

Planning a Service Project

For more information, please contact Office of Student Community Service:

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Participating in community service gives groups and individuals the opportunity to have a positive impact in the community and make a difference in the lives of others. Community service is a way to address issues by taking action. Thinking about planning a service project? Consider these questions to ensure your project will be successful:

How many members are in your group?

Determining how many members there are in your group will make it easier to determine what type of volunteer project you would like to do. For example, small groups may want to take on smaller projects, whereas, large groups may want to take on larger projects.

Do you want to do a one-time service project with an agency, or make a long-term commitment?

The great thing about volunteering is that it gives you the opportunity to form relationships with the people you work with. Because these relationships are so valuable, certain agencies prefer volunteers to make on-going commitments. For example, if you are interested in tutoring a child, it would be helpful if you could return on a consistent basis so he/she can become familiar with you. On the other hand, many agencies have a mix of needs and are always looking for individuals who are willing to work on a one-time service project. Contact agencies directly to see what types of opportunities there are. Or, contact the Office of Student Community Service.

What issues are important to your group?

Consider the purpose and mission of your group. If your organization has a particular philanthropy or explores a social issue, the Office of Student Community Service can help you find agencies that also work with that philanthropy or issue. For example, if your group is a choral ensemble and has put on a number of performances, consider visiting a local family emergency shelter and giving a concert.

What type of community service do you want to do?

There are three main types of service: Direct, non-direct, and indirect.

Direct service involves working one-on-one with individuals.
(tutor a child, spend time with nursing home residents)

Non-direct service includes working behind the scenes.
(paint a daycare center, prepare food for people living with illnesses)

Indirect service means you are working on behalf of an agency.
(hold a fundraiser, participate in a letter writing campaign)



Setting a Timeline

At least six weeks before your desired service date: Figure out what issues interest you. Determine the number of people in your group, and whether you'd like to do a one-time service project or make an ongoing commitment. Contact local agencies to learn about upcoming opportunities.

At least four weeks prior to your service date: Solidify the service location and time and date of activity with host agency. Begin to think about preparation activities. Confirm transportation.

At least two weeks prior to your service date: remind all participants that the service date is approaching.

The week prior to your service date: Remind participants of their commitment to the agency. Discuss the agency and issue and begin to prepare activities.

After your service: Reflect and evaluate with your group. Thank the host agency. Continue to learn from the service experience.

The Office of Student Community Service has multiple resources to help you plan an excellent service experience for your group.
Visit our office located on the 3rd floor of the MLK Jr. Union and talk with one of our Community Service Coordinators.

MAKE THE DIFFERENCE.