Greetings,

Thank you for taking the time to speak with us about the potential of providing a field education experience for students in the School of Social Work. Information about each of the programs (BSW, MSW and Ph.D.) and curriculum can be accessed at: http://www.ssw.chhs.colostate.edu/field.

Our social work education program prepares students for professional practice from a generalist perspective. We teach multi-level assessment and intervention with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities, applied through social work roles. A crucial component of social work education is the field placement.

At the bachelor’s level (BSW), early in the program, our students complete a two semester introductory practice skills course that is an educationally-guided, experiential learning opportunity for understanding and practicing interpersonal helping skills. Communication, relationship-building, and entry level professional writing skills are the primary focus of this course and are taught through lectures, as well as through an advocate-mentor relationship taking place in a social service setting. Additionally, BSW students, in their senior year, must complete a 450 hour field placement within an agency or organizational setting. This may be a one-semester or two-semester placement.

At the graduate, advanced generalist, master’s level (MSW) students must complete two field placements. The foundation year (270 hours) and the concentration year (675 hours) field placements provide a context for students to integrate social work practice skills with their course content. Prior to acceptance into our MSW program, students must have a minimum number of hours of practice experience, in addition to the academic requirements. Many of them have substantial human services experience.

Our program requires that MSW interns have an MSW field instructor with at least two years of post-degree experience. Supervisory experience is a plus. There are instances when the MSW field instructor is external to the agency; for example when an agency does not have an MSW on staff, we will work with the agency to identify a qualified field instructor to work with the student intern in coordination with the agency. The student would then also have an on-site supervisor who oversees the day-to-day duties of the intern. Field instructors for BSW students should have the minimum of a BSW degree and two years of post-degree experience, or an MSW degree.

A field liaison is assigned to each field placement and maintains contact with the student and the agency throughout the term of the placement. The field liaison, part of our field education team in the School of Social Work, provides consultation and support in developing a learning plan, evaluations and is the “first responder” for any problems should they arise. Within the first few weeks of the field placement, a learning plan is developed with the student. At the end of each semester, an evaluation is due to field liaison.
Field instructors and on-site supervisors are provided with an orientation prior to the start of the semester in which they have an incoming student; and the field liaison and the directors of field education are also available to agency staff and field instructors throughout the placement.

Please feel free to contact us with any questions. We are happy to discuss our program, students and any opportunities. Thank you, again.

Warm regards,

Sue Tungate,
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