

HUNTER COLLEGE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
City University of New York

THE GROUP WORK STUDENT MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

Welcome to Group Work at Hunter!

The Group Work Student Mentorship Program offers a space for new students to meet up with second-year students throughout the year. It is a platform for support, understanding, and information sharing. Topics of discussion often include field placements, group work in the classroom, and applying theory to practice. Students help each other to problem solve challenges that they may face in leading a group or in advocating for group work in the field.



The Group Work Student Mentorship Program takes on many different forms: students can be paired with a second-year group-work mentor, mentorship groups meet at scheduled times over the year, and special events for group workers and mentors are also organized during the year. We look forward to seeing you in the Group Work program this year!

Allison McKenna, Group Work Student Mentorship Coordinator 2008-2009

GW Student Mentoring: Beginnings

VICKI'S PHOTO HERE

Getting accepted into the HCSSW-MSW program was *one* the most exciting moments of my life. Getting accepted into the program as a GW Major was *the* most exciting moment of my life! I anxiously awaited the start of my first year, imagining all of the innovative challenges, experiences, and wisdom that lay ahead. With much enthusiasm I anticipated the friendships, connections, and community I would soon create through field work and course work. What I did not completely understand was how demanding the program would be.



Little did I know how much course work professors were to demand. I was completely in the dark when my field work supervisor had even higher expectations. While trying to balance all of these expectations, I soon began to feel the inevitable: overwhelming confusion. I also felt very alone. As a first-year student I was highly insecure about my group work skills - anxiety that was only exacerbated when I was immediately assigned to facilitate a number of groups! That's when I turned to my professor, Dr. Roselle Kurland, for support, guidance, and encouragement.

Throughout the year Dr. Kurland and I had discussed the challenges, struggles, and isolation that group work students can face in the first year of field and classroom; many of us were in desperate need of mutual aid. Eventually, we realized that group workers need to provide for one another what we provide for so many others: a group! Together we worked on developing a group for first-year students to be facilitated by second-year students. The purpose of the group would be to provide support and mentorship. I am so glad to see that the GW Student Mentorship Program lives on.

Vicki Hallas, Founder of the Group Work Student Mentorship Program

The 2008-2009 academic year sees the Group Work Student Mentorship Program into its fourth year. Life for this program has not been without challenge, but GW students persevere – continuing to build, to develop, to expand, to harness one another's strengths - reaching out to one another, graduating from "mentee" to "mentor," and even moving into mentorship as new alums of second-year students who face all the new challenges of "life after school."

STUDENT MENTORING ~ MUTUAL AID DESIGNED BY GROUP WORKERS FOR GROUP WORKERS