**What Social Work Interns Want From Their Agency Instructor**

***Recognize it’s normal to be nervous and unsure in the beginning.***

-Students need support to take their time and ask questions.

-Don't expect them to know the job before they start.

***Student needs to begin with a learner’s stance.***

-Learning involves watching, listening, asking questions, rehearsing, and practicing.

-Starts with learning the organizational structure and culture.

***Practice, practice, practice in a safe, learning environment.***

-Internships provide exposure to the field of social work AND allows students to try out new skills.

-Field instructors sometimes like to start students out slowly, so they can be sure the intern is prepared for what is to come.

***It is helpful to go over learning plans throughout the semester to make sure agency assignments match learning goals.***

***Assist them in establishing themselves as a professional.***

-Develop supportive and open relationships with colleagues and supervisors.

-Make sure they are introduced in every professional setting.

-When appropriate, have student contribute in every professional setting.

***Model a positive work-life balance.***

***Frequent communication***

-Set time throughout the internship; use of a guide/discussion tool (ask about their summary of learning)

-Help negotiate difficult situations and reflect on practice decisions.

-Admit if nervous about not possessing the knowledge, skills, and teaching ability to help shape a bright-eyed student just entering the field.

***Provide resources (Students are in college to learn.)***

-Manuals

-Past professional development readings/handouts

-Books, professional journals, websites

***Provide frequent feedback***

-Daily or after tasks

-Do evaluations together

References:

http://www.socialworker.com/feature-articles/field-placement/8-tips-for-new-social-work-interns/

http://www.socialworker.com/feature-articles/field-placement/whos-whats-hows-of-being-a-successful-social-work-field-supervisor/