

CENTER for the STUDY of SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE



A Joint Program of
Columbia University School of Social Work
Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services



CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Social Work Doctoral Dissertation Fellowships for 2006-2007

The Center for the Study of Social Work Practice announces funding for a limited number of Doctoral Dissertation Fellowships for the 2006-2007 academic year. The Center is a joint program of the Columbia University School of Social Work (CUSSW) and the Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services (JBFCS).

Doctoral Dissertation Fellowships are available to social work doctoral students nationwide who wish to conduct research aimed at improving the quality of evidence-based practice in social work. Applicants may apply for funding up to \$20,000 for the 2006-2007 academic year and, as well, for funding up to \$20,000 for the 2007-2008 academic year (see specifications described below). Indirect costs are not awarded.

Applications will be considered in any of the following priority areas:

Approaches to Staff Supervision. Possible research topics include the following and others: examination of one or more differing approaches to supervision in social work agencies; group supervision vs. individual supervision; matching of supervisors and supervisees by key demographic variables such as ethnicity and race; differing schedules or formats for supervision; differing theoretical models or substantive approaches to supervision; and, related topics of special interest to the applicant.

Effects of Staff Training in Cultural Competence, Diversity, or Racism. Possible research topics include the following and others: effects of staff training on a wide range of outcomes and outcome measures (such as relevant attitudes and behaviors of staff and clients; racial or ethnic identity of staff and clients; client self-esteem; client engagement and continuance in treatment; staff satisfaction and retention); examination of one or more differing approaches to staff training; fidelity with which staff training is applied in practice; development of improved research measures or data banks; and, related topics of special interest to the applicant.

Foster Care and Mental Health. Along with other organizations, JBFCS is engaged in a collaborative partnership with foster care agencies in which it provides on-site mental health training, consultation, and services to foster care professionals, foster parents, and foster children. Key aims include improved functioning of staff, parents, and children; reduction of multiple placements; increased success rates for permanent placements; and related goals. Possible research topics include the following and others: examination of one or more differing approaches to staff consultation; effects of mental health training on behavior of staff, parents, or children; effects of mental health consultation on multiple placements and the success of permanent placements; improved measurement of relevant outcomes including cost-benefit analyses; development of improved data banks and management information systems; coordination of mental health and foster care services; and, related topics of special interest to the applicant.

Effects of Removal/Non-removal to Foster Care. Possible research topics include: literature reviews of the evidence-based rationales for removal or non-removal of children to foster care; differing rates of abuse, neglect, death, or other outcome variables for removed and non-removed children; improved indicators of success and failure; alternative community-based programs; and, related topics of special interest to the applicant.

Implementation of Evidence-Based Practices. Possible research projects include: literature reviews regarding models of evidence-based practice, characteristics of successful organizational innovations, determinants of acceptance or implementation of evidence-based practices, and related topics; field experiments and surveys regarding acceptance or implementation of evidence-based practices; clinician attitudes toward evidence-based practices; examination of organizational and staff variables that facilitate or deter implementation of evidence-based practices; and, related topics of special interest to the applicant.

Advances in the Effectiveness of Social Work Practice. This priority area encompasses a wide range of possible research projects that can potentially facilitate advances in the design, implementation or effectiveness of social work interventions. Although the above-described topics are accorded special priority, applicants are invited to propose other research projects that show promise for advancing the quality and effectiveness of agency-based social work practice.

These Fellowships are available to provide support for social work doctoral students during the dissertation phase of their studies. Funds may be used to support the student's time in conducting the dissertation or to cover study expenses during the time the student is engaged in the dissertation study. In order to be eligible, the doctoral student must have the dissertation proposal approved any time after January 10, 2006 or have a formal dissertation *proposal* defense date set by June 10, 2006.

To apply, students must submit: (1) a copy or draft of their dissertation proposal; (2) a cover letter specifying how the dissertation will advance knowledge relevant to social work practice in one of the above-described priority areas; (3) plans for dissemination of the study's findings, and career plans after completion of the doctorate; (4) a letter of recommendation from the student's dissertation sponsor; (5) a brief budget that proposes how the Fellowship funds will be used; (6) a study timeline along with a statement describing how the Fellowship funds will serve to expedite completion of the dissertation study; and, (7) a curriculum vitae.

It is preferred but not essential for funded research projects to be conducted at one or more of the many units of the Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services (JBFCS) and in close collaboration with staff of the Center for the Study of Social Work Practice. A wide range of direct service programs in numerous areas of social work practice are offered by JBFCS. Located throughout the greater New York City metropolitan area, JBFCS employs more than 2,000 professional staff and serves more than 65,000 clients. Travel funds are available for Fellows who conduct their research at JBFCS.

Pursuant to a favorable first-year review and completion of an approved renewal application, it may be possible for a Doctoral Dissertation Fellow to qualify for a second year of funding in 2007-2008. In such instances, it is anticipated that funds awarded for 2006-2007 would be dedicated primarily to literature review, project design, development of collaborative relationships with research sites and, if advisable, a pilot study. Funds awarded for 2007-2008 would be devoted largely to project implementation, data analysis, and preparation of reports. Funding for a second year is contingent upon satisfactory progress during the first-year and a favorable review by the Center for the Study of Social Work Practice.

Fundable Doctoral Dissertation Fellowships must meet the following criteria. The proposed project must entail exemplary empirical research that can be completed no later than June 30, 2007 or, if necessary, June 30, 2008. The research must advance social work knowledge in ways that can improve the quality of evidence-based practice in one of the above-described priority areas. Funded Doctoral Dissertation Fellows will prepare interim progress reports, a final report, and one or more publishable manuscripts that describe the findings of their research.

Applications must be received on or before April 30, 2006. They may be sent either electronically (cbt1@columbia.edu) or by surface mail to:

**Constantino Chito Trillana
Center for the Study of Social Work Practice
1255 Amsterdam Avenue, Room 1115
New York, NY 10027**

For further information or pre-application consultation, please inquire with Ronald A. Feldman (212-851-2265) or Constantino Chito Trillana (212-851-2266).