A Message from the Field Office

Welcome to the inaugural UNCW School of Social Work Field Education Newsletter! The purpose of this newsletter is to keep the field office and the social work community connected. We are excited as the 2014-2015 academic year begins and look forward to working together as we continue to create a distinguished learning environment for our students.

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**Save the Date**

**Field Instructor**

**Learning Contract Training**

Sept. 8th 9-11:30am  
(onslow extension)

Sept. 12th 9-11:30am  
(main campus)

***Click on our Field Website for resources and important field information.***

[http://uncw.edu/swk/includes/FieldEducation.html](http://uncw.edu/swk/includes/FieldEducation.html)

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(Front row left to right, Debbie Wyse, Angie Vandenberg, Lori Dugan, Second row Jacquelyn Lee, Jessica Strong, Third row Tee West, Brian Williamson, Yvette Gosline, not pictured Chris Hall, Arthur Frankel)
What do you enjoy most about providing supervision?

I enjoy helping students learn about their new identity as a professional social worker and how it is different from any volunteer work they may have done previously. To me, learning how to make that professional identity your own—by integrating the theories and methods you have been taught with your own personality, gifts, and skills—that is the most exciting part of field placement.

What are some challenges you have encountered in supervision?

One of the biggest challenges is supervising a student who is in a different agency, receiving day-to-day supervision from a task supervisor. I have to create relationships with both people, learn about the agency, and help both folks make a plan that will meet the student’s learning needs, as well as the agency’s needs to better serve their client populations.

What are some typical learning problems that you see come up for new interns?

I think new interns struggle with the balance of the student intern role. Sometimes, they aren’t assertive enough about questions, concerns, or issues that face them, and if they don’t have a committed supervisor who relates well to them, they really struggle to get their own needs met. Other students are a little too aggressive, not taking the time to learn about the agency and how they can best make a contribution. Learning how to balance their own learning needs with the client and agency needs is a big part of the first few months in the placement setting.

Please describe the theories you try to integrate in supervision?

I believe that one of the most important parts of practice is recognizing who you are as the practitioner—all of the identities you are managing, and how they shape your interactions with others—and recognizing the identities, experiences, and interests of those with whom you interact. Maybe it is because I teach diversity, but I think intersectionality of our own identities, the forces of oppression and liberation, and the cultural constructions that shape our interactions with others are foremost in my mind during supervision. What does it mean that you are a white, heterosexual, gender-normative, middle-class, 20-something woman from Wilmington working with a low-income, heterosexual, gender-normative, Latina, single parent in her 40’s in Pender County? How does that shape your relationship? Your ability to understand her strengths and hopes?

Is there anything you would like to tell a brand new field instructor/supervisor?

I think, and superstar field education researcher Marion Bogo agrees, that the most important component of the field experience is the relationship between the field instructor and the student. If the student and field instructor can really connect, then the discussion and reflections on which field education relies can be productive. If the field instructor is too distracted or distant, the student will not have the chance (or be challenged) to really reflect on his or her experience and make necessary changes.
Spotlight: on Alumni in the Field

Each Newsletter focuses on a UNCW School of Social Work alumni in the field. In this issue the spotlight is on Jacqueline Cook. Ms. Cook is a 2013 BSW graduate of UNCW who interned with Clinica Latina at Coastal Horizons Center, Inc. Her field instructor was Liz Uzcategui. She currently lives in Perth, Australia practicing social work. Let’s put the spotlight on Jacqueline!

**What is your current social work job?** I am currently working at Wanslea Family Services in Perth, Australia. My role is the first of its kind. I am a full time, relief social worker. I cover for different positions across the agency while people are away on leave for more than a month at a time. It is a great opportunity for a new social worker to get my hand in various positions. My first role cover was a Social Worker position in Foster Care. I provided case management to 10-15 foster children, some Aboriginal children, ensuring their placement with foster families was going smoothly. My second role cover was a Social Worker position in our programme “Leaving Care”, which is working with young people who have lived in foster care and need assistance in transitioning to independence. My last role is in our Family Services programme. This programme acts a prevention service, preventing families from being separated, and working to strengthen families to stop the growing need of foster care.

**What do you enjoy most about your position?** Social Work is challenging, however our work is so meaningful and needed that it makes the hard work worth it at the end of the day. I enjoy that every day is different; no family has the same dynamic, so our work is not repetitive. You are constantly pushed out of your comfort zone. Plus, the people I work with are inspiring and passionate, which I like to think has rubbed off on me. I am passionate about my clients’ quality of life improving and really believe in the work that I am doing. I know that I have picked the right profession.

**How did your internship prepare you for social work?** I was lucky to have found an internship that was supportive and where I thrived. In the beginning, my supervisor was more confident in my abilities than I was. I felt like a fish out of water - I didn't even know what “case management” really meant. By the end, I was case managing complex cases, counselling clients in Spanish, and I was confident in myself. Most importantly, my supervisor taught me that I could be myself, and that humor was an important way to connect with colleagues and clients. Coming to my job now, I know how to balance professionalism and my personality. My internship helped me come out of my shy shell, and be the professional yet personable social worker that I feel I am now.

**What advice do you have for seniors starting their internships?** Don't be afraid to make mistakes. In fact, if you aren't challenging yourself, getting out of your comfort zone, and making a mistake every now and then- you're not taking advantage of your situation. You're a student and intern, it's okay to trip up sometimes, you are there to learn. So don't be afraid of what you don't know how to do, or don't understand, just be excited to learn and soak in all of the knowledge and guidance from the ones who do know what to do.

"I was lucky to have found an internship that was supportive and where I thrived. In the beginning, my supervisor was more confident in my abilities than I was."

-Jacqueline Cook, BSW '13
Be sure to visit the UNCW School of Social Work Facebook page. You will find reporting on the latest events, reports from the field, job listings, and other exciting happenings!

Clink the link on the icon!

Save the Date

CHHS CONVOCATION

September 10, 2014, 4:00 - 6:00 p.m.

Open to all faculty, staff, students, and field instructors