**Alternative Spring Break 2018 Participant Application**

**DEADLINE:** Wednesday, November 8\(^{th}\) @ 5 pm

Applications should be submitted in person to the Center for Civic Engagement (Lightsey 203)

$10 non-refundable application fee is due upon submission.

**Application fees go toward Alternative Break scholarships available for Spring Break Participants. Check or cash is acceptable. Make checks payable to “College of Charleston – Alternative Break.” For concerns regarding the application fee, please email Christopher Ciarcia at ciarciac@cofc.edu**

**What is Alternative Spring Break?**
Alternative Spring Break is a transformative experiential learning opportunity where participants spend their academic spring break addressing critical issues throughout the country. The mission of Alternative Break is to empower participants to progress from members of their community to active citizens. With education, direct service, and reflection as a guide, participants embrace self-discovery and foster a sense of social awareness.

Each Alternative Break team consists of up to 9 student participants, 2 student Site Leaders, and 1 faculty/staff advisor. Prior to the trip, participants engage in education, orientation, and trainings (EOTs); fundraising; and service. During the trips participants take part in strong direct service, educational programming, daily reflection, and leadership development. Further, when teams return to campus they participate in re-orientation, reflection, and post service.

**Qualifications and Expectations:**
All students who are currently enrolled at the College of Charleston and are in good standing are qualified to participate in Alternative Spring Break. Previous experience with leadership or service is not necessary; however, the ideal participant has a passion for positive social change.

Participants are required to actively participate in all aspects of the Alternative Break program. This includes attendance in pre-trip meetings, fundraising, pre and post service, and re-orientation. Failure to meet these expectations can result in the Center for Civic Engagement removing participants from the trip. Additionally, there is a non-refundable payment policy. If a participant has to drop out, all of their previous contributed money is non-refundable. Trips are designed for participants to live simply and in community. Therefore, participants are expected to respect each other as they learn together in the shared experience.

Further, all Alternative Break trips are alcohol and drug free experience, including pre and post trip Alternative Break programming.

The Alternative Break program and the Center for Civic Engagement are committed to providing access for all people with disabilities. Please contact Christopher Ciarcia at ciarciac@cofc.edu for more information.
Tentative Issues of Focus

*Cultivating Common Ground: Environmental Justice and Mindfulness*
Narrow Ridge Earth Literacy Center | Washburn, TN | $300
This week-long experiential learning opportunity offers students the chance to examine Earth Literacy through spirituality, sustainability, and community. On this trip, you will delve into environmental issues by engaging in organic gardening, conservation projects, and eco-construction projects. In addition, we will emphasize nature-centric activities, such as yoga, hiking, and meditation in order to better understand the importance of Earth’s natural resources and the need for environmental activism.

*Constructing Relationships and Building Compassion: Affordable and Sustainable Housing*
Habitat for Humanity | (TBA) | $300
This experience will address the nation’s housing crisis through education, direct service, and reflection. Housing insecurity is a very relevant issue in our country, as nearly 19 million low-income houses in the US have to pay over half of their income on housing. By partnering with Habitat for Humanity, we will gain a greater understanding of the housing crisis by participating in home construction as well as attending the organization’s provided educational programming.

*Water Resources and Sustainability*
Chesapeake Bay Foundation | Annapolis, MD | $300
This learning-service experience will give students an opportunity to support a large and influential nonprofit organization that serves as a watchdog and fights for effective, science-based solutions to the pollution degrading the Chesapeake Bay and its rivers and streams. Participants will take part in field work with staff members; learn about environmental degradation in the Chesapeake; and work together on projects related to trees, oysters, and sustainable agriculture.

*LGBT+ Rights and Public Health*
Gay Men’s Health Crisis Center | New York, NY | $300
Over the course of Spring Break, participants will work with the world’s first and leading provider of HIV/AIDS prevention, care and advocacy. Participants will have the opportunity to support staff by serving meals to clients, putting together Safer Sex kits, and helping out with other special projects. In addition, participants will be educated on the ways that the Gay Men’s Health Crisis Center is working to develop comprehensive solutions that promote education, increase awareness, improve care, reduce stigma, elevate policy and build strong, supportive communities in order to end the HIV/AIDS crisis.

*Civil Rights and the Arts*
Selma Center for Nonviolence | Selma, AL | $300
Participants will be immersed into the history of Selma and the Civil Rights Movement so that they may become co-builders of the Beloved Community that Martin Luther King, Jr. dreamed about. Participants will take part in nonviolence trainings and tour historic sites, including interactive tours at the National Voting Rights Museum and the Ancient Africa, Enslavement and Civil War Museum. Participants will also be able to serve in the community by collecting and artistically interpreting the stories of community members.

A note on Alternative Break scholarships: A limited amount of scholarships are available for participants. Scholarship amounts vary based on number of applicants. For more information, please contact Christopher Ciarcia, Associate Director of the Center for Civic Engagement, at ciarciac@cofc.edu.
# Important Dates

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

**November**
- Wednesday, November 29\(^{th}\)  
  Introduction to AB; 25% of trip cost due  

**January**
- Wednesday, January 17\(^{th}\)  
  Education, Orientation, and Training (EOT) meeting #1; 25% of trip cost due  
- Wednesday, January 31\(^{st}\)  
  EOT #2  

**February**
- Wednesday, February 14\(^{th}\)  
  EOT #3; 25% of trip cost due  
- Saturday, February 24\(^{th}\)  
  Pre-Service  
- Wednesday, February 28\(^{th}\)  
  EOT #4  

**March**
- Wednesday, March 7\(^{th}\)  
  EOT #5; 25% of trip cost due  
- Wednesday, March 14\(^{th}\)  
  Send-Off Celebration  
- Saturday, March 17\(^{th}\) – Saturday, March 24\(^{th}\)  
  Alternative Spring Break!  

**April**
- Wednesday, April 4\(^{th}\)  
  Return and Reflect  
- Saturday, April 7\(^{th}\)  
  Post-Service
Full Name (as it appears on government I.D.): _____________________________________________

Nickname: ___________________________________________ Phone: ___________________

Permanent Address:
_____________________________________________________________________________
City: __________________________ State: _______ Zip: ______________

Local Address:
_____________________________________________________________________________
City: __________________________ State: ____________ Zip: ______________

Birthday (m/d/y): __________ Class Year: _______ Major: ______________

E-mail: __________________________ Student ID #: __________________________

Voluntary Demographic Data
Colleges and universities are asked by many, including the federal government, accrediting associations, college guides, newspapers, and our own college/university communities, to describe the backgrounds of our students and employees. In order to respond to these requests, we ask you to answer the following questions. Submission of this information is entirely voluntary.

Religious affiliation: __________________________

Gender: __________________

Are you Hispanic/Latino?
   ___ Yes
   ___ No

In addition, select one or more of the following racial categories to describe yourself:
   ___ American Indian or Alaska Native
   ___ Asian
   ___ Black or African American
   ___ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
   ___ White

This first page will be removed as part of a blind selection process, thus basic information will be requested again on the next page.
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Alternative Break Rankings:

Note: Please note there is limited space on each Alternative Break experience, and as such you may not get your first choice. Please rank all issues of focus in order of preference (1=most interested, etc.).

- Environmental Justice and Mindfulness
- Sustainable and Affordable Housing
- LGBT+ Rights and Public Health
- Civil Rights and the Arts
- Water Resources and Sustainability
**Essay Questions:** Please answer **all** questions on a separate sheet of paper.

Note: Participants are selected according to interest, availability of space, and answers to the questions listed below. Please remember that this is a blind selection process so please take time to submit thoughtful, typed responses to these questions on a separate sheet of paper.

1. Describe a previous service experience for which you are particularly passionate.
2. What do you hope to gain out of your experience with Alternative Break?
3. In your opinion, what role do active citizens play in a community?
4. Please provide any additional information that you think we would find useful during the selection process. (ex: Level of Spanish, previous construction experience, etc.)