

1. Faculty Mentor

The faculty mentor, Dr. Susan Baker, is a Professor and statewide Extension Specialist in the Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition who also administers the statewide Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP).

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2. In what region(s) will the student be working (county/region/state)?

This project will be conducted in the Front Range Region in Colorado. However, the research will involve the statewide Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP), currently staffed in Weld, Denver, Arapahoe, and Pueblo Counties. The student will work closely with two Extension multi-county EFNEP supervisors in those counties. This project also will support EFNEP programs on a national level.

3. In less than 150 words, please describe the proposed internship goals, scope, and objectives.

EFNEP works in local communities, providing nutrition education to low-income audiences to improve health and food access. Policy, Systems, and Environmental (PSE) approaches address public health issues to support healthy eating and active living by making the healthy choice the easy choice. Currently, EFNEP programs are in the early stages of implementing PSE efforts, and resources and training are necessary. Accordingly, internship goals and objectives include: (1) mastering distance-training development and delivery (e.g. webinars), and (2) developing a social marketing campaign to accompany the two Colorado EFNEP curriculum (Eating Smart • Being Active targeting adults and Kitchen Science: Exploring Food & Health targeting 3rd-5th graders). Developing this social marketing campaign will help EFNEP staff in Colorado and those programs in other states that purchase and use these curricula, to include PSE work in programming – a new expectation of EFNEP nationally.

4. Which PRU activities are included in the scope of this internship?

EFNEP is an integral part of CSU Extension's Nutrition, Food Safety, and Health PRU. Successful implementation of PSE activities will play a role in improving health and food security for EFNEP participants and their communities by providing community outreach that helps to make the healthy choice the easy choice. PSE efforts will also encourage greater participation in EFNEP, which targets five core areas also critical to this PRU, diet quality, physical activity, food resource management, food safety, and food security.

5. What student learning outcomes do you anticipate and are there opportunities for professional development?

By making the healthy choice the easy choice, PSE approaches have significant potential to improve the health of the general public. However, EFNEP approaches have historically focused on behavior change through direct nutrition education only, which engages small groups of participants in lessons on nutrition and healthy living. Although EFNEP has been allowed to introduce PSE strategies over the last few years, PSE approaches are not routinely implemented as a component of EFNEP programming, and thus training and resources are needed.

Learning Outcomes. The student will have the opportunity to learn about EFNEP and PSE, and how PSE implementation within EFNEP can promote healthy eating and active living. He/she will also learn about social marketing campaign design and evaluation. Furthermore, the project will result in a targeted literature review to draft potential social marketing messages merging existing CSU curricula learning objectives and images.

Professional Development. Ample opportunities for professional development are available, including attending meetings with EFNEP professionals and partner agencies. There is also the potential to attend conferences, such as the annual Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior conference in July and/or the annual EFNEP coordinators meeting in March 2021. Also, the student will shadow EFNEP educators and collaborate with EFNEP educators, supervisors, and state staff members. Furthermore, the student will regularly correspond with EFNEP program leaders and staff members in other states during the design and development of materials. Overall, the intention of this internship is to promote the improved health of individuals and communities and the enhanced collaboration between EFNEP, Extension staff members, and the community on local and national levels. This internship will provide the student with critical multi-state collaboration opportunities within the Extension system.

6. How does this internship support identified stakeholder needs in your county/region?

CSU EFNEP is deeply integrated in Colorado communities, serves diverse audiences, and reaches a myriad of stakeholders, including participants, human services agency staff, clients, and community leaders. Building upon these established networks can facilitate integration of nutrition education throughout local human service agencies and food systems. PSE approaches will enhance EFNEP's capacity to implement effective strategies to improve the health of low-income populations in Colorado communities and within EFNEP programs across the country.

Active communication with community partners is essential to facilitate recruitment of a wider range of participants who would benefit from EFNEP classes and PSE efforts. Overall, integrated interventions that combine PSE strategies with EFNEP's traditional direct nutrition education will reinforce and maximize positive effects for communities as well as the individuals served. These upstream changes will expand the reach of EFNEP beyond individuals to include partnering agencies and the communities in which participants live.

7. **What is your experience with mentorship? In less than 100 words, please describe your experience with and approach to mentorship.**

Dr. Baker has led EFNEP programs at the county and state level for 30 years. She has had the opportunity to mentor many Extension professionals and paraprofessionals. She has also mentored graduate students at CSU for 14 years and has served as a preceptor for RD interns for over 20 years. She also successfully mentored an Extension intern in 2019.

8. **Are there on-going connections with CSU faculty associated with this project, or is there identified faculty interest?**

Dr. Baker is a professor in the department of Food Science and Human Nutrition.

9. **Are travel funds available? Opportunities to provide student assistance with housing?**

Assuming a Fort Collins-based CSU student is selected, housing assistance would not be necessary because the student would be based out of Fort Collins at the EFNEP office at CSU, sometimes commuting to other counties. Thus he/she could stay in his/her current housing situation. Funds to support the intern's travel to attend EFNEP classes, agency meetings, and sites of social marketing campaign implementation are available.