

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

INTERDISCIPLINARY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH COLLABORATION (IBHC) FELLOWSHIP:

What is the Interdisciplinary Behavioral Health Collaboration (IBHC) Grant?

In 2017, the Department of Social Work was awarded a HRSA (Health Resources & Services Administration) Behavioral Health Workforce Education and Training Program grant for MSW Program development and support. The grant award spans over four years and funds the Interdisciplinary Behavioral Health Collaboration (IBHC) Project. The project will build integrated behavioral healthcare capacity through providing specific trainings and consultation to increase team work and collaborative care between the health and mental health fields in four distinct and interrelated areas: 1) among MSW students; 2) with faculty; 3) among field supervisors, and 4) with existing workforces.

What is the Interdisciplinary Behavioral Health Collaboration (IBHC) Fellowship?

The Fellowship is a particular type of MSW advanced field practicum working within interdisciplinary behavioral health settings. Students selected into the IBHC Project Fellowship receive comprehensive training in both classroom and field settings providing integrated behavioral healthcare. IBHC Fellows gain the professional competencies outlined by the Interprofessional Education Collaborative and the Council on Social Work Education. In addition to WSU MSW advanced field requirements, Fellows are required to complete additional trainings, co-facilitate IBHC Grand Rounds, and assist in the annual IBHC Conference at WSU. Fellows receive a \$10,000 stipend during the academic year that they are in the Fellowship.

How do I apply for the IBHC Fellowship?

A limited number of IBHC Fellowships will be awarded during each academic year of the grant. The grant expects to award a total of 81 Fellowships over the four-year span of the grant. Students apply for the Fellowship during the same time period as applying for the MSW Advanced Practicum. A separate application is required and is available on the Social Work Department Field Education Page at <http://www.westfield.ma.edu/academics/social-work-department/field-education>

How/when will I know if I have been awarded a Fellowship?

The Fellowship award process is twofold. Applicants will receive an initial response to their application in the early spring after applying for the Fellowship. At that time, students may receive a conditional Fellowship acceptance pending acceptance in an advanced internship within an approved IBHC site. Students may receive a final Fellowship acceptance after successfully obtaining an MSW Advanced Internship with an IBHC Site.

For example, a student applies for the Fellowship in Feb 2020 for the advanced internship beginning in Sept 2020. In March 2020 a student receives a conditional acceptance. In May 2020 student is accepted for an

advanced internship at an approved IBHC Site. After internship acceptance, student receives final acceptance as an IBHC Fellow for the 2020-21 academic year.

When do I receive the \$10,000 stipend?

The stipend is disbursed in two equal installments, one each semester.

Is the Stipend Taxable Income?

Yes. A payment, typically known as a "*stipend*", used for living and incidental expenses such as room and board, travel, equipment, i.e. computer or other expenses that are not required of all students enrolled in courses **are taxable** income to the student.

May I apply the stipend to my MSW tuition?

Yes, arrangements can be made with Financial Aid to apply the stipend to MSW tuition.

Is there a list of IBHC approved sites that I can review?

IBHC site options change very frequently and, therefore, we do not publish a "list" of locations. When you begin the field application process that is related to the Fellowship, Field Education Program staff will talk with you about possibilities based on the information in your application and resume, conversations with you, your experience thus far in the social work program, and information from faculty that have had experience with you. In general, IBHC Sites include mental health and addictions programs, medical settings, forensic settings, and other settings where integrated behavioral health and integrated primary care services are provided.

There is currently an Integrated Health Care Elective offered in the MSW Program. Am I required to take that course as a Fellow?

Although the elective is certainly related to some areas within the IBHC Project and many students will choose to enroll in this elective, Fellows are not required to take this particular elective as part of the Fellowship. Fellows will participate in specific integrated care trainings provided by the IBHC Project.

What happens to my status as a Fellow if I don't complete my MSW Advanced Internship?

If for some reason a student does not complete the MSW Advanced Internship or Fellowship during the academic year of the award, the student may be required to reimburse the stipend on a pro-rated basis.

Fellowships do not automatically carry forward to another academic year. For instance: a student takes a leave of absence during the middle of the academic year as a Fellow and then returns the following year to complete his/her program of study. The student would forfeit the Fellowship for the academic year of acceptance and would need to reapply the following year if still interested in the Fellowship.

Are there any obligations after I complete the Fellowship?

Fellows must commit to working within an integrated healthcare setting in a medically underserved area for two years after receiving their MSW degree. While there is no requirement that stipends funds be repaid if, for some reason, a Fellow does not complete the work requirement, the expectation is that all Fellows will complete this obligation.

It is the intention of the IBHC Project to have ongoing periodic communication with all Fellows to assist in areas such as building a community of social workers within this scope of practice, employment, additional trainings, and to offer support in the area of integrated care. Previous Fellows may be periodically asked to provide information regarding their work experiences, etc. to support outcome data and determine needs for future Fellows and the integrated care workforce. Previous Fellows will have access to all IBHC trainings at no cost.

For Additional Information, Contact:

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