



STUDENT AFFAIRS RESEARCH AND ASSESSMENT

CSA Graduate Assistant Position 2011-2012

Pennsylvania State University

JOB DESCRIPTION

The CSA graduate assistant (GA) in Student Affairs Research and Assessment (SARA) assists with measuring the effectiveness of strategic initiatives within the Division of Student Affairs, such as cocurricular learning and student engagement. Projects vary from year to year and may include assisting with the AFA/EBI Fraternity/Sorority Assessment, the Newspaper Readership Survey, the Student Satisfaction Survey, and the Student Drinking Survey. The GA is also responsible for assisting in the training and supervision of the Pulse phone survey staff. In addition, the assistantship provides experiences in a broader Student Affairs context, including working with student organizations and contributing to Division-wide strategic planning. General responsibilities include:

- Assisting with assessment projects including project design, survey construction, data collection, analysis, report writing, and presentation of results;
- Assisting in the training and supervision of 20-30 Pulse project student employees (includes evening hrs one night per week);
- Assisting in the day-to-day office operations;
- Collaborating with student affairs professionals to develop good assessment and planning practices, including learning outcomes assessment; and
- Performing other duties as assigned.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Through this experience, the GA will synthesize curricular experiences obtained through graduate study into student affairs practice by directly applying theory and research to practice. The GA will develop an understanding of the role and function of assessment within student affairs and a general understanding of various offices within the Division of Student Affairs as well as the connection of student affairs to the broader institutional context. More specifically, the GA will gain knowledge and experience in the following:

- Designing and implementing a variety of assessment efforts including participating in survey construction, sampling strategies, and data collection as well as facilitating focus groups;
- Student staff supervision and training;
- Managing and analyzing quantitative data including frequencies, descriptive statistics, t-tests, and chi-square analysis using SPSS;
- Analyzing and interpreting of qualitative data, including open-ended responses and focus group transcripts;
- Synthesizing findings through writing executive summaries and comprehensive reports;
- Communicating results (including formal oral presentations) to inform policy and programs; and
- Acquiring an operational understanding of Penn State and its division of Student Affairs.

QUALIFICATIONS

A master's student in the College Student Affairs program. Knowledge of research methodology, analysis, and data management within quantitative and/or qualitative work. Experience using relevant software packages (i.e., SPSS, Access, Excel) preferred. Strong interpersonal, problem solving, and oral and written communication skills. Ability to work as a team member while at the same time being able to function independently.

TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

This is a 10 month position from August 2009 to May 2010 for 20 hours a week. In accordance with graduate school guidelines, the position includes a monthly stipend, a tuition fee waiver, and a contribution to the Penn State Graduate Assistant/Fellow Student Health Insurance annual premium.