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Tulane University's Office of Service Learning

The mission of Tulane's Office of Service Learning is to engage faculty members and students in an endeavor that combines community service with academic learning. Service Learning aims to benefit students' education, further faculty research and teaching, and build community goodwill.

To achieve this mission, the Office strives to help create a "classroom without walls" that is beneficial to the following groups:

For **College Students**, the office will help students

- apply concepts from the classroom to community service
- work within a very diverse community
- gain knowledge and expertise from the community
- evaluate, question and reformulate civic values
- prepare for internships and future research
- explore career options.

For **Faculty Members**, the office will

- assist in the development of innovative approaches to instruction
- provide support for service learning courses (orientations for students, site monitoring, reflection activities and mini-grants for new courses)
- sponsor programs, speakers, and symposia on service learning
- support faculty members' efforts to disseminate information through conference presentations or publications
- provide opportunities for collaborative community research and project development.

For **Community Partners**, service learning

- makes available to them the services of university students
- increases volunteer diversity in sex, age and race
- allows them to identify needs and develop a service program that meets needs of both the community and the university.
- builds on-going relationships between the university and the community partner
- offers support through a mini-grant program.

For the **University**, service learning

- furthers the goals of Tulane's strategic plan
- allows the university to be an active, engaged partner in the community.
- facilitates university teaching, research, and program development.

In conclusion, the Office of Service Learning aims to facilitate collaborative learning between university, community, faculty, and students by integrating each groups' cultures with the New Orleans' urban setting to foster mutual understanding and accessibility.

Academic Guidelines

Students are responsible for fulfilling academic requirements. If you are pursuing a one-credit Service Learning component, you must register for the course at the beginning of the semester. If you have any questions about course requirements, please ask your professor.

I. Required Number of Service Hours

Please consult your course syllabus for specific number of hours.

II. On-Site Orientation

All students are required to attend an on-site orientation. Make-up orientations will not be scheduled because they cause a great inconvenience for school staff. Please schedule accordingly.

III. Training : *Sessions for the Spring 2002 training will be held on Saturday, January 26th and evenings from January 28th through the 31st.*

In collaboration with Student Affairs, the Living Learning Dormitories, Student Employment and Local Community Representatives, the Office of Service Learning holds a mandatory training session for all students involved with education sites. The training will discuss working in cross-cultural settings and offer assistance on how to better work with students.

IV. Written Reflection Assignment

Please consult your course syllabus for specific reflection assignments.

- **Journal Entries**
- **Short and/or Long Paper** Tying Service Learning to Course Themes
-

V. Oral Reflection- With support staff from the Office of Service Learning

Please consult your course syllabus for specific reflection assignments.

- **In-class Rap Session-** Takes place during class with Faculty Member.
- **Hybrid Rap Session-** Includes students involved in SL and faculty member outside of class
- **Office of Service Learning Rap Session-** For School-based service learning, rap sessions will revolve around themes relating to the service experience. Sessions take place at 1332 Audubon Street with trained facilitator. Please refer to the rap session schedule for more information.

VI. Bi-Monthly Communication: The Education Service Learning Coordinator will communicate with service learning students by e-mail every two weeks with updates on school sites, tutoring, where students should be with their hours and relevant campus and community events. While not required, it is highly recommended that students e-mail the site coordinator with information on how service is going. Include both the positives and any problems. It helps to receive feedback throughout the semester.

VII. Site evaluation

After about four weeks of service, students will be asked to evaluate their experience. Feel free to contact Office of Service Learning staff with concerns throughout the semester.

Community Guidelines for Service Learning Students

Tulane University is committed to working in the New Orleans community. Through service learning, the university and community work together, involving hundreds of students like yourself as partners in making New Orleans a better place.

As service learners in the New Orleans community, *you represent Tulane University*. Your responsible efforts help determine the respectability of Tulane's efforts in the community. It is important for future service learning students that you leave a good impression. The following guidelines will help you do so:

- Exercise courtesy and maturity at all times. Smile and greet the people you see as you walk through your site. Turn off any cell phones or pagers.
- Dress Appropriately!
Clothing should always be neat and professional. Consult with your site supervisor(s) about their policies on appropriate attire. The following items of clothing are **NOT** appropriate for community settings:
 - SHORT SKIRTS - TANK TOPS
 - RIPPED CLOTHING - FORM FITTING CLOTHING
 - HALTER TOPS - LOW CUT SHIRTS
 - HATS - FLIP FLOPS/SMELLY DIRTY SNEAKERS
 - SHORTS - T-SHIRTS WITH ADVERTISEMENTS
- Seek assistance immediately from the Office of Service Learning should any questions or problems arise surrounding your service activities in the community. We are here to help!
- Understand that you are ultimately responsible for the quality of your experience.

Learn about New Orleans. This will help you contextualize what you learn from your site.

- Be perceptive. Observe your surroundings.
- Visit your local library.
- Check out the following web sites:
 - <http://www.crt.state.la.us/crt/ocagno.htm>
 - <http://www.crt.state.la.us/crt/farfes.htm>
 - <http://www.sec.state.la.us/around/facts/facts-index.htm>
 - <http://www.nola.com>

- Talk to people, including individuals at the site, Office of Service Learning staff members and others you meet in the community.

Learn About Your Service Site

Learn about the community and the people in it, before making assumptions.

- You may come from a very different community than the one you will become a part of through service learning. Therefore, it is important that you do not assume that you know how to help and how to solve perceived “problems”.
- Make an effort to learn about existing strengths as well as needs in the community. Although New Orleans Public Schools have many problems, you will also find strength, commitment, resiliency, traditions, values and pride in schools. Be open to seeing the positives!
- Learn about the history of New Orleans public schools and the history of your particular educational program. Understand the purpose and goals. How can you help the program meet its goals?
- Be open to seeing things in new ways, from other viewpoints. Observe and respect cultural differences in language, expectations, and values. Try to develop mutual trust and make efforts to understand and appreciate the culture of the community and/or organization.
- Ask questions and do not just listen; HEAR what is said! Let the people who work and live within the area of your service learning placement help you become an effective service learner.

Realize that you do not have all the answers

- Make it a point of knowing what you are expected to do as a service learner at your service learning site.
- Realize that you may not already know how to do what is expected of you.
- Take steps toward preparing yourself by asking questions. Seek out useful information about the school and the project you will be working on.
- Critically think about the purpose of your service learning assignment and actively work toward meeting the agency’s needs while understanding the relevance within your area of study.
- Pay attention to how you practice power. Learn and serve **WITH** the people at your school site. We are reaching our hands out, not down.
- Be Patient. Learn that things do not always go as planned or expected.
- Accept, enjoy, celebrate and build on small successes.

Building Relationships

- **Build trust.** As you begin your service, you will discover that before you can work on academics with your student, he or she must feel comfortable in working with you.
- **Maintain trust.** You will have a set service time every week. The students and school staff with whom you are working expect you to be there when you say you will. Failure to do so leaves your students disappointed and hurt. If for some reason you are unable to attend at your scheduled time, make sure to contact your site and

have someone pass this information along to your student.

- **Do no harm.** Understand that by virtue of being at your site, you will have an impact on the people there. Being conscious of this and following the guidelines contained in this handbook will help make sure your impact is positive.
- It is important to be non-critical and non-judgmental.
- Be positive and firm in your interactions. Set personal limits that are comfortable for you. Use positive reinforcement whenever possible.
- Plan a positive way of winding up your semester's activities, so that you and the people at your school will have a chance to say goodbye and to appreciate the experience you have shared during the semester. Please refer to the section on closure in this handbook for ideas.
- Keep an open communication. If you become concerned about an individual with whom you are working, let the site supervisor know of your concerns and seek his/her advice. Ask for assistance or advice as soon as you realize you need it. But don't bother the supervisor about trivial matters that you can handle yourself.

Working at Education Sites

I. Schedule your service time with your site.

Know the exact number of service learning hours you are expected to complete over the course of the semester. At the on-site orientation, schedule the times you will be there each week with your site coordinators.

II. Arrive on time and ready to work.

It is important that you are consistent with your attendance and that you arrive on your scheduled day and time. You should identify a contact person at the site and obtain his/her phone number, so that you can inform him/her if you are unable to keep a scheduled visit.

III. Sign In

You are expected to sign in at your site. Sign-in procedures vary according to site. Make sure you are familiar with the appropriate procedures. Your professor will receive a copy of the on-site sign-in sheets so as to be able to compare it with personal time sheets which you will find at the end of this packet.

IV. Recognize your limits.

Accept assignments that you know you can handle. If you are given something that you think you cannot handle, make sure you discuss the situation with your site supervisor and your Service Learning Site Coordinator and request other duties, within the first two weeks of beginning service. Use your time wisely and do not interfere with the performance of others.

V. Understand Your Responsibilities.

What you should and should not try to handle:

- Discipline is the teacher's responsibility and the teacher is in charge of the classroom. You should NEVER intervene physically to break up a fight or altercation between students! At a school, call security personnel to deal with the situation. At Upward Bound, work with Dr. Dasher.
- Do not stay in your school classroom if you discover that no responsible adult is present. Leave the classroom, inform the school office that the classroom is unattended and inquire about the location of the teacher and return to the University. Check with your professor about whether you will be responsible for making up the hours.
- Whenever you take students out of the classroom, go to a place designated for service learning activities or where school staff can supervise you. Find out at orientation or ask your teacher where you can work best.

VI. Understand What it Means to Work with Children

- Remember that children may not always be perfectly well-behaved. Exercise patience and don't take things personally. Consider the child's context and viewpoint: What may be affecting his/her behavior? Look at the situation as a chance to develop your skill in interacting with all children.
- Children will look up to you - what you do or say can have a big influence on them. Be careful not to make promises that you cannot keep. If you would like to start a project with a child or try a new activity, speak with the teacher first to make sure it is appropriate.
- Because the children will come to expect your visits, it is important to have a special way to mark the end of your work with them. Talk with your teacher/coordinator about a classroom party, games, or some special activity on your final day at the school or program. See the section on closure in this handbook.

VII. Limit your discussions about your experiences.

The people you work with have a right to confidentiality. We encourage service learners to talk about their experiences with others and reflect upon them in their journals. However, please do not use real names when discussing your experiences off-site. Simply change the names or omit names altogether. Refrain from discussing one student with other tutors or school staff unless you are seeking advice from the teacher or program coordinator on how to better work with that student. Be respectful of the student's privacy and use discretion.

Working Effectively with Students

1. Understand the importance of building relationships.

Be a good listener. Let the student know that he or she matters. Carry out your role as a tutor.

2. Encourage students to do their own thinking and problem-solving. Be patient. Give them plenty of time to answer. Silence can mean that they are thinking or organizing what they want to say or write. Be sensitive, however; don't leave the student hanging if she/he doesn't know the answer.

3. If you don't know an answer or are unsure of what to do, admit it to the student and work it out together.

4. Respect children's ideas. Give positive and specific feedback.

5. Comment or apologize when you make a mistake. It is important that children hear apologies the way adults do and come to know that no one is perfect.

6. Use tact and positive comments. Encourage students. Find something worthy of a compliment, especially when students are having difficulties.

7. Accept each student as he or she is. Do not feel responsible for judging a student's abilities, progress, or behavior.

8. Respect a student's privacy. If a student or a teacher reveals personal information, regard it as confidential unless it is something dangerous to the student or someone else. If so, tell your site coordinator.

9. Keep your commitment. The students will expect you and look forward to your coming to their school. If you know you will be absent, tell them in advance. Do not make promises you cannot keep. Students remember everything.

10. Be gracious and sympathetic with students' efforts.

11. Maintain a sense of humor. Enjoy yourself.

This information was taken from New Orleans Public Schools "Helping A Child LEAP To Success"

Tutoring Tips

Understand the Purpose:

- To improve the educational achievement of the student.
- To enhance student's self-esteem.
- To widen the horizons of the student through contact with a concerned, helpful, more experienced person.

Steps to Success:

- Come prepared.
- Introduce yourself and get to know the student. Tailor your sessions to fit with the student's interests and abilities.
- Structure the learning environment to best suit the student's needs.
- Assess what the student knows and what he or she feels he needs to improve upon.
- Begin tutoring at a level that is within the grasp of the student and adjust as needed. You may want to look at the Louisiana Department of Education web-site and the subject standards and benchmarks in order to better understand reasonable expectations for student abilities and progress:
<http://www.doe.state.la.us/DOE/asps/home.asp?I=CONTENT>
- Participate actively with the student as he or she works through the task.
- Work through problems or assignments with the student, modeling different approaches to the same problem. Different people learn in different ways. Your preferred approach may not work best for your student.
- Be aware of learning styles and find ways to appeal to all the styles preferred by children with whom you work.
- Break large tasks into smaller pieces.
- Help students to think independently. Encourage children to have confidence in their abilities.
- Give clear directions.
- Be alert for signs that your student does not understand the material. The student will not necessarily ask if she/he doesn't understand. Watch for facial expressions and body language.
- If it seems a student does not understand the material, try to discover precisely with what the student struggles: is it the directions? Is it the assignment format? Is it a base concept that underlies the current problem? Perhaps the student struggles with algebra because she/he truly does not understand fractions.
- Look for ways to motivate the student.

This information was adapted from New Orleans Public Schools "Helping A Child LEAP To Success"

Service Learning Enhancement Grants

Enhancement grants are made available to teachers, principals and other school officials to provide additional resources to schools. Awards range from \$50 to \$300. In the past, many service learning students have worked with school officials to create innovative projects which benefit students in the public schools.

Three projects that were funded by the Office of Service Learning include:

-GED Preparation in Spanish.

Two Tulane students worked with their site supervisor at Hispanic Apostolate to develop a curriculum to help the people in the GED preparation program get ready to take the test. Together the students and agency staff purchased educational videos from the Mexican Consulate to help individuals at a variety of ability levels prepare for the GED. The Enhancement Grant covered the cost of the materials needed. The grant application described the objectives of the program as well as of the grant and the role that the students were to play in its implementation. (Spring 2001)

-Starting Simple: Classroom Materials at El Yo Yo

Several service learning students worked with the teaching staff at El Yo Yo Headstart Center to purchase various materials for use in the infant and toddler classes as well as in the preschool program. The students realized that the purchase of materials may not be strictly innovative but they also recognized these school's need for materials such as books, puzzles, arts and crafts supplies and other classroom manipulatives. The students were careful to find developmentally appropriate materials and explained how these materials would help facilitate interactions between service learning students and the children at the school. In addition, the resources remain at the school for future use by teachers and service learners alike. (Spring 2001)

- Young Scientists

The purpose of this project was to introduce sixth grade students to some of the fundamentals of science. Service learning students worked with a science teacher at Carter G. Woodson Learning Academy to develop an appropriate curriculum. Together, they laid out the lesson plans on a weekly basis and ended the semester with an innovative lesson on ecology and resource conservation. The grant covered materials for the science labs. The students gained experience in helping to teach and in developing a curriculum. The teacher and students in the class benefitted from the additional supervision during experiments. (Spring 2001)

You will find a copy of the Enhancement Grant Application on the following two pages. We encourage interested students to collaborate with school officials on new projects and look forward to seeing your ideas! Please feel free to visit the Office of Service Learning

to view other examples of previous grants or to discuss your ideas with a staff member.

Service Learning Enhancement Grant Application

Please note that teachers may apply for the grant in one of two ways:

A. Come up with an idea for a project to be funded by a Service Learning Enhancement Grant, complete the application in full, and submit it to the Office of Service Learning.

B. Work with Tulane service learner(s) to come up with an idea, have the service learner(s) complete the application, review the application together, have the service learner make any changes, and have the service learner(s) submit the application to the Office of Service Learning.

1. _____

Applicant(s)

2. _____

Date of Submission

3. _____

Organization

4. _____

Telephone Number of Contact Person Best time to call

5. _____

Project Title

6. _____

Brief description of Project

7. _____

Names of organization members involved in project

8. _____
Location of Project

9. _____
Number of Service Learners involved

10. _____
Number of public school students involved

11. _____
Grant amount being requested

12. Answer the questions below, in a narrative format (2 pages minimum)

- a. What is the purpose of the project?
- b. What is innovative about the proposed project?
- c. How will your classroom or school benefit from the service learning enhancement grant
- d. How will Tulane Service Learners benefit from the project and how will they be involved in carrying the project out?
- e. Describe the project: Specify activities and approximate times when they will be carried out.
- f. How will you tell whether the project accomplished its purpose? What information will you collect to evaluate this?
- g. Who will plan and carry out this project? Please supply a telephone number for the designated contact person.
- h. Describe the budget. What will you need to spend in order to carry out the project and why is that expense necessary? (Note: Please include order forms and invoices.)

TRANSPORTATION

Van service will begin: January 29th, 2002.

*A schedule may be picked up at the Office of Service Learning on or after
January 25th, 2002.*

The Office of Service Learning provides transportation to most service learning sites. White vans clearly marked: Tulane Service Learning, leave from the Office of Service Learning at 1332 Audubon St. We strongly recommend that you take advantage of the Service Learning Van. Several guidelines must be followed when going to and from Tulane to your service site:

I. Be On Time

Due to the van's tight route schedule, the driver cannot wait for students who are running late. Please arrive EARLY at the pick up and drop off points.

II. Sign-In/ Sign-Out

To ensure that you will be picked up when you are finished at your site, please sign the van log. Remember to fill in all of the appropriate spaces - failure to do so might cause delay or result in your not being picked up.

III. Partner Up For a Shared Experience

Consider partnering up with one or more Tulane students at your site. This will allow you an opportunity to work together and share your experiences, concerns, and questions.

IV. Service Learning Shuttle Drivers are Great Conversationalists!

If you have any questions while riding the shuttle, feel free to ask the drivers. As New Orleans Natives, they are very informed about the community.

Please do not eat, drink, or smoke in the van.

If you experience a problem with shuttle service, please notify:

Yvette Barnett @ 862-8060

V. Driving Yourself?

If you drive your own car to your site, do not leave any valuables in it and remember to always lock your doors. If you intend to drive, we encourage you to go with another student.

VI. Tulane's Off Campus Shuttle

Some Service Learners may benefit from using the Tulane Uptown/Downtown Shuttle which leaves from McAlister, in front of Fogelman Arena. You will be notified about using this shuttle rather than the OSL shuttle at the time of your on-site orientation.

CREATING CLOSURE

How can you, as a student service learner, best prepare yourself and individuals you have been working with for your departure?

Through Service Learning, students experience the frustrations and difficulties as well as the successes and hopes of working with different populations on a short-term (semester-long) basis. Closure signifies the ending of an experience and will involve a period of time meant to effectively prepare participants for the conclusion of a service learning partnership.

I. Give Advanced Notice - two to three weeks before your service ends.

In anticipation of final visits to the service site, you should inform the site supervisor and those with whom you have worked about the number of weeks left for your semester-long commitment. This way, the site supervisor will be alerted to the loss of assistance and the persons being served will have the opportunity to emotionally prepare for and express "goodbyes."

★ *Plan a "Ceremony" for your final session.*

Plan a gathering with drinks and snacks. This may be a time for acknowledgment, for sharing accomplishments, providing certificates and awards, taking and sharing photographs, create a bulletin board, photo album, or another memento to signify the experience. The Office of Service Learning will help support these activities. Please ask about our "Celebration Grants!"

★ *Write Letters*

Write a letter to the service site and/or the person you served sharing how the experience changed you, what you learned, and the lasting impact the service has had on you. If you would like to continue writing after the semester, invite the individual(s) you worked with to write back.

★ *Make a booklet*

This can include any number of things and will give the student something by which to remember you. You can bind together examples of the work you did together over the semester, write stories about your time together or detail plans for the future. Perhaps you and your student will want to make separate books and exchange them.

★ *Give Small Gifts as Remembrances*

Make a tape of music both parties like, take a Polaroid camera to the last service visit and take pictures of each other to exchange, give a book (one that you have read together or one that you think the person might enjoy). *Don't spend large amount of money on gifts, please!*

II. Behaviors to avoid when saying "goodbye"

Emotions often surface for you and the students with whom you have been working as your time together draws to an end. It is likely that the students with whom you have worked have experienced losses and it is never an enjoyable part of a partnership. Leaving a partnership without saying goodbye will leave both you and the students you have worked with feeling unsettled and abandoned. Be aware that you may become "romanticized" and may be inspired to make promises to perpetuate feelings of good will. However, you must **BE HONEST** about ending the experience. Your time commitment is finished and it is appropriate for you to say goodbye. Do not make promises that cannot be kept.

Adapted from a text created by Lorena Shier, Virginia Commonwealth University, Division of University Outreach/Office of Community Programs, Richmond, Virginia, and used with her permission.

Personal Time Sheet

To be completed and handed in to the Office of Service Learning

NO LATER THAN April 24, 2002. Keep a copy of yourself.

Name _____ Campus Phone _____

Service Site _____ Position _____

Site Supervisor _____ Phone number of Site _____

Course Number _____ Professor _____

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time In</u>	<u>Time Out</u>	<u>Total Hours</u>	<u>Student Initials</u>	<u>Site Coordinator/ Teacher Initials</u>

Student Signature _____ Total Hours Worked _____

Teacher/Site Coordinator Signature _____

Orientation Reflection Exercise

Reflection is a very important part of the service learning experience. We encourage service learners to reflect on their service activities throughout the semester so that they are thinking critically about the work they are doing and increasing their understanding of class concepts. Please begin reflecting by answering the following questions. Keep this form so that you may refer to it at the end of your service learning experience.

1. What are your initial feelings about your service learning placement site? _____

2. What are your expectations for this service learning assignment?

3. What are your feelings about your service learning assignment?

IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW

Scheduled Time for Service:

Weekly Responsibilities:

Questions/Notes:
