RISK MANAGEMENT

Various types of safety issues may arise at different steps in the Service Learning process. These are examples of some of the potential issues about which all participants should be aware.

Screening Participants And Supervision

- Develop an appropriate ratio between supervisors and student participants
- Screen the person who will be supervising student activity to ensure that the individual is both willing and able to provide good supervision
- Create and enforce supervisory policies and procedures
- Screen the student participants to ensure that they are academically, mentally, and physically qualified for the experience
- Inform students of any invasive screening tools that might be used (drug test or check of driving record)
- Advise students of the risks of the off-campus environment and the anticipated activity
- Provide appropriate safety training and address special needs that must be accommodated to perform the activity safely
- Ensure respect for the student’s privacy, dignity, and civil rights
- Develop policies and procedures for reporting allegations of discrimination or harassment and advise the student about them.
- Develop policies and procedures that will enhance safety (such as use of protective equipment, time limits, prohibited activity in certain types of weather or under certain conditions, safety reminders posted near power equipment or in hazardous areas)
- Restrict a student’s access to confidential and proprietary information at the off-site location and to materials with great value (narcotics, cash, or negotiable instruments)

Premises Safety

- Maintain heating, cooling, and ventilation that is appropriate for the environment and anticipated activity
- Ensure a safe means of ingress and egress and communicate an evacuation policy to the student
- Perform periodic inspection to ensure that the paths of ingress and egress are clear and safe
- Initiate/ enforce appropriate crime prevention policies (such as good lighting and locks, escorts to parking lots)
- Perform inspections to ensure that the facility and its equipment are safe and ergonomically appropriate

Transportation

- Establish clear guidelines as to who is responsible for transportation to the from the agency site; students typically must arrange their own transportation without facilitation by faculty
- If transportation is needed on-site, safe transportation must be ensured, including checking the safety of the vehicle and the driving record and ability of the driver.
Emergency Preparedness And Response

- Establish a contingency plan if the off-site location is unavailable for use for the anticipated activity
- Create a procedure to respond to a medical or other emergency
- Handle communications with campus constituencies (such as concerned faculty, staff, students, alumni) if a problem arises
- Handle media or governmental agencies inquiries if a problem occurs

Legal Compliance

- Obtain any licenses or permits for the activity or its anticipated location
- Comply with laws governing the off-campus activity (such as building, or health or life safety codes)
- Comply with mandated reporting laws applicable to the off-campus activity (such as suspected child or elder abuse, release of hazardous substance into the environment, or workplace injury