



Peer Support Specialist

MSW Practicum Placement

Dean of Students, Student Development and Campus Life

Job Title: Peer Support Specialist

Program Description: Spalding University's newly developed peer support program endeavors to close the gap in student resources in order for students to accomplish their education goals. By pairing students with a peer support specialist to ascertain needs and barriers such as financial struggles, housing insecurity, food insecurity, childcare, and additional non-academic needs, students should be more equipped to achieve their academic goals. Through creating a support system, accountability processes for individual students, and a Spalding University resource network, the peer support program will improve retention rates and generate community partnerships - expanding the reach of the Spalding University mission.

Job Description: Peer Support Specialists offer support to Spalding University graduate and undergraduate students who are facing personal challenges or barriers that could potentially hinder academic success. Peer support uses a generalist, case management model and evidence-based practice to engage, assess, intervene, and evaluate student concerns to alleviate or navigate problems. In addition to direct service the peer support specialist will also be responsible for researching policy and practice and contributing to the design and implementation of the peer support program. Other opportunities of interest to the MSW student that align with the goals of the program can be incorporated into the practicum experience. Peer support specialists must abide by the Code of Ethics and display professional ethical behavior at all times. The core values of Social Work and of Student Development and Campus Life must be incorporated in practice at all times.

Responsibilities:

- Meet with referred students regularly virtually or in-person as needed
- Maintain professional meeting notes
- Update and maintain the resource manual
- Provide referrals to campus and community resources
- Engage in systems thinking with the Compassion Action Team – attend meetings when possible
- Provide counseling for students on the financial aid process (training provided)

Program mission: Our mission is to ensure academic success for all students by eliminating barriers, creating solutions, and promoting independent living skills.

Required skills:

- Good written and verbal communication

- Critical thinking particularly systems thinking
- Appreciation and respect for racial, socio-economic, geographic, educational, religious, ethnic, gender, sexual orientation, and ability diversity