Guidelines and Limitations for Students in Service Learning

As you begin your Fayetteville State University service-learning placement work, please remember that you will be a representative of FSU in the community. As such we ask you to carefully read and abide by the following guidelines created to assist you in having the most productive community service-learning experience possible.

1. **Ask for help when in doubt.** Your site supervisor understands the issues at your site and you are encouraged to approach him/her with questions or problems as they arise. They can assist you in determining the best way to respond in difficult or uncomfortable situations. You may also consult your course instructor or the Office of Civic Engagement and Service Learning at FSU.

2. **Be punctual and responsible.** Although you are volunteering your time, you are participating in the organization as a reliable, trustworthy and contributing member of the team. Both the administrators and the people whom you serve rely on your punctuality and commitment to completing your service hours/project throughout your partnership.

3. **Call if you anticipate lateness or absence.** Call your supervisor if you are unable to come in or if you anticipate being late. The site depends on your contributed services and will be at loss if you fail to come in as scheduled. Be mindful of your commitment; people are counting on you.

4. **Respect the privacy of all clients.** If you are privy to confidential information with regard to persons with whom you are working, i.e. organizational files, diagnostics, personal stories, etc., it is vital that you treat this information as privileged and private. You should use pseudonyms in referring to this information in your course assignments.

5. **Show respect for the agencies for which you work.** Placement within community programs is an educational opportunity and a privilege. Remember, not only are you serving in the community, but the community is serving you by investing valuable resources in your learning.

6. **Be appropriate in attitude, manners, and appearance.** You are in a work situation and are expected to treat your supervisor and others with courtesy and kindness. Dress neatly, comfortably, and appropriately (check your site for its conduct and dress code). Use formal names unless instructed otherwise. Limit cell phone use. Set a positive standard for other students to follow as part of FSU’s ongoing service learning.

7. **Be flexible.** The level of intensity at the service site is not always predictable. Your flexibility to changing situations can assist the partnership in working smoothly and in producing positive outcomes for everyone involved.
In addition to the above expectations, as a participant in your community service learning experience, you are also responsible for the following limitations:

NEVER…

- Report to your service site under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Give or loan money or other personal belongings to a client.
- Make promises or commitments to a client that neither you nor the organization can keep.
- Give a client or organizational representative a ride in a personal vehicle. DO NOT transport a child by yourself.
- Tolerate verbal exchange of a sexual nature OR engage in behavior that might be perceived as sexual with a client or agency representative.
- Tolerate verbal exchange OR engage in behavior that might be perceived as discriminating against an individual on the basis of age, race, gender, sexual orientation, or ethnicity.

Other safety Issues:

- Keep your automobile a non-attraction. Do not leave items visible in the car’s interior. Place valuable articles in the trunk prior to arrival. Lock your vehicle doors.
- If you take the bus, be sure to know the route and the bus fare.
- In case of a breakdown or transportation problem, carry enough money to get you home.
- Develop a community safety net of resources in your placement area.
- Get to know your supervisor at the agency. Ask him/her questions about the area and get suggestions on what you should do if you find yourself in trouble.
- Familiarize yourself with people, places, and things in the area that can be of assistance in times of emergency (e.g. the location of phones, 24 – hour stores, police station, etc.).
- Give the phone number of the agency where you’ll be serving to a roommate, friend, or relative before leaving for your placement site.

Please contact the Office of Civic Engagement and Service Learning if you have any questions or concerns.