CSP Research Fellowship for MPA Students

The MPA program is seeking applications for the CSP Research Fellowship. Please find information about the fellowship and directions for applying below. This fellowship is open to all MPA students.

Overview of the Center for Social Policy

The Center for Social Policy (CSP) is based in the McCormack Graduate School for Policy and Global Studies at University of Massachusetts Boston. CSP investigates the intersection of public policies and employment to understand the root causes of poverty and to develop solutions to enhance family well-being. CSP’s projects span across policy areas, and include community development, affordable housing, homelessness prevention, workforce development, employment, and youth development. CSP conducts both quantitative and qualitative research, and is especially known for its strong community partnerships and use of participative action research methodology. Students who serve as CSP Research Fellows will have the opportunity to delve into a policy area, analyze and generate solutions to a current challenge, learn about applied policy research, and deepen their understanding of community-centered research.

Requirements for CSP Fellows

Requirements for the fellowship will vary depending on current projects and needs of CSP, as well as the interests of the student. Requirements will likely include some work that must be completed during day-time hours at the Center and some that can be completed outside of day-time hours in a location convenient for the student (e.g. at home, in library, etc.). At a minimum, the student must:

- Participate in bi-weekly supervision of project.
- Attend and participate in CSP meetings and events in order to gain a broader understanding of the work for the Center (monthly).
- Develop a final product reflecting work completed during the fellowship. The final product may be one or a combination of the following (to be agreed upon between student and CSP supervisor):
  - Literature review of a topic area
  - Developing and writing a grant proposal
  - Analysis of a data set with overview of findings
  - Oral presentation reflecting work completed during the fellowship
- Register for independent study credit(s) with the CSP supervisor. The CSP supervisor will provide a grade upon completion of the requirements.

See following page for the requirements for the CSP Fellow for Spring Semester 2017.

Credits towards the MPA Degree

Students can use participation in the CSP Research Fellowship for up to 2 academic credits towards the MPA degree. Academic credit gained for work completed in the CSP Research Fellowship will be used in lieu of weekend workshop course requirements in the MPA program. The number of credits and the weekend workshops they replace will be agreed upon between the MPA Program Director, CSP supervisor, and the student depending on the nature and timing of the fellowship work.
CSP FELLOWSHIP – SPRING SEMESTER 2017

Project: Mapping Goals and Approach:
Many coalitions of organizations in the state are working to address poverty and inequality with a policy agenda. In order to contribute to CSP’s research agenda and to inform the work of the On Solid Ground coalition, a coalition of service providers and policy advocacy organizations focused on improving housing stability and economic security for families, we need an environmental scan. The CSP Fellow will:

- Identify coalitions and initiatives that have overlapping or related missions and/or action agendas related to poverty alleviation
- Interview key coalition members to gather detailed data.
- Create a map and analysis of each of these coalitions’ policy priorities, activities, funders, members, and indicators of reach, and possible impacts.

The final deliverable will be:
- A map or matrix of related coalitions
- A written analysis of the overlaps, gaps in coverage of policy area and of emerging policy topics
- Presentation to the On Solid Ground coalition

The On Solid Ground Coalition
The 40+ member On Solid Ground coalition works across sectors through an inclusive, interdisciplinary research-based approach to increasing housing stability and economic mobility. OSG was formed as an outgrowth of a joint report released in 2015: On Solid Ground: Building Opportunity, Preventing Homelessness. Based on this research, the On Solid Ground coalition is actively pursuing a four-pronged approach to increasing economic stability and reducing family homelessness:

- **Advocate for a coordinated system** that supports homelessness prevention, minimizes cliff effects, and provide integrated case management services.
- **Expand affordable housing and rental assistance vouchers** for low-income households; preserve existing subsidized homes; and improve public housing.
- **Invest in services that provide a path to increased incomes** and economic mobility for low-income families.
- **Track Progress:** Collect and analyze data, and track progress – at state agencies and their nonprofit partners – toward common goals related to housing stability and economic mobility.

The On Solid Ground coalition aims to accomplish its objectives by improving systems and programs that serve low-income families, advocating for increased funding for housing and supportive services, and fostering partnerships among low-income families, service providers, employers, property owners, and government. Central to the coalition’s work is the inclusion and policy input of families that have experienced housing instability. Many of our members have families impacted by poverty who serve in active roles informing and carrying forth the mission and direction of the distinct agencies.
Directions for applying for participation

To apply for the CSP Research Fellowship, please submit, via email, the following materials to Michael Ahn, MPA Program Director at Michael.Ahn@umb.edu. Applications are due February 3, 2017.

- Your resume or CV.
- A personal statement of approximately 300-500 words that addresses the following questions:
  - Why are you interested in participating in becoming a CSP Research Fellow? In your statement, please indicate what specific areas of CSP are of interest to you, and any work or volunteer experience related to those policy areas.
  - How will participation in this competition be beneficial to your MPA studies and your career?
  - If selected, can you commit the necessary time to complete the fellowship?