Alternative Break Learning Partners

I. About Alternative Break

The mission of Alternative Break is to empower students to progress from members of their community to active citizens through social issue focused education, direct service, and critical reflection.

With education, direct service, and critical reflection as our guide, the Center for Civic Engagement seeks to provide students with dynamic experiential learning opportunities that allow them to explore the world of active citizenship. The Alternative Break program embodies these core values and provides students with avenues of self-discovery and social awareness through service immersion, group development, travel, and cultural exchange.

Alternative Break at the College of Charleston hosts approximately 10-14 domestic and international service immersion trips each year engaging over 100 students in direct service and intentional reflection during the academic breaks. Alternative Break is affiliated with Break Away®, a national nonprofit organization, which provides a curriculum and network for over 100 affiliate schools and more than 400 nonprofit community partners.

Through the devoted efforts of our student leaders and staff members, the Alternative Break program seeks to empower students to expand their horizons of self-awareness and social responsibility. The Alternative Break Leadership Board works passionately for social justice through direct service and a curriculum encompassing topics that fuel the progress of positive social change. From exploring cultural preservation through drum circles of the Quileute Tribe in La Push, Washington, to distributing anti-parasitic medication as part of a public health campaign in villages on the outskirts of Antigua, Guatemala, Alternative Break students continue to embrace the experiences that broaden the scope of their educational experience.

The Nine Components of the Alternative Break Program at the College of Charleston include:

1. Strong direct service
2. Alcohol and other drug-free requirements while on the trips
3. Diversity
4. Education
5. Orientation
6. Training
7. Reflection
8. Reorientation
9. Community Impact
II. Learning Partner Role and Responsibilities

- Participate in all aspects of the Alternative Break experience (i.e. service, cultural excursions, attend pre-departure meetings, etc.)
- Provide support during medical emergencies
- Support facilitation in response to escalating confrontation
- Provide appropriate feedback and guidance with regard to changes in logistics
- Serve in a leadership role if the group must separate for activities at any point

III. Learning Partner Application, Selection, and Compensation

a) Consideration and Selection

Prospective faculty/staff Learning Partners are encouraged to attend an information session to learn more about the role and are required to review the mandatory dates (see above). Faculty/staff are also encouraged to email the student Site Leaders directly for any specific questions related to experiences of interest. Any interested faculty and staff must submit a letter of interest detailing their motivation for serving as a Learning Partner, the specific trip(s) for which they are interested in serving as a Learning Partner, their approach when working with student leaders, and their desired community impact as a result of participating in the Alternative Spring Break program. Letters of interest are due via email to Chris Ciacia (ciarcia@cofc.edu). Selected advisors will be required to attend a meet and greet training with student site leaders, TBA.

b) Compensation

The cost of the experience (food, lodging, transportation) will be covered for the Learning Partner. Additionally, a stipend to cover additional expenses incurred due to prolonged travel will be provided to faculty/staff learning partners participating in trips that are 4 days or longer in duration.

c) Adjunct Faculty and Temporary Staff

We will welcome interest from adjunct faculty as well as staff members who have temporary appointments. We do require that any/all Learning Partners have health insurance coverage over the course of the Alternative Break trip (temporary plans are available for a small fee). Additionally, all temporary and adjunct contracts with the College of Charleston must cover the entire duration of the Alternative Break experience (to include pre-departure meetings, etc.).
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Important Dates  ASB 2018

Attendance is mandatory for listed dates. All Wednesday meetings will take place from 5:00 pm – 7:30 pm.

November
Wednesday, November 29th Introduction to AB

January
Wednesday, January 17th Education, Orientation, and Training (EOT) meeting #1
Wednesday, January 31st EOT #2

February
Wednesday, February 14th EOT #3
Saturday, February 24th Pre-Service
Wednesday, February 28th EOT #4

March
Wednesday, March 7th EOT #5
Wednesday, March 14th Send-Off Celebration
Saturday, March 17th – Alternative Spring Break! Saturday, March 24th

April
Wednesday, April 4th Return and Reflect
Saturday, April 7th Post-Service