Brandeis | DEPARTMENT OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Alternative Breaks

A Student Leader's Guide to Organizing a Meaningful Volunteer Trip

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Table of Contents

Trip Planning Timeline

(Adjust Timeline as Needed for Your Trip)

6 months out

- Hold first student coordinator meeting
- Attend Involvement Fair
- Meet with the Assistant Director, Community Engagement & Leadership (AD)
- Plan a meeting schedule for coordinators & book rooms.
- Create tentative budget and determine participant co-pay; coordinate additional budget requests through Waltham Group and/or Student Union as needed
- Make tentative schedule of fundraising dates
- Brainstorm potential sites
- Identify at least 1 faculty/staff advisor to attend on the trip (2 are required for international trips)

4 months out

- Finalize volunteer sites and housing; determine if CORIs are required by consulting with the AD
- Hold an info session
- Make participant applications available
- Ensure there is a Memorandum of Understanding on file between the organization and Brandeis

2 months out

- Hold participant interviews
- Select participants and waitlist participants
- Hold first meeting for trip participants
- Begin to collect deposits for participants; set payment timeline.
- Formulate a schedule for your trip with community partners.
- Finalize transportation and tickets

1 month out

- Hold second meeting with whole group
- Hold group meeting and Risk Management training, with AD
- Begin planning reflection and post-trip service activities for trip
- Create a menu & identify dietary restrictions
- Hold a final pre-trip meeting
- Contact sites for a final reconfirmation of logistics / activities
- Contact airlines/buses/vans to reconfirm reservation
- Have a pre-departure meeting with AD

During the trip

- Do individual check-ins, ongoing team-building, and reflection.

Following the trip

- Post-trip activities: students log hours, send out thank you notes, etc.
- Meet with AD; send photos/trip blurb to DSE
- Do eval. to get feedback from volunteers and community partner
- Advertise for next year's coordinator positions with application
- Hold interviews for coordinators; type up advice for next year.
- Present at ASB end of year event; Hold trip reunion/reflection
- Select final coordinator team;
- Have coordinator team for next year meet and create list of goals

Researching and Choosing a Site

Research/ Choosing Trip Sites – things to keep in mind when researching potential sites

- Determine a topic for your program for this year (Poverty, HIV/AIDS, Hunger and Homelessness, Animal Abuse and Awareness, Environment, Social Justice, Housing, GLBT etc.)
- Where is this topic most prevalent? Is there a real need for service?
- Where can you realistically travel? Is it a safe place for students?
- Are the agencies community-based, national, or international?
- What level of community interaction do the agencies provide/allow for volunteers?
- What transportation is needed? Review DSE's van policies and the University's driving expectations.
- How many people can the site(s) handle?
- Does the site offer housing?
- What about cooking or showering facilities? Does the site have gender inclusive accommodations / are they accessible?
- Does the host organization seem flexible and willing to create a program? Can they give you an itinerary?
- What type of training does the site provide for volunteers?
- What language skills are needed?

- Consider:
    - Volunteer service projects and interest to Brandeis students
    - Housing
    - Transportation
    - Access to kitchen and shower facilities
    - Level of community interaction
    - Level of community/ organizational "need"
    - Responsiveness of host site supervisor
    - Total cost; if more expensive, make sure it's a longer trip.
- When you have found a partner, share their organization name and representative contact information with the AD who can assist in setting up a Memorandum of Understanding (agreement) with the organization.

Selecting Participants

After you have confirmed the sites and publicized your trip to the student body, you are now ready to begin selecting participants. This is a rough outline to guide your process.

Info Session:

- An info session will help students to see exactly what your mission is, the site(s) that are chosen for the year, and have the opportunity to ask any questions. The info session should include as much information as possible about the trip itself, the social justice issue to be addressed, and the requirements of participants (fee, if applicable; attendance at pre-trip meeting; attendance at post-trip activities; cultural sensitivity; etc.). You should share details about the info session, as well as applications, through your club's Campus Groups page and other DSE channels. After you have the info session, you are ready to start the application process.

Next, applications:

- Make the application!
- What are you looking for in participants?
  - Some good questions are: Why do you want to participate? What previous community service experience do you have? How do you work in a group setting? Describe a time you experienced a culture other than you own – how did you handle it?
- Give participants at least two weeks to fill out and turn in the application
- Look at applications – Anonymously! (Assign each person a letter or symbol; then only look at those – black out the names after you've made a key)
- Rank applications – who you like the most, who you'd like more info from, who you'd rule out if it was up to you alone

Set up & Hold Interviews:

- Who will give the interviews?
- What if friends apply?
- Will you have an 'impartial' jury?

Select participants

- Meet all at once and make your decisions
- Do you give preference to former participants?
- Decisions are often the best without names – less biased
- Create a waitlist of participants: 3-4 for each site
- Email all applicants, whether they were accepted or not

Budget

Creating a solid budget is critical to designing a successful program. The key to making a budget is to secure your community partners as early as possible in the beginning of the year so that you can begin to plug in numbers and have an estimate of how much fundraising you will need to do. Don't be afraid to talk budget with partners if needed.

Things to consider when you finalize a budget:

- How many individuals will be participating? How long do you hope to go?
- What kind of transportation will you need? Are there group discounts?
- How much will food cost? Will you be eating out, cooking, or a combination?
- Where will you be staying overnight? Are there group discounts?
- Add a cushion of money for the trip in case of unexpected expenses
- For international trips, keep the exchange rate in mind

Financial Policies

There are two steps to budgeting:

1. **Forecasting your Budget** - You will need to forecast all your expenses ahead of time so you know the amount of money required for the trip. The total budget will depend on the number of participants, the place chosen for the alternate break and other resources needed for the break.
2. **Funding your Budget** - Once you have an approximate budget and you know how much money you need, you will have to ensure you have the required funding from different sources. There can be three different sources of funding as elaborated in section two below.

1. Forecasting your Budget

Creating a solid budget is critical to designing a successful program. The simple definition of a program budget is – a plan of the spending within a program based on the income and expenses for a period. In other words, it's an estimate of how much money a program/trip requires in terms of the expenses and once you know that, you can ensure you have enough incoming money (income) to support these expenses.

The key to making a budget is to secure your community partners as early as possible in the beginning of the year so that you can begin to plug in numbers and have an estimate of how much money you will need for the entire trip.

Things to consider while you create a budget:

- How many individuals will be participating? How long do you hope to go?
- What kind of transportation will you need? Are there group discounts?
- How much will food cost? Will you be eating out, cooking, or a combination?
- Where will you be staying overnight? Are there group discounts?
- Add a cushion of money for the trip in case of unexpected expenses
- For international trips, keep the exchange rate in mind

How to create a Budget?

If you have never created a program budget then let's work on how to create a simple budget for your program for a semester. We will be following the steps below in order to create a program budget by listing all the incomes and expenses of the program here.

- Step 1 - Always open an Excel workbook, so you can input all your incomes and expenses in a column, just like the example shown below.
- Step 2 - In the income column, list all the sources of Income for your program that you plan to use. For your program, there are only three overarching sources of income – Student Activity Fee (SAF) Approved Allocation, Gifts, and Fundraising amount.

- Step 3 - In the expense column, list all the expected expenses for your program. Make sure you make a detailed budget for each and everything you would need for the program before you finalize your program’s budget.
- Step 4 - Calculate the balance amount left for the program by subtracting total expenses from the total income. The amount left is your balance amount. In this example, the income and expenses of the club were equal, so the balance amount was $0.

Example Budget for a Program

Income Item	Income	Expenses Item	Expense Amount
SAF Approved Allocation	$ 4,500.00	Travel cost	$ 1,500.00
Gift	$ 100.00	Accommodations cost	$ 1,000.00
Fundraising	$ -	Registration cost	$ 500.00
		Misc.	$ 200.00
		Supplies	$ 300.00
		Food	$ 1,100.00
Total	$ 4,600.00		$ 4,600.00
Balance amount for June			$ 0

2. Funding for your Budget

Once you have figured out the budget needed for your program, you know the total expenses needed for the program and you can plan to apply for funding accordingly. There are a variety of ways to fund your program. At Brandeis University, programs may have access to three different sources of funding based on their affiliation to a program with a service Organization:

A. Student Activity Fee (SAF) Allocation
B. Fundraising Amount
C. Gift/ Donations

Global Brigades - Global Medical Brigades is registered and recognized as a service club on campus and they participate in the Annual Marathon to seek funding for their budget. Historically, they have had a budget of ~$15,000-$22,000 provided by the Allocations Board.
Waltham Group Service without Borders - Service Without Borders is a Waltham Group club and historically has had a budget of ~$5,000 that comes from within the larger Waltham Group budget, which is allocated by Allocations Board.

Waltham Group Habitat for Humanity - Habitat is a Waltham Group club and historically has had a budget of ~$5,000 that comes from within the larger Waltham Group budget, which is allocated by Allocations Board.

A. Student Activity Fee (SAF) Allocation - Funding through Brandeis Allocations Board

Annual Marathon

Programs get access to the Student Activity fee via Annual Marathon. An annual marathon is a process of funding that takes place every year. A marathon has a specific Start and End date, during which the clubs submit their Budget Request for the next academic year calendar. Every semester, an email is sent out to all the club leaders detailing the dates of the entire Marathon process which will include the start date and an end date for applications along the review period and final date for the results of the Marathon. Once Marathon Decisions are out, you can appeal any decisions made by the Allocations Board. The Appeals timeline will be included in the email sent out by Allocations Board. To be more likely to receive funding through the appeals process, it is highly recommended you speak with a member of the Allocations Board to determine the reasoning for the denial or partial allocation. Below are some of the several questions which are part of the application process:

- How will requests be funded if the A-Board does not fully fund them?
- How requests benefit students and the campus?
- Is the club/activity accessible to the whole student body?
- How requests serve an organization's purposes?
- How requests serve event's purposes
- Club history
- Logistics of events
- Any other pertinent questions
- Number of total members and active members
- Number of people on an organization's mailing list
- Outside funding sources
- Fundraising events done by an organization
- If it's an event, the number of students you expect to attend
- If you are planning on ticketing the event or asking participants to fund some costs through fundraising?
- Any other information an organization feels necessary for the A-Board to know

Important points about SAF funding:

- This funding expires at the end of the spring semester, meaning it will only last for 1 academic year and the deadline to use the allocated funds is usually on the last study day of the spring semester
- Annual Marathon Requests must be submitted by the date specified by the Student Union, usually late February in spring semester for the upcoming 2 semesters (academic year). Annual Marathons do not fund summer trips or winter trips.

- Please note that graduate students cannot receive Student Activity Fee as they do not pay into it.

Important Resources

In order to find out more about Annual Marathon and the process, please check out the following resources:
Allocation Board Website
Treasury Board Website
Finance Handbook - for all procedures and policies for spending the allocated money through the Student Activity Fee

B. Fundraising

A program's cost is usually higher than the allocated amount from the Student Activity Fee. Fundraising is a big part of funding and demonstrates participant's commitment before the trip! Hence, each program is encouraged to explore different fundraising possibilities to cover the remaining cost of the program. Below, we have listed some of the common ways students have fundraised for their programs in the past and have successfully generated funds for their programs. This is not an exhaustive list and you may come up with additional ideas and ways to fundraise, but please reach out to the Budget Analyst in the Department of Student Engagement to check whether your idea of fundraising is within the University financial policies. You can start with the following steps:

- Start brainstorming
    - Based on the program budget, determine how much money you need to fundraise
    - What fundraisers have or haven't worked in the past?
    - What did the participants have to say about last year's fundraisers?
    - Keep corporate donors in mind, and be creative!
    - When soliciting potential donors remind them of what you can do for them (advertise, wear their logos etc). You can get a tax exempt certificate from the Department of Procurement or contact the Budget Analyst in Student Engagement.

- Choose a fundraiser and fundraiser leader, and advertise around campus
    - Choose a lead student coordinator or team for the fundraiser
    - Flyer around campus and send out an email via listserv
    - Have participants sign up for fundraising responsibilities
    - Review fundraising guidelines in the Finance Handbook

Clubs are permitted to raise funds for their programs in various ways; some of them are listed below:

1. Participant fees - This can contribute a substantial amount to funding needs. Here are some things to keep in mind when deciding how much participant fees should be:
    - What is needed that can't be covered by club funding?
    - What is reasonable to expect students to be able to pay?
    - What will keep certain students from participating? How can we make our trips equitable and accessible to everyone?
    - What are the resources to subsidize some fees? Consider scholarships. See DSE staff to see if A-Board allocated additional funds for need-based scholarships for your specific club trip(s).
    - Determine who will be collecting the participant fees (club leaders or DSE staff). If offering scholarships, it may be best to have a Department of Student Engagement staff member track this. If a staff member is in charge of receiving funds, then all funds will be kept in a department lockbox for safe keeping. Meet with the Budget Analyst and Assistant Director of Community Engagement and Leadership to discuss your fee-collecting options and determine what is best for you and your trip.
2. Bake sales
3. Ticket sales for performances - If you are charging for tickets using Campus Groups, your revenue will automatically be deposited into your account by the end of the semester.
4. Charging other Brandeis Departments - If a department wishes to provide funding to a club, it may only do so via internal transfers (journal entries). The department must send their chart string and approval by email to the Budget Analyst in the Department of Student Engagement, for this to occur.
5. Please note that no auctions, raffles or other games of chance are permitted.

Important Points about Fundraising:

- Please Note: You may not use the Student Activity Fee funds to buy supplies or goods that are then used in a fundraiser. Since students already pay the Student Activities Fee, which is the money that A-Board allocates the clubs.
- It is illegal for clubs to purchase items using the Brandeis tax-exempt status if they intend to sell those items. Please be careful when planning your fundraising activities
- All fundraising cash and checks received by clubs must be deposited with the Student Union Treasurer. Check out the detailed processes outlined in the Finance Handbook
- You may not use personal Venmo or cash apps to receive money. For more information, check out the detailed processes outlined in the Finance Handbook
- Gifts vs. vs. Donations: Please know the difference between these terms -
    - ➔ Gifts: If there is a benefit associated with the money exchanged, it is not considered a gift.
    - ➔ Donations: If you are charging $20 to a dinner event and part of that goes to the cost of dinner and part of that is a donation, you must disclose that $10 is for dinner and $10 is for the donation.

C. Gifts and Donations

Programs may solicit donations provided the donations act in accordance with all of the policies of the Brandeis University Office of Institutional Advancement. Receiving Donations/Gifts are a great way to help fund your programs. A program may receive gifts and donations from an external organization, other people, friends, family, alumni, etc. Anyone who wants to donate can visit the Institutional Advancement website and donate to their choice of club, student organization or a specific program. Programs are encouraged to not rely on SAF funds and promote their programs to receive gifts and donations through the Institutional Advancement website. Donations to programs can be used to cover costs that Marathon funds won't cover for programming.

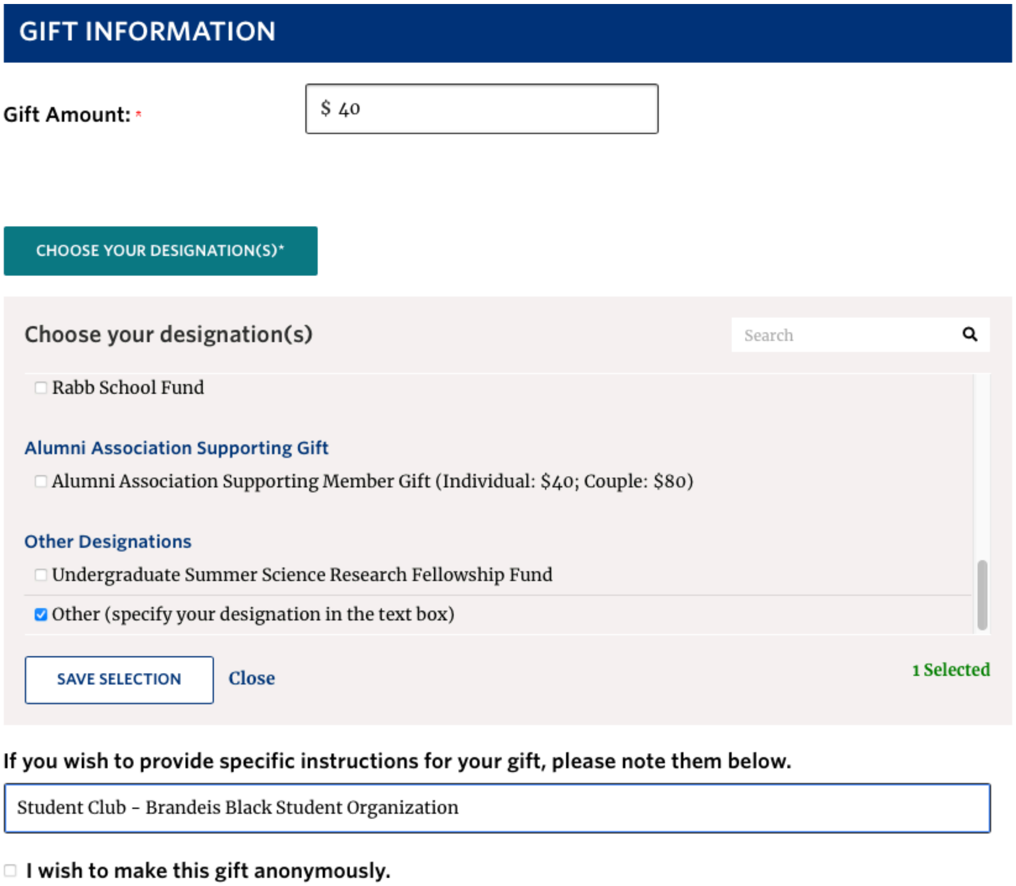
There are several different ways a donor can donate to a program and for the convenience of the donors, Brandeis offers different ways to give. In order to find more details of how to give, you can redirect your potential donors to Institutional Advancement website. Some of the popular ways to give are:

- Online at Institutional Advancement website.
- By check - Tax-exempt donation checks made out to "Brandeis University" can be given to the Budget Analyst in the Students Engagement office, or sent directly to Advancement Services (MS 124). Credit card donations can also be made online. Please be sure to include what club is receiving the donation in the memo field, as well as all information pertaining to the donor (name, address, restrictions, and postmarked envelope, if applicable)
- By Phone
- Through Wire Transfers
- Cash Wire Gifts (Including IRA Gifts)
- More ways to give can be found on the Institutional Advancement website. For any assistance with gifts and donations, please reach out to giving@brandeis.edu.

Instructions for receiving Gifts/Donation Online

Below are the instructions that need to be followed to correctly donate to your program.

1. Put the Gift Amount in the box.
2. When Choosing Designation - be sure to select others (specify your designation in the text box), which is the last option in the drop-down menu.
3. And then put your notes - please be sure to ask people to put down your program's full name in the notes section so it can be correctly tagged and then allocated to your program.
4. Please note that all the money collected via the Institutional Advancement website will go to the Program's Gift/Donation Account and not in their Fundraising account. They are 2 different pots of money.
5. Please see the screenshot below:



GIFT INFORMATION

Gift Amount: *

$ 40

CHOOSE YOUR DESIGNATION(S)*

Choose your designation(s)

Search

Rabb School Fund

Alumni Association Supporting Gift

Alumni Association Supporting Member Gift (Individual: $40; Couple: $80)

Other Designations

Undergraduate Summer Science Research Fellowship Fund

Other (specify your designation in the text box)

SAVE SELECTION

Close

1 Selected

If you wish to provide specific instructions for your gift, please note them below.

Student Club - Brandeis Black Student Organization

I wish to make this gift anonymously.

Important Points about Gifts/Donations:

- Gift donations may not be mailed to student mailboxes.
- Most gifts to Brandeis University are considered tax-exempt, as long as donors do not receive any physical or monetary benefit for their contributions, and will result in a donor receiving a form from Brandeis confirming this fact.

Making Donations to other Organizations

You may not donate to other organizations. However you may spread awareness about a cause of your choosing or an organization (not for profit) of your choosing and encourage people to directly donate to them on their fundraising platform or website.

Budget Tracking on Trip

Faculty/staff advisors may be given a university credit card to make approved allowable expenses while on the trip. This spreadsheet below will help your advisors and club treasurers keep track of expenses incurred during the trip.

Budget Tracking on Trip

Staff Advisor			
Number of Participants			
Destination			
Total Budget	$20,000.00		

Date	Expense	Receipt	Reconciled
Total	**$0.00**		

Risk Management

Risk Management is the process of identifying conditions that can cause injury or loss of assets, and then devising strategies to eliminate or control those conditions. It is a way to help ensure that you are running a safe program, to prepare in advance so that neither you nor any of your participants suffer any injury or harm while you work with them, and to avoid taking on unreasonable risks

The most useful tool in risk management is **prevention**. Try to prevent accidents. If something you are about to do seems risky or unsafe, then don't do it. If you notice a hazard when you're volunteering on site, report it or try to fix it (if safe to do so and you have the knowledge and skills to safely do so), and try to keep your volunteers safely away from it. Use your best judgment and be cautious.

Strategies to Prevent Accidents
- Select people for your trip who will be professional and who have the skills and experience to run a safe program.
- Train your participants to operate safe programs and to pay attention to potential safety issues. At the beginning of each service project or day spend at least 5 minutes to go over possible safety issues and/or ask the community partner to do so.
- Require every volunteer to go through training about operating programs that are harassment-free and culturally sensitive, provided in coordination with the AD.
- Ensure all volunteers go through a pre-departure training run by the AD, which focuses on trip expectations, safety practices, and risk management.
- Take a First Aid and CPR class. Bring sufficient first aid kits.
- Ensure volunteers are properly trained on any equipment they will be using during the trip. Trip organizers should share in advance the physical work expectations of the trip.
- Advise trip participants not to travel locally on their own and to stay in a group. It is important that participants travel in groups. No personal detours, stay together.
- Student trip organizers should always have in their possession a copy of emergency procedures, important contact information, and a first aid kit.
- Ensure Student Engagement has a copy of contact information (including emergency contacts) for all participants.
- Discuss potential risk management concerns and your plans to mitigate them with Student Engagement staff prior to trip departure.
- Trip organizers should ensure allergies and dietary restrictions are accommodated, and that trip participants have shared these needs in advance.

- Participants should be sure to stay hydrated, eat, and rest appropriately given the physical nature of these trips.
- Communicate concerns to trip leaders and faculty/staff advisor.
- Brandeis policies are in effect during the trip, even though you are not on campus. Alcohol use is discouraged. Consider the reason you are on this trip. Alcohol will not be permitted inside residences/accommodates or on-site. Respect the expectations of your community partner, trip leaders, and advisors.
- Arrange your program's activities so that you don't have to rely on cars when possible. Make drivers aware that they are liable if they have an accident while driving for your program. University insurance will only be used if the driver of a rented vehicle uses a Brandeis University credit card to rent the vehicle. All drivers of rented cars must take the Brandeis Van Training Course. Instead of driving personal vehicles, use DSE vans. Drivers who are driving a DSE van are often covered by the University in an event of an accident but are first required to go through a van driving certification.
- Ensure your advisor has all important documents, health information, and contact information on hand in case of emergency.
- Identify emergencies most common to the region and to individuals, and develop plans for these emergencies, in consultation with the AD.

Additional requirements for international trips:

- International trips must receive special written permission from the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs prior to taking place
- Additionally, all participants must
    - Provide a copy of their passport to DSE
    - Enroll in Smart Traveler Enrollment Program
    - Print and Bring a Copy of Brandeis' Travel ID Card (Zurich Travel Group Insurance) – carry this while traveling
    - Review relevant advisory information for destination country:
        - US Department of State travel advisories
        - OSAC security report
        - CDC health advisories
    - Download and use Mobile Passport Control

If an Emergency Occurs…

An emergency is any event that poses an immediate threat to, or has already endangered, the safety and well-being of those traveling abroad. This includes, but is not limited to, the following types of incidents:

- Serious accident or injury, including but not limited to loss of consciousness, broken bone(s), concussion, open wounds requiring medical attention, or other injury requiring hospitalization
- Serious illness, whether related to physical, emotional, or mental wellbeing
- Hospitalization for any reason
- Fainting, loss of consciousness or illness
- Physical assault
- Sexual assault or rape
- Robbery or mugging
- Disappearance of a student
- Local or national political crisis that could threaten the student safety/wellbeing
- Terrorist threat or attack
- Arrest or questioning by police or other local security force
- Any legal action (lawsuit, trial, etc.) involving a student
- Vehicle accident

As soon as emergency services have been notified and the situation is stable , an incident needs to be documented and reported to the Assistant Director of Community Engagement & Leadership. You should report the incident by emailing the AD with all relevant details (date, time, names of those involved, actions taken,treatment provided, if policy other authorities or medical professionals were involved, and the current status of those impacted). Follow the guidelines below, but remember that these guidelines do not replace common sense and good judgment.

- If you believe there is a health or safety risk to participants, contact emergency services:
    - Then contact your onsite Brandeis faculty/staff advisor as well as the onsite partner for immediate assistance.
    - Next contact the University Police (781-736-3333).
    - If it is a medical concern, medical insurance and/or travel insurance may need to be contacted.
    - Then contact the Assistant Director of Community Engagement & Leadership via email.
- In a non-medical emergency, contact the local police and follow procedures. Next contact the University Police (781-736-3333) to determine next steps if the

situation allows. Then contact the Assistant Director of Community Engagement & Leadership via email.

- If trip coordinators learn that a Brandeis student may have experienced discrimination, harassment, or sexual violence, they are required to share this information with the Office of Equal Opportunity and should do so as soon as possible. For resources about supporting a student who has experienced sexual assault, visit the Peer Advocacy & Resource Center (PARC) website.
- If abroad, in the event of an arrest, detention, crime victimization, disappearance, or death of one of the students, contact emergency services, University Police and the AD as soon as possible. They may advise you on additionally contacting the nearest US Embassy or Consulate. If they cannot be reached, contact the State Department's Office of American Citizens Services and Crisis Management at 1-202-501-4444.
- In the event that participants would have to be evacuated, local authorities, the US Embassy/Department of State, and/or the Department of Student Engagement would work to facilitate the safe return of participants.
- It is important that for any major risk management situation, once safety is secured, DSE should be alerted by trip leaders/advisors.

Document Checklist:

- Each group needs to:
  - Submit the DSE Travel Form
  - Submit a list of all volunteers
  - Submit a daily schedule of activities
  - Submit the Pre-Departure Form
  - Complete Emergency Contact Cards and distribute to participants, instructing them to keep in their possession for the duration of the trip; share a copy with DSE
- Each participant must:
  - Complete the Assumption of Risk & Waiver of Liability document (as well as the International Travel Addendum for international trips)
  - Complete the Emergency Contact, Medical, and Dietary Form
- Additional requirements for international trips:
- International trips must receive special written permission from the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs prior to taking place
- Additionally, all participants must
  - Provide a copy of their passport to DSE

- Enroll in Smart Traveler Enrollment Program
- Print and Bring a Copy of Brandeis' Travel ID Card (Zurich Travel Group Insurance) – carry this while traveling
- Review relevant advisory information for destination country:
  - US Department of State travel advisories
  - OSAC security report
  - CDC health advisories
- Download and use Mobile Passport Control

Other requirements may exist depending on the nature of your trip, such as CORI approvals, community partner liability waivers, etc.

Trip Roles

Trip Leaders

- Coordinating transportation, scheduling, and trip expenses/budgeting
- Liaising with the local community organization/partner organization
- Doing the necessary pre-work before the trip
    - Ground the experience in the “why” and the needs of the local community
    - Encourage participants to get to know each other
    - Review travel and trip expectations, emergency procedures, etc.
    - Ensure participants understand important information: showering, cooking and sleeping facilities, location of local grocery stores and hospitals, and plans for meals
- Trip leaders should distribute responsibilities appropriately, assigning a daily captain for certain duties, etc.
- Manage daily check-in communication to DSE

Participants/Volunteers

- Keep a copy of the provided Emergency Contact Card, your health insurance card, and passport (for international trips) on you throughout the trip
- Be familiar with the trip’s itinerary, accommodations, and schedule
- Complete required forms and follow relevant policies
- Make decisions about trip participation based on their own personal comfort levels, medical needs, etc.
- Have a plan for communicating with others via phone (personal or shared cell phone, etc.) during the trip
- Be aware that there is not as much time for study on these trips as you may think

Faculty/Staff Advisors

- Meet with student leaders and DSE prior to the trip. Be familiar with trip details and relevant university policies.
- Generally speaking, student leaders lead the trip. Student leaders may ask the advisor to help facilitate certain aspects. Exception: advisor manages emergency situations.
    - Emergencies: 911 or local emergency services; then call Public Safety

(781-736-3333) and contact DSE.
    - Non-emergencies but time-sensitive concerns: Contact DSE.
    - Non-urgent concerns: Contact DSE and submit CARE report as needed.
- Be present on site for duration of trip. Ensure student leaders take daily attendance. Create a positive learning environment by ensuring the group is respectful and inclusive. Help group leaders process at the end of each day and plan for the next day.
- Post-trip reflection opportunities with students and feedback to DSE.
- Advisors will travel with university p-card to assist with purchases during the trip.

Pre-Trip Meetings

Pre-trip meetings are extremely important to educate, train, and prepare your participants for your trip. **At the very minimum**, you should hold monthly pre-trip meetings with your group after selecting participants if able. The timeline and number of meetings can be adjusted based on how many weeks you have between the time of participant selection and leaving for the trip.

A countdown to your trip...

Team Building, Expectations, and Fundraising

Team Building
- Do at least one icebreaker/teambuilding activity. The participants are together for the first time – they should start getting to know and trust each other!
- Offer training and other pre-departure orientation experiences depending on the needs of the trip. This includes weekly meetings. Participants should get to know each other before the trip.

Be sure to go over expectations of all participants
- Mandatory meetings and trainings
- Payment of fees (if applicable)
- Important documents they will need to provide
- Cultural expectations
- Code of conduct – all participants are held to the standards of Brandeis's rights and responsibilities policies
- Support of fundraising efforts
- Attendance of post-trip reflection and service event; mention ASB Symposium.
- Registration encouraged for the Commitment to Service Award Program (CTSA) to log volunteer hours
- Identify showering, cooking and sleeping facilities, as well as local grocery stores and hospitals, and share that info with participants before the trip. The plan for meals should be shared, including dietary accommodations.

Fundraising
- Decide what fundraisers you will do and choose committees/chairs for each
- Set dates for each fundraiser

Cultural Sensitivity and Social Justice

Trip organizers should provide an overview of the local community in which students will be serving: demographics, history, culture, and resources for further research. This should include information about the local community partner, issues the trip is designed to address, and how those issues show up in this specific community. Cultural sensitivity training must be provided for all of your participants. The goal of this training is that your participants are knowledgeable and respectful about the culture they will be working in. This goes both for international trips and domestic trips! Culture does not just exist across national borders. Some things to keep in mind are:

- Religious diversity and religions practices in the region
- Income/poverty levels
- Body language norms (personal space, eye contact, physical affection, etc)
- Gender dynamics
- Importance of age/seniority

The format of this training is up to you as a coordinator, but here are some resources:

- Contact the Study Abroad Office for their support and resources
- Contact the Department of Student Engagement for their support and resources
- Check out GlobalSL's list of cultural sensitivity and privilege activities

This meeting is a great time to also discuss the social justice issue(s) that you will be learning more about during the trip. Some things to consider are:

- What social justice issue(s) will be addressed on this trip?
- What community is affected?
- What are the root causes of this issue?
- What is currently being done to address the issue?
- How will your activities address or affect the issue?
- How will your presence be important to the community? Discuss "voluntourism" and be sure participants recognize the personal reasons they are going on this trip (i.e. skills learning, cultural exposure, etc).

Risk Management

Risk management training is also **required** for your trip! Please see the section in this handbook about risk management for training. Coordinators are required to attend a Risk Management training with the Department of Student Engagement and meet with a DSE staff 1-on-1 about risk management for their specific trip. Coordinators must train their participants on this information. This meeting is also the time to have participants fill out waivers and participant information forms. Be sure to check to see if your partner site requires volunteers to fill out waivers. Also please make yourself familiar with all sexual assault reporting guidelines. Trip organizers should maintain a copy of emergency procedures and a first aid kid.

Immunizations and Packing List

Provide a suggested packing list for participants.

For international trips, participants are advised to visit the **Travel Clinic at Newton-Wellesley Hospital**, who can provide guidance based on travel destination as well as administer recommended vaccines. Many of these costs are not covered by insurance.

Final Logistics and Expectations

Before leaving for your trip, you should have one final pre-trip meeting a week or so beforehand. During this meeting you will be reminding volunteers of their responsibilities and what will be expected of them. Make sure all students tell their parents/loved ones they are going on their ASB trips and may be harder to contact (we can't tell family members where the students are unless the student lists them as emergency contact or we receive permission from the student). You should also be sure everyone is clear on the logistics of the trip and has turned in all required documentation.

Trip Logistics

Making the logistics of the trip smooth is key to making it successful! Follow these guidelines and suggestions to make your trip as smooth as possible.

1. **Brandeis University Vans**
2. **Food**
3. **Airline Transportation**
4. **Bus Transportation**
5. **Van Rentals**
6. **Lodging**
7. **Official Documents**
8. **Health Concerns**
9. **Safety and Emergency Contacts**

1. Brandeis University Vans
If you need van drivers for your trip, either to bring participants to the bus or airport, or if you are using the van as a mode of transportation, you need to make sure those van drivers are certified by the Brandeis University Department of Safety and Transportation.

Contact the Senior Department Coordinatorat the Department of Student Engagement to book a DSEvan, or to get a driver certified. Plan at least two months in advance to have a driver certified, as the certification takes time! Waltham Group vans can be taken by ASB trips within a 12-hour driving radius (ballpark of 800 miles) of Brandeis. That includes all of the East Coast, West Virginia, most of Virginia, some parts of North Carolina, some parts of Ohio, and the edge of Kentucky.

All participants should be familiar with DSE's Van Policy. Drivers must be Brandeis van certified. All vehicle occupants are required to wear a seatbelt at all times. The possession or use of alcohol and other drugs in a van is not permitted. Travel between the hours of 12am and 5am is prohibited. Please review Brandeis' General Driving Guidelines.

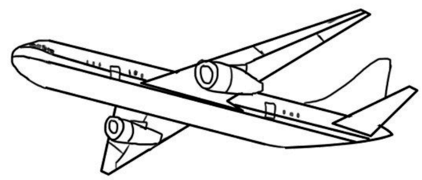
- Daylight travel: Four hours at a time.
- Nighttime travel: Three hours at a time.
- Within 15 minutes of reaching a driving limit, the driver should exit the highway to a safe rest area. The driver should take at least a 15-minute break, or another approved driver should assume driving responsibilities.

Each van has a monitoring device which immediately triggers an alert for moving violations and other safety concerns. These may be followed up on by DSE.

2. Food

Food is an important logistical factor when deciding how to pack and budgeting. Depending on where you are you might need to prepare menus and food lists for most or all of your meals. Be sure to get a clear idea of what facilities, resources, etc. your accommodation has! Please be sure to accommodate all special dietary restrictions and allergies of your group. A typical weekly budget for food for a group of about 13 people might be between $600-700. Consider whether you'll be eating out or cooking, and whether any of your volunteers have food allergies and dietary needs.

3. Airline Transportation

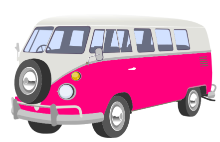


If you need to fly to your site, make sure that you make flight arrangements **ASAP**. Some of the best deals are found online, however, because online sites often do not let you book many tickets at once, you may need to make a group booking.
If you are a Waltham Group organization planning a trip, the AD has to authorize the transaction on the purchasing card to pay for the air tickets. Once the purchase has been made, ask the airline to email you a confirmation receipt of the tickets/itinerary and give copies of your bank statement and receipts to the Allocations Board to reimburse the cost of travel.

4. Bus Transportation

Greyhound and Peter Pan have traditionally been used as the primary bus companies for bus travel. You can book bus tickets online – be sure to search around a little bit for promotional codes! The best way to reach the bus is to have a van driver drop your group off at South Station so that they can board there.

5. Van Rentals



If your site requires that you have to rent a van and you do not have access to a DSE van, book a van in advance to secure a good price. In the past, Brandeis had a partnership with Enterprise, so they should be the preferred vendor (but you may want to double check this before booking). Book with a university credit card.

6. Lodging
You must have a plan for where you and your volunteers will be staying overnight, showering, and cooking. Some host organizations offer free lodging, or have deals with nearby hotels/hostels to house volunteers for a discounted price. Be sure that you book in advance, and then confirm right before leaving for your trip. It's always a good idea to have a backup plan. Make sure your lodging is accessible for those with disabilities.

7. Official Documents
For international trips, be sure that all participants have a valid passport that expires no sooner than six months after your planned return to the U.S. Consider visas as well; most countries will require a tourist visa or permit for short-term visits, but some may require volunteer visas.

8. Health Concerns

- All participants should keep a copy/photo of their health insurance card (or the physical card) with them for the duration of the trip.
- Participants with allergies should carry their epipen for the duration of the trip. Participants who are prescribed medication should be sure they have enough supply for the duration of the trip and refill in advance if necessary.
- Participants should take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing, including but not limited to being up to date with their physical exams, consulting with a doctor prior to travel if needed, and making known to DSE/advisors any conditions that might impact their ability to participate safely – before or during the trip.
- International Trips:
    - Participants are advised to visit the Travel Clinic at Newton-Wellesley Hospital, who can provide guidance based on travel destination as well as administer recommended vaccines. Many of these costs are not covered by insurance.
    - Participants should review cdc.gov/travel for health advisories associated with destinations to which students are traveling outside of the US. This information includes health risks, recommended vaccines, suggested packing lists, and other resources.
- If I am under the Brandeis student health insurance plan, am I covered for medical treatment while studying or traveling abroad? Yes. No matter where you travel as a student, you are covered under the student health insurance medical plan worldwide 24 hours a day.

9. Safety & Emergency Contacts
Before you leave on your trip it's important to create a channel of communication and have a clear understanding of it before you go. To do this, have a conversation with the AD about how and when you will check in with DSE staff once you arrive at your site and once you return safely back to the United States. Your advisor should also have a plan to connect with DSE during the trip. Coordinators should keep important documents for all volunteers, as well as contact information printed and with them at all times during their trip. Brandeis University also requires that all participants fill out a DSE Waiver form as well as a before volunteering.

The Trip!!!

So, you're all set and ready to go on your trip! Here are some extra tips and suggestions.

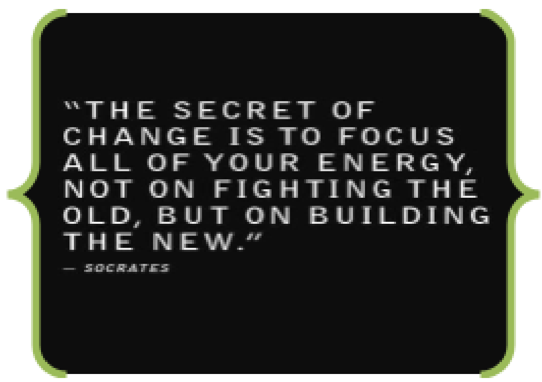
1.) **Pre-trip preparations**

Before you leave on your trip here is a checklist of things/ items to cover before you go

- ✔ Distribute a packing list to participants at least two weeks before departure
- ✔ Designate and outline key responsibilities of each coordinator and make sure those tasks are clear to leaders. Examples of this might be responsibilities for being the accountant, photographer, or leader for reflection activities
- ✔ Call your host organization a week before you leave to confirm your time of arrival and any last minute details
- ✔ Confirm your lodging arrangements a week before you leave
- ✔ Assemble a folder with important documents including: all reservation confirmations, participant information, envelopes for spending cash and receipts, contact info for the AD and the site supervisor for your community partner, and any maps or transport documents

2.) **During the trip**

- ✔ Be flexible
- ✔ Get enough rest
- ✔ Do individual check-ins to see how everyone is doing
- ✔ Be on the same page as your co-leader in front of volunteers, even when you disagree



Remember that an important element of a service-learning trip is to make sure the participants connect with the community and have powerful reflections on their service.

To create an environment that fosters that learning, you should plan for ongoing reflection activities and team building activities. You may want to have pairs of participants sign up to lead their own choice of reflection activity for the group, so that they can choose what style works best for them.

Post-trip

Congratulations! You have completed the biggest part of the program – the trip! But before you put your planning hats away there are just a few more items to cover when you get back.

Make sure you log your service hours for the trip and tell your participants to do the same. When estimating how many service hours you completed, we recommend you cap it at around 8 hours a day unless you can prove and want to appeal that you did more hours per day. Contact the AD for Community Engagement & Leadership to ask any questions as they also oversee the Commitment to Service Award program. In addition, you can count up to 15 hours of transportation and reflection per semester so your students may count some hours for that as well.

Send out Thank You's and donations

- Thank You's should go to both your donors and your volunteer sites!
- You may have already done this, but now you have a real update on what you were able to accomplish that you can write to others.
- Thank You's are best when they are personalized. Be specific about why your group is grateful, including what you learned.
- Have everyone who attended sign

Design evaluations

Design evaluations so participants can provide feedback on their experience and so next year's coordinators will be able to incorporate some learned lessons into future trips. Check out a sample evaluation. These evaluations can be sent via email or given to participants during the reunion/reflection meeting. You want to make sure that not too much time goes by in between the trip and evaluations. Remember to:

- Be fair and let people speak their mind anonymously
- Ask questions about everything! (the pre-trip meeting, the partner, the activities, the community engagement, the coordinators, the logistics, the team building and reflection activities, etc.). Make sure to include a few open-ended questions or comment boxes where participants can include comments/suggestions that are not explicitly included in the evaluation form.

Have a post-trip coordinator meeting

Organize a post-trip meeting for all the coordinators to get together to share their experiences and tie up some loose ends. At this meeting, remember to:

- Summarize the events, achievements, and challenges of your trip and if you haven't already, set up a post-trip meeting to go over these things with the AD.

- Share your stories and photos with the Department of Student Engagement and Brandeis University media. See if the Justice, Hoot or BrandeisNOW wants to do a feature on your service trip.
- Finalize the budget and if a Waltham Group organization trip, make sure to give any extra petty cash to DSE who will safely deposit the funds back into the appropriate account. Update the budget and see how much is left over for the group reunion/reflection.

Group Reunion/Reflection & ASB Symposium Prep

Check in with the Department of Student Engagement staff to see if you are required to present at an end-of-year Alternative Break symposium of some sort. If so, organize a group reunion/reflection after the service trip to prepare for the symposium as it also gives you a great opportunity to see everyone again after they have had plenty of time to think about their experience. It is up to the coordinators to choose what kind of event you want to have; it can be in the form of a casual dinner or meeting up at the Stein. Here are some items to include:

- A powerpoint or slide show from the trip
- Have people share favorite, funniest, hardest, or most unexpected moments
- An organized reflection activity that will prompt participants to think critically about their experiences, and the issues they were working to address.
- Prepare (or assign others) to create a poster for the ASB symposium; assign who will present on behalf of the group.
- Mention that you are (probably) looking for new coordinators for next year!

Present at the ASB Symposium

- Assign a trip coordinator and participants to prepare and present at this end-of-year presentation where ASB trips can share their experiences and all they learned with the rest of the Brandeis community! What the symposium may look like may vary by year as some years it could be as simple as a PowerPoint show that staff show during Celebration of Service while other years may include poster presentations to all of campus. See DSE staff for more details as the symposium draws near. This presentation is usually in conjunction with or around the same time as the Celebration of Service event in April.

Begin search for next year's coordinators and type up transition guide

If you need to fill a spot for coordinators next year, those positions should be filled before the year is over so that the coordinators can begin planning in the summer. Here are some suggestions on how to go about choosing leaders for following year:

- Decide what type of coordinator(s) your program needs – goals, background, and simple criteria
- Make an application with questions related to organizational skills, cultural sensitivity, ability to manage and work with others, dedication to the idea of service, etc.
- Make application available to the whole campus and send out an email to your program listserv
- Think about encouraging former trip participants to apply; do 1-on-1 outreach
- Hold interviews – group or individual depending on your needs and number of applicants
- Remember that actions on service trips are telling
- Choose your coordinators and send out emails to all applicants
- Type up a transition guide of best practices, advice, and notes that coordinators will want to know next year.
- Meet with coordinators at least 1x to train them and share with them any useful transition materials.