



Victim Advocate

BACJ- related certificates and concentrations: Victims and Victim Services concentration

BACJ- related courses:

- CRJU 4170 – Victimology (3 credit hours)
- CRJU 3285 – Trauma in the Criminal Justice System (3 credit hours)
- CRJU 3250 - Violence in Society (3 credit hours)
- CRJU 3280 - Trauma Among Correctional Populations (3 credit hours)
- CRJU 4140 - Domestic Violence and Crime (3 credit hours)
- CRJU 4150 - Sex Offender and Offenses (3 credit hours)
- HDFR 1080 - Lifespan Issues in Family Violence (3 credit hours)
- PSYC 3611 - Psychology of Women (3 credit hours)
- SOCY 4460 - Hate Groups and Group Violence (3 credit hours)
- SOCY 4780 - Violence in Relationships (3 credit hours)
- HDFR 4004 - Family and Comm. Prog. II Grant Writing/Fundraising (3 credit hours)
- HDFR 4090 - Helping Profession Skills in HDFS (3 credit hours)
- HDFS 4260 - Family Systems and Social Justice (3 credit hours)
- HDFS 4860 - Trauma Informed Care for Diverse Populations and Co-occurring Disorders (3 credit hours)
- CRJU 4600 - Special Topics (3 credit hours) - some of these topics are victim related such as Human trafficking.

Complementary/recommended minors: Spanish, Psychology, Sociology, Human Development & Family Relations, English Writing, Communication, Law Studies

Recommended extracurricular activities and experiences: Alpha Phi Sigma Criminal Justice Honor Society, study abroad, other community involvement and equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) experiences such as a student association or club, volunteering in the community, or other experiences that expose you to communities and cultivate a service-minded perspective. Some agencies or nonprofits have volunteer victim advocate positions available to gain experience before seeking a paid position.

Internship: Many victim services organizations offer internships and many law enforcement agencies have victim services units, these would be ideal for victim advocate internship.

Duties and Responsibilities: The preferences of those affected by crime vary, some prefer to be called victims and others prefer to be called survivors. For the purpose of this brief, we primarily use the term “victim” to adhere to the BACJ concentration moniker. Victim advocates often perform a variety of duties and depending on the organization or agency, advocacy may look like a “desk-job” or it may involve field work. For example, some organizations focus their advocacy on being available for victims as a resource for

assisting in finding mental health services, family services, legal advisement or other. Some victim organizations provide these services directly. Others may provide financial support to victims who are unable to meet their basic needs due to being a victim of crime and an organization may provide food, temporary shelter, gas, rent/mortgage assistance, bus/airline tickets, or other necessities for a victim/survivor. Other organizations may take a more out-of-office role in victim advocacy such as responding to crime scenes to support victims, transporting and supporting victims during court proceedings, to buy food, to a hotel or temporary dwelling, or other services.

Work Environment and Schedule: This may vary from standard 8am-5pm office hours to “on-call” hours during the day or night, and may be in-office or out-of-office.

Career Path/Promotion: The career path within non-profits is a varied one, but may involve beginning as a victim advocate and progressing to a more executive role or supervisor.

Education, Training and Certification: Bachelor’s degree, Trauma-informed training is often useful.

Special Considerations: People may be drawn to victim advocacy because of their own victimization experiences. It’s incredibly important to strongly consider one’s own healing, health and self-care relative to providing support for victims. Being exposed to traumatic events on a daily basis, and being expected to provide support, is an incredibly important but taxing position. Please consider your own history and well-being, and ability to provide support to others if you are still healing from your victimization.

Skills and Competencies: listening, empathy, patience, needs assessment and action, interpersonal communication skills, trauma-informed practices.

Colorado Salary Averages:

Bottom 10%: \$41,708

Top 10%: \$77,281

Median: \$57,305

Median Salary in U.S. as of 2021: \$56,720