

## UPDATE: JACSW Student Forums – Fall 2017

The College hosted forums where students were invited to meet with the dean, associate dean, and the director of the doctoral program for open discussion and dialogue on issues of concern and importance to their experience at the college. One-hour periods were scheduled at times that allowed foundation year, concentration year, and doctoral students attending classes during the day or evening time slots to attend.

Small groups of students made use of six of the seven sessions offered between October 24, 2017 and November 9, 2017. We wish to thank all who took the time to participate. The numbers of students present ranged from one on two occasions to approximately twelve on two occasions. Over the course of the sessions held, some concerns were raised in the areas of:

1. curriculum (e.g., currency of readings, diversity content, insufficient focus on clinical practice skills);
2. consistency of student experience across cohorts;
3. faculty availability and responsiveness; timely and useful feedback on assignments;
4. field instruction (e.g., more information needed about placement process earlier, managing work hours and field hours); and
5. the need for greater resources for students (e.g., financial and other aid for students in need, advising for undocumented students).

Some students used the time to share their satisfactions with their experience at the college as well, mentioning faculty, the friendships and support networks developed in their cohort, and rewarding field experiences.

There were also concerns raised regarding specific instructors. The associate dean, using the standard steps and procedures in place for resolving issues in classrooms with instructors has addressed these concerns with the instructors. Students were reminded and encouraged to make use of similar standard steps and procedures for resolving classroom/instructor issues (i.e., speak directly with the instructor as soon as possible, and if not resolved, engage the assistance of the attention of the associate dean).

Changes addressing curriculum concerns raised are already underway in our process of self-study for reaffirmation of accreditation. Curriculum renewal that considers student input is an important part of that process. Additionally, attention to the overall student experience is equally important. Feedback from these forums will be shared with our curriculum committees and other committees and individuals to consider ways to continue to improve and enhance the student experience.

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