



Professional Associations: Advantages and Challenges for Social Work Students

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Our Time Today

- Objectives
- Introductions
- The Value of Professional Organizations for Social Work Students
- Relational Cultural Theory as Framework for Relational Mentoring
- Recommendations
- Student Experiences

Objectives

01

Provide their students with five benefits to joining professional associations while still in their student roles

02

Provide their students with a list of benefits to conducting research while students and presenting their findings at professional conferences

03

Identify concrete ways they can mentor students to engage in professional associations

Introductions

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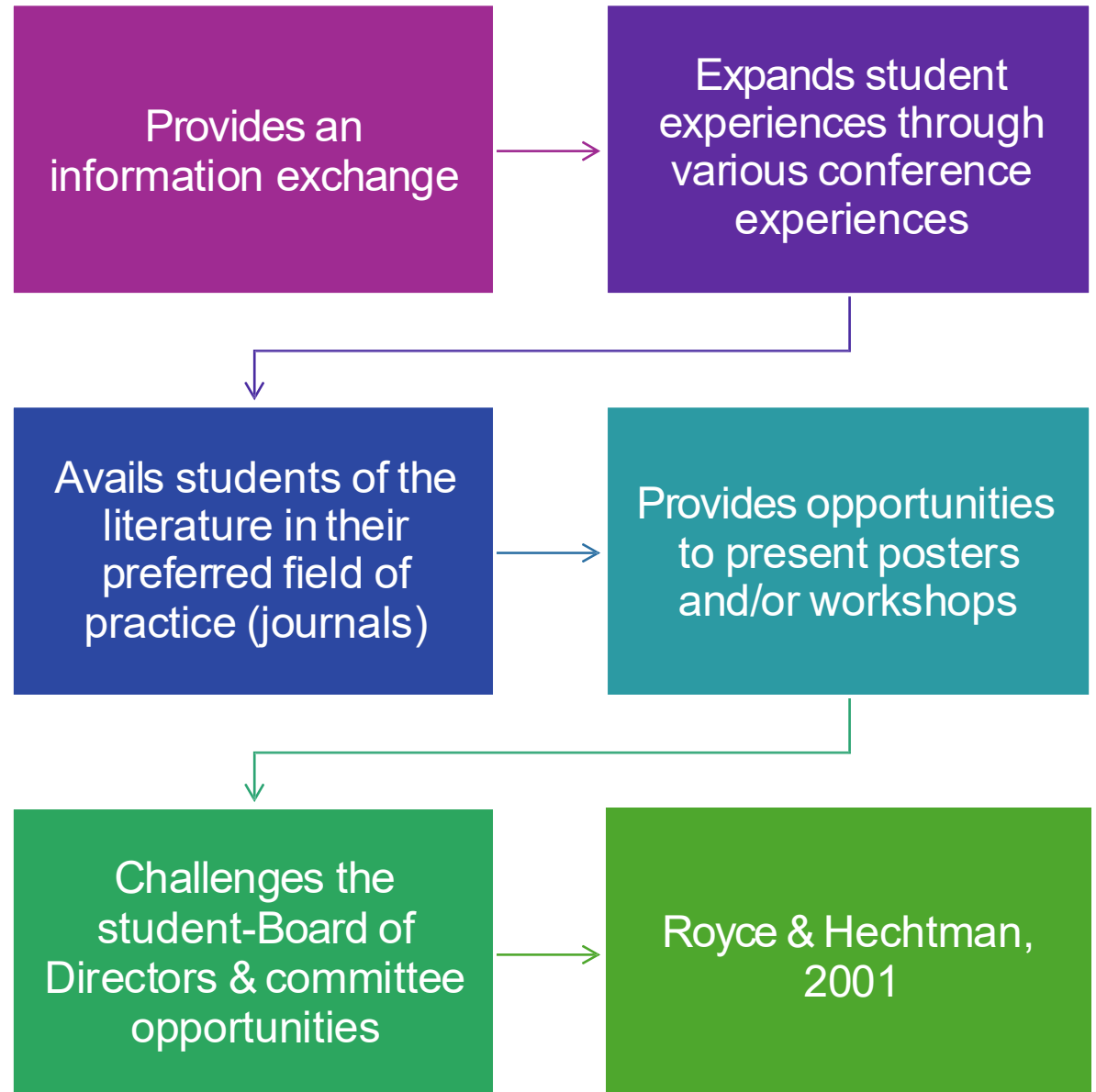


We both love travel, bringing students to conferences, and exposing them to new places, people, and experiences.

**IASWG Symposium
at
Kruger National
Park
South Africa**



The Value of Professional Organizations for Social Work Students





Robben Island Prison, South Africa

Socializes students into the profession- builds a professional identity

Provides a sense of belonging- a professional home

Offers networking opportunities

Can be a system of support (depends on the size and one's involvement)

Offers links to potential jobs

Offers possibility of developing mentoring relationships (being mentored and mentoring)

Offers a means of contributing to the profession

Relational Cultural Theory/Relational Mentoring

This theoretical model focuses on how women develop through the connections they make.

Relational mentoring allows for students to develop personally and professionally in ways that align with their needs and styles (Alvarez & Lazzari, 2016).

It also helps ground mentoring as a personal endeavor, which focuses on the individual needs of the student mentee and the specific skills of the mentor (Farrell, et. al. 2023).

Recommendations

Use

Use classroom time to inform students about professional associations in general and the opportunities they offer its members

Provide

Provide students with lists of professional associations that meet diverse field of practice interests and when possible, provide personal contact information within associations of interest to student(s)

Provide

Provide students with information on specific benefits to them, as students, for joining. Facilitate their joining. This could take place in class, during advising, or through structured student meetings.

Recommendations

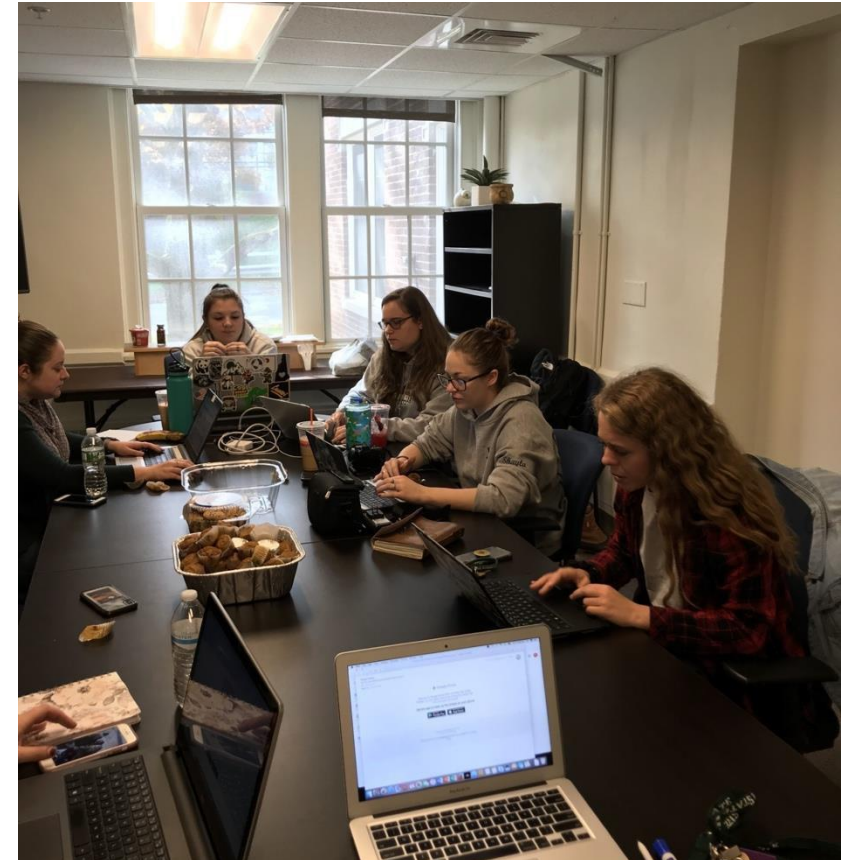
- Encourage students to attend committee meetings, sit on Boards, attend professional conferences, conduct research and submit proposals to conferences, or simply observe association meetings.
- Mentor students who are interested in conducting research. Collaborate with them, allow them to work in small groups, or offer them an independent study to work on their research projects. Students are willing to work on their own time but need your support and mentorship to do so.
- Mentor students to strive for Board positions and inform them of the process
- Have fun!

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Benefits-(references)

- Opportunities for networking (Knight, 2002; Messmer, 2005; Richards, et. al, 2023; Royce & Hechtman, 2001)
- Opportunities for continued learning and the exchange of professional ideas through attendance and presentation at conferences (DeLeskey, 2003; Guerrieri, 2011; Messmer, 2005; Richards, et. al. 2023; Royce & Hechtman, 2001)
- Fostering a sense of professional identity, belonging, and mutual aid (Guerrieri, 2011; Messmer, 2005; Royce & Hechtman, 2001).



Experiences Shared by Students

