Guide to Planning an Alternative Breaks Trip!
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INTRODUCTION

New York University’s Guide to Planning an Alternative Breaks Trip!

Planning and leading an Alternative Breaks trip can be a daunting task, however it is our hope that this guide will walk you through the process! If you are proposing a trip, please use this guide to help you fill out your Preliminary Proposal Application (as well as your Final Proposal Application if your Preliminary Proposal is accepted), as it provides detailed explanations and instructions for each of the sections you must fill out for both proposal applications. If you are applying to lead a pre-selected trip, please read this guide thoroughly before applying to gain a better understanding of the expectations and responsibilities that will be required of you as a site leader. Please note that this is an introductory guide to leading an Alternative Breaks trip and it is not all-inclusive. At the Site Leader retreat, which will be held September 22-23, 2012 and is mandatory for ALL site leaders, you will receive a comprehensive Site Leader Manual that will provide further guidance and resources for leading your trip.

A Brief History of Alternative Breaks at NYU

The Alternative Breaks program, as it is structured today with an Advisory Board and student Site Leaders, was organized by the Office of Students Activities (now CSALS) in Fall 2005 as a response to provide assistance in the Gulf Region to the communities affected by Hurricane Katrina. In January 2006, 56 students traveled to Alabama and Louisiana to participate in hurricane relief efforts by delivering meals, cleaning debris, gutting houses, among other needed projects. That same spring, students returned to the Gulf, but also to 4 other locations in the U.S. to work with education, housing and homelessness. Today, the program has expanded to 24 trips, with seven of them being international and with numerous partnerships throughout the University.

Philosophy and Mission of NYU Alternative Breaks

The Alternative Breaks Program at NYU provides students with the opportunity to learn about political and social community dynamics while becoming a catalyst for collaborative social change. Through learning and practice, students will explore the theory of integrating service, education, and reflection to create meaningful change in their communities.

Our vision is a society of effective citizens: people who value the community as a priority when making life decisions. As part of the Alternative Break experience, participants will become more educated and experienced in all sides of a social issue. Upon return, they will be empowered to make more informed decisions and take meaningful action that supports a greater good. They will become contributing members of society and will weigh in on issues that impact their community.

Types of NYU Alternative Breaks

NYU Alternative Break trip types include: pre-selected trips, proposed trips and partnership trips to both domestic and international sites.

Pre-selected Trips. These trips are selected based on feedback from site leaders and participants and are ultimately decided upon by the Alternative Breaks advisory board. Site leaders will be responsible for planning and developing the logistical aspects of the trip as well as the components of the trip revolving around the 8 components. All activities before, during, and after the trip must be in accordance with the expectations set
forth by NYU Alternative Breaks. In addition, all trip activities should comply with university policies and procedures. (See page 13 for further details on leading a pre-selected trip.)

**Proposed Trips (Please note that at this time trips can ONLY be proposed for Spring Break).** These trips are initiated, planned, and developed by students. All activities before, during, and after the trip must be in accordance with the expectations set forth by NYU Alternative Breaks. In addition, all trip activities should comply with university policies and procedures. (See page 10 for further details on proposing an Alternative Breaks trip.)

**Partnership Trips.** These trips are in collaboration with an NYU department or faculty member. Previous trips have partnered with the Residential Life & Housing Services office, the LGBTQ Student Center, and The Comm*Unity First Year Service Learning Experience program. Students may propose a partnership trip, or may participate in a pre-selected partnership trip. Partnership trips should be open to all students unless a well-explained reason is provided for it being a closed trip.

**Staff Requirements for International Travel.** All international trips require at least (2) staff members to travel with the group. Students proposing an international trip are responsible for identifying staff members to accompany them, as well as for negotiating and arranging payment for the staff members’ cost of travel and program fees. While some departments may cover travel costs for their staff members, others may not, so please explore other options. (See pages 7 and 12 for further information on staff members as well as for further information on figuring out payments for staff members. The Center of Student Activities, Leadership and Service is NOT responsible for covering the costs of staff members.)

**8 Components of a Quality Alternative Breaks Trip**

NYU’s Alternative Break program is a member of the Break Away, the national Alternative Breaks organization. Break Away established the following elements an alternative break program should incorporate in order to exceed the typical volunteer vacation experience and move its participants down the path toward becoming an effective citizen. Each of the following components is vital to providing a quality break experience: without one, the impact is lessened; with all of them developed thoroughly, there is no limit to the power of your alternative break experience.

**Strong Direct Service**

Programs should provide an opportunity for participants to engage in direct or “hands on” projects and activities that address unmet social needs, as determined by the host community. Community interaction during service projects and social activities is highly encouraged during the break.

**Alcohol and Other Drug-Free**

Issues of legality, liability, personal safety and group cohesion are of concern when alcohol and other drugs are consumed on an alternative break. Programs should provide education and training on alcohol and other drug related issues, in addition to developing and communicating a written policy on how these issues will be dealt with on an alternative break.

**Diversity**

Strong alternative break programs should include participants representing the range of students present in the campus community. Coordinators should recruit for, design, implement and evaluate their program with this end in mind.

**Orientation**

Prior to departure, participants should be oriented to the mission and objectives of Break Away, the campus break program, and the host agency or organization(s) with which they will be working.
Education
Programs should include educational sessions that participants attend prior to and perhaps during their alternative break. These sessions should provide participants with a sense of the history of both the region they will be working in and of the problems they will be working with during the break. Effective education provides facts and opinions from all perspectives on the social issues, including ways that the participants’ personal life choices are connected to them.

Training
Participants should be provided with adequate training in skills necessary to carry out tasks and projects during the trip. Ideally this training should take place prior to departure, although in some instances it may occur once participants have reached their site. Examples of training include teaching basic construction skills, learning how to work with physically challenged persons, or learning to test groundwater for impurities.

Reflection
During the trip, participants should be encouraged to reflect upon the experience they are having, synthesizing the direct service, education, and community interaction components. Time should be set aside for this activity to take place both individually and as a group.

Reorientation
Upon return to campus, programs should have reorientation activities for all participants where they can share their break experiences and translate these experiences into a lifelong commitment to active citizenship. Through these activities, participants can learn about volunteer opportunities in their local area, summer internships, political avenues for continued community involvement, resources for continued education on social issues, tips for making personal decisions that benefit the entire community, and similar means for continued community involvement.

Because all of NYU’s Alternative Break trips will be quality trips, both pre-selected and proposed trips will be expected to incorporate these 8 components before, during, or after the trip and in any capacity relating to/involving NYU Alternative Breaks program.

©Break Away Site Leader Survival Manual

Roles and Responsibilities

Co-Site Leaders
This year, site leaders are given two options for applying to be a site leader:

1. Proposing an Alternative Break trip
2. Applying for a Pre-selected trip

The next two sections “Proposing an Alternative Break Trip” and “Leading a Pre-selected Trip” go into more detail about what each of these options entails and we suggest reading through both sections if you are unsure of which option to apply for (or even if you are sure of which option you wish to apply for just be sure this is the route you wish to take). Site leaders leading both types of trips will be held to the same expectations and be required to do the same amount of work—although the planning/researching process for the proposed vs. pre-selected trip differ during the summertime.

The deadlines for each option can be found on the respective applications as well as on the “Calendar of Important Events” on page 26. All potential site leaders will be interviewed before being fully accepted as a site leader and will subsequently work with their co-site leader and designated board mentor to plan their trip.
Two students (undergraduate or graduate) will serve as the co-site leaders of the Alternative Break trip and will ultimately be responsible in leading all aspects of the trip (further details on site leader expectations on the next page).

A co-leader can:

- Balance your strengths and weaknesses. Perhaps you are miraculously alert, cheerful and inspired both early in the morning and late at night . . . but could use some help with financial record-keeping.
- Provide checks on your thorough preparation. For example, before your break begins, it is critical that you confirm your housing plans—and it is good for your effectiveness, and definitely for your sanity, to have a fellow participant double-check your plans during the planning process.
- Share the responsibilities. For example, two days before break, when you have a paper due in a class you have been neglecting, you will be ecstatic that your teammate can go to the Center for Student Activities, Leadership, and Service or Alternative Breaks office to pick up any necessary paperwork or speak with a board member about a certain issue.
- Address the needs of different participants: Some people respond better to extroverts, or maybe to those more quiet, approachable personalities; others are most relaxed and willing to participate in the company of women/men or both. For this reason, it is best to try to pair people who balance each other, who are of different genders, and whose strengths combine to form something close to an “Ideal Site Leader.”

For applicants applying for pre-selected trips:
We ask that you fill out the personality profile included in the site leader application so that the Alternative Breaks boards can appropriately pair with you with another co-site leader that may be most compatible with your leadership style. Co-site leaders will be paired together based on similar social issue/trip interest. (Please note: your responses to this section will in no way affect whether or not you are selected as a site leader.)

For applicants who are proposing a trip:
You have the option of choosing a co-site leader to work with. If you do have someone in mind who you would like to work with, please include their name and information on your preliminary proposal and be sure that they fill out a preliminary proposal application as well. If you do not have someone in mind who you would like to work with, please fill out the personality profile included in the application so that the Alternative Breaks board may use this to pair you up with another site leader who will be compatible with your leadership style. All co-site leaders will be paired up based on their similar social issue interests. For applicants who do indicate another person with whom they would like to work with, please be aware that the indicated site leader is included in the overall “application package.” This means that the indicated co-site leader will be taken into account when applications are reviewed and will be considered when preliminary trip proposals are approved/rejected. So please put a lot of thought into the person you would like to work with and to not just pick a friend because you think it would be ‘fun’ to work together. Consider asking yourself: Will we work well together as a team? Do our strengths and weaknesses balance each other out? Are both of us willing to put in the effort to make this trip as successful as possible? Is my co-site leader knowledgeable of the social issue? If the answer is yes to all of these questions, then the co-site leader pair will most likely make a good team. Please be aware that the Alternative Breaks domestic and international board ultimately have the final say as to whether a site leader pair is accepted for a proposed trip.

Site Leader Expectations
All site leaders will be held to the expectations outlined below beginning the summer of 2012 and extending through the 2012-2013 academic school year.

General Site Leader Responsibilities
- Commit 1 academic year to the site leader position and AB program
- Attend the MANDATORY site leader retreat: September 22nd-September 23rd
- Attend all site leader meetings
  - Normally Thursday evenings at approximately 6:30pm
  - OR communicate with your board mentor the reason for your absence at least 24 hours in advance
- Check email on a daily basis; respond to emails within 24 hours
- Meet with board mentor every other week to discuss:
  - Logistics pertaining to the trip
  - Any necessary paperwork
  - Fundraising ideas
  - Education, orientation, and training ideas
  - Reflection ideas
  - Group updates
  - Any group, site, or co-site leader issues
  - Questions for the board mentor
- Complete all necessary paperwork given to you by your board mentor, CSALS, or site organization
- Pass all important information on to your participants and send them reminders of important deadlines

**Alternative Break Trip Site Leader Responsibilities**
- Meet with your co-site leader at least once a week
- Facilitate participant interviews for your group
- Schedule and run mandatory weekly meetings with your group; each meeting should contain:
  - Education materials (i.e. information on site organization/location traveling to, etc)
  - Orientation (i.e. understand mission of site organization to become allies to their mission)
  - Training (i.e. provide training in necessary skills: teaching, tool handling, language, etc)
  - Reflection (reflect upon experiences)
  - Alcohol & drug free environment for all AB-related events (group meetings, fundraisers, etc)
- Coordinate at least one service project before or after your trip
- Coordinate at least three group fundraisers & encourage participants to do individual fundraisers

**Alternative Breaks Proposal Review Committee**
A selected group of individuals from both the domestic and international Alternative Breaks boards will make up the Alternative Breaks proposal review committee. Once all preliminary proposals have been submitted, the committee will review each proposed trip and notify site leader(s) whether the preliminary proposal has been approved or rejected. Site leaders whose preliminary proposals have been accepted will then complete the final proposal packet. The committee will reconvene once all final proposals have been submitted and again review the proposals and accept/reject the proposed trip.

**Faculty and Staff Advisors**
A faculty or staff advisor will support and enhance students’ experience by collaborating with site leaders and remaining an integral part of the group dynamic. Staff members are not expected to plan any of the logistics of the trip as site leaders will be primarily responsible for logistical organization. Faculty or staff advisors are expected to participate in all group activities before, during, and after the trip and adhere to all guidelines set forth by the group and by the Alternative Breaks program.

**Responsibilities of a Staff Member:**
- Secure release from immediate supervisor
- Provide guidance and support to the student coordinators and participants, when necessary
- Adhere to all ground rules agreed upon by the group (in a pre-trip meeting)
- Assist with transportation if and when needed
- Create a positive learning environment by ensuring the group is respectful and inclusive
- Participate in individual and group discussions
- Act as a staff contact during the trip in the case that a participant gets separated from the group or needs to call the staff member for emergency purposes
- Help with emergency protocol if a situation occurs while on the trip
- Attend all additional Alternative Break staff member training sessions

**International Pre-selected Trips**
International trips are required to have two faculty or staff members travel with the group. For pre-selected international trips staff members will be identified and assigned to trips by the CSALS office; site leaders are not required to research and identify the staff members for their trip.

**International Proposed Trips**
International trips are required to have two faculty or staff members travel with the group. On the preliminary application you will see a section dedicated to the two staff members who will be traveling with the group. Please be sure to include their contact information as well as a reason for why you have chosen these two particular staff members. It is the responsibility of the site leaders to research and identify the two staff members that will be traveling with this group. Be sure you have communicated with the faculty or staff advisor to ensure they are willing and able to attend the trip as well as to cover the financial costs of the trip (the end of this section will discuss staff members’ travel cost more in depth). We recommend putting a lot of thought into choosing staff members as the two identified staff members will be regarded as part of the ‘total package’ of your preliminary proposal. The Alternative Breaks International Board will ultimately decide whether the two identified staff members will be allowed to go on the trip or not.

**Domestic Pre-selected Trips**
These trips are student-lead; no faculty or staff advisors will travel with the group.

**Domestic Proposed Trips**
Previously, only some domestic trips have had faculty or staff members travel with the group. However, if you are proposing a domestic trip (partnership or not), and wish to have staff members travel with the group, please include their names and departments on the preliminary proposal. If you do wish to have staff members travel with the group be sure communicated with the faculty or staff advisor to ensure they are willing and able to attend the trip as well as to cover the financial costs of the trip (the end of this section will discuss staff members’ travel cost more in depth). We recommend putting a lot of thought into choosing staff members as the two identified staff members will be regarded as part of the ‘total package’ of your preliminary proposal. The Alternative Breaks Domestic Board will ultimately decide whether the two identified staff members will be allowed to go on the trip or not.

**Partnership trips:**
Site leaders of both pre-selected and proposed partnership trips will be responsible for identifying two staff members to travel with the group. Be sure you are in contact with potential staff members early on in the planning process to ensure these staff members are able to attend the trip.

**Staff Members’ Trip Payment:**
Staff members are responsible for paying the fees associated with the particular trip they will be traveling on. Some departments may cover the travel costs of staff members and this should be the first option to be considered when determining how a staff member will pay for the trip. In particular, staff members can approach their department by explaining that the trip experience can be considered “professional development”. If the department is unwilling to offer any financial support and no other possible staff members are available to go on the trip, co-site leaders may seek help from their board mentors on how to
proceed. (Important note: the Center for Student Activities, Leadership, and Service is unable to provide any financial support to traveling staff members.)

**Center for Student Activities, Leadership & Service**
The Center for Student Activities, Leadership, and Service (CSALS) is located on the 7th floor of the Kimmel Center for University Life. The Alternative Breaks administrator and graduate student advisor work out of this office in addition to the administrators and graduate student advisors involved with the New York City branch of the NYU New York Global Service Corps. Ultimately, CSALS acts as a resource center for board members, site leaders, and participants.

**NYU New York Global Service Corps**

The NYU New York Global Service Corps encompasses all service-related programs and events run through the Center of Student Activities, Leadership, and Service. The three main programs that are a part of this structure include Project Outreach, Civic Team, and Alternative Breaks. The domestic board of the NYU Service Corps will oversee all domestic Alternative Breaks trips and the international board of the NYU Service Corps will oversee all international Alternative Breaks trips. The NYU Service Corps structure can be used as a resource by site leaders for ideas and information regarding local group service events. The NYU Service Corps represents the presence of service on the NYU campus, of which Alternative Breaks trips play an integral role.
PROPOSING AN ALTERNATIVE BREAK TRIP

Steps to Proposing an Alternative Break Trip

*Please note: At this time, proposals will only be accepted for SPRING BREAK*

Here is a brief overview of the steps involved in proposing your own Alternative Break:

- Site leaders interested in proposing an Alternative Break should research and decide on:
  - The social issue the trip will focus on
  - The host-site and trip location
- Site leaders interested in proposing an Alternative Break should find and select a co-site leader if they do not already have one. Site leaders can also request to be assigned a co-site leader by the Alternative Breaks Proposal Review Committee.
- Site leaders should complete and submit the preliminary proposal application to propose an Alternative Break trip by June 22nd 2012.
- The Proposal Review Committee evaluates all preliminary proposals and notifies site leaders of their decision by July 6th, 2012.
- Between July 6th and July 27th, site leaders with preliminary approval will work with the host site to:
  - Confirm availability for Spring Break (March 16 - 24, 2012) and secure space
  - Plan on-site logistics, including transportation, lodging, meals etc
  - Finalize trip costs
  - Organize detailed trip itinerary with daily schedule, including direct service as well as educational and cultural activities
- Site leaders with preliminary approval will work with their co-site leaders to:
  - Create a schedule for pre and post-trip meetings, each with a different learning objective
  - Decide on and plan fundraising activities/events and create payment plan for participants
  - Create a schedule of reflection activities for each day of the trip
  - Recruit faculty or staff member to travel with the group (international trips required to have two staff members!)
  - Research travel and health advisories for host site location, as well as immunizations and travel requirements if applicable
  - Finalize trip costs
- Site leaders with preliminary approval will consolidate this information and submit their full, final proposal by July 27th, 2012
- The Proposal Review Committee schedules in person/Skype interview with each site leader between July 27th and August 10th, 2012
- Site leaders with full trip approval are notified by August 10th, 2012

Selecting a Social Issue

The first, and perhaps the most important, step in planning an Alternative Break trip is selecting which social issue you would like to focus on. You can choose to work with an issue that you are passionate about and have experience with, or you can choose a social issue you may not have as much experience with but are interested in learning more about. However, keep in mind that regardless of which location and host organization you work with, it is likely that there will be an interplay of multiple social issues at hand. If you are unsure of which social issue you would like to focus on, perusing news outlets and social justice blogs/websites may serve as good resources. In addition, please see the list below for social issues that previous Alternative Breaks trips have focused on. The sky is the limit for what social issue you can choose to focus on, so do not feel restricted to these as they are simply examples!
● Poverty and Homelessness
● Public Health
● Community Development
● Disaster Relief
● Low-income Housing
● Youth and Education
● Animal Rights
● Fair Trade Impact Exploration
● Environment
● Disabilities Respite
● Women’s Empowerment
● LGBTQ Advocacy
● HIV/AIDS Education and Outreach
● Street Children and Child Workers’ Rights and Advocacy

Selecting a Host Site Organization and a Location. After you have decided on which social issue you would like to work with, the next step is deciding which organization you would like to work with and where you would like to carry out your work. One way to do this would be to first research organizations that relate to the issue you have chosen, and then to research the locations in which that particular organization serves. Although this method is preferred, if there is a particular location that you have in mind that relates to your social issue, you can research organizations that work in that particular area. However, please make sure you are choosing a location based on the social issue and not simply a location you would like to travel to!

“Broker” Organizations. One important distinction to make before moving forward is the difference between a “broker” organization and other organizations. A “broker” organization typically offers a pre-packaged trip, with some room for changes and modifications. Broker organizations usually connect you to another smaller organization through which you will perform your service. These trips are usually all inclusive, with the program fee including housing, meals, transportation and educational activities. The benefits of working with such an organization is that the organization handles the majority of the groundwork and research, however they are usually MUCH more expensive. Many organizations do not offer this type of package, and it will be your responsibility to research lodging options, nearby grocery stores and public transportation -- but at a much lower cost :)

Host Partner Status
The host partner must be a registered non-profit organization. For organizations in the US the non-profits must provide documentation of 501(c)(3) status. International non-profits must be reviewed and approved by the Center for Student Activities, Leadership, and Service.

Break Away Site Bank. An excellent place to start looking for potential host organizations to work with is the Break Away site bank. Break Away is the national organization of Alternative Breaks and consists of over 100 Chapter Schools, including NYU! The site bank features a comprehensive database of organizations that have been previously used by Alternative Breaks programs nationwide. One extremely useful aspect of this site bank is that each organization listed features a list of schools that have worked with that organization in the past. This is especially useful as it allows you to begin contacting students and staff at these schools to gather their feedback on the organization and ask about their experience with that organization. You can access the site bank by going to the Break Away website (www.alternativebreaks.com), selecting “Program Login,” and entering the following login information: Username: 200 / Password: 200b. Then simply click on “Search Site Bank” and begin browsing!

Additional International Resources:
● Global Exchange, www.globalexchange.org
● International Volunteers for Peace, www.vfp.org
● Building Bridges Coalition, www.wevolunteer.net
● NYUServiceConnect, www.nyu.edu/service-connect

In selecting a host site organization, begin by considering:
● What kind of service will you be doing? Is it relevant to your social issue?
● Is the host site a reputable, trusted organization?
● Is there a program fee? Is it expensive?
● What does the host-site provide?
● Is the organization a “broker” organization?
● Has NYU worked with this site before? Have other schools? How would they rate their experience?

Working with your Host Site. Once you have thoroughly researched multiple host site organizations, have weighed out all of your options and have decided on which one you are going to work with, it is imperative that you develop a professional and respectful relationship with the site contact as you will work closely with this person throughout the year. Who your site contact is will depend on the host site organization; many organizations have volunteer coordinators that will serve as your main contact as they are the ones that will organize your trip details, however others will not. When beginning conversations with your host site, make sure you are given the contact information for the person who is actually responsible for the planning and details of your trip, as they will have the most information. For detailed instructions on what to discuss with your host site, please go to page 14.

Identifying Staff Members

A faculty or staff member traveling with the group offers a unique perspective to group discussions and can enhance the overall experience of participants and site leaders alike. It is the responsibility of co-site leaders to identify a staff member who will be traveling with the group.

Please note: ALL international trips are required to have two staff members travel with the group. Domestic trips are not required to have staff members, but may have faculty or staff members travel with the group if site leaders wish to recruit and identify staff members for the trip.

Qualifications to be considered when identifying a staff member:
● Strong group facilitation experience and skills
● Proven commitment to social justice and community service
● Willingness to support student leadership
● Willingness to lead by example
● Knowledge of trip/issue focus preferred
● Experience in country or region preferred
● Language skills (if applicable)

When researching potential staff members to recruit for your trip, consider departments within NYU that address the social issue your trip will be focusing on. This way, the faculty member traveling with you will bring knowledge and a new perspective to the group. Reaching out via email with a short blurb about the mission of Alternative Breaks and specifically what your trip will be focusing on is a good starting point for gauging interest/feasibility of a staff member accompanying your group on the trip.

For a partnership trip, co-site leaders should identify staff members within the department you will be partnering with in order to enhance the partnership relevance to the group and to the trip experience.
If you are unable to find a faculty member within a specific department willing/able to go on the trip you may look into staff members within student affairs or within other departments that are dedicated to fighting to social injustices, but may not have worked specifically with.

When contacting staff members be sure to include:
- A short description of Alternative Breaks and its mission
- An explanation of your trip and the social issue you will be addressing
- The roles and responsibilities of staff members; be sure to include the fact that staff members will be involved with the group before, during, and after the trip
- The dates of the trip (spring break 2013 is March 16-24)

Staff Member Interviews
The chosen faculty or staff members for the trip will be considered part of the trip proposal “package”. This package includes the preliminary proposal, the two site leaders applying for the position as well as the staff members traveling with the group (if applicable). Interviews will be conducted with the staff members you have indicated on the preliminary proposal application in order to gauge their willingness to engage in the Alternative Breaks experience to ensure a successful experience for the group. (So please make sure the staff members you are communicating with are aware of this interview!) Ultimately the Alternative Breaks international or domestic board will give the final approval as to whether a designated staff member will be allowed to travel with the group.

Previous staff members who have participated on Alternative Breaks trips have included graduate student advisors, staff members, and administrators from: the Center for Student Activities, Leadership, and Service; the Student Resource Center; the Center for Multicultural Education and Programs; NYU Student Affairs Office; and other divisions of student life departments at NYU.

Please note: As mentioned in the “Roles and Responsibilities” section (page 5), staff members are ultimately responsible for covering the financial costs of the trip. The Center for Student Activities, Leadership, and Service is unable to provide any financial support to traveling staff members.

LEADING A PRE-SELECTED ALTERNATIVE BREAK TRIP

Steps to Leading a Pre-selected Alternative Break Trip

Here is a brief overview of the steps involved in applying for a pre-selected Alternative Break trip:
- Interested site leaders complete and submit the site leader application by June 18th, 2012
- Site leader applications are reviewed by either the domestic or international Alternative Breaks, depending on which type of trip the site leader has applied for
- Applicants accepted for an interview will be notified by June 22nd and a time for an interview will be arranged
- Site leader interviews take place between June 22nd and July 2nd
- The domestic and international Alternative Breaks boards review applications and interview notes to chose site leaders as well as to create site leader pairs
- Selected site leaders are notified of their acceptance by July 6th
- Between July 6th and August 9th, site leader pairs will work with a board mentor from either the domestic or international board to communicate with host organizations in order to:
  - Plan on-site logistics, including transportation, lodging, meals etc
  - Finalize trip costs
Organize detailed trip itinerary with daily schedule, including direct service as well as educational and cultural activities.

- Also between July 6th and August 9th, co-site leaders will work together to complete the Logistics Planner, involving the following responsibilities:
  - Create a schedule for pre and post-trip meetings, each with a different learning objective
  - Decide on and plan fundraising activities/events and create payment plan for participants
  - Create a schedule of reflection activities for each day of the trip
  - Research travel and health advisories for host site location, as well as immunizations and travel requirements if applicable
  - Finalize trip costs

- Site leaders will consolidate this information and submit their Logistics Planner to their board mentor by August 10th, 2012

Process Overview

The process for site leading a pre-selected trip will be different than it has been in the past in that site leaders will be more involved in the logistical planning of the trip. As can be seen in the above “Steps to Proposing an Alternative Breaks Trip” a lot of time and effort will be put in during the summertime in order to have the logistical aspects of the trip prepared before the school year begins. The Logistical Planner that site leaders will work on between July 6th and August 9th will cover all aspects of the trip from budgeting, lodging, transportation, on-site service, contact information, and creating a daily itinerary. A substantial amount of time will also be dedicated to brainstorming and planning ideas for educational, orientation, training, and fundraising efforts. Although there are only a limited number of pre-selected sites available to apply for, please take the time to consider which social issue you are most interested in addressing so as to be the most dedicated to your trip and provide the best experience for your participants. Your attitude and involvement will directly affect the experience your participants have!

PLANNING AN ALTERNATIVE BREAK TRIP

Working with Your Host Site

Whether you are proposing your own trip or leading a pre-selected trip, it is imperative that you develop a professional and respectful relationship with your site contact, as well as maintain consistent communication. Who your site contact is will depend on the host site organization; many organizations have volunteer coordinators that will serve as your main contact as they are the ones that will organize your trip details, however others will not. When beginning conversations with your host site, make sure you are given the contact information for the person who is actually responsible for the planning and details of your trip, as they will have the most pertinent information for planning the trip. The following topics are areas you will need to discuss with your site contact. All collected information will be included in either the final proposal application (proposed trips) or the Logistics Planner (pre-selected trips).

- **Service:** What kind of service will you be doing? What is the target population will you be working with? What skills or training are needed? Will the host provide an on-site orientation that covers the context of the work and any safety concerns?

- **Housing.** Will the host organization provide housing for you? How much does it cost? Does the housing include a place to shower? Is there a kitchen? How many people will be in each room? Will there be private rooms or a common sleep space? Will beds and linens be provided or will you have to bring sleeping bags? Will anyone else be staying at the housing location while you are there? Does
the housing include a large, quiet space where you can hold reflections? If not, where can you hold reflections? How far is your housing from where you will be doing service? If housing is not included, is too far, or is very expensive, can they recommend churches or hostels that might offer a safe, inexpensive place to stay as an alternative?

- **Meals.** What meals are provided? Can they provide options for vegetarians and other dietary needs? Is it possible to buy your own groceries and prepare your own meals? What are good places to eat in the area?

- **Transportation.** How will you be getting around from place to place? Is there public transportation? If you are flying, will they arrange your transportation to and from the airport?

- **Cost.** What are the program fees associated with partnering with this organization? What does this fee cover? Are there any additional fees that you need to know about?

- **Educational and Cultural Activities.** What will your daily schedule look like? When does your day begin and when does it end? Will you have time for educational and cultural activities in the evenings? Are any activities, such as educational meetings with local universities, political leaders, or other community organizations, included in the program fee? If not, can they recommend any local, inexpensive activities such as these?

- **Organization Liability Insurance.** When payments greater than $1,000 are paid to the partner organization or a contract is needed, NYU’s purchase order must be used, which is a short form contract, which as part, requires all vendors doing business with the University to be insured to protect the University from incidents and injuries or negligence by the organization of any kind. NYU’s insurance requirements are as follows:
  
a) Commercial General Liability Insurance, written on an occurrence basis in amounts of not less than US$2,000,000 per occurrence
  
b) Workers’ Compensation Insurance as required by applicable law and Employer’s Liability Insurance in an amount not less than US$1,000,000 for each accident;
  
c) Automobile Liability Insurance for a combined single limit of not less than US$1,000,000 if the organization will own, hire or lease any automobile in connection with this Licensing Agreement.

The organization must submit certificates of insurance evidencing the coverage described in (a) - (c) above, to the extent applicable, and the additional insured endorsement; such endorsement will name NYU as an additional insured and state that NYU is not to be responsible for payment of premium for such additional insured status. A sample required certificate of insurance is available at: www.nyu.edu/insurance/Minimum%20Limits.pdf

The certificate holder must be issued to:

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY
INSURANCE DEPARTMENT
838 BROADWAY - 4TH FLOOR
NEW YORK, NY 10003-4475

**Creating an Itinerary**

Whether you are proposing a trip or leading a pre-selected trip, you will be responsible for creating a detailed day-by-day itinerary for your trip. Rest assured that this task will be very easy to complete once you have had
the aforementioned conversations with your site contact; after you have collected that information you should have more than enough details to create a sufficient day-by-day itinerary. Try to view your itinerary as a constant work in progress, as things WILL change and not everything will go as planned! The day-by-day itinerary will be a great resource for the group participants to have an idea of what each day will look like but be sure to stress flexibility as this will be critical in the case that the itinerary is not followed exactly (and oftentimes this does happen!).

While creating your itinerary, please be conscious of the following:

- Each day should include an hourly schedule with exact locations and times for each activity
- Sequencing is important; if you will be taking part in educational activities that will better inform the service you are doing, be sure to schedule this earlier rather than later
- Be realistic about how long it will take your group to accomplish ordinary tasks, such as showering and eating meals, and be sure to account for this in your itinerary
- Give yourself enough time to get from one location or activity to another so that you avoid being late!
- Schedule some FUN activities as well as some free time to allow for group bonding and journaling
- You will also be responsible for creating a daily reflection schedule for each night, so as you begin create your itinerary you should also be thinking about which reflection activities would be most effective for each day. For more information on reflections, please see page 20.
- Feel free to use the sample itinerary on the next page as a guide!
## ASB - Stone Mountain, Georgia

### Saturday - Sunday March 10th – 11th, 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:00 am</td>
<td>Pick up vans from Avis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30 am</td>
<td>Group meets in front of Kimmel Center to load vans – away we go!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00 pm</td>
<td>Stop for lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30 pm</td>
<td>Arrive at Hotel Rest Stop – Best Western Raleigh North</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:00 pm</td>
<td>Clean-slate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sunday:</strong></td>
<td><strong>DAYLIGHT SAVINGS (SPRING FORWARD 1 HOUR!)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:00 am</td>
<td>Resume Driving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:00 pm</td>
<td>Check into Best Western at Stone Mountain and Unload</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:00 pm</td>
<td>Grocery Shopping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00 pm</td>
<td>Late Dinner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30 pm</td>
<td>Movie Viewing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30 pm</td>
<td>Free time / Sleep!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Monday, March 12th, 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7:00 am</td>
<td>Breakfast at Hotel (continental breakfast)/Energizer/Today’s Schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:30 am</td>
<td>Drive to International School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00 am</td>
<td>Volunteer at International School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 pm</td>
<td>Lunch (Fast Food or at the Hotel)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:15 - 5:45 pm</td>
<td>Refugee Family Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:30 – 7:30 pm</td>
<td>Oakland Cemetery Tour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00 pm</td>
<td>Dinner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:00 pm</td>
<td>Reflection about First Day and Four Corners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00 pm</td>
<td>Free Time/Sleep catch up!!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Tuesday, March 13th, 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7:15 am</td>
<td>Breakfast at Hotel (continental breakfast)/Energizer/Today’s Schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00 am</td>
<td>Drive to International School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30 am</td>
<td>Volunteer at International School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 pm</td>
<td>Lunch (Fast Food or at the Hotel)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:45 - 5:45 pm</td>
<td>Refugee Family Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:00 – 8:00 pm</td>
<td>Emory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00 pm</td>
<td>Fish Bowl Activity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Wednesday, March 14th, 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7:15 am</td>
<td>Breakfast at Hotel (continental breakfast)/Energizer/Today’s Schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00 am</td>
<td>Drive to International School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30 am</td>
<td>Volunteer at International School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 pm</td>
<td>Lunch (Fast Food or at the Hotel)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:45 - 5:45 pm</td>
<td>Refugee Family Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:30-7:30pm</td>
<td>Underground Atlanta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:00pm</td>
<td>Triggers &amp; Sad Face, Neutral Face, Happy Face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:00 pm</td>
<td>Sleep/Free Time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Creating A Budget

Although creating a budget for your Alternative Break trip may sound daunting, it is our hope that this step-by-step guide will make the process much easier. Before creating your budget, keep in mind that you are estimating the costs associated with your trip and they very likely may change. However, it is important to have a strong estimate of your total trip cost in order for you, your co-site leader and your participants to plan finances accordingly.

Before moving forward, keep the following in mind:

- Previously, **domestic** Alternative Break trips at NYU have ranged from $400-$500 per person
- Previously, **international** Alternative Breaks trips at NYU have ranged from $1000-$3000 per person
- The cheaper the cost of the trip, the BETTER!
- Please keep in mind that there will be a minimum of 12 people (2 site leaders + 10 participants) on all trips, and possibly more if you have staff members travelling with you. Therefore, all individual costs and expenses, such as airfare and program fees, need to be multiplied by 12 to calculate your total cost
- Overestimate on the most critical expenses: airfare, lodging, food, and other essential fees.
- Immunization expenses (if applicable) may be an additional participant expense. All participants are responsible for their own immunizations, however you will be responsible for alerting them about the recommended shots and medications needed as well as their fees.
- Other additional expenses may include visa fees, airport exit fees, etc.

**Site Leaders Applying for Lead Pre-Selected Trips**: Although creating a budget is not part of your Site Leader application, you will be responsible for creating a budget alongside your mentor during the summer and will be expected to submit a detailed budget in the Logistics Planner (to be worked on between July 6th and August 9th).

**Site Leaders Submitting Trip Proposals**: In your Preliminary Proposal Application, you will find a budget template to work with. Below is a breakdown of each line item to guide you through the process.

**Host Site.**

- **Program Fee**: The program fee is the cost associated with each participant to work with your host site organization. As mentioned previously, be sure to clarify what this fee does and does not include.
- **Donation**: Some host site organizations do not charge a program fee but do recommend or require a donation. Please be sure to include money for donation if one will be given.
- **Other**: Be sure to inquire whether there are additional fees associated with working with your host site organization. For example, if the host site does not provide a shower and you must pay to use a shower facility, you would include this cost here.

**Travel.**

- **Airfare**: If your trip includes airfare, you must estimate the cost of a round-trip flight to your destination. Be sure to look up flight costs for the exact dates of the trip to increase accuracy.
- **Van Rental**: If you are driving to your Alternative Break destination or will be driving when you reach there, then you must include the cost of van rentals in your budget. Keep in mind that you will need two vans, not one, as you will have at least 12 people. As we typically use Avis Car Rental to book vans, you can estimate the cost of your van rental here: [http://www.avis.com/car-rental/avisHome/home.ac](http://www.avis.com/car-rental/avisHome/home.ac)
**Gas:** If you are renting vans, you must also include the cost of gas. Since this is a little tricky to estimate, please use the following gas cost calculator to estimate the cost of gas for your trip: [GasBuddy.com/Trip_Calculator.aspx](http://gasbuddy.com/Trip_Calculator.aspx)

**Tolls:** If your driving route includes tolls, please include this cost in your budget.

**Parking:** If your host site does not provide parking and you must pay an additional parking fee, please include that cost here.

**Rail/Bus:** If you will be using public transportation, research the exact costs and multiply them by the number of times you will need to use public transportation.

**Food.**

**Food:** If food is NOT included in your program fee from the host site, allocate $8 per person, per day for food. Please note that this only applies to the days you are actually at the host site, NOT the days that you will be travelling to and from your destination.

**Lodging.**

**During travel to/from site:** If your destination takes more than 15-17 hours of driving to reach, you are required to stop overnight during your drive. To estimate this cost, locate the approximate midpoint of your driving route and research nearby hostels or hotels and multiply the hotel/motel’s per room fee by the number of rooms you will need. You must then multiply this number by 2, as you will need to stay there on the drive to the site as well as on the drive back to NYU.

**On-Site:** If lodging is NOT included in your program fee, you must look into nearby housing options. Ask your site contact to recommend nearby and affordable hotels, hostels or churches. When comparing options, keep in mind that the further away from the site you are, the higher your ground transportation fees may be in terms of gas. After you have contacted these locations and selected one, multiply the per room fee by the number of rooms you will need and the number of days you will be staying there.

**Health Insurance (International Trips Only):**

In continued efforts to ensure the safety and overall support for our Alternative Break trips traveling abroad, the Center for Student Activities, Leadership and Service requires all students traveling abroad to register with the NYU-sponsored HTH Worldwide Health Insurance Program. Enrollment into this health insurance plan must be built into the trip budget. Costs per individual is $10.60 per week $21.20 for a 7-14 day trip. Please see page XX for more information.

**Interviewing and Selecting Participants**

In the fall, site leaders—of both pre-selected and proposed trips—will work closely with their board mentor to select potential participants for their trip and then to conduct in-person interviews with each potential participant to decide whether to accept or deny them a spot on the trip. Detailed criteria for selecting and interviewing participants will be provided to site leaders during the site leader retreat.

**Fundraising**

Fundraising is an integral part of the Alternative Breaks Program at NYU. All Alternative Break trips are required to host 3 fundraisers for their group, specifically. You may also be asked to help out with larger fundraisers that support Alternative Breaks as a whole.

**Bake Sales are great, but we believe there are much better, more effective, ways of fundraising. Here are some fundraising ideas to consider:**

- Organize a Restaurant Night: Five Guys, Crepaway, etc. all offer Restaurant Nights to student groups and a portion of profits made that night will be donated to the group.
- Sell food on campus: Buy food in bulk and/or prepare a meal and resell it at a profit. Restaurants like Chipotle are great at donating food to student groups.
- Raffles: You can hold a raffle as a supplement to your regular scheduled fundraisers or as a separate event on its own. You can purchase prizes to be raffled off or visit neighborhood shops and ask for gifts as donations to the program. (Try places such as Best Buy, Starbucks, Chipotle, Burger Creations, McDonald’s, etc.)

**Fundraising Tips**

- Everyone has fundraisers in the lobby and staircase of Kimmel, so this market is very oversaturated. Know that there are many other places on campus to hold fundraisers, such as: Residence Halls, Rooms in Kimmel (not lobby or staircase), Restaurants, Silver Building, the space between Bobst Library and the Welcome Center, etc.
- Fundraisers are meant to be bonding opportunities for your group. Don’t let them become too stressful. Encourage all participants to help out in some way; you can even let your participants take the lead role in organizing them!
- Bake Sales are probably inevitable. So try to maximize on the profits you can get out of them. Bake the goods yourself to save costs. Rather than hosting your Bake Sale in the Kimmel Lobby, reach out to student clubs and organizations, and ask them if you could hold a bake sale during one of their big events. If you go this route, be sure to have your Bake Sale at multiple events, not just one. Also look into places off campus where there is the possibility of selling to non-students who may actually have cash on them and money to donate to a good cause!
- Utilize Residence Halls! There is a constant flow of students coming in and out of Residence Halls at all hours of the day and night. Contact the RHAD of the building to coordinate reserving a table in the lobby of the building. Be sure to give them advanced notice.
- Be sure that the costs of holding your fundraiser don’t outweigh the potential profits! Before agreeing on your fundraiser, outline all the costs associated with it. Then consider how many customers/donators you would like to reach and be sure to be very realistic about how much profit you intend to make.

**Reflection**

In the introduction section of this guide you will find “reflection” listed as one of the 8 components of a quality Alternative Break trip. Holding reflections with the group is a major part of the Alternative Breaks experience and ultimately helps enrich the service experience for the group. Site leaders will be responsible for holding reflection sessions during group meetings (both before and after the trip) and on each night of the Alternative Breaks trip. Reflections can be one of the most meaningful and memorable aspects of the trip if done correctly; brainstorming and planning ideas now will get the creative wheels turning as you consider new and interesting ways to engage in reflections with the group.

**Why reflect?**

- To ‘break the ice’
- To discuss the events of that day
- To process what they have learned, seen, felt, and experienced that day
- To increase awareness of social issues
- To clarify individual and group values
- To evaluate your role as a catalyst for change
- To discuss any issues or concerns with the group and working through them together
- To engage in informed discussions with the group, making sure that each participant contributes their thoughts and ideas in some way

When brainstorming and/or planning reflection activities for the group there are a number of things to consider…
Timing
Especially on the actual trip you want to designate a specific time each day that will be dedicated to reflections. Refer back to the itinerary you have made of each day to decide what time would be most feasible to hold the reflections. Be mindful of bedtimes: you don’t want to start a reflection session at midnight when the group has to be up at 6am!

Setting
It is ultimately up to the site leaders where reflections are held, but you want to make sure that all participants feel comfortable in the selected space. Quiet, secluded areas are preferable, along with spaces that allow all members of the group to be able to see one another and to be at the same level (i.e. sitting on the floor, sitting in chairs, etc). Also be aware of such things as the temperature of the space, possible distractions (cell phones, music, etc), and the possibility of non-Alternative Breakers being nearby (this may prevent someone from sharing their true feelings if an outside person might overhear it).

Ground rules
It is always a great idea to set ground rules with the group at the beginning of the trip or at the first group meeting. This way the group can create an environment in which everyone feels comfortable and willing to share their opinions, which will make for the most effective reflection sessions. Be sure all members have agreed on the set ground rules before starting the initial reflection session. Keeping the ground rules in plain sight during reflections will remind group members what the rules are and that they should be adhered to during each reflection session.

Supplies
Reflection activities can be as creative and innovative as you want! Sometimes creative ideas come with the need for supplies. If this is the case, site leaders should inform their board mentor about what specific supplies are needed so that Alternative Breaks can supply the group with the proper materials. Be sure to talk with your board mentor in advance about what supplies and materials you will need for the planned reflections to give the board mentor adequate time to accumulate these items.

Reflection Do’s and Don’ts

DO
Choose activities in which participants will feel comfortable and safe expressing themselves
Use open-ended questions (not “should the welfare system be reformed” but rather “what aspects of the welfare system would you change?”)
Ask for specifics and examples
Paraphrase and summarize (Ex: “So what you’re concerned about is who defines what’s best for these communities?”)
Acknowledge contributions
Redirect questions to the group
Be creative
Take some risks by posing provocative questions
Use a variety of activities especially those that will appeal to different learning styles

DON’T
Refute people’s ideas
Put people on the spot
Downplay thoughts or feelings
Offer solutions or act like an “expert”
Force people to speak

Reflection Ideas and Activities
*Important note: As you begin to plan reflection activities for the group, be conscious of the timing and sequencing of each session. For example, a “Hopes & Fears” activity should be planned at the beginning of the trip rather than the middle and a more personal and emotional reflection should be saved for the end of the trip when the group members are not only more comfortable with one another but have also experienced more on the trip that they can bring into their discussion.

**What, So What, Now What?**
Most of your conversations will follow the what-so-what-now-what track. Think of it as asking: What happened? So What does that mean? Now what do we do?

**What** is descriptive, asking for facts (what happened, with whom), and gets at group interaction (how did you work together?)

**So what** is a shift from descriptive to interpretive—it gets at the meaning for each participant, as well as the feelings involved, lessons learned, and the all-important why.

**Now what** is contextual: it puts the situation in a larger context, the big picture. It allows the group to apply lessons learned and insights gained into new situations, as well as set future goals and create action plans.

**Quotes**
Quotes, poems, or stories are a GREAT way to start reflections. Quotes can be found online, in books, or in the newspaper.

Some of our favorite ways to use quotes:

- Pass around a small bag, envelope or box containing slips of paper with quotes you’ve pre-selected. Ask each participant to pick a quote, think about it for a minute, and then read it out loud and share a few thoughts on how it may (or may not) apply to their experience.
- Use one quote for the whole group, either as a conversation starter or as a free-write prompt. To do this, read the quote aloud (you could post it somewhere, or give everyone a copy if you have the right supplies) and have the group spend 5-10 minutes writing a response to the quote (hopefully that applies to their experience). When done, give people a chance to read what they’ve written and respond to each other.
- If using a group journal, pre-select quotes and write them into random pages. That way, when people are contributing the group journal they have something to respond to if they choose to use them.

**Pair Share**
Have everyone find a partner. You can either ask folks to spend a minute each to tell the story of their day, a highlight and a low point, or use some of the reflection questions. You may want to think about who your pairs are: if you have 2 folks who are really close, you might want to split them up… if half the group has been at one site and the other half at another one, perhaps you want to have people who’ve been at different sites paired together. You can also follow up the first question with a second, and so forth; when you come back together as a group you can have each pair share something they learned. Be creative!

**Storytelling**
This can be done in pairs, or as a whole group. You could even take turns (one person per day)! This works well if you give a prompt, such as “tell a story about today,” a particular moment that made you feel good, a moment that made you feel not so good, a story about why you volunteer, a story about what you learned, your cultural or familial roots, about people or things that have changed you, a piece of your personal history that will help people really get to know you, a story of an important event in your life that brought you to this point, etc…… This can be really powerful if done well. Some sample guidelines (for a group storytelling session):

- Have a set amount of time for the story (5 minutes is good)
- No interruptions. People rarely get a chance to talk about themselves without judgment or advice—it can be a great gift to the speaker for people to listen with interest and attention!
● Have a time-keeper who gives a (silent) one-minute warning.

● After the story, have two people in the group volunteer to give the storyteller an affirmation (something they really like or appreciate about that person) (one minute per person). The facilitator might need to remind group members to let everyone share in giving these affirmations.

Variation: As the facilitator, start out telling the story of the day (or trip). When someone feels you’ve left something out, they can interrupt you (‘gotcha’ usually suffices) and take over. The interruptions continue until you’ve reached “the end.” (or “Fin” if you are feeling artsy.)

Group Journals & Blogs

Group journals are often passed from participant to participant or left in one spot. Writing in group journals is usually strictly voluntary and entries may be signed or unsigned, poetry or prose or visual art. At the end of your trip, we recommend making copies for everyone. Below are some journal prompts:

● 5 senses: write about what you experienced (in the 5 senses: sight, smell, touch, hear, taste) at the service site.

● 3 stages: a description of an event, an interpretation of the event, and an application to future events

● Who am I? Answer the question: Who am I at (the site, the event, etc.)?

● “Critical Incident”: describe and analyze a particular incident from your service, responding to questions like what conflicts did you face during the event?” “What are possible root causes for the societal issues you observed?”

If you have access to the internet at your site you may consider creating an online blog that can then be shared with family, friends, coworkers, and fellow classmates! This is a great way to keep people outside of your group engaged in the service you are doing and what you are learning while on the trip.

Letter to Self

This one generally works best during the first meeting you have with the group, before you go on the trip. You’ll need paper for everyone (1-2 sheets should be sufficient), and envelopes. You can provide prompts (such as, what are your hopes/fears/expectations/concerns/goals for your Alternative Break experience), or let the group write about whatever they would like. At the end, have them fold and seal their letters in envelopes, and address them. Send them out after the group returns from the trip.

The above reflection activities are just a few ideas that you may use with your group during reflection sessions. We encourage you to think of new, creative activities and/or to research additional reflection ideas in order to collect a database of reflection activities that can be used throughout the year. Browse through the database of activities you have come up with and then work each one into a schedule being mindful of the timing and sequencing of these activities as previously mentioned.

Additional Reflection Resources:


Payments

All site leaders and participants will be responsible for signing a commitment form and paying an initial non-refundable deposit. Initial deposits will be charged to your Bursar account after you submit your signed commitment form. There will be no required payments throughout the year in order to ensure that site leaders and participants can benefit as much as possible from fundraising and donations. At the end of the year, remaining balances will also be charged to your Bursar account. More detailed information on deposits and payments will be provided at the Site Leader Retreat.

**Please note: Initial deposits are non-refundable; therefore there are no refunds if you over-fundraise for your trip. Because the cost of each trip is slightly subsidized by the Center for Student Activities, Leadership & Service, funds raised in excess will go towards covering these subsidized costs.**
Health and Safety

Although there is a long history of Alternative Breaks at NYU, the ability to travel to different communities to perform service is a privilege, and with privilege comes a great deal of responsibility. There are a number of policies and procedures in place that will ensure you have a safe and fun Alternative Breaks experience. Please review the policies below as they are all mandatory! By applying to be a site leader you are agreeing to abide by these safety standards set forth by Alternative Breaks.

Essential Rules for a Safe Alternative Break Trip
• Absolutely no drugs or alcohol allowed on an AB Site. Anyone using drugs or alcohol or in possession of drugs will be sent home at their own expense.
• Site members must always travel in groups with at least one Site Leader. Always use the buddy system.
• Site Leaders must always carry the emergency procedures and emergency contact information.
• Site Leaders must always carry their first aid kit.

Driving Safety
• Drive Safely! Designated driver(s) of vehicle(s) must have a driver’s license that is valid for driving in the United States. No one unaffiliated with NYU should drive a vehicle or ride in a vehicle.
• It is essential that the terms and conditions of the rental car contacts are followed, particularly with regard to age restrictions and licensing of the drivers.
• All of your drivers should be well rested. On long trips such as this one, drivers should rotate every two hours. Another student should be awake and alert in the front seat. Driving through the night should be avoided.
• All drivers should be aware of hazardous weather conditions and predictions and be willing to change their travel plans accordingly. Student Activities requires that you check in to a hotel in the event of bad weather and unsafe driving conditions.
• No more than 7 individuals should be traveling in a single van at any time. A seatbelt must be available for each person and used at all times.
• Individuals taking prescription drugs or other medication that might impact on their ability to operate a vehicle should not drive at any time during the trip nor should they operate machinery at a work site.
• Drivers should observe common safety standards when driving. Do not drive over the speed limit. Pass on the left. Use turn signals. Don’t tailgate.
• Turn lights on at dusk or in bad weather. Use wipers when conditions dictate. Don’t pick up hitchhikers. Use caution when stopping in emergency lanes and activate emergency flashers. Stay alert. Conditions in the van should not be distracting to the drive (loud music, people and/or luggage blocking drivers sightlines, eating while driving, etc.)
• All auto accidents should be reported to the rental company, Associative Director of Student Activities (212-998-4997), and police department covering the location of the accident when they occur. If a police accident report is available, a copy should be submitted to the Associative Director of Student Activities when you return to campus and a Student Activities Incident Report Form should be completed. You will need the following info: date of the accident, time, place, type of vehicles involved, any injuries, names of drivers and occupants, and a report of how the accident occurred. For life-threatening emergencies, call 911 and then NYU Public Safety at 212-998-2222.

Alcohol/Drug Policy Violation and Protocol for Sending NYU Students Home
• When a violation of the AB Alcohol/Drug policy occurs, the NYU Site Leader(s) will contact the AB advisor. Site Leaders should document and be prepared to relay the incident/violation and inform the AB participant of the program’s intent to dismiss them from the program.
• The following steps will be taken to ensure the student receives due notification of dismissal from the program:
• Site Leaders will document the incident and meet with the student to review the violation of AB policy. Student and Site Leaders will sign and date the incident report.
• Site Leaders will contact AB advisor to review incident. AB advisor will consult with the Executive Director Student Activities. If determined that the student is to be sent home, the Site Leaders and advisor will determine the method of transporting participant back to campus. A participant found in violation must provide their own financial means (cash, check, credit card, etc.) to arrange their transportation to campus from the AB site.
• Site contacts (host agency) will be notified of the participant being dismissed from the program.
• AB advisor will follow-up with the Executive Director and will request that appropriate student disciplinary action be taken.

Health Insurance (International Trips Only)

In continued efforts to ensure the safety and overall support for our Alternative Break trips traveling abroad, the Center for Student Activities, Leadership and Service requires all students traveling abroad to register with the NYU-sponsored HTH Worldwide Health Insurance Program. Enrollment into this health insurance plan must be built into the trip budget. Costs per individual is $10.60 per week $21.20 for a 7-14 day trip.

Highlights of the NYU-sponsored HTH Worldwide Health Insurance Program are:
• 100% coverage up to the policy limits, with no deductible
• Western trained and credentialed health professionals
• Coverage for medical evacuation and repatriation
• No out-of-pocket expenses when using in-network providers
• 24/7 availability of HTH representatives, who will assist students with making appointments for medical and mental health providers and guarantee that the student will not be asked for payment at the time of service
• Online resources for students, parents and advisors.

The NYU Student Health Center will automatically enroll participants in the program. Once participants are enrolled, they will receive an email from enrollment@htheworldwide.com with information about their insurance ID number and how to register and print their ID cards.

Immunization Requirements

Please note that the HTH Worldwide insurance program listed above does not cover pre-departure immunizations. Participants are responsible for talking with your physician and visiting the Center for Disease Control website (http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/) to make informed choices of which immunizations you will need. The staff at the NYU Student Health Center Travel Medicine (www.nyu.edu/shc/medservices/allergy.immunology.travel.html) are also prepared to provide you with the latest health information and immunization services for your trip. If you plan to utilize the services at the NYU Student Health Center, it is important to schedule an appointment at least 8-12 weeks prior to your trip due to limited availability – and because many immunizations require time to take full effect. To schedule your appointment, please call the Student Health Center at 212-443-1188.

NYU Traveler

NYU requires all individuals traveling on University business to be registered with NYU Traveler. Information in NYU Traveler allows the University to quickly locate and contact you in the event of an emergency while you are traveling. The Alternative Breaks program will manage the registration of travelers in this system.
Travel Assistance Services
NYU provides a Travel Accident/Assistance Program that protect participants when encountering unexpected risks while traveling. For more information please visit:  
http://www.nyu.edu/insurance/insurance_web_site_006.htm

Calendar of Important Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 18th</td>
<td>Site leader application due</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 22nd</td>
<td>Preliminary trip proposal due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 22nd-July 2nd</td>
<td>Board members review applicants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 6th</td>
<td>Notification of approval/rejection</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 6th</td>
<td>Board members notify site leaders of their trip placement and co-site leader pair</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 6th-August 9th</td>
<td>Co-site leaders work alongside board mentor to prepare and finalize all trip details to complete Logistics Planner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 6th-July 26th</td>
<td>Co-site leaders work alongside board mentor to prepare and finalize trip details for the final trip proposal</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 27th</td>
<td>Final trip proposals due</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 10th</td>
<td>Site leaders submit Logistics Planner</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 10th</td>
<td>Notification of final approval of proposed trips</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 4th</td>
<td>First day of fall semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 23rd-24th</td>
<td>MANDATORY site leader retreat</td>
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Conclusion

Congratulations! You have successfully finished the first step in planning an awesome, life-changing, eye-opening Alternative Breaks trip! We know at this point you are at the edge of your seat, just waiting to begin planning all the details of your sure-to-be unforgettable Alternative Breaks trip. And we promise the planning will be fun! To ensure this process goes smoothly, we want to remind you again that not only will you have your board mentor to assist you, but also the Alternative Breaks domestic and international boards to help you along this exciting journey. This guide was written by the Alternative Breaks board members in an effort to give a thorough supplementation to the proposal and pre-selected site leader applications through the lens of students who have been involved in the program for several years now. But rest assured that once fall starts you will receive an even more in depth site leader manual that will go into detail of not only the 8 components of Alternative Breaks, but also all the awesome Alternative Breaks details and information we know you’re dying to learn about! We congratulate you on deciding to site lead a trip and taking a positive step forward toward becoming a social change agent. A better tomorrow starts with YOU! And that of course means that tomorrow you will be working on filling out your site leader application! We wish you the best of luck!! 😊

In service & solidarity,
NYU Alternative Breaks