



# Center for Health & Safety Culture

## PHD Research Assistant Opportunity

The Center for Health and Safety Culture (CHSC) in cooperation with the Department of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering (M&IE) is seeking a PhD candidate for a funded assistant position to research safety culture and its application to improving traffic safety.

The CHSC is an interdisciplinary center serving communities and organizations through research, training, and support services to cultivate healthy and safe cultures. The CHSC is dedicated to applying research to develop sustainable solutions to complex social problems. M&IE is the largest department at Montana State University with over 1500 students, faculty and staff. The department offers four undergraduate majors and five graduate degree options. Department faculty have active collaborations with CHSC to improve our understanding of safety culture within organizations.

Together, these collaborations use a Positive Culture Framework (PCF) to measure and transform culture. PCF recognizes that many different layers in a community (e.g., individuals, families, schools, workplaces, etc.) or organization (e.g., executive leadership, managers, supervisors, etc.) influence the prevailing culture. Thus, in order to improve culture, we need to engage multiple layers in the change efforts.

The proposed dissertation topic for this position is related to the role of leadership in transforming organization safety culture. Specifically, we are interested in the role of leadership within state agencies responsible for traffic safety. The dissertation would seek to characterize the type of leadership that is effective in growing a strong safety culture and predict the type of safety culture expected to be most effective in creating innovative traffic safety strategies and safety citizenship within road user groups.

Because of the nature of this dissertation topic, we expect the successful candidate to have an interdisciplinary knowledge beyond engineering. Topics include psychology, sociology, and management in either public, non-profit, or private sectors. We expect the successful candidate will complete the PHD within the College of Engineering (<http://www.coe.montana.edu/phd/>). This may entail taking additional core engineering courses depending on the student's education background. This work will be completed under the supervision of Dr. William Schell (<http://chsculture.org/staff-view/dr-william-schell/>) and Dr. Nicholas Ward (<http://chsculture.org/staff-view/dr-nicholas-ward/>). A Doctoral Committee comprised of faculty from relevant disciplines across Montana State University will be formed to guide and support the PHD candidate in completing the required research dissertation.

Key skills for the successful candidate will include understanding of the scientific method, conducting research with human subjects, capacity to understand and apply theory from multiple disciplines, experience working with communities (or other social groups). Candidates must have strong writing and oral communication skills that are adaptable to a wide range of audiences.

The position will include an annual stipend of \$18,000 including tuition waivers. It is expected that the first year of the appointment will include Teaching Assistant duties before moving into a greater research focus. Additional years, up to a maximum of a four-year period, will be provided depending on funding availability and student performance. The successful candidate is expected to begin the PHD program in Fall 2017.

The CHSC is located in Bozeman, Montana. Bozeman was recently recognized as one of the top places to live in the U.S. Located a few hours north of Yellowstone Park in the beautiful Rocky Mountains, the town of 40,000 people provides all the amenities of a big city with extensive outdoor activities.