

PAMPHLET FOR STUDENTS

STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY

RISK MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES FOR COMMUNITY INTERACTION FOR STUDENTS

Introduction

Community interaction (CI) facilitates your development and learning as a professional citizen of South Africa. CI is regarded as a core academic function at Stellenbosch University (SU) together with teaching & learning and research.

As a student you have the co-responsibility to ensure your own safety by keeping to safety measures and procedures throughout your participation in CI and Service-Learning (SL). Through this aspect of the SL experience students are afforded an opportunity to better prepare themselves for the world of work where they might be required to venture into new territories.

The University places a high priority on the safety, health and fulfilment of its staff and students – on campus as well as away, such as when engaged in CI activities.

- Through its designated staff members, the University takes a pro-active stance in risk analysis and risk management, which includes issues of liability and insurance.
- Risk management forms part of good practice in CI as it creates an awareness of and commitment to providing quality service and general ethical practice in teaching and research.
- Risk management strategies and procedures should be adequately planned during programme and module development and clarified during the CI orientation of students and the implementation of programmes.
- SU commits itself to supporting staff, students and community partners with risk management strategies and insurance policies.

Definition of terms

Community Interaction is described in the broadest sense as interaction between the University and the community. This includes the concept service-learning and other academic and/or non-academic service related activities.

Community is described as the specific grouping in society with whom the interaction occurs at a given moment.

SU defines **service learning** (SL) or “community service learning” as “an educational approach involving curriculum-based, credit-bearing learning experiences in which students (a) participate in contextualised, well-structured and organised service activities aimed at addressing identified service needs in a community, and (b) reflect on the service experiences in order to gain a deeper understanding of the linkage between curriculum content and community dynamics, as well as achieve personal growth and a sense of social responsibility. It requires a collaborative partnership context that enhances mutual, reciprocal teaching and learning among all members of the partnership (lecturers and students, members of the communities and representatives of the service sector)”. The above definition serves as the basis for discussions regarding risk management matters in this document.

In order to further refine the SL risk management focus the following basic terms need to be defined: (**Risk management** is formally defined as the process whereby an organisation (HEI) establishes its risk management goals and objectives, identifies and analyses its risks, and selects and implements measures to address its risks in an organised fashion. The goal of risk management is to improve performance by acknowledging and controlling risk, which improves the HEI’s ability to avoid unpleasant surprises that can occur during the implementation of a service learning module or project. This helps the organisation (HEI) to take control of the risks that cannot be avoided.

Risks can be categorised into different types and levels (people, property, income and goodwill). The simplest definition, however, is “the possibility of loss, injury, disadvantage or destruction”.

Liability in general includes almost every type of duty, obligation, debt, responsibility, or hazard. More specifically legal liability indicates under which circumstances a person is obliged to bear the damage he or she has caused another. To found liability as a matter of course certain requirements must be met, namely the act of a person, wrongfulness, fault, harm and causation.

Liability prevention involves the systematic identification, analysis, measurement and reduction of risks. It encompasses both service learning products (e.g. poster, pamphlet, diet plan) and experiences and also includes the service or community agency. Liability could pertain, for example, to incidents such as slipping on a wet stairway or being involved in a motor vehicle accident, and in worker’s compensation cases, among others.

Agreement and **contracting** refer to an arrangement made between two or more parties whereby they signify their assent, whether in writing or otherwise, to a course of action, or to a distinct intention, that affect the parties.

Insurance involves a contractual agreement that calls for one party, in exchange for a consideration, to reimburse another party for certain specified losses

General Guidelines

All CI students are required to -

- Participate in orientation, training and ongoing supervision for the CI experience.
- Be sure to sign the attendance register for the day on which the risk management guidelines are discussed in class.
- Be punctual and responsible in completing your commitment of time and task to the service provider or community.
- Follow the appropriate dress code.

- Always identify yourself when engaging with community members in order to ensure that they know that you represent SU a student, and that they understand what the purpose of your involvement is.
- Inform a staff member or the service provider if you know you will be late or not able to make it at all – this is not only professional courtesy, but indicates your whereabouts.
- Keep all information about clients you work with confidential.
- Show respect for the supervisor, staff and clients at the placement site.
- Be aware that you serve as ambassador of goodwill and are representing your University.
- Talk to your lecturer or another appropriate staff member if you experience any problem or may become aware of safety risks at the placement site.
- Sign in at the placement site every time you are there (if required), and record your service hours on your time record form. This will not only ensure that you receive credit for the hours you have served, but will help to allocate responsibility.
- If you are uncomfortable with the placement site, you may request an alternative one. Do not just change by yourself.
- Refrain from smoking when engaged in SL activities.
- DO NOT engage in any type of business with clients for the duration of your CI.
- DO NOT give advice to clients that could have financial implications for them; always consult with your lecturer if such a temptation arises!
- Ensure that you act within the scope of the set outcomes of your CI assignment and remain within your current level of competency. If in doubt, consult your lecturer or site supervisor.
- Know that the University has **limited** insurance coverage (i.e. professional indemnity and liability coverage), which may make provision for your actions, depending on the specific circumstances, and provided that you act within the scope of your SL duties as outlined in your study guide.
- It should, however, be kept in mind that SU is not liable for any injuries and/or damages a student may suffer through his or her own doing. It is recommended that students discuss this matter with their own insurers.

Guidelines for entering an unfamiliar community site

When you embark on your community interaction activities in an unfamiliar community, you should adhere to the following guidelines, which will enhance your learning experience:

- Make an effort to know your site supervisor. Ask him or her questions about the area. Solicit his or her advice on what precautions you need to take to avoid hazardous situations.
- Familiarise yourself with the area. Get to know the location of phones, 24-hour stores, police stations, agency staff, other service agencies in the area and local businesses.
- Be familiar with the rules of the site. These rules are in place to ensure the most efficient functioning of the operation. Rules about training requirements such as background checks, confidentiality pledges or immunisations are intended to protect both you and the people with whom you are working.
- Be accessible. Provide the phone number of your service site and a schedule of your hours to a relative or friend before leaving to do community service.
- Work in pairs. Try not to be alone with clients without adequate supervision within close proximity.
- Stay informed. Stay in touch with your fellow community and/or service agency workers and keep up with incidents and issues affecting the area in which you serve.

- Trust your intuition. Sometimes the only indication you will have about impending problems is your 'gut feeling'. These feelings are enough of a signal to take precautions or simply suspend your activity, but be sure to explain them to your supervisor.
- Do what feels right. If you do not feel comfortable or safe participating in a certain activity, do not hesitate to share your feelings with your site supervisor or another appropriate person. You are not required to participate in any activity that makes you feel uncomfortable or unsafe.

Safety Guidelines

In addition to the above guidelines, also take note of the following -

- Make sure that you know who to ask for help at the University and the placement site in encountering any kind of CI problems, or when in doubt, and in case of emergency.
- Make sure that you know how to handle emergencies or where to get help on your way to or exiting from the placement site.
- Again: Visit the placement site in pairs and trios – never alone.
- When you embark on SL excursions, ensure that the lecturers always know exactly where you are. Deviations from the programme should be communicated to the staff member.
- DO NOT report to your placement site under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- DO NOT give or loan your client money or other personal belongings.
- DO NOT make promises or commitments to a client that you cannot keep.
- DO NOT tolerate or engage in a verbal exchange of a sexual or discriminatory nature or engage in behaviour that might be perceived as sexual or discriminating with a client or service provider.
- DO NOT enter into a personal relationship with a client or service provider during the SL placement.
- DO NOT wear or carry conspicuous jewellery and other expensive items. Conceal cell phones.
- Act promptly if subjected to severe medical risks or infectious diseases at the placement site.
- Should any problem arise while you are working in the community, you should immediately contact the nearest police station and enquire about the safest or recommended route to leave the area.
- Report any incidents with your lecturer and/or site supervisor as soon as possible.

Travelling and Transport

Since CI students almost always engage in off-campus activities the following arrangements for travelling and transport should be followed:

- The driver of a vehicle transporting students should have a valid driver's licence older than two years and should be over the age of 20.
- Students who transport more than 12 persons at a time are required to have a professional (endorsed) public driver's licence.
- The driver of the vehicle should check it thoroughly (fuel, brakes, tyres, spare tyre) before departing on a CI trip.

- Always maintain a positive attitude towards other road users, especially pedestrians.
- Know the route and prescribed time schedules to the placement site. Be familiar with alternative escape routes.
- Avoid high-risk crime and trouble areas en route.
- Always go to the placement site during the day.
- DO NOT travel alone in a car to the placement site.
- Keep the vehicle's doors locked whilst travelling and windows preferably closed (or slightly open). Lock and immobilise (activate the alarm system and/or gear lock) when the vehicle is parked.
- Park in well illuminated parking areas if parking indoors.
- Make sure of approved parking on the premises of the placement site.
- DO NOT leave valuables/equipment in the parked vehicle.
- Obey traffic rules at all times (don't speed and overload).
- DO NOT give a client, service provider or stranger a ride in your own or a rental vehicle.
- DO NOT drive under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol.
- Go directly to the placement site without unnecessary stops (e.g. to buy refreshments at a shop). If absolutely necessary, stop only at safe and well frequented parking areas.
- Please take refreshments along to the placement site to inhibit unscheduled travelling in the vicinity of the placement site.
- Be very cautious at unusual roadblocks and accident scenes and if flagged down by police or traffic officers, request identification without opening doors and windows.
- Be aware of risks (like hijacking) involved in travelling by road. Be as calm as possible under stressful circumstances. Try to remember particulars of the hijackers and their escape vehicle and convey these particulars to the police and contact person as soon as it is possible.
- The University has **limited** insurance coverage against claims that may arise from accidents and/or injuries during scheduled and officially approved trips to and from CI centres of community sites when a lecturer or student was the driver of a vehicle (either your own **authorised** or a rented vehicle). This means that you will be insured whether you are the passenger or the driver of such a vehicle.
- Remember that a trip in your own vehicle will only be regarded as formally approved if you have written permission to claim for such a trip and keep record of the kilometres travelled. **Take note: If you make use of your own vehicle without such permission, please ensure that your vehicle will be covered by your own insurance.**
- Please note that the University's insurance coverage does not include transport in a taxi.
- If you have a breakdown or your vehicle is involved in an accident, gather all information and call in for help (if necessary). Inform your lecturer immediately and report the accident at the nearest police station.

Communication and Emergency Numbers

Each group of students must be in possession of a cell phone. Where applicable, the following telephone numbers must be available to the students and must be stored in the cell phone:

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

ALWAYS CONTACT YOUR SUPERVISOR FIRST

CRIME RELATED AND OTHER RISK INCIDENTS:

IF THE INCIDENT IS ON CAMPUS, CONTACT USB NEXT OR IF THE SUPERVISOR CANNOT BE REACHED : 021 8082330 OR 021 808 4891

Mr L Le Roux: 021 8084963

ALL CRIME- OR MEDICAL-RELATED INCIDENTS NOT ON CAMPUS

Police, Stellenbosch : 021 809 5003, 021 809 5015, 021 809 5000

Report incidents at the nearest police station if outside Stellenbosch area

Fire Brigade : 021 808 8888

MEDICAL

Ambulance service: 021 937 0500, 021 937 0500/10177

Medi-Clinic Emergency Unit (24 hours) : 021 861 2000

Stellenbosch Hospital: 021 887 0310

Emergency services by air: contact Ambulance service

Reporting an incident for insurance purposes (via your supervisor):

Chief Officer: Finance (SU) Elisma de Lange -

(Timeframe: within 2 hours for accidents and within 24 hours in cases of theft.)

The following on-campus emergency services are available to students:

* Protection Services (as above) : 021 8082330 or 021 8084891

* Campus Health: 021 808 3496

* "If things are getting too much for me": A counsellor at SU Student Counselling and Development: 021 808 4124, **24 HOUR CRISIS SERVICE** 082 5570880

General Information SU Source: (www.sun.ac.za; rnew@sun.ac.za) – ***Where can I get help?***

Insurance (claims and insurance will vary for different contexts)

Claims for theft, damage, third party, vehicle etc

REPORT WITHIN 24 HOURS

Elizna de Lange

Assistent Rekenmeester / Assistant Accountant

Finansiële Beplanning en Batebestuur / Financial Planning and Asset Management

tel: 021 - 808 2809

faks/fax: 021 - 808 3664

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