

UF Center for Gender, Sexualities, and Women's Studies Research

CGSWSR Internship Opportunity: Alachua County Victim Services and Rape Crisis Center

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<http://www.alachuacounty.us/Depts/CSS/VictimServices/Pages/VictimServices.aspx>

Best time to call: M-F, 8:30am-5pm

Brief description/mission:

The Alachua County Victim Services and Rape Crisis Center was initiated in 1974 by the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners to provide specific services for victims of violent crime. The Board recognized the need to financially assist crime victims and, therefore, developed a local crime compensation fund. The fund primarily assisted crime victims with medical bills incurred as a result of crime. Gradually the Center has grown to nine full time advocate counselors offering a full range of victim services. We are the area's only certified Rape Crisis Center, and place a special emphasis on providing services to rape victims. Rape is a means of oppression and control, and has been perpetrated for thousands of years. Those without power – women and children, gentle and vulnerable men, and those culturally different - suffer at the hands of those who wield it. Women's Studies interns will be exposed to the effects of our rape-prone culture not only on victims, but on all people, male and female.

Mission Statement: The VS&RCC mission statement is: To diminish the impact and facilitate recovery to victims and survivors of violent crime by providing counseling, emergency response, criminal justice support and accompaniment.

Number of Hours/Credits: Flexible—1-3 credit internship; work on-site and/or in the community –crime scenes (with Law Enforcement present), victim's homes (when judged safe), hospital, courthouses, etc.

Schedule Requirements: Varies with tasks (see “activities” below) and flexible. Some schedules may require that once a weekly schedule is set (e.g. Monday, 9-2; Wednesdays, 9-5, etc.) interns will work that schedule all semester.

Prerequisites/Qualifications: Interns will be selected after application and interview. They must demonstrate interest in the issues our organization deals with; a good attitude and professional demeanor; and willingness to work. They must have a valid FL driver's license; some recovery work or experience with counseling is desirable. Interns cannot currently be criminal defendants. Thirty hours of Advocacy Core Training will be provided to each intern. INTERNS MUST MAKE A YEAR-LONG COMMITMENT; volunteering prior to internship is recommended, though interning for two semesters in a row, or continuing as a volunteer for one semester post-internship is possible.

What activities will the intern take part in, and how do they relate to Women's/Gender studies? Interns can choose amongst a variety of tasks to make up the level of involvement they prefer. In the following descriptions, italics indicate periods of time when this service is needed and/or delivered to provide a time frame so interns can make realistic choices about how they can best serve. Hotline and on call both work on shifts that begin and end at a designated time; other service areas may be more flexible.

- **Answering after hours hotline** - carry cell phone to which the Rape Crisis Center hotline has been forwarded and provide crisis intervention, information and referral, and contact advocates as needed to respond to emergency outreach requests from law enforcement, hospital, or victims.

End of business day [5pm] to beginning of next business day [8:30am], 7 days a week

- **Monitoring injunction hearings** – introduce services to plaintiffs who are present for domestic violence, repeat violence, and sexual violence injunctions and provide information, counseling, support, and accompaniment to those who request it. *Tuesday and Thursday, 8:30am until 4pm.*

- **Answering hotline during business hours** – answer calls to in-house hotline, provide crisis intervention, information and referral, and notify advocates as needed to respond to requests from law enforcement, hospital, or victims. Additional office tasks as assigned. *Business hours, 8:30am until 5pm.*

- **Monitoring first appearance hearings** – introduce services to victims present for first appearance hearings and provide information, counseling, support and accompaniment to those who request it. *Daily, 9am until approximately noon.*

- **Court presence/accompaniment** – attend court events such as case management, bond reduction, pre-trial conference, trial status conference, and motion hearings, trials and other court events as requested by advocates who cannot cover. Report results to advocate and/or victim involved in the case. Provide information, counseling, support and accompaniment to victims who choose to attend the court event. *Business hours, 8:30am until 5pm.*

- **Speeches / presentations / tabling** – Educating community and school groups about our services, risk reduction, myths vs. realities of violence and victimization, especially sexual and domestic violence. *As requested, anytime including weekends and evenings.*

- **Online hotline** – Use agency or home computer to provide crisis intervention and information and referral to sexual violence survivors via the Rape and Incest National Network's (RAINN) website. *Currently Monday through Friday, 12-8pm; eventually 24/7.*

- **Outposting** – Keep hours at a designated outreach office to provide counseling, advocacy, and other services to victims who are referred by the host agency or who request services. Current outpost offices are St. Francis House and Gainesville Community Ministry; potential offices are Alachua PD, High Springs PD, Waldo PD, and House of Hope. *Business hours, or as arranged.*

- **On call** – Prepare to and respond to requests from law enforcement, hospitals, and sexual violence victims for a victim advocate. Provide advocacy, support, crisis intervention, information and referral, and monitor involved agencies to ensure that victim rights are upheld. *End of business day [5pm] to beginning of next business day [8:30am], 7 days a week*

- **Special events and projects** – Assist in planning, preparing and staffing agency events, under staff direction. Examples of events include the Program Anniversary Banquet, Sexual Assault Awareness Month Events like painting the 34th St. Wall, sponsoring film screenings and speakers, sponsoring Victims Rights Week Events like the Candlelight Vigil, tile painting, Empty Seat at the Table, etc. Projects vary according to need. *Business hours 8:30am until 5pm; some evening and weekend events.*

- **Support Group co-facilitation** – Coordinate, plan and facilitate with a staff advocate a 10 week support group. Groups are offered for the loved ones of homicide victims, child, teen, and adult rape survivors, childhood sexual violence survivors, and adult at-risk sexual violence survivors. *Business hours 8:30am until 5pm; some evening hours on weekdays.*