The Office of Minority Student Affairs History

The Office of Minority Student Affairs exists as a result of campus leadership, local community support and the activism of local community leaders and African-American law students at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in the late 1960s. After the success of the Project 500 initiative in 1968 - which was created to increase campus enrollment by 500 minority students - Latina/o, Caucasian, Asian-American and low-income and first-generation students of all backgrounds also began matriculating through the project. With the increasing numbers came the need for a permanent campus program to increase retention and graduation rates of a diverse student population and provide services for the enrichment and development of underrepresented students at the campus. The 1960s leaders’ vision of a diverse student population and persistence in seeing that they are supported resulted in what is now known as the Office of Minority Student Affairs, or OMSA.

Currently, OMSA coordinates more than a dozen programs and services to ensure the academic success of students who have been admitted to Illinois through the Educational Opportunities Program (EOP) or the President’s Award Program (PAP), as well as underrepresented students, and those who are economically disadvantaged and/or first-generation college students.

Mission: A Social and Just Imperative

Promoting educational access, opportunity, and success for historically-underrepresented students is a social and just imperative. OMSA is one of the longest-running and most comprehensive support units on the campus and in the United States. Under new leadership, OMSA is ready to serve and ready to lead efforts in support of student excellence and success.

On behalf of the campus and the Division of Student Affairs, the Office of Minority Student Affairs:

- provides services to students to assist with personal and academic achievement and serves as an advocate for students. OMSA serves underrepresented students, those admitted to the University through the Educational Opportunities Program (EOP) and the President’s Award Program (PAP), first-generation and economically-disadvantaged students, and any student who is accepted through OMSA’s affiliates program.

Teaching Students Counseling Skills: Training in MSW Field Work

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Abstract

In an accredited Master of Social Work (MSW) field placement site, MSW students are given the opportunity to practice what they learn in the classroom and apply it to real-life situations. What these placement sites are doing to make sure that students get the right training is essential to students’ professional development. The field placement sites that were focused on were either currently active (with students) or had trained students within the last three years. The sites accepted MSW interns with a concentration in Mental Health. What exactly did these sites do to develop students’ counseling skills? What sort of training did they offer MSW interns? What can these sites do to improve their counseling skills training? This paper offers an analysis of responses to an online survey that was completed by the field site supervisors. The survey questions were emailed to the field site supervisors via Qualtrics, an online survey software program. The responses are a way to gain valuable information regarding: 1. what students learned about counseling skills at their field placement sites, and 2. what specific training, if any, did they receive that enhanced their counseling skills. The findings suggest that the agencies provide various interventions through different teaching methods. Also, these agencies provide training that helps students to develop counseling skills. Inconsistencies in the study contribute to the low percentages of training that needs to be improved.