

# A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR FACULTY

## on Managing Partnership Logistics, Student Intake, and Orientation Processes with Knoxville Non-profits

**NOTE:** Aim to have all students fully on board (including application and on-boarding / training) within 1 - 2 weeks after the start of the semester for one semester courses.

### STREAMLINING THE APPLICATION PROCESS



Communicate with chosen community partners (especially those working regularly with UTK service-learning classes) about their standard application processes in advance of the semester.



Request shortened application processes for UTK service-learning students if the standard application process is overly burdensome or time-consuming.



If possible, send out an early communication to students requesting that they begin the application and on-boarding process with their community partners in advance of the semester.



Provide quick access for students to all necessary contact information and paperwork, along with instructions on how to set up tours, complete background checks and any other necessary forms, etc.

### STREAMLINING THE ON-BOARDING PROCESS

- Think about transportation! Talk with students about the safest, most reliable way to get to their designated service-learning sites. If public transportation is a good option, have students map out transportation routes and practice taking public transit together to shared community partner sites during the first week. Many students are not familiar with the KAT bus system and will require an introduction.
- Communicate with chosen community partners in advance of the semester about setting up a tour and on-boarding session specifically for UTK service-learning students that coincides with the beginning of the semester (tour first week / on boarding session second week).

# SETTING CLEAR EXPECTATIONS WITH STUDENTS AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Provide an easy to reference page or packet of information related to the course and the partnership commitment for community partners to access throughout the semester.

Learning-Work Agreements (LWA): It is essential that community partners and students communicate early in the semester about their mutual expectations regarding scheduled work hours, how hours will be recorded, how unavoidable absences will be handled / made up, work duties, frequency of supervisory meetings, and learning goals. These should be made explicit in a LWA and signed off on by students, community partners, and instructors by the end of week two of the course (see example).

**NOTE:** Learning-Work Agreements serve well as the basis for the service-related portion of the course grade.

Inform students of your expectations regarding student conduct off-campus as they are representatives of and ambassadors for UTK.

Familiarize students with ways of anticipating and avoiding potentially dangerous situations and minimizing risk. You can use this by using the 'Risk Management Cycle' and the various tools laid out in the 'Experience Learning Risk Management Handbook' (Page 18 onwards)

If fitting, institute a buddy policy requiring that UTK students are never sent out into potentially dangerous situations alone. Communicate this policy to community partners, and make it explicit in your LWA.

Send out periodic check-in emails to community partner supervisors, asking for feedback about student adherence to LWAs. In case a student is showing up late, missing shifts, or not attending at all, it is best to be aware of this early and to have a policy in place to address conditions under which the student/community partner relationship may need to be terminated.

Factor in course fees for smaller expenses associated with teaching service-learning courses that might be incurred by students or instructors (background check fees, medical exam fees, transportation, etc.)



## NEED MORE INFORMATION?

Find more resources on service-learning course design and partnership opportunities at [teaching.utk.edu](https://teaching.utk.edu)