

# Service-Learning Etiquette

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Center for Community Engagement

- Representing more than yourself
- RECIPROCAL learning
- Academic responsibility
  - Canceling at the last minute is like not finishing a paper
  - If you are going to be late or are sick, call your site (follow up via email) and notify your professor and other group members

**Representing the College**

- Dress Appropriately for your Surroundings
  - Consider who you are working with and for
  - Consider the type of work you will be doing
  - Respect the dress guidelines of the site
- Arrive on time
  - Respect the time of community members
  - If you are going to be late or are sick, call your site
- Leave valuables at home or in the car
  - The site is not responsible for lost or stolen items
  - You are there to volunteer and interact with those you are serving so you can leave the technology behind
  - There is no need to flaunt your possessions

**At the site**

- Golden Rule
  - Approach people as you'd like to be approached
- Be Flexible and Have Patience
  - First visit might seem a little unorganized, will mostly consist of site orientation and filling out paper work
- Ask Questions
- Don't be afraid to jump in

**At the site**

- **Confidentiality**
  - Respect the privacy of persons served
  - Many sites will have you sign a confidentiality agreement
  - Simply refrain from using specific names in your reflections or class discussions, find other ways to describe people or change the name
- **Person First Language**
  - Stop and think about how you are describing someone
  - Disabled Person vs. Person with a Disability

**Being Respectful**

- Readjusting your lenses
  - When interacting with people remember you don't always know the whole story
  - We are viewing life from our lens so we need to look at it from theirs
- Be present with the people
  - (i.e. hanging out and forming relationships)
  - Be cautious in getting caught up in feeling like you didn't physically "DO" anything/see any outcome from your work

**Your interactions**

- **Build Relationships**
  - Creates trust and shows you are genuine
  - Tones down the “us vs. them” outsider perspective
  - Breaks down barriers and feelings of being put on display or being targeted
- “Who is Helping Whom?” Article

**Finding the Meaning**

- **Carpooling**
  - It is recommended that you ride together
    - Saves on gas
    - Allows for reflection time and debriefing
    - Creates a bond with class mates
- **Weather**
  - If inclement weather prevents you from traveling safely to your site, call ahead and notify your site
- **Transporting Clients**
  - Only at the direction of the site and even then it's not advisable

**Travel**

- Feelings get ahead of where we intellectually are
- If we cross boundaries we are inviting harm to ourselves, and potentially those around us
- Need to respect the basic structure and authority of the organization and staff
  - Rules are in place for a reason

## **Cultural Competency/Boundaries**

Turn to the person next to you and discuss what you would do in each situation:

- Homeless person asks you for money...
  - Personal boundary
- Client asks you for a ride...
  - Safety/liability/personal boundaries
- Client asks you for your phone number...
  - Personal/safety boundaries

**What would you do?**

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**Further Questions?**