

## ***Practice and Leadership with Communities and Organizations***

### ***Advanced Field Placement Learning Opportunities***

The Practice and Leadership with Communities and Organizations (PLCO) concentration engages students in coursework and field placements that support their learning in and with communities, organizations, and systems, as well as increasing skills in working with individuals within communities. Students will learn and practice various approaches to community and organizational change, with an emphasis on understanding and addressing the root causes of social inequities. Through this concentration, students will engage in racial equity, community and/or organizational assessments; they will develop, contribute to, and/or modify organizational and grassroots interventions to advance social justice; they will increase the voices of people who experience marginalization - particularly in program and policy development; and they will engage in community based-research and evaluation. Students will develop the organizational leadership and facilitation skills needed to engage communities in shared learning, build effective coalitions and teams, and lead participatory planning and advocacy efforts.

#### ***Types of Field Placement Settings:***

The focus of this concentration is to support student learning at multiple levels of organizations and with communities and its members. For advanced PLCO students, it is critical that the majority of activities focus on work with groups, organizations and communities. Exposure to direct practice is beneficial and welcomed within the context of increasing social work competencies and well rounded learning. These settings include but are not limited to:

- Community Based Organizations (all fields of practice)
- Large, Bureaucratic Organizations/Systems
- Schools
- Start-Ups
- Campaigns
- Social Enterprises
- Child Welfare
- Juvenile Justice settings

#### ***Examples of Possible Internship Activities that Support Student Learning:***

- **Leadership:** Gain exposure to agency leadership styles, roles and practices; develop, understand and begin to integrate the meaning of leadership and how to incorporate skills in varied settings, and the intersection of direct practice and administrative functioning.
- **Equity:** Engage in organizational assessment for racial equity and/or a community assessment in an effort to obtain input and recommendations for change and/or improvements to practice
- **Group facilitation:** Participate, co-lead and eventually lead the facilitation of groups and engage in collaborative change processes within the organization (ie, with staff, community members, board of directors, etc)
- **Partnership-based methods of analysis & evaluation:** gather, organize, analyze program data, develop summary reports, develop and implement program impact evaluation
- **Fiscal management:** Engage in opportunities to learn about the organizational financial planning and budgeting processes; engage in budget analysis
- **Policy advocacy:** Participate in community forums or advisory councils to represent agency perspectives in policy change and/or implementation
- **Culturally responsive collaboration and partnership building:** Initiate or strengthen collaborative partnerships within the larger community context, including initiation of strategic planning committees to advocate for agency and partner needs
- **Direct practice:** Create intervention action plans