

Student Guidelines (How You Can Benefit)

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#1: Challenge Yourself

Take advantage of this opportunity to learn about your community, test out potential career options, gain new networking contacts, gain new skills, and learn new things about yourself. You may feel initially uncomfortable at your site. However, the best learning comes from situations you haven't encountered before. The instructors and class will provide support.

#2: Be On Time and Reliable

Your community partner relies on you to be there at the agreed time and counts on you to complete your project. It's crucial that you show up at your agency during your pre-established work schedule. If you need to be late or miss a work date because of sickness or emergency, please notify your partner right away.

#3: Know your Assignment

Make a good first impression by knowing the project guidelines well and communicating this to your partner during your first meetings.

#4: Create a Quality Product or Service

- Apply the knowledge and skills gained in the course to your product or service.
- Learn the mission and needs of your community partner.
- Be flexible – sometimes your ideas won't meet the community partners' needs. Listen and be willing to modify your product if that's the feedback you're receiving.
- Update your partner on your progress & ask for feedback on your work and submit drafts to make sure you're on track.

#5: Use Professional Verbal and Nonverbal Communication

- When arranging a meeting, call or e-mail with enough lead time.
- If your partner contacts you, return the call or e-mail promptly.
- Seek help when you need it; if you have questions, ask.
- Good eye contact, strong hand shake, and clear voice conveys confidence.
- Dress appropriately. You are a representative of Fisher.

#5: Follow the Agency's Expectations and Policies

- Use formal names unless told otherwise.
- Avoid gossip and protect your own and others' privacy and confidentiality.
- Never engage in, or tolerate from others, verbal exchanges or behavior that may be perceived as discriminatory or sexual.

#6: Reduce Barriers

When you enter the community, ignore stereotypes of community, be open minded, and be positive and have fun! You will reduce barriers and increase understanding.

There's Safety in Number:

Plan Ahead

- Map out your route so you know where you're going for your first visit. Find out where to park.
- If you're concerned, please ask your supervisor for suggestions on staying safe.
- Be cautious and use common sense (i.e. keep doors locked). When you can, travel with others.

Communication

- Communicate to someone your destination and time of return.
- If you feel uncomfortable for any reason, please let your instructor or supervisor know.
- Please report any incidents to your instructor or supervisor.
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Boundaries

- Don't give a client a ride in a personal vehicle. Don't give or loan clients' money or other personal belongings. Don't share too much personal information (phone No., address, etc.)
- Don't visit people in their private homes. Projects will not include activities that require this.

Getting Started:

Contacting your Service-Learning Site:

- A designated **Group Communication Leader** should call the contact person for the first meeting. Give them your name, course title, and instructor name. Ask when is a good time to meet to discuss the project.
- **When leaving a message**, make sure to leave your name, number, and a good time for them to reach you. Give them a day or two to get back. **Call back if you don't hear from them.**
- Make sure you get **directions** so you can get to your site at the designated time. Bring your contact information with you.

First Visit and Future Communication:

- The first meeting should be an **orientation to the agency**. Listen carefully to agency expectations. Please ask questions about policies or expectations you're not clear on.
- During your first meeting, determine your **weekly schedule and start and end date**. Determine how often you'll be meeting during the semester. Your schedule should be honored throughout the semester.
- Plan on also going over **expectations of the course assignments, your responsibilities at the site, and project ideas**.