March 20, 2019

Agency Communication

To our agency partners,

The purpose of this communication is to share next steps as we determine a plan for all social work students participating in Field Education at The Ohio State University College of Social Work. The leadership team here at the College of Social Work has been collecting data from agencies and students so that we can make a decision that protects not only our students but our entire community and remains consistent with instructions from the Governor. Based on Governor Dewine and the CDC’s directives for individuals to stay at home and participate in social distancing efforts, and the recognition that many agencies are withdrawing students from their practicum settings, we are continuing the requirement for all OSU College of Social Work students both in Ohio and around the country to complete field hours virtually through the end of Spring semester. Virtual activity options include those provided by your agency and/or field instructor and those included from CSW that can be found on the website. We will be posting additional online trainings to the website within the next week.

The semester has been extended to April 27, 2020.

If students wish to complete field hours in a context that will put them in the community or in an in-person agency setting, we are requiring the submission of a proposal to be reviewed by the Director and Assistant Director of Field Education. Students may not attend in-person agency activities until they have receive approval from the field office. Students are required to include the following information in their proposal:

- A compelling reason that the student is requesting a return to in-person field activities
- A copy of the guidance that the agency has issued to staff about steps to safeguard their health and protection and those of the clients being served (it can be as simple as an email documenting the notice sent to students)
- Completion of the COVID-19 Virtual Activity
- An email from the agency field/task instructor stating that they agree to the student’s return and documents the appropriate public health protections in place at the agency

What is next?

➢ For students who are able to continue at the agency through completing hours virtually, the following is necessary:
  - Student must share their virtual field plan with the field/task instructor and liaison to review and approve. Agency needs are a priority. If these have been met, students should then focus on any required activities on their learning agreements that they can complete remotely. Please encourage the student to complete activities from the virtual list provided on the website. Students should keep track of their activities and hours and log their time in the field database.
Our expectation is that the agency field/task instructor will review virtual work and reach out to the field liaison if concerns arise. If this causes undue stress to the FI/TI, please let your liaison know that you need additional support from the field office.

- The Field team will be offering students multiple live virtual supervision sessions starting next week. Students can count 1 hour of these towards field supervision per week. We hope that this alleviates some of the burden agencies might feel in continuing field placements. These will be shared on the CSW website as they become available.

For students who are not returning to the agency and are unable to stay in the practicum due to a lack of agency availability to continue supervising the student virtually, please complete the following tasks:

- Please communicate with the student and field liaison so that they are aware that the placement is ending.
- If possible, please work with the student to complete all paperwork in field database (including time sheets, supervision logs, and Learning Agreements). The documents should be reviewed and signed based on how the student has performed up until Spring Break. Students should have an understanding of how many hours they have remaining.

We have provided information about COVID-19 on our website here: https://csw.osu.edu/novel-coronavirus-covid-19/. Please check this website regularly for the most updated information.

Please reach out if you have any questions.

Take care,
Katie