



**Center for Community
Engagement, Learning &
Leadership**

Service, Service-Learning, and Community Engagement Guidelines¹

LSU continues to monitor the coronavirus pandemic. While the situation is fluid and we need to retain flexibility and resilience, CCELL has a few guidelines to help you plan for service experiences, service-learning classes, and various forms of community engagement in Fall 2020.

General Guidelines

In April 2020, LSU put out guidelines for internships, field placements, and co-op experiences for Spring and Summer 2020². Our Fall 2020 service guidelines draw on those university-approved standards for working with the public. We want everyone in our communities to be healthy. No matter how you navigate service, service-learning classes, or community engagement, we encourage everyone to observe CDC guidelines, including physical distancing, handwashing, and face coverings. Face-to-face (F2F) service is currently permissible for Summer and Fall 2020 if:

Conditions under which F2F service is permissible for Fall 2020:

1. CDC, state, local, and university health guidelines are observed
2. Community partners are accepting face-to-face volunteers
3. Students are comfortable volunteering face-to-face



PHOTO: Fall service opportunities might involve more outdoor or at-home work

¹ Last updated August 4, 2020

² <https://www.lsu.edu/careercenter/students/internshipguidance.php>

When deciding what to do with your course, service hours, or community-engaged scholarship, weigh the pros and cons of each option available to you. CCELL supports you making the decision that is best for you and your loved ones, your community partner and/or the populations they serve, and that preserves your ability to maintain a healthy work/life balance. In what follows, we provide suggestions and advice for how to figure out your individual course(s), degree requirements, and/or community-university relationships.

The Importance of Partnership(s)

A top priority for faculty, students, and community partners is figuring out how to sustain existing partnerships in a pandemic. LSU faculty, students, and partners were amazingly resilient in the face of COVID-19 when the stay-at-home order went into effect this spring. [To see some of their stories, click here.](#)



PHOTO: In Spring 2020, Kothar Abdelghani, a Biological Engineering major at LSU created an opportunity for young Muslim women to connect through service to combat social isolation

With the uncertainty we face for Fall 2020, however, the work may not be easy. Faculty have [basic guidelines for fall teaching preparation](#) and a wealth of resources for high-quality teaching approaches³ from LSU, but are still getting clarity on what their fall teaching experiences will look like (eg. physically distant; hybrid; hylflex; or online). Community partners are navigating

³ For example, [professional development courses are available through LSU Online](#); LSU Online has provided a one-page [summary of terms critical to remote and blended instruction](#); and the [Faculty Technology Center](#) is available for individual assistance at ftc@lsu.edu.

statewide re-opening phases, but no one can know what fall will look like. We anticipate students will be challenged to find service hours and service-learning classes and that engaged scholars may have had to put their research on hold for a while and/or figure out how to move forward.

The common thread here is we are all facing planning challenges. A first, and critical step, in the process is to communicate with your partners about what the challenges are. It is likely you have already done this. You may know your faculty partner cannot teach their class this fall. You may know your community partner is excited to welcome back a smaller number of volunteers with safety protocols in place. Or you may know your existing partnership or engaged research has to be paused because the pandemic continues to disrupt face-to-face interaction.

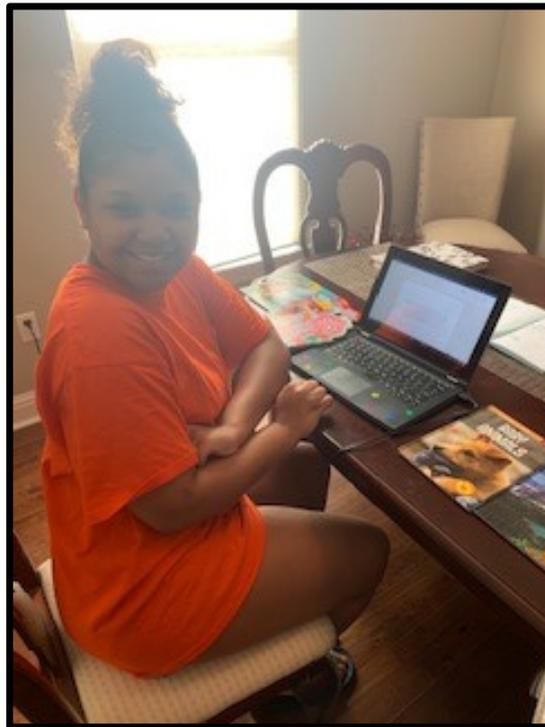


PHOTO: In Spring 2020, some Psychology students worked with a temporary community partner and completed meaningful service safely from home, making read-alouds for children out of school due to the pandemic

In this context, you may be looking for a new partnership. As a community partner, you might have lost your faculty collaborator temporarily and want to pair up with another class for fall. As a student, you may be looking for a new place to volunteer because your former agency is still in remote mode. If you are faculty and your community partner cannot take on volunteers in a way that fits with your class needs, you might be looking for a new (maybe temporary) solution. We are here to help you figure that out.

Regardless of the situation you are in, going through the steps below should help you plan for fall in a way that is as simple as possible, while also reflecting the core values that drive your dedication to community engagement.

Fall Planning Guidelines

Step 1: Sustaining or Changing an Existing Partnership



PHOTO: Can your work with an existing partner be moved outdoors or shifted to at-home projects for a semester? That kind of temporary adjustment might be the simplest route for everyone, if available.

- If/when possible, existing partnerships should be sustained. If you have not already, reach out to your community partner to see how they are doing. If you are a community partner who has not heard from your faculty partner or regular student volunteer(s), check in with them. Together, evaluate whether/not your partnership can be sustained for fall.
- Consider remote or e-service options. Due to the threat of unanticipated disruption and the reality that not all community partners and students can safely engage in face-to-face service for Fall 2020, the easiest route might be to temporarily adopt a remote model.
 - [Click here](#) for “best practices” re: online service and/ or online S-L classes
 - [Click here](#) for “best practices” for remote service work as an individual student
 - [Click here to email CCELL](#) if you have interest in joining our working group for engaged scholars whose community-based research is temporarily disrupted
- Plan for face-to-face service, but also its potential disruption. For community partners who are currently taking in-person volunteers and want to in fall, it might be most beneficial to plan for that in advance, but to have a backup plan in place for students who have health concerns and/or for everyone, should virus rates spike again and lead to another period of physical distancing measures. Our [“best practices” document](#) provides advice on how to plan a hybrid service model in advance.

If your needs are met after Step 1, you can stop here. If they are not, consider Step 2.

Step 2: Creating a New (Maybe Temporary) Partnership

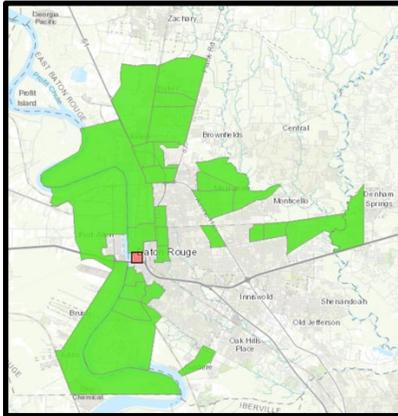


PHOTO: Map of Baton Rouge food deserts. There are many local, regional, and global issues students can work on from home for a semester, with the right (temporary) community partner. Research, reports, and other deliverables are well-suited for a one-time or short-term partnership.

- Create a new (temporary/not) partnership. If you need a new partnership, you face the challenge of being back in “square one,” so to speak: cultivating a new relationship based on mutuality. We encourage faculty, students, and community-partners to consider remote or e-service options first, since they are the easiest to sustain across the variety of scenarios we might find ourselves in for Fall 2020.
- Explore your social networks. You may have local, national, or international organizations in your existing social networks you could tap into. The benefit to this approach is some of the relationship-building processes involved in developing a new partnership might already be done. For example, trust could already exist if you are recommended to the faculty member or community organization by a mutual friend.
- Consider remote or e-service options. Choosing a new (temporary/not) partner who can accept e-service protects everyone best against the threat of unanticipated disruption and the reality that not all community partners and students can safely engage in face-to-face service for Fall 2020.
 - [Click here](#) for “best practices” ideas re: online service and/ or online S-L classes
 - [Click here](#) for “best practices” for remote service work as an individual student
 - [Click here to email CCELL](#) if you have interest in joining our working group for engaged scholars whose community-based research is temporarily disrupted
- Explore our list of e-service opportunities. [Click here](#) to see the list of e-service opportunities we are cultivating on an ongoing basis. If you know of an opportunity that can be added to the list, please email us at ccell@lsu.edu to get it added ASAP.

If your needs are met after Step 2, you can stop here. If they are not, contact us (ccell@lsu.edu) to schedule an individual Zoom consultation on navigating your concerns and planning for fall.