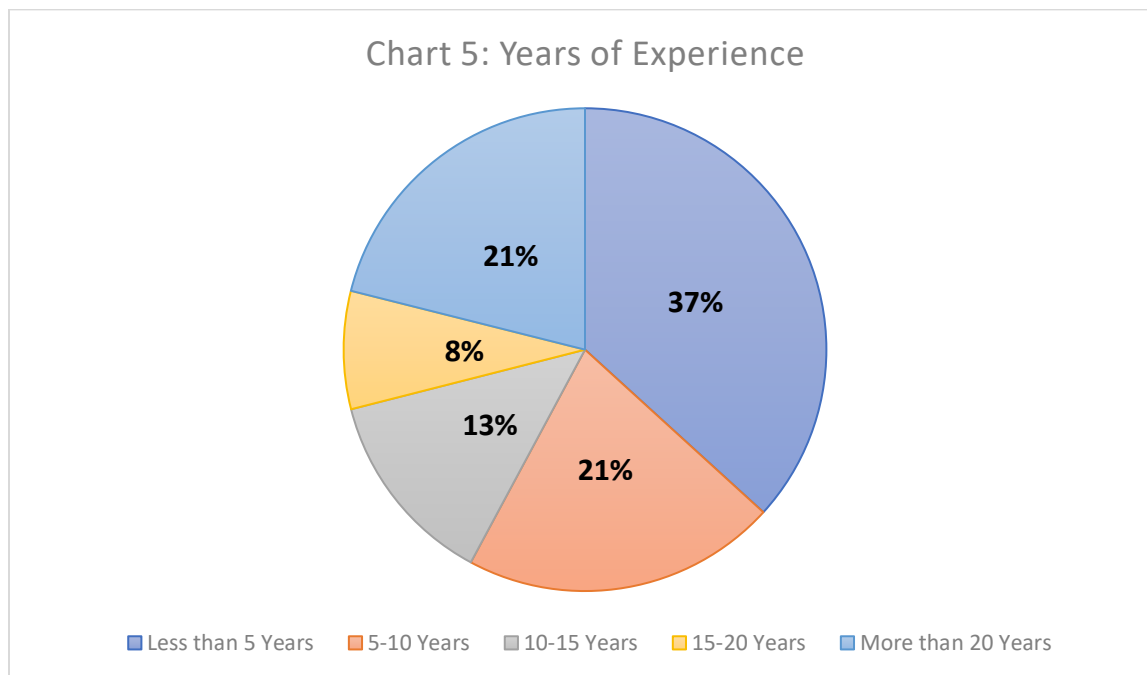
Findings: Project Areas

To facilitate the evaluation process, project objectives and performance measures were

divided into the following seven areas:

1. High-tech Experience with Updated Curriculum

2. Student Recruitment

3. Student Access

4. Advisory Board

5. Implementation

6. Program Related Outcomes

7. GPRA Measures

   a. General Feedback

   b. Employer/Supervisor Feedback

   c. Alumni Feedback

Participants were asked a series of questions related to each of the program areas and provided responses using a 5-point Likert-type scale, including the following response choices: 1 – Very Inefficient; 2 – Inefficient; 3 – Neither Efficient nor Inefficient; 4 – Efficient; and 5 – Very Efficient. Additionally, there were a few questions that measured various stakeholders' satisfaction and their perception of the VEFC's quality, utility, and relevance, also measured on a 5-point Likert scale. In contrast to the previous year's I & O survey that primarily focused on planning and preparation for the first cohort, the current year survey data includes course-related content and outcomes given that the first cohort successfully completed the requirements of the training certificate. As such, the covered period is October 1, 2021 to September 30, 2022 (Year 2). The following sections include the information that was presented within the survey, as well as the results from the participants.

1. **High-tech Experience with Updated Curriculum**

   The High-tech Experience with Updated Curriculum program area included four questions pertaining to the goals of completing and updating course re-designs, creating and posting the CRC/CVE preparation module, maintaining the VEFC website, and the development of a unique logo.

   Course Re-designs: There was a goal to complete course re-designs and make revisions and/or updates annually in collaboration with the Biggio Center. At the time of the

survey, five course re-designs were completed with one course to be revised. According to the survey, 44.7% of respondents (N = 17) reported that the course re-designs were "very efficient," while 39.5% (N = 15) reported as "efficient," and 15.8% (N = 6) reported as "neither inefficient nor efficient." The mean score of this program goal was 4.29 (SD = 0.73) out of 5.00.

Creation CRC/CVE preparation module: There was a goal of creating and posting the prep module to the VEFC website for public access and at the time of the survey, with the module's content and corresponding recordings being finalized with the intention of posting them for public access in January 2023. Given this, results indicated that 28.9% percent (N = 11) reported "very efficient," 39.5% (N = 15) reported "efficient," 26.3% (N = 10) reported "neither inefficient nor efficient," and 2.6% (N = 1) reported "inefficient." The mean score was 3.97 (SD = 0.83) out of 5.00.

Maintenance of the accessible website: With regard to continuing to update the program website for the VEFC, 50% of respondents (N = 19) reported "very efficient," in addition to 28.9% (N = 11) who reported "efficient," and 18.4% (N = 7) as "neither inefficient nor efficient." The mean score of the updates and maintenance of the website was 4.32 (SD = 0.78) out of 5.00.

Unique logo: There was a goal to create a logo unique for the VEFC. However, at the time of the survey, the AU Office of Communications and Marketing (OCM) has yet to approve the VEFC proposed program logo given that the OCM requirements are currently under revision. The respondents indicated the results of this are 28.9% (N =

11) "very efficient." 21.2% (*N* = 8) "efficient," and 50% (*N* = 19) "neither inefficient nor efficient." The mean score was 3.79 (*SD* = 0.88) out of 5.00.

2. **Student Recruitment**

The Student Recruitment program area consisted of six questions pertaining to recruiting students for the upcoming cohort, recruiting and giving priority placement to those with minority identities from traditionally underrepresented groups and/or those with a disability, enroll students who currently work in State Vocational Rehabilitation agencies, hosting virtual open houses, awarding RSA scholarships to program applicants, and attending career fairs and/or conferences for recruitment purposes. For the purpose of this report, data from both the first and second cohorts are provided. The first cohort is the primary focus of this report, given that they have completed the program in full, thus their programmatic outcomes will be examined in the current I & O survey. However, it is also necessary to include brief information related to the recruitment of the second cohort that is currently enrolled because their recruitment occurred during the covered period. More detailed information and outcomes for the second cohort will be examined upon next year's I & O Survey for year three.

Recruitment of the upcoming cohort: Given that the initial planning period has concluded and the VEFC is now offering courses as well as enrolling students, there is a goal to recruit the next cohort of students each year. For Year 2, the VEFC recruited and enrolled 16 students to make up cohort 1. Regarding the recruitment of cohort 2, 27 students confirmed enrollment for the 2022-2023 academic year (year 3). Results indicated that 68.4% (*N* = 26) rated this outcome as "very efficient," 21.1% (*N* = 8) as

"efficient", and 10.5% (*N* = 4) as "neither inefficient nor efficient." The mean for student recruitment was 4.58 (*SD* = 0.68), which is the largest mean from the questions that respondents answered.

Recruit and give priority placement to individuals of underrepresented/minority groups: Prior to the current I & O Survey, an anonymous and voluntary student data survey was conducted to collect demographic information related to the student population of the VEFC. The first cohort student data survey, and those whose outcomes are being examined in the current survey, featured 11 respondents, indicating a 57% response rate. Of those 11 respondents, five (45%) reported being of racial/ethnic minorities and eleven (100%) identified as having a disability. For the second cohort, it was reported that of the 20 students that participated in the student data survey (71% response rate), eleven (55%) students identified as being of a racial/ethnic minority, in addition to six (30%) students identifying as having a disability. This information was provided in the I & O survey for respondents to rate the efficiency of the goal and outcomes. Just over sixty percent (60.5%; *N* = 23) of respondents reported this area of recruitment as "very efficient," while 31.6% (*N* = 12) reported "efficient," and 7.9% (*N* = 3) reported "neither inefficient nor efficient." The mean for minority recruitment was 4.53 (*SD* = 0.65).

Enroll students working in State VR: Information related to the number of students who work in State VR was also collected in the student data survey. Of the eleven respondents for the first cohort student data survey, five of the 11 respondents (45%) reported working in State VR agencies. For the second cohort that was solely recruited during the covered period, it was reported that, of the 20 respondents, three (15%)

students currently work in State VR agencies. Thus, the respondents of the I & O survey rated this outcome as 42.1% (*N* = 16) "very efficient," 39.5% (*N* = 15) "efficient," 15.8% (*N* = 6) "neither inefficient nor efficient," and 2.6% (*N* = 1) "inefficient." The mean for the goal of student employment in State VR agencies was 4.21 (*SD* = 0.81).

Hosting Virtual Open Houses: Another student recruitment goal pertained to hosting multiple virtual open houses via Zoom for potential applicants to meet the faculty/state, learn more about the program, ask questions, etc. Last year, the VEFC hosted two open houses, one per semester. The results were 60.5% (*N* = 23) rated it as "very efficient," 28.9% (*N* = 11) as "efficient," and 10.5% (*N* = 4) as "neither inefficient nor efficient." The mean was 4.50 (*SD* = 0.69).

Award 15 RSA scholarships to VEFC program applicants: During the covered period for cohort 1, 15 scholarships were awarded but only 12 were utilized due to three students dropping out of the program for significant personal reasons. Because of this, the VEFC was able to award 18 scholarships in July 2022 for the second cohort that will be enrolled the 2022-2023 academic year, as not all scholarships were used in the previous year. According to the survey, 65.8% of respondents (*N* = 25) reported "very efficient" while 23.7% (*N* = 9) reported "efficient," and 10.5% (*N* = 4) reported "neither inefficient nor efficient." The mean score was 4.55 (*SD* = 0.69).

Attending career fairs and conferences: Another goal was to attend career fairs and/or conferences in order to recruit potential applicants. The graduate assistants attended two academic conferences, one virtual career fair, and one university organizational meeting during Year 2. The respondents rated this as 36.8%. (*N* = 14) "very efficient,"

50% (*N* = 19) "efficient," and 10.5% (*N* = 4) "neither inefficient nor efficient." The mean was 4.27 (*SD* = 0.65).

3. **Student Access**

The Student Access program area contains two questions that pertain to providing two educational formats (on campus and distance education), as well as offering a virtual New Student Orientation via zoom.

Provide two educational formats: The goal of providing the on-campus and distance education formats was rated as "very efficient" by 57.9% (*N*= 22) of respondents. 34.2% of respondents (*N* = 13) reported it as "efficient" and 7.9% (*N* = 3) reported it as "neither inefficient nor efficient." The mean score for providing two educational formats was 4.50 (*SD* = 0.65).

Host a virtual New Student Orientation: As suggested by the previous cohort, the faculty and staff of the VEFC organized a new student orientation so that incoming students had the opportunity to get to know each other prior to starting the academic year. The results of the I & O survey indicated that 60.5% (*N* = 23) of respondents rated it as "very efficient," while 34.2% (*N* = 13) rated it as "efficient" and 5.3% (*N* = 2) rated it as "neither inefficient nor efficient." The mean rating for hosting a new student orientation was 4.55 (*SD* = 0.6).

4. **Advisory Board**

The program area related to the advisory board consisted of only one question at this time, which asked about the effectiveness of the VEFC in recruiting Advisory Board

members from Region IV and various other states. Information related to the specific states, the date/time of the first board meeting, and continued planner was provided.

Recruit Advisory Board Members: According to the survey, 31.6% (N = 12) reported this program area as "very efficient." Another 44.7% (N = 17) reported it as "efficient," while 18.4% (N = 7) reported it as "neither inefficient nor efficient" and 2.6% (N = 1) reported it as "inefficient." The mean score for the effectiveness of recruiting and planning for the advisory board was 4.08 (SD = 0.8). We are still recruiting in two states.

5. **Implementation**

Four questions related to the program area of implementation were included in this survey. These questions included information related to the goals of disseminating the Year 1 I & O Survey, completing all RSA reports on time, continuing quarterly grant team meetings, and using cutting edge technology and software

Disseminating the Year 1 I & O Survey: The Year 1 I & O Survey report was posted on the VEFC website for public access, as well as discussed with the program officer, consultants, faculty, and staff. The results indicated that both the ratings of "very efficient" and "efficient" produced a 44.7% (N = 17) response rate. Another 7.9% (N = 3) of respondents gave the rating of "neither inefficient nor efficient." The mean score for this program goal was 4.34 (SD= 0.67).

Completing RSA reports on time: All annual, semi-annual, and quarterly reports were submitted on time to the Program Officer of RSA. Results indicated that 52.6% (N = 20) respondents rated this goal as "very efficient," while 39.5% (N = 15) rated it as

"efficient," and 7.9% (*N* = 3) rated it as "neither inefficient nor efficient." The mean for the goal of submitting all RSA reports on time was 4.45 (*SD* = 0.65).

Continuing grant team meetings: Each quarter the grant team of faculty, staff, and consultants meet via Zoom to maintain a continuous feedback loop regarding quality program improvements. The results of the current survey include 44.7% (*N* = 17) of respondents rating this goal as "very efficient," 47.4% (*N* = 18) as "efficient," and 7.9% (*N* = 3) as "neither inefficient nor efficient." The mean of the grant team meeting goal was 4.37 (*SD* = 0.63).

Cutting-edge technology and software: The goal of utilizing updated technology and software has been included each year of the VEFC. The program currently uses new online course instruction and content provided on CANVAS, online/virtual assessments (e.g., Pearson Q-Global, SkillTran, PAR Products, O*NET, and others), and Zoom for all virtual meetings. The highest rating was "very efficient" with 60.5% (*N* = 23) of respondents, followed by 28.9% (*N* = 11) selecting "efficient," and 10.5% (*N* = 4) selecting "neither inefficient nor efficient." The mean was 4.50 (*SD* = 0.69).

6. **Program Related Outcomes**

In contrast to the previous Year 1 I & O survey report, the current survey contains multiple program related outcomes. There were four questions that addressed the goals of presenting program progress and outcomes at conferences, conducting spring meetings with students, monitoring student progress by GPA, and providing course evaluations to students.

Present program progress and outcomes at conferences: The outcome of the conference attendance goal was attending one conference to present the VEFC program outcomes and general information. At the time of the current survey, the presentation proposal for the VECAP national forum was accepted, but the grant team had not yet presented as the conference occurred in late September 2022, thus the eventual outcome was still in progress at the time of data collection for the current survey. About 36% (*N* = 14) reported "very efficient," 44.7% (*N* = 17) reported "efficient," and 18.4% (*N* = 7) reported "neither inefficient nor efficient." The mean rating was 4.18 (*SD* = 0.73) out of 5.00.

Student Meetings: During the Spring semester, each student met with the PI/Program Director, Dr. Jill Meyer, and a graduate assistant on the grant to discuss their experience in the VEFC, as well as offering space to provide feedback. Each student had a 30-minute virtual meeting. The current survey indicates that 57.9% (*N* = 22) of respondents rated this goal as "very efficient," 34.2% (*N* = 13) rated it as "efficient," and 7.9% (*N* = 3) rated it as "neither inefficient nor efficient." The mean for the student meetings outcome was 4.50 (*SD* = 0.65).

Monitor Student Progress by GPA: Another program related outcome is to monitor student progress by GPA. All students from the first cohort maintained a 3.0 or higher GPA, thus meeting the graduation requirements of the training certificate. The respondents of the current survey gave the following ratings: 63.2% (*N* = 24) for "very efficient," 28.9% (*N* = 11) for "efficient," and 7.9% (*N* = 3) for "neither inefficient nor efficient." The mean was 4.55 (*SD* = 0.65).

Provide Course Evaluations: After each semester, a course evaluation was provided for each course so that students could provide feedback and make suggestions related to the course content, teaching, assignments, etc. The results of the current survey suggested 55.3% (*N* = 21) of respondents selected "very efficient," 34.2% (*N* = 13) selected" efficient," and 10.5% (*N* = 4) selected "neither inefficient nor efficient." The mean for this program outcome was 4.45 (*SD* = 0.69).

7. **GPRA Measures**

   The GPRA measure the quality, relevance, and utility of the VEFC, as well as encourage feedback from alumni and their employers or supervisors. The VEFC is founded on the Empowerment Evaluation, and continuous improvement is an essential component of this model, which include the GPRA measures, among other important aspects of the evaluation. The current survey asked questions related to the GPRA measures to all participants, as well as a separate question series for alumni and employers/supervisors in order to ensure a specialized approach for meaningful feedback, resulting in three separate categories. They are as follows:

   a. **General Feedback**

      The general quality, relevance, and usefulness of the VEFC were measured by all respondents. There are eight questions within the general GRPA measures feedback section.

      Quality: For the purpose of the current survey, the quality of the program was operationalized by the degree to which the course materials, technology, and

tools effectively support student acquisition of the VEFC program's intended knowledge and skills. The first cohort all maintained a 3.0 GPA or higher resulting in a 100% graduation rate. Additionally, student course evaluations provided high ratings for coursework quality, including high tech options for software and assessments. The respondents rated this question as follows: 65.8% (N = 25) for "very efficient," 23.7% (N = 9) for "efficient," 10.5% (N = 4) for "neither inefficient nor efficient." The mean response was 4.55 (SD = 0.69), indicating reports of high quality on a 5-point scale.

Relevance: The relevance of the program was operationalized by the degree to which the VEFC program's intended knowledge and skills, courses, content, on campus and distance learning, and accessible technology align with agencies', employers', and students' expectations. During annual reviews, students reported a high degree of satisfaction related to their professional development including their accessibility to on campus and distance learning. As such, 52.6% (N = 20) gave the rating of "very efficient," 34.2% (N = 13) gave the rating of "efficient," and 10.5% (N = 4) gave the rating of "neither inefficient nor efficient." The mean response was 4.43 (SD = 0.69).

Usefulness: For the purpose of the current survey, the usefulness of the program was operationalized by the degree to which the knowledge and skills provided by the VEFC are applicable to the profession and workplace environment. As such, students were able to and encouraged to sit for the CRC exam. Two students took the exam, but it was reported that only one student passed, resulting in a

50% pass rate. Additionally, students were able to secure employment with at least four students receiving promotions and/or career changes that were more aligned with their career goals. Given this information, 34.2% (*N* = 13) of respondents rated it as "very efficient," while 39.5% (*N* = 15) provided a rating of "efficient," 23.7% (*N* = 9) provided a rating of "neither inefficient nor efficient," and 2.6% (*N* = 1) provided a rating of "inefficient." The mean score for the usefulness of the VEFC program was 4.05 (*SD* = 0.84).

Collective Program Ratings: In addition to the aforementioned quality, relevance, and usefulness questions, other inquiries related to general impressions of the program were posed. It is important to note that questions displayed a different 5-point Likert scale with options including poor (1), below average (2), average (3), above average (4), and excellent (5). The general and collective program ratings are as follows:

    i. *Stakeholders' impression of the VEFC students' knowledge and skills as it applies to employment and workplace skills:* 52.6% (*N* = 20) rated this as "excellent," 26.3% (*N* = 10) rated this as "above average," and 15.8% (*N* = 6) rated this as "average." The mean rating was 4.39 (*SD* = 0.77).

    ii. *General utility of the VEFC:* 50% (*N* = 19) of respondents gave the rating of "excellent," 28.9% (*N* = 11) of respondents gave the rating of "above average," and 15.8% (*N* = 6) gave the rating of "average," resulting in a 4.36 mean rating (*SD* = 0.76).

iii. *General quality of the VEFC:* 50% (N = 19) provided the rating of "excellent," while 28.9% (N = 11) provided the rating of "above average," and 15.8% (N = 6) provided the rating of "average," resulting in a mean of 4.36 (SD = 0.76).

iv. *General relevance of the VEFC:* 47.4% (N = 18) provided the rating of "excellent," while 36.8% (N = 14) provided the rating of "above average," and 13.2% (N = 5) provided the rating of "average," resulting in a mean 4.35 (SD = 0.72).

v. *General usefulness of the VEFC:* 44.7% (N = 17) of respondents provided the rating of "excellent," while 36.8% (N = 14) provided the rating of "above average," and 10.5% (N = 4) provided the rating of "average," resulting in a mean 4.37 (SD = 0.69).

b. **Employer/Supervisor Feedback**

A crucial component of the GPRA measures that was included in the current survey is feedback from employers and/or supervisors of alumni. It is important to understand how the training of the VEFC students is applied and used, and to what degree of competence. The questions related to supervisor impressions are also rating on the 5-point Likert scale of poor (1), below average (2), average (3), above average (4), and excellent (5). Additionally, a number of questions asked for the degree of satisfaction of the VEFC's quality, usefulness, and relevance. This is also measured on a 5-point Likert scale with the following ratings: Very unsatisfied (1), unsatisfied (2), neither unsatisfied nor satisfied (3), satisfied (4),

and very satisfied (5). Alumni were asked to share the current survey with their employer or supervisor to complete on their behalf. However, only one individual met this criterion and completed the survey. Thus, the following results are indicative of only one person's perception of the VEFC.

Impression of the quality of curricular and technology provided by the VEFC: The respondent gave a rating of "excellent," resulting in a mean of 5.00.

Impression of the relevance of the program skills and knowledge: This area was contextualized in terms of the supervisors' needs for vocational evaluation and forensic professionals. The respondent gave a rating of "excellent."

Usefulness and quality of students' knowledge and skills used in the workplace: The respondent gave a rating of "excellent." The mean is 5.00.

Employers' satisfaction with the quality of training: During the covered period, the goal was to have the majority of employers satisfied with the VEFC's quality of training. The respondent gave a rating of "very satisfied," resulting in a mean of 5.00.

Employers' satisfaction with the usefulness of training: During the covered period, the goal was to have the majority of employers satisfied with the VEFC's usefulness of training. The respondent gave a rating of "very satisfied." The mean score was 5.00.

Employers' satisfaction with the relevance of training: During the covered period, the goal was to have the majority of employers satisfied with the VEFC's

relevance of training. The respondent gave a rating of "very satisfied." Thus, the mean score was 5.00.

c. **Alumni Feedback**

Another imperative component of the empowerment evaluation model is providing opportunities for graduates of the VEFC to give feedback for the program after they have completed it in its entirety. Again, they were asked to answer questions related to the quality, relevance, and usefulness of the program on the 5-point Likert scale of poor (1), below average (2), average (3), above average (4), and excellent (5), as well as their satisfaction with the quality of training on the 5-point scale of very unsatisfied (1), unsatisfied (2), neither unsatisfied nor satisfied (3), satisfied (4), and very satisfied (5). Eight graduates completed the survey and answered the following questions:

Quality of the program: This was operationalized by the degree to which course materials, technology, and tools effectively support student acquisition of the VEFC's intended knowledge and skills. Graduates rated the quality of the program with 50% ($N = 4$) selecting "excellent," 25% ($N = 2$) selecting "above average," and 25% ($N = 2$) selecting "average." The mean was 4.25 ($SD = 0.87$).

Relevance of the program: The relevance of the VEFC was operationalized by the degree to which the VEFC program's intended knowledge and skills, courses, content, on campus and distance learning, and accessible technology align with agencies, employers', and students' expectations. The graduates' responses were as follows: 25% ($N = 2$) selected "excellent," 50% ($N = 4$) selected "above

average," and 25% (*N* = 2) selected "average," resulting in a mean of 4.00 (*SD* = 0.76).

Usefulness of the program: The usefulness of the VEFC's knowledge and skills was conceptualized within the context of obtaining employment or promotion. The respondents provided the following: 25% (*N* = 2) selected "excellent," 50% (*N* = 4) selected "above average," and 25% (*N* = 2) selected "average," resulting in a mean of 4.00 (*SD* = 0.76).

Satisfaction with VEFC's quality of training: During the covered period, there was a goal to have the majority of graduates satisfied with the VEFC's quality of training. 37.5% (*N* = 3) of respondents provided the rating of "very satisfied" and 62.5% (*N* = 5) provided the rating of "satisfied," indicating a 4.38 mean of satisfaction (*SD* = 0.52).

Career related information: The graduates who completed the survey also provided information related to their career. Of the eight respondents, none of these participants reported receiving a new job or promotion during or after their completion of the VEFC. However, it was noted that at least four students reported receiving new jobs or promotions in their individual student meeting during the Spring semester. Additionally, five of the eight graduates (62.5%) who completed the current survey indicated that their career goals have changed since the VEFC, which seems to match many positive reports during the student meetings.

Findings: Qualitative Responses

Survey participants were given the opportunity to add additional thoughts and observations at the end of the Year 2 I & O survey. The prompt was "please provide any additional comments or feedback regarding the quality or efficiency of the aforementioned areas or other suggestions for improvement." Below is the list of quoted responses direct from the survey participants:

- "Having adjunct professors that work in the field of forensics is invaluable. The articles added as supplemental material into the readings are also well placed. Again, I feel so fortunate to have this opportunity to learn."

- "I completed the VEFC program at the end of 2021. Feedback/suggestions I have are: 1) working with sites like SkillTran, OASYS, JobBrowser Pro so that students enrolled in VEFC have access as 'student accounts' or 'student membership' for free or reduced cost. 2) The Proprietary Rehabilitation course more usage of case studies/case files that help with assessing functional limitations, RTW restrictions, baseline evaluation pre-injury/post-injury. 3) And last, replace the Emerging Adulthood course with the Medical and Psychosocial Aspects of Disability course. The information I gained from the Medical Aspects course has helped me TREMENDOUSLY in my new position. That course provides great info on the impact of disability related to daily living, social, mental/emotional, community, relationships, life planning/aging, AND vocational. It is the clinical layer to our field of study, and ties back to one of the AU-CRC program

outcomes..."to provide high quality services to individuals with disabilities to work, LIVE and SOCIALIZE in the community"."

- "Looks like this project is off to a great start and is definitely needed."
- "The VEFC was excellent in revealing vocational opportunities I did know existed. It will allow for a career change beyond retirement. It will also enhance skills of seeking to become a rehab counselor."

Current students were also offered an opportunity to provide feedback with the prompt of "is there anything you would change about the marketing of the VEFC, enrollment process, educational resources, etc. for the VEFC and for future incoming cohorts?" The following answers were provided:

- "Attend Rehabilitation Counseling Conferences especially those with large membership of minorities."
- "Everything has been incredibly useful and helpful. I want to add that I am beyond impressed with the instruction thus far and wish I had this while going through my masters program many years ago. Thank you!"
- "I would not have so many tabs or tasks all over CANVAS for distance-learners. Have a simpler style of discussion, assignments, quizzes verses all of the things all over the place."

Summary and Recommendations

The purpose of the present survey was to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the Vocational Evaluation Forensic Certificate's seven current program areas. By listing the program goals that pertained to year 2 of the program (Oct 1, 2021 to Sept 30, 2022), students, faculty, staff, consultants, alumni, Advisory Board Members, and other stakeholders were asked to rate the efficiency in meeting each of the goals within the given time frame. A total of 38 stakeholders completed the survey which resulted in about a 53% response rate. Additionally, there was an opportunity for respondents to provide feedback, thoughts, and other observations at the end of the survey.

In summary, the participants included both men and women, though the majority of the respondents identified as female. In terms of race or ethnicity, many racial and ethnic identities were represented including White (neither Hispanic nor Latino/a), Black or African American, Hispanic or Latinx, American Indian or Alaskan Native, and those identifying as two or more races. Lastly, we also had a large degree of variation among the survey respondents' affiliations to the VEFC, which provided invaluable feedback and perspective.

Overall, the Year 2 I & O survey response options ranged from "inefficient" to "very efficient," with the majority of responses at the "efficient" or "very efficient" ratings. Altogether, most of those involved with the VEFC reported the program areas and goals to be efficient, as evidenced by mean scores of 3.79 or above (based on a 5-point scale) on all items in each of the seven program areas. The two lowest means pertained to the creation and approval of a unique logo (M = 3.79) as well as creation and publishing of the CRC/CVE preparation module (M = 3.97). The highest means of the initial questioning that every

respondent answered were related to recruitment of new students ($M = 4.58$), allocating RSA

scholarships ($M = 4.55$), providing a new student orientation ($M = 4.55$), monitoring student

progress by GPA ($M = 4.55$), and the rating of the quality of the program ($M = 4.55$).

Although the results suggest positive impact and efficiency, there are still many changes

that can be made to improve the VEFC and its efficiency and effectiveness in meeting the

grant's purpose and objectives. Based on these results and the general knowledge of the

program in its current state, we propose the following recommendations:

1. **Student Recruitment:**

   Recruiting minority students: While we have a fairly diverse current cohort in both race,

   ethnicity, age, and ability status, we aim to increase the number of individuals with a

   minority identity enrolled in the program and awarded a scholarship. We hope to

   continue to expand relationships with local HBCU's in the state of Alabama, as well as

   recruit from other organizations and academic institutions outside of the local area. The

   student's suggestion that encouraged recruitment at Rehabilitation Counseling

   conferences with large membership of minorities is a valuable suggestion and will be

   further considered in the future.

2. **Unique Logo:**

   While we have submitted a logo that is unique to the VEFC to the appropriate Auburn

   University office, we have been unsuccessful in this area as that department is revising

its branding requirements and limitations. We will continue to follow up with them so as to have a logo approved in the timeliest manner.

3. **CRC/CVE Preparation Modules:**

The current state of the CRC/CVE module includes finalizing content and recordings that will be posted in January 2023. While this is behind schedule, it is noted that a discussion with previous students who already completed the CRC or CVE took place and focused on the format and content that would be most helpful. Various mediums were also discussed, thus, the timeline for creation and publishing was delayed.