



Some tips for your Community Based Experiential Learning Site

We are delighted you have enrolled in a community based experiential learning course! As you may anticipate service is not always easy and while we would anticipate you feeling uncomfortable at times, we do not want you to feel or be unsafe and have provided key points for you to think about *before* you start your service. If you have any questions about your safety please contact the Center for Civic Engagement program. Please read through the document, ask any questions and sign and date at the end of the document.

While in your placement neighborhoods:

You may be in an unfamiliar neighborhood where you may see poverty in appearance of houses, street activity and other aspects. When you are in any unfamiliar situation:

- Be sure to exercise caution and use common sense.
- Walk confidently and make eye contact with people.
- Appear comfortable with your surroundings even in the beginning.
- With time, you will indeed become comfortable with the neighborhood.
- Be patient and gentle with yourself but be alert
- Do not bring anything you would want to lose: jewelry, money, cell phone, etc.
- ALWAYS and in ALL situations follow your intuition and pay attention to your instincts: there is a difference between being uncomfortable and being unsafe.

While you are at your placement site:

- **Dress appropriately for your particular site.** This means not to wear items like tube tops, tank tops, nothing too short (skirt or shorts) and no mid drifts showing. More business casual dress may be required for schools. Wear appropriate footwear as per your site recommendations. In some sites, flip flops are not appropriate.
- Know who your site supervisor is and where to contact them in case of emergency.
- Know where your service partner is at all times.
- Never give your phone number or email out to a client/student at your placement.
- If people make assumptions about you, try to be compassionate. Asking the person why they made those assumptions or starting a conversation would be good responses and be a learning experience for all.
- The Center for Civic Engagement program prohibits students to give out money to any clients. If you are asked, you should say this: “Our/my program supervisor does not allow us/me to give out money.”
- The Center for Civic Engagement programs also prohibit students from forming romantic relationships or friendly relationships that extend outside of service time. If a person at your site suggests this be clear in the message of boundaries and speak to your site supervisor and Center for Civic Engagement staff about ways to address further interactions.
- If you feel unsafe or threatened, tell your site supervisor or Center for Civic Engagement staff. You will not be tattling. When in doubt, talk to someone!
- Please also refer to the Student Code of Conduct as set out by the Dean of Students and the Provost respectively:

<http://www.drexel.edu/studentlife/studenthandbook/Handbook.html#judicial>

http://www.drexel.edu/provost/policies/academic_dishonesty.asp

Getting to and from your placement site:

- Center for Civic Engagement provides SEPTA tokens for bus transport to sites.
- If you drive to your site and you park:
 - Do not leave anything visible in your car. It is often a good idea to place items in your trunk *before* you leave campus.
 - Lock your trunk and doors.
 - If you get any type of ticket, you and your passengers are responsible for payment.
 - If you are traveling in your own car, the University is does not cover for any risks incidents while traveling to your service site.
 - If you are travelling in a Philly Car Share vehicle with a Drexel Community Scholar, the university assumes insurance risks regarding incidents while travelling to your site.

Encountering Diversity:

You will most likely be entering an environment different from that of Drexel where you will encounter people of various socio-economic, cultural, and ethnic identities. Taking this into consideration, we suggest you:

- Remain sensitive and open-minded in all dialogues: be cautious of your own assumptions and gentle with judgments the clients might have about you.
- Take into account it may take time and numerous visits to establish an understanding between yourself and the people at your sites.
- Keep in mind, the people you will be interacting with may have different life experiences than you.
- Remember, everyone is an expert at their own life experience.

General Information

- Never drive a client anywhere.
- Never give out your personal information like your phone number, email or address.
- Never engage in a relationship outside of your supervised service time with a client.
- Never engage in a romantic relationship with anyone at your site.
- Never give out money or personal belongs while at service.
- Plan for possibilities: What if I can't find my service site? What if I am running late to service?

In Case of Emergency:

- Contact Drexel Public Safety at 215-895-2222.