



## **What's Up – A Newsletter from the UM School of Social Work**

Welcome to your monthly email from the University of Montana School of Social Work. We will highlight different happenings in our school and the social work field each month. We want to create a sense of connection and understanding of the many beautiful things happening at your school.

We hope you all had a restful and recharging Winter Break!

### **Advocacy Spotlight:**

#### ***Social Work Students – Advocate!***

Our profession has a rich history of advocacy and social justice (think all that stuff you learned in SW 530!).

Our BSW and MSW UM Social Work programs include students from more than 20 states and 3 Countries (Mexico, Canada, and the US). Wherever you are, there are policy decisions being made. We encourage you to learn about the systems of power and decision-making in your community and state/province.

#### ***Where do I even start?***

1. Many students find that following certain organizations really help them learn about social justice issues in their state or community. Some examples of these organizations are:
  - NASW – all states have a chapter and typically track legislation, Montana's [here](#). Note: they're looking for Advocacy Committee members!
  - The ACLU all states have a chapter, Montana's [here](#).
  - The Budget and Policy Center – chapters in most states, Montana's [here](#).
  - Human Rights Network- chapters in most states, Montana's [here](#).
2. Montana Specific Resources for following the current Legislative session:
  - [The Session Podcast](#) (also on Apple Podcast)
  - [What the Helena newsletter](#) from Forward Montana
  - Montana Women Vote [action alert sign up](#)

3. A real-life example: Logan Cook, a UM clinical assistant professor in the School of Social work, recently was quoted in the Montana Free Press story "[Montana's new efforts to regulate recovery residences.](#)"

## **Attend Centering Indigenous Knowledge Web Series**

Sponsored by UM and hosted by Montana Campus Compact, the [Centering Indigenous Knowledge Webinar Series](#) kicks off Feb. 1 and will run every Wednesday at noon through March. The eight-part series is facilitated by Dr. Karla Bird, UM tribal outreach specialist and member of the Amskapi Piikani Nation (Blackfeet).

As part of its mission to advance the public purposes of colleges and universities and educate students for civic and social responsibility, the MTCC board aims to raise awareness of the rich Indigenous knowledge in Montana and center the people and institutions who lead it.

The web series will inspire people to learn more and seek ways to support tribal colleges and their work to advance and preserve Indigenous knowledge. The webinar will discuss the histories, current offerings, and unique contributions of tribal colleges.

[Registration is free](#), but attendees are encouraged to support via contributions to the presenting institutions or the [American Indian College Fund](#).

## **BSW Information:**

The **Faculty BSW Committee is seeking a student representative!** The student representative offers invaluable student-centered perspectives as a committee member and provides input into curriculum, programing, and student support resources.

The Committee meets biweekly on Wednesday, currently at 9 am. Meeting time can be changed to accommodate for student rep schedule. Please reach out to Deanna Cooper, [deanna.cooper@umontana.edu](mailto:deanna.cooper@umontana.edu).

## **Mentoring for BSW Students: Connect with Faculty**

Fall semester all BSW students were offered the opportunity to be partnered with a faculty member to engage in professional mentoring partnership. The UMSSW BSW Mentorship program is an additional component to academic advising. Building relationships is a foundation of social work. This applies to your professional pathway as well.

Mentors are being encouraged to reach out to their assigned partners early in the semester. This is not a one-way street! **You can reach out to your assigned mentor as well to schedule a time to meet.**

Here is a great article from [The New Social Worker](#), describing what to expect from a mentor and how it benefits your career pathway.

If you aren't sure who your mentor is, reach out to Tomas Hernandez to inquire, [tomas.hernandez@mso.umt.edu](mailto:tomas.hernandez@mso.umt.edu).

Have a great Spring semester!  
Warmly,

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