

Jefferson Public Citizens Program

Student Handbook

University of Virginia

2015-2016 Edition

Contact/Location

JPC is administered by the [Center for Undergraduate Excellence](#). The center works in partnership with the VP for Student Affairs office as well as with appropriate schools, units, and departments across grounds.

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Jefferson Public Citizens Program
Handbook
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I. INTRODUCTION

a. What is the Jefferson Public Citizens Program?

The Jefferson Public Citizens program (JPC) inspires students to act as engaged citizens through active community partnerships, research service projects, and scholarly reflection. JPC is an academic research-service program for all U.Va. undergraduates who want to put their learning into action. JPC encourages and prepares students to collaborate with local, national and international communities to effect positive change in the world.

The goals of the program are to:

- Be a catalyst for students to build upon coursework, create knowledge and become active citizens for the public good.
- Create partnerships between university faculty and students and local, national and international communities to jointly address identified societal needs.
- Develop students' ability to produce personal and scholarly reflection and to appreciate the values of diversity and equity.
- Create a university community that values community-engaged scholarship.
- Engage faculty to participate in academic community partnerships through teaching and research.

The Jefferson Public Citizens program is an innovative academic program that integrates students' service and research experiences throughout their time at the University.

The Jefferson Public Citizens program (JPC) aims to be a multi-year experience open to all students at the University of Virginia. During students' first years at the University and during the summer months, they are encouraged to take part in a diverse array of local, national and international community and university-based learning, research, and service opportunities. In their second and third years at the University of Virginia, students may apply as a team to become formal participants in the Jefferson Public Citizens program and complete a community-based, group research and service project.

b. How does JPC Work?

The JPC program is unique in that it involves **groups of students** working with a community partner, a faculty advisor and often a graduate student on an academically-based service project. Students work collaboratively with community members and faculty members to identify areas of needed research and scholarship prior to beginning a JPC project. Once the JPC project is underway, team members follow a work plan and a partnership agreement that is agreed upon in advance by all parties. Student group members also participate in workshops to further develop their project management and research skills, and enhance their work and reflection.

The JPC program is also distinguished by its emphasis on **integrating service with scholarship** and reflection. Students and community members engage in scholarly inquiries into issues of local, national and international importance. A final product is shared with fellow students, the community and the university through classes, community presentations, a public presentations and a JPC journal publication.

Throughout their time at the University of Virginia, students are invited to join a **community of students, faculty, scholars and community partners** through social opportunities, academic learning, and special workshops, lectures and events related to the Jefferson Public Citizens program. While in most cases the formal JPC project takes place in a student's third and fourth years, there are ample opportunities for students in their first and second year to participate in JPC activities. There are many special events, educational opportunities and community service initiatives available to students through Student Affairs, Student Groups, and Madison House.

This involvement in their first and second years of the University not only helps students prepare for the Jefferson Public Citizens application process, it exposes them to **a wealth of extracurricular and academic experiences** and a network of students, faculty and administrators who work to advance the university's public service mission.

Student teams apply to become Jefferson Public Citizens during the end of the fall semester. They are required to submit a proposal for a community-based research project in partnership with a community organization and a faculty advisor. Community partners for **JPC projects can be local, national or international**. Funding is available to support JPC project costs, faculty advisors, and graduate student mentors.

c. How did the Jefferson Public Citizens program come about?

The Jefferson Public Citizens program is the progression of the University of Virginia's commitment to creating meaningful opportunities for integrating civic engagement and academic learning. This priority has been identified in university wide strategic planning efforts, including the Commission on the Future of the University, the Diversity and Equity Commission, the 2020 Public Service and Outreach Commission, the Ten Year Academic Plan, the Quality Enhancement Plan and the 2007 All University Retreat.

When the Office of University and Community Partnerships was created in 2008, the university leadership saw the opportunity to create new pathways for student learning and community engagement by connecting research and service opportunities already occurring throughout the university. In spring 2013, the Jefferson Public Citizens program moved to the Center for Undergraduate Excellence which now administers the program.

d. What are the benefits of the JPC Program?

The benefits of the JPC program are extensive. JPC provides both an informal university community for students and experience with the dynamic world of local, national and

international organizations. Benefits include:

- Making a difference in the world through scholarship and service with the community;
- Working with other students, community members, administrators, and faculty members to address a community need through rigorous inquiry;
- Identifying a research problem in the community and learning how to work toward a solution through service and scholarship;
- Developing critical scholarly and professional experience;
- Participating in ongoing opportunities for building skills and knowledge through workshops hosted by community, faculty and administrators;
- Joining a supportive community of peers invested in the value of civic engagement.

Students who successfully complete the Jefferson Public Citizens program will receive recognition for their research and service including:

- Special designation on the University of Virginia academic transcript;
- Opportunity to publish in the JPC journal;
- Special JPC graduation sash

II. Jefferson Public Citizens Program: Core Components

a. First and Second Years – What to Expect

➤ Gaining A Portfolio of Experience

The Jefferson Public Citizens program (JPC) seeks to connect all University of Virginia students with opportunities for service and learning. To that end, JPC and affiliated programs at the University of Virginia provide a wealth of opportunities for students to engage in community service, connect with a network of faculty and fellow students and learn research methods and skills for community-based research.

This experience is essential in applying to become a Jefferson Public Citizen. The JPC application requires students to describe their relevant service and scholarship and reflection on service experience. Below is a selected list of ways to engage in the JPC community and build a portfolio of scholarly reflection and experience:

- Participate in community-based service experiences. To find opportunities, check out the websites of the Jefferson Public Citizens program, Learning in Action, Madison House, Student Groups, etc.
- For possible international projects, attend the *Cultural Orientation, Reflection and Engagement* series sponsored by the International Studies offer;
- Enroll in Community Engagement courses which blend service with academic learning (see the Learning in Action web site at U.Va. for a list of courses);

- Enroll in courses that teach research and evaluation methods;
- Join the Jefferson Public Citizens group on Facebook to connect with other students, faculty and community members interested in social and community engagement;
- Attend a coffee chat session in the fall sponsored by the Center for Undergraduate Excellence.

The JPC community strives to be inclusive, diverse and reflective of the entire student body. For students who must work in order to meet expenses, or who do not have the financial resources to take advantage of the opportunity to participate in the JPC program, please consult the Scholarships, Fellowships and Stipend section.

During their first and second years, students are encouraged to keep a running log of their coursework, service experience, participation in training workshops and social networking events.

Transfer students may be able to consider previous service and scholarship at another university as part of their portfolios.

b. Third and Fourth Years

➤ **Getting Started**

In September and early October of each academic year, the staff of the JPC program will offer technical assistance for students who seek to connect with meaningful research and service projects, find or confirm potential student team members, identify faculty advisors, consult with potential community sites and agencies to select a project, and work as a team to complete a proposal for submission into the Jefferson Public Citizens program.

1. Why do Jefferson Public Citizens Work in Teams?

A unique feature of the Jefferson Public Citizens program is its reliance on teams of students to complete projects. The benefits of groups are multiple:

- Teams encourage students to **bridge** some of the boundaries found in traditional learning environments.
- Teams reflect the way most projects in the private, public, and civic sectors are completed and provide students with an opportunity to replicate the kind of learning and teamwork environment **common in the workplace**.
- Teams encourage **interdisciplinary** learning across academic departments, disciplines and schools.
- Teams facilitate **mutual learning** between the community and the university partners.
- Through ongoing dialogue and interaction, teams **expand the capacity** of students to address pressing research problems and bring solutions to bear on those problems.

- Teams allow students to learn from each other and hold each other **accountable** for achieving a common goal.
- Teams of students from first years through fourth years increase the possibility of **sustainable engagement** with the community.
- Teams increase project capacity and members bring a **diverse set of skills** and experiences to the task at hand.

2. Finding a Project and a Team

Students have access to staff from the Jefferson Public Citizens program who provide technical assistance and connection opportunities. The JPC staff is available for technical assistance throughout the school year. Consult the JPC website for more staff contact information.

a. Choosing a Team Research Project

Students may identify projects by: (1) consulting with faculty members who have existing relationships or projects with community partners and may be able to help them connect to a meaningful project; (2) developing their own well-designed concept or project, based on previous service experiences and/or course work (3) contacting a JPC staff member who has access to a team of faculty and community member advisors who are available to help students refine and develop project ideas. In all cases, **engaging a faculty advisor early for help with a JPC project is essential.**

JPC projects should be designed to meet identified community needs. The Jefferson Public Citizens program strives to support research projects that involve community members in project design and implementation. Community members may be involved with JPC team projects by: helping to define research objectives; having input into how the project is organized; helping to set the outcomes and processes; taking part in the analysis and interpretation of data, and; weighing in on the distribution of final results. Community members (local, national and international) should have the opportunity to provide their own analyses and interpretation of the results prior to final publication of the JPC report.¹

b. Assembling a Team

Students may assemble their own groups of three to five team members. Teams should be comprised of students with a diverse set of experiences, and may come from a range of majors, departments and/or schools at the University. Students may be in their 1st, 2nd, or 3rd year of study. 4th year students may participate in JPC if they will be enrolled in a graduate studies program at the University of Virginia after graduation. In all cases, student members must demonstrate they have the skills and experience to complete the JPC project successfully. All members of the JPC team must be enrolled as fulltime U.Va. students for the duration of the project.

¹ This paragraph is adapted from “Community-Based Research Principles” from the University of Washington School of Public Health.

All team members have equal responsibility for the completion of the project, and thus choice of team members is very important. Student teams create a proposal where each student plays a critical role in the completion of the work. Applications are reviewed carefully based on the composition, skill set, interests and experience of the team (see application form). All team members are recognized as Jefferson Public Citizens. A final proposal, when submitted, must have the support and involvement of a faculty advisor, a community partner, and clear roles and responsibilities for all students on the team.

Individual students interested in completing a comparable research and service project on their own may apply for Community Based Undergraduate Research Grants administered by the Center for Undergraduate Excellence. A graduate student and undergraduate student seeking to collaborate as a pair on a research project may apply for the Double Hoo Research Grant administered by the Center for Undergraduate Excellence. Graduate students may also be members of a JPC team as a project mentor. One student, in most cases a 3rd year student, must be selected by the group to serve as the primary contact for the JPC project.

Students can form teams in a variety of ways. They can meet fellow students through: (1) academic classes; (2) faculty advisors; (3) university community networking events; (4) volunteer service projects and programs; (5) the JPC group on Facebook; (6) posting a JPC project idea on bulletin boards; (7) community engagement workshops and events; (8) asking the JPC staff for assistance.

2. Matching Service Interests with Scholarly Learning

Students are encouraged to choose opportunities that apply their academic skills, experiences, and ideas to scholarly projects that serve the public good. Community based research seeks to foster collaborative partnerships between university researchers and the community, share knowledge among key stakeholders, and address social inequities.

It is important that a JPC project has academic rigor, reflects a community need, and is achievable in the amount of time a team has available (a summer, a semester, or two-three semesters). While the JPC staff, faculty and community members may guide students in developing a proposal that meet these criteria, what follows below are general guidelines for (1) engaging community partners; (2) developing research rigor; and (3) putting together an achievable time line and scope.

a. Developing Research Rigor

Student team research projects should be designed to integrate service with applied research, and should not be either exclusively public service or independent research. The JPC faculty advisor plays a vital role in determining academic rigor for the JPC project. Both primary and secondary research is appropriate. The JPC program emphasizes projects that encourage students to interact with their community partners, engage in neighborhoods

and communities, and require a presence in or knowledge of a particular community. Scholarly projects will be assessed for their rigor, conception, feasibility, and the extent of faculty and community support for the research results.

For a JPC project, student teams will be expected to:

- Identify a problem to be solved, or need to be addressed, based upon existing information
- Collect pertinent data/information
- Analyze data/information
- Draw logical and defensible conclusions
- Communicate clearly and effectively findings and conclusions
- Defend a solution to a critical audience
- Produce a final paper on findings and, if appropriate, recommendations

JPC research projects must demonstrate adequate faculty supervision and, for international projects, must demonstrate the existence of supporting infrastructure in the region where the project will be implemented. The community partner should explain in its JPC project endorsement letter how it would function as an onsite advisor to the JPC team.

b. Engaging Community Partners

In approaching local, national or international agencies to discuss the potential of collaborating on a community-based research project, it is advised that students **make arrangements well in advance of program deadlines**. Student teams should keep in mind the constraints of the local organization's time, resources and capacity. Once students have agreed upon a project concept with a faculty advisor, an agency contact and begun project planning, it is important for JPC teams to continue to conduct themselves professionally and have a realistic view of the project scope, budget and resources needed. When developing the project work plan, students should remember to set and keep clear deadlines and to align the JPC project calendar with the University and community agency calendars in advance. JPC teams will finalize their project planning with a university community partnership agreement that holds all parties accountable before beginning the project. Faculty advisors will guide JPC teams throughout this planning process. JPC teams must remember while on site in a community that their local partner has other responsibilities and commitments that extend beyond supporting the JPC project group. For a full list of items to consider prior to beginning a project, see appendices for work plan and partnership agreement forms.

While most student teams will have one community "client" with whom they partner, other team projects may have multiple stakeholders and work on a community-wide issue. In these cases, students will still need a faculty advisor and a primary community partner willing to work with the team on completing the research.

c. Achieving a Reasonable Scope

The development of a work plan with roles, responsibilities and deliverables is critical to setting up an achievable JPC research project design. Using the work plan template in the appendix, students should begin developing a full project calendar recognizing team members' other work and academic obligations. JPC teams should consider the schedule of team members, the calendars of the community partner, faculty advisor and JPC program deadlines. Before finalizing a proposal, students should use this work plan as a master planning document for discussion with team members, the community partner, and the faculty advisor.

➤ **Enrolling in the Program:**

Students are accepted into the program and expected to participate in a JPC orientation as well as related workshops and seminars before embarking on their projects. Students are considered formally accepted into the program once they finalize their work plans and sign the university community partnership written agreement with their community partners and faculty advisors. This finalization of plans and agreements must occur before the end of the spring semester.

1. Learning the Basics: Jefferson Public Citizens Orientation

The orientation to the Jefferson Public Citizens program combines team-building with acquiring knowledge of effectively working with community agencies. The JPC orientation workshops, involving faculty, community agencies, graduate students, and university alumni as trainers and facilitators, cover critical topics such as:

- Ethics of Community Service
- Best Practices in Community-Based Research
- Cultural Competency
- Sensitivity and Listening Skills
- Public Communication and Presentation Skills
- Different Dimensions of Leadership
- Project Management
- Conflict Resolution

Throughout the academic year, JPC students also have the opportunity to attend training seminars and workshops covering these and other related topics in more depth. Academic, administrative and community professionals will conduct these seminars. Following the acceptance of a JPC project, students may be directed by the Review Committee to take specific workshops needed for their project or to further develop areas where they need more experience prior to beginning their project.

2. Finalizing a Work Plan and a Partnership Agreement

Student teams, community partners, and faculty are required to sign and be held accountable for two documents in a JPC project once the student team has been accepted into the program. Teams are formally accepted into the program when they file: (1) a Partnership Agreement with the faculty advisor, community partner, and all team members; (2) a Work Plan that sets the calendar, outcomes, anticipated deadlines and lead individuals on the work to be completed.

These two documents form the working agreement the team will refer to throughout the JPC project duration. They serve as a guide to project development and completion. Copies will be kept on file at the Center for Undergraduate Excellence and should be also filed with a JPC team's faculty advisor and community partner.

3. Choosing Courses

Students interested in becoming a Jefferson Public Citizen are strongly encouraged to take courses in the appropriate field and discipline to prepare them for their project. Students should also try to take Community Engagement classes at the university, or classes that provide them with the opportunity to develop community-based and/or research service learning projects.

Students who are unable to take those courses, or who have taken courses similar in topics may submit evidence of having been exposed to research methods and community-based learning in other University of Virginia courses as part of their team member application.

Transfer students may list courses that they have taken previously before attending the University of Virginia. Individual team members will also be asked to list coursework pertinent to the proposed JPC project.

Students will also be expected to meet regularly with their faculty advisor and community partners to complete the research project. It is recommended that JPC teams meet weekly themselves and bi-weekly with their community and/or faculty partner to coordinate and implement their community-based research project. This schedule should be set in advance of implementation as part of the proposal development process.

III. Applying to be a Jefferson Public Citizen

a. What is the Timeline and Deadline for Applications?

Applications will be available in September of each year for submission in December of that same year, with notification in early February. Awarded projects may begin in either summer or fall of the following year.

b. What are the Requirements?

The Jefferson Public Citizens Review Committee seeks teams of students with a balance of skills that will lend themselves to successfully completing the project, a breadth of

experience in academic coursework touching on public and community issues, a history of social and community engagement that has informed their experience at the local, national or international level, a passionate interest in the project and the field, a sense of how to work well as a team, and a track record of working effectively to meet deadlines with a range of partners.

Students submit a JPC research and service project proposal as well as a team application to gain entry into the JPC program.

c. What is in a JPC Application?

A Jefferson Public Citizens team completes an application process that includes a portfolio of the members' past experiences in relevant scholarship and service, in addition to their reflections on that experience and the project proposal. This portfolio must equally represent all team members and show their individual and collective skills. It includes:

- A statement of purpose from each team member describing their involvement in public service and community engagement activities; and each team member's coursework relevant to the proposed research project;
- A JPC project proposal;
- A budget for the project;
- Unofficial transcripts for each team member;
- Recommendation letter from a faculty member who will advise the JPC team;
- Project endorsement letter from the community partner;
- Copy of the International Studies Office' Travel Form for Student Research and Service Learning Abroad;
- A partnership agreement between the faculty advisor, community partner, and primary JPC student contact;
- A preliminary work plan that has been shared with the faculty advisor and the community partner.

d. Notification: The Selection Process

The Jefferson Public Citizens Review Committee notifies the primary student contact of acceptance into the program. Full acceptance is granted when (1) the university community partnership agreement has been signed by the community partner and faculty advisor and (2) the work plan has been reviewed and approved by each partner. These documents set the terms for completion of the JPC project and identify clear expectations for all participants.

IV. Supporting and Advancing your Study

a. Scholarships, Fellowships, and Stipends

As part of the application process, teams submit a budget for expenses related to their project including travel, supplies, etc (see application form). Because of the increased cost for conducting projects abroad, there are limited additional funds for international projects. In all cases, JPC funding cannot conflict with other forms of financial aid a student may be receiving. In order to receive their funds, students are required to enroll in the university's direct deposit program:
http://www.virginia.edu/studentaccounts/direct_deposit.html .

The JPC also provides an opportunity for graduate students to work with faculty and undergraduates on a JPC research & service project related to their graduate work and academic interests. JPC graduate students can serve as project managers for the JPC team and provide informal mentoring and advising to the JPC students. Graduate student participation will add capacity to the JPC team and assist with overall JPC team management. The JPC student team or the JPC faculty advisor may identify a JPC graduate student mentor. Faculty advisors should be aware that JPC support for graduate students cannot interfere with other forms of funding the graduate student may be receiving.

Research funds for faculty advisors are also provided and, in some cases, compensation or necessary equipment is provided to community partners to facilitate their capacity to participate in the project. Faculty and community members can contact the JPC staff for more information.

b. Committee of Academic and Community Partners

As part of an effort to encourage ongoing sharing between local community partners and academic researchers, students are invited to attend topical meetings on issues of civic and public interest sponsored by university offices and departments. These sessions will be held both at the University and in the community and focus on sharing and exchanging information on community needs, relevant community-based research, and networking with others in a similar field of interest.

c. JPC Journal: Project Findings

JPC student teams will be expected to publish their findings in the JPC journal. Deadline for submitting articles to Public is in early February and the journal is released in the spring.

d. Annual Public Service Presentations

JPC student teams are also expected to present their project at an annual forum engaging university leaders, faculty and community partners. The goals of this forum will be to: hear JPC students present their project findings; provide JPC students with an opportunity to reflect on their work; celebrate the completion of projects and the people responsible for them; acknowledge exemplary work; engage and recruit interested students, faculty and community partners in future JPC work; and provide input to the JPC staff on future needs and gaps. JPC student presentations are scheduled to be held the April of the year following acceptance into the JPC program.

A panel of alumni, student, faculty and community member judges will evaluate the JPC student presentations at the forum. The judges will select on presentation as a winner based on the quality of the presentation. Presentations will be kept to a strict time limit. The community partner of the winning JPC presentation team will receive a monetary award to help support continuation of the JPC work.

V. Evaluating the JPC Experience

As part of the process of continuous improvement, the Jefferson Public Citizens program will collect data on team experiences, as well as faculty and community experiences throughout the program. Student teams will have the opportunity to evaluate their experience at agencies to provide information for future JPC students. Community partners will also evaluate the student teams and provide this feedback to students and their faculty advisors. Faculty advisors will also be asked for evaluation of the students' JPC project. These evaluations will determine notation as a Jefferson Public Citizen on the students' academic transcript. These evaluations will also be used to support continuous improvement of the JPC program.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Calendar for 2015-16

Appendix 2 - JPC Project Work Plan

Appendix 3 - Tips on Working with Community Agencies

Appendix 4 - Advice from JPC Alumni

Appendix 1

Calendar for 2015-16

September – November 2015	JPC Project Development and Technical Assistance Period
December 1, 2015	Applications Due including Travel Form for Student Research and Service Learning Abroad due to International Studies Office
Early February 2016	Notification of Acceptance
February - April 2016	JPC Orientation, Workshops and Seminar Final JPC Work Plans and Written Agreements Signed If applicable, final registration with International Studies Office and final approval from Institutional Review Board.
February 2016	Journal Article Submission Deadline for the previous year's JPC awardees
April 2016	Forum with presentations by the previous year's JPC awardees
June 2016	New round of JPC Projects Begin

Appendix 2.

JPC Project Work Plan

This Work Plan will be completed before or during JPC orientation. All teams should begin to fill out this work plan prior to attending orientation. A completed Work Plan must be filed with the JPC staff before work begins on the JPC project. ²

I. Context

When working with a community organization, it is important that your JPC team start off on the right foot. Orientations are crucial to understanding a new place and will undoubtedly help your team be more effective. Be politely assertive and ask questions about the community organization. Below is a list of questions that will be useful in understanding your team's role and your work with the community. Your faculty advisor and JPC staff will be able to help you in this process.

II. Preparing Your Work Plan:

General Information Orientation:

- What is the team's general work plan and responsibilities?
- Who is the team's faculty advisor and what supervision are you receiving from UVA? Does everyone know each other?
- How much time will your team dedicate to the project? When will you be working at the site?
- How will the team get to the site? What could prevent team members from getting to the site?
- How will all the people involved communicate with each other? (Remember email may not always be the best method.)
- What is the timeline of the JPC project? When will your work be completed and what will be your end product? Does the product benefit the community as well as satisfy your academic goals?
- What specific goals do you have for your work?
- Is there a written agreement of expectations?
- What are the specific expectations of each of the parties involved: students, community partner, and faculty advisor?

Logistical Site Orientation:

- What type of workspace will your team have? Where is everyone else's workspace?
- Do your team have access to a computer, printer, copier, fax machine, and other electronic supplies? Do you need any passwords to access any of this information? (Do not assume organizations will be able to provide you with workspace, computers, office supplies, etc.)
- Where are supplies kept and what are the protocols for using the supplies?

² adapted from Tufts University, January 2009.

- If your project is providing your own supplies, how will those materials be stored and managed?

Organization Orientation:

- Who else is working at the organization? What are their responsibilities? (Taking time to meet with people you aren't necessarily working with is a great way to gain a better understanding of organization.)
- What is the vision of the organization? How does your work fit into this larger vision?
- What challenges does the organization currently face? How will your team remain sensitive to these challenges as it pursues its work? Are there extenuating circumstances that may affect the outcome of your project?

Personal Knowledge and Skills:

- What type of skills and knowledge does the organization expect your team to have? Where can you receive these skills and knowledge?
- Does the organization have a copy of your final JPC project proposal and Work Plan?
- What academic classes, technical skills, or service experiences does your team have that would be helpful for this project and for the community organization?

III. Project Basic Information

Primary Student Contact:	
Community Partner:	
Faculty Advisor:	
Project Title:	
Brief Summary of Project:	

IV. The Work Plan³

Goals & Objectives	Activities	Outcomes (Deliverables)	Implementation Steps	Project Timeline, Date to be Completed	Team Member Responsible	Resources Needed

Please submit a copy of completed Work Plan to:

- the JPC staff
- your Community Partner
- your Faculty Advisor

³ Work Plan adapted from Tufts University, January 2009.

Appendix 3.

Tips on Working with Community Agencies

Excerpted and adapted from *Partnering with Communities: A Guide to Getting Involved with Tufts' Partner Communities*. March 2006

Getting Down to Work—Tips for Students

When beginning work at a community-based organization, consider the following guidelines. These can serve as a reference for faculty, staff or students supporting a thoughtful and reflective experience for the student and the community partner.

- **Approach your position as you would any job.** Each organization has certain policies and expectations you must respect. If you have to miss a scheduled visit, make every effort to get in touch with your supervisor well in advance.
- A student seeking to establish a rapport with local communities needs to have a **non-judgmental attitude**, acceptance, an understanding of people's rights to make their choices and decisions, and respect for each individual's worth, dignity, empathy and authenticity.
- **Show respect for traditions and difference**, and avoid imposing your culture and value systems on others.
- **Set goals for service and for learning.** Sit down with community partner, be straightforward about your learning requirements, and ask them to do the same about their needs.
- **Articulate each person's role.** Decide and document in a project agreement program and logistical details such as transportation, supervision, timeline, and reporting systems. Refer to this agreement in the future for clarification of expectations.
- Be sure to intentionally engage in **reflection** throughout this experience. Reflection has proven to be an essential element for best practice in active citizenship. It increases both project effectiveness as well as enhances student learning.
- **Create a schedule** of days and times that you are available to work. Be prompt. Be sure to inform your supervisor if you are not able to go in, about academic schedule, breaks, etc.
- Expect uncertainty at first. Your level of comfort and **responsibility will increase** as the semester progresses. Ask for help or feedback when you are in doubt about how or what you are doing.

- Recognize your limits by **accepting assignments that you can handle**. Don't be afraid to speak up if you don't think you are qualified to work on a particular task.
- **Communicate** with your site supervisor; ask for feedback from your supervisor on a regular basis.
- Be aware that as a community based learner you may learn information about individuals you are working with that is covered by **rules of confidentiality**. Speak to your community supervisor to discuss how the obligations of confidentiality may apply to you.
- **Be realistic about what you can accomplish**. Don't expect to accomplish in two hours of weekly service what a trained professional cannot accomplish in 40.
- Consider how you can link this experience to your **future goals** and academic experience.

Appendix 4

Advice from JPC Alumni

- “Expect to spend a lot more time on your project than you originally anticipate.”
- “Planning is key! Planning everything out way in advance really helps out on the long run. Figure out logistics (budget, transportation, lodging, etc.) and don't be afraid to contact your in-country person. Also, make sure you form your team with dedicated people who you know you will work well with.”
- “Stay open to allowing big changes in your project once you actually begin to work on it. We feel that our success was largely due to our ability to let the community participate fully in the project”
- “Have a good research plan before you go, but always be flexible.”
- “pursue the mission and overcome the challenges . . . it was an AMAZING experience”
- “Definitely reach out to previous project leaders and partners! You have a much greater chance of having a successful research experience (and successful JPC application) if you build off of existing relationships and projects. Very hard to build something up from zero! This is especially true for international projects.”
- “Plan as far ahead as possible, but be ready to improvise at any time.”
- “Have as detailed a plan as possible, but also be as flexible as possible.”
- “Have regular (weekly or bi-weekly) meetings to keep up with each other in addition to any faculty/mentor meetings. Prepare all of the background research and establish a well-prepared plan before leaving to ensure the in-country time is productive and seamless.”
- “It is difficult to find a balance between working with your community partner and the community themselves. Before going on your trip, make it a priority in your work plan to schedule time with the community partner, but also formal and informal meeting with the end users of your project.”
- “Make sure to develop a strong relationship with your community sponsors. They are crucial to the success of your project. Be flexible with regards to their needs and wishes, and communicate your goals and ideas clearly.”
- “Put time and effort into it. This is something that is true for every stage of the process from grant-writing to presentation preparation. Problems will come up as

you move forward with your JPC project and giving yourself the time to deal with them is crucial. Don't wait till the last minute or cut other people out of the process. A JPC project is a huge undertaking and the best results come when the whole of the group has delivered input and thought long and critically about what to do or how to present something.”

- “We would advise students to be prepared to be flexible. Research has its ups and downs; that's simply part of the process. Some of your ideas won't work, there will be roadblocks, but that's okay! Quite honestly, that's when you can learn the most. We would also advise potential JPC-ers to adequately assess and consult with community stakeholders and partners. While it can be incredibly empowering to be in a new place doing research and service, it is vital that the vision of the actual community you are affecting remains intact.”
- “Build a project around what your community partner asks for, not what you decide they need (and be in constant communication with them!).”
- “It will always be difficult to assess feasibility and feel comfortable about entering a new community before working somewhere new. Regardless, spend as much time as possible preparing yourself for the new environment. Make provisions for this in your project workplan! It's pretty much impossible to “over prepare”, and the greater a general background you achieve before working with your community partner, the better you will be able to contextualize all the new experiences you will encounter.”
- “Go for it, it's an amazing opportunity. To get the most out of it - you must put all you have into it.”