

SWOSU Students Participate in Transitions Course Field Trip

05.19.2017

Eighteen students in the special education programs at Southwestern Oklahoma State University in Weatherford recently participated in a “transitions” course field trip to various sites in Oklahoma City.

The SWOSU students are participating in the course, which is about providing transitional planning and services to secondary students with disabilities.

There are seven graduate and 11 undergraduate students in the course, which is an exciting number because of the shortage of special education teachers in Oklahoma, according to Bruce Belanger, coordinator of field experiences and certification at SWOSU.

The field trip included stops at the Rockwell campus of Francis Tuttle Technology Center, Mercy Hospital and Putnam City West High School.

At FTTC, students did a partial tour of programs including: service careers, which are specific programs for students with disabilities focusing on culinary arts, grounds keeping, small engine maintenance, and employability skills; culinary arts; health sciences; assessment center; and the Education Enhancement Center, focusing on services to high school students with disabilities.

Students also had two additional meetings with representatives from the Department of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) and Oklahoma State Department of Education.

The next stop focused on Project SEARCH at Mercy Hospital, a collaborative model between FTTC, DRS, Mercy Hospital and the OU National Center for Disability Education and Training. The program provides employment and education opportunities for post-secondary technology center students with disabilities. Project SEARCH uses a combination of classroom employability skills instruction, career exploration and on-the-job training and support.

SEARCH is a nine-month, non-paid internship program designed to prepare students for entry-level employment. Through this partnership, the program takes place in a business setting where total immersion in the workplace facilitates the teaching and learning process through acquisition of competitive work skills.

At Putnam City West High School, the students toured and observed various special education classrooms and settings including those serving more severely challenged students, moderated challenged students, and mildly challenged students.