

## **2020 SAHE Practicum Experience:**

### **Center for Student Research Graduate Peer Mentor Program**

**Supervisor and Contact:** Jennifer Poe (jpoe@uccs.edu)

**Center Overview:** The Center for Student Research (CSR) oversees the Undergraduate Research Academy and the new Graduate Research Academy. Our long-term goal is to catalyze research career paths for our students by 1) utilizing an apprentice model of student-faculty collaboration; 2) providing an aspirational peer-mentoring model with a graduate student mentor; and 3) fostering a campus community of student researchers and faculty mentors. The CSR is devoted to all students, with a mission to especially serve underrepresented minority, first-generation, and other at-risk or under-served students.

**New Initiative: CSR Graduate Student Peer Advocate Program:** The CSR intends to create a new Graduate Student Peer Advocate (GSPA) program. The GSPA's role is to engage with and listen to undergraduate student members of the CSR and to provide them with informational and emotional support to enhance their experience with research and to promote positive attitudes toward graduate school. The GSPA will also champion networking activities for students and facilitate involvement with campus and community events. The GSPA will receive extensive training on mentoring best practices such as active listening, interpersonal communication, setting ground rules and trust building, and implicit bias mitigation.

**Practicum Position Focus:** The SAHE student selected for this practicum will help 1) design the training curriculum for the Graduate Student Peer Advocate position in the Center for Student Research and 2) will help design the GSPA application/selection process. This will require the SAHE student to gain an understanding of the unique needs of students involved in research as well as the importance of mentoring best practices that will benefit the GSPA. With knowledge gained from stakeholders, the SAHE student will develop an application tool and screening rubric to help select future GSPAs into the program. To meet both goals, the selected SAHE student will need to arrange stakeholder meetings with graduate and undergraduate students and collaborate and synthesize on and off-campus resources that can contribute to the selection of and mentor training of the GSPA. Knowledge gained from these meetings, in addition to independent work researching existing training resources, will inform the overall creation and implementation of the Graduate Peer Mentor Program. This is an opportunity to build a central campus support resource for student researchers at UCCS.

#### **Learning Outcomes:**

- Develop an understanding of peer mentor programs and use this knowledge to create a training plan for a graduate peer mentor to support undergraduate students.
- Develop an understanding of the needs of students involved in research and graduate training
- Develop the ability to create a recruitment and selection process for student leadership
- Develop the ability to identify potential candidates student leadership positions
- Develop the ability to provide training for student leadership

**Specific Tasks:**

- Develop the application tool for interested graduate mentors as well as a screening rubric for selecting the GSPA.
- Develop program materials such as the training program manual, workshop designs, webinars and toolkits for the GSPA.
- Collaborate with other graduate students in research-based fields to understand what areas of support they needed as undergraduates to help inform the training plan for the GSPA.
- Meet with current undergraduate students involved in research to understand their needs and how best a peer mentor can support them.
- Identify on and off-campus organizations and resources that can serve as channels for the GSPA trainings.
- Assess program outcomes for the trained GSPA

**Relevant Professional Competency Areas for Student Affairs Educators:**

- Program design and assessment
- Interpersonal communication skills
- Leadership
- Organization
- Personal and Ethical Foundations
- Social Justice and Inclusion

**Practicum Requirement:**

- 100 hours, weekly hours can be flexible throughout the summer and fall
- SAHE master's student with a 3.0 GPA or higher
- Must have knowledge and passion for broadening student success, especially in research
- Must possess the ability to work independently and collaboratively

**Application Process:**

- Submit resume and letter of interest to Ms. Poe at [csr@uccs.edu](mailto:csr@uccs.edu)