TASK FORCE REPORT:
GUIDELINES TO FACILITATE STUDENT FIELD ACTIVITIES

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SECTION ONE:
PREPARING FOR THE FIELD

As an urban university, DePaul University's mission emphasizes the importance of fostering connections and engagement with diverse social groups and communities located in the greater Chicago area. In this way, the work of education – in its broadest sense – is informed by the cultural and professional resources of these diverse communities. At the same time, DePaul extends its resources beyond the university walls to provide educational and public service programs, leadership in various professions, the performing arts, and civic endeavors, as well as work with community groups engaged in various projects for autonomy, sustainability and empowerment.

As much as university-community relationships are beneficial to a liberal arts education, strong collaborations are as desirable as they are rare. DePaul's location in Chicago, as the third largest city in the United States, allows faculty, staff and students numerous opportunities to understand how theoretical frameworks about various aspects of human life – from biological, ecological, cultural, historical, aesthetic and philosophical angles – inform and generate praxis. Course-based individual and group projects, participatory and academic research, internships and experiential learning programs all offer many opportunities to situate academic orientations to any topic in the material aspects of social life in Chicago.

DePaul's nationally ranked service-learning initiative encourages and provides a model for integrating community-based work into the various discipline-based curricula, and has inspired many students to make lifelong commitment to civic engagement and social justice. These initiatives, registered in the more than 45 specialized centers and institutes around the university, certainly complement the university's explicit focus of educating young people from groups historically marginalized and underrepresented in U.S. universities.

Through these varied experiences, students are able to recognize and gain some insight into how various forms of knowledge work together in daily life. Such understandings are useful for solving short-term issues, as well as generating interest among students in both posing and preparing to answer larger questions with long-term consequences after they leave DePaul.

While students are the focal beneficiaries of field activities, faculty and staff play a significant role in identifying, facilitating and realizing these micro aspects of university-community relationships. The growth and interest in community-based learning at DePaul over the past several years suggests the need for a shift in the university's approach to this aspect of its mission. That is, our current approaches to field activities tend to be a highly idiosyncratic and varied process depending on the faculty or staff member providing the learning opportunity, but we need to move to a more cohesive, internally consistent and streamlined approach.

Based on a review of faculty practices regarding field activities, and the various issues and conflicts which have emerged from these varied relationships with community-based groups and agencies, this manual attempts to address some core issues and concerns regarding this form of participatory education in a systematic way.

The manual offers a practical approach to engaging in field-based activities outside of the university environs. Developed by an interdisciplinary team of faculty and staff who have been involved in various field activities, a set of guidelines for best practices are provided about how to work and engage with diverse communities in the Chicago area.

Along with raising some of the questions that faculty may wish to ask themselves *prior* to committing themselves to community-based learning, the manual also highlights some key areas regarding syllabi, evaluation of student performance, conduct, safety and liability, and relationships with community groups.

As such, the following DePaul personnel can benefit from this manual:

- All faculty (regardless of rank, length of tenure, age, gender or personality) teaching or considering courses that incorporate any field activity including
    - Internships
    - Visits to community sites
    - Experiential learning
    - Service learning and
    - Research activities
- Staff involved in the facilitation of any field activity and in supervising or coordinating events related to student participation.

Preparing for the 'Field': Or, What Am I Getting Myself Into?

That community engagement is a central component to DePaul's mission is not a mandate in and of itself for *every* faculty to develop a community-based learning module. Nor is it expected that faculty require students to participate in field activities, such as delivering a tutorial program, collecting and testing samples of paint from neighborhood sites, and helping to organize town meetings. Whether you are a first-year faculty, the longtime administrative assistant to a department where students are always doing some kind of "fieldwork", or a tenured faculty member who needs to add some excitement to his/her teaching load, you will find that much of the work of community-based learning projects happens prior to the beginning of the course. This manual is designed to assist you, regardless of your level of experience or expertise, in attaining a high-quality unique field experience for both you and the students involved.

However brief the field activity that you have designed, do consider it an extension of your professional identity. At any given moment in the academic year, many faculty, staff and students at DePaul are involved in some form of community-based learning. And, chances are, you might not be the first person to select the community site that you are going to work with. Here are some general reminders which will be explored in more depth in subsequent sections:

1. Now that you have decided that you really want to do a field activity, it is highly recommended that you discuss the activity and all that it entails (that you know of, anyway) with the chair of your department/program. Often, they will say "sure, go right ahead, good for you." However, it is important to take this opportunity to discuss the additional kinds of work involved in making such a course possible, as well as to solicit recommendations or references to other programs, sources of

support (student assistants, equipment etc.) and persons to consult to make the project flow smoothly, and be a productive endeavor for you.

2. The importance of professional and courteous conduct. Both faculty and students are representing the university in their various relationships and interactions within community settings.

3. While the focus tends to be on one's own project – and dealing with its various components – it is important to bear in mind that our courses do not operate in a vacuum. Each field activity – whether a success or a failure or somewhere in between – does affect future projects. To the extent necessary, faculty and staff should be aware of how their decisions related to their individual courses might put future programs at risk.

4. Community settings are not "laboratories" in the way often described by various disciplines and university administration. They do not belong to us, and we don't have free reign because of our university affiliation. Instead, communities consist of the homes, businesses, schools, churches, workplaces, bingo halls, parks, and streetscapes etc. which are inhabited by people with real needs, desires, hopes, dreams and promises. When designing courses with field activities, faculty should think very carefully about how communities will benefit in a tangible way, and to build that into the learning module.

5. Careful consideration should be given to how the project can unfold with ***negligible*** responsibility assigned to community members for making it happen. That is, no field activity should place undue burden on the agencies which have consented to work with university courses. Rather, faculty and staff should take responsibility for managing any and all risks related to the activity.

6. The beauty of field activities is that they are replete with the idiosyncrasies and high drama of everyday life. That, after all, is a large part of the reason we choose to having our students do these projects. But, with the excitement of bridging the theoretical with a more dynamic, engaged and practice-based knowledge comes the uncomfortable situations, clash of personalities, passionate yet dangerous acts of good intention, medical emergencies, and meltdowns associated with human interaction. Faculty should build multiple forums into the course design to address the issues that students might/will/do encounter in the field experience. Opportunities for meaningful self-reflection are a critical aspect of any field activity. It is within this venue – rather than the final paper at the end of the quarter - that students express their fears and idealism, make sense of their experiences and those of community members they interact with, and solve their own problems. Most importantly, it is the site where students can take steps to moving beyond the limitations of their personal biographies to recognizing the broader historical and ecological contexts that link them to community members live.

7. Field activities are not substitute sites for the classroom; they are extensions of the classroom. As such, faculty members do not relinquish responsibility of/for the students while they are in community settings. Nor are students completely

subjected to the authority of field supervisors. Instead, faculty and staff need to inform students about their responsibilities in the field – in terms of conduct, decision making, and being aware of the difference between discomfort and feeling unsafe.

8. In designing the course, think about it in relation to the rest of your workload. Carefully choose the quarter that you wish to incorporate this field activity, based on the rest of your workload and what you want students to accomplish in that time. Field activities take up considerable amounts of administrative time, e.g., monitoring students' performance; site visits; meeting with students; arbitration; meeting with site supervisors; evaluating student work; making lists of things to do the next time around.

9. Become familiar with the federal, disciplinary and institutional policies/codes of conduct which govern interactions between university and non-university persons, especially around knowledge exchange or research. DePaul's Institutional Review Board (IRB) is one place to seek such guidance.

10. Remind yourself about why you are doing this in the first place.

Frequently Asked Questions

Below are some Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) which will be addressed throughout this manual including:

1. **What can I ask my students to do without getting sued or harming anyone?** [Go to Section Five: Student Behavioral Responsibilities and Conduct]

2. **Are there safety requirements/concerns that I should consider in developing an experiential/community-based course module?** [Go to Section Six: Safety Guidelines]

3. **Are there resource persons or aficionados at DePaul who I really should consult before and during this course?** [Go to Section Seven: Useful Resources]

4. **Where can I find examples of courses, syllabi, projects, student papers, etc. that are relevant to my academic discipline and my course?** [Go to Section Seven: Useful Resources]

5. **Who is going to help me find appropriate sites?** [Go to Section Two: Selecting Sites]

6. **What happens if I select my own site because I don't like any of the ones recommended to me?** [Go to Section Two: Selecting Sites]

7. **What exactly is the reward (besides being a good citizen) for requiring students to engage in field activities?** [Go to Section One: Preparing for the field]

8. **How do I monitor students' field activities?** [Go to Section Four: Monitoring Student Performance]

9. **What if students refuse to participate?** [Go to Section Five: Student Behavioral Responsibilities and Conduct]

10. **What if there is an emergency while students are engaging in a field activity?** [Go to Section Eight: Emergency Responses]

SECTION TWO:
SELECTING SITES FOR FIELD ACTIVITIES

Some general questions apply when considering sites:

1. Does the site contribute to the fulfillment of learning objectives set for the course?
2. Do any conflicts of interest, ethical or legal issues preclude the use of the site?
3. Can the site be utilized in such a way that students are reasonably safe from physical harm or injury?
4. Does presence or use of the site present other danger or risks to students or faculty?
5. Can procedures be established to respond to any risk or injury that occurs?
6. If the site is an organization, are they openly and willingly collaborating with the faculty and/or students?
7. If the site is an organization, what does the organization gain from collaboration with faculty and students? What are the potential disadvantages for the organization?
8. What is the potential for long-term sustainable collaboration with the site?
9. If you are working with a site, do they have an emergency evacuation plan?

The type of site that one selects will vary based on course structure, objectives and discipline. There are five broad and sometimes overlapping categories types of sites:

1. Service learning/community-based research sites. For this category, refer to the well developed policies and practices of the Steans Center (http://cbsl.depaul.edu/). Note that some community-based research may also involve field activities within any of the types of sites below (2 through 5).

2. Internship placements. For this category, refer to the policies and practices of the various internship offices and programs on campus.

3. International sites. All courses that involve international travel/research must be organized through the Study Abroad Program. Faculty considering international course work for their students should consult with Study Abroad (http://studyabroad.depaul.edu/).

4. Local area public and semi-public research/observation sites. These are sites wherein students' presence is not channeled through formal relationships with persons/organizations associated with the site. These sites vary from street corners, parks, cafes, shopping malls, playgrounds, sports stadiums, to corner stores and supermarkets.

5. Remote field sites. Examples include sites such as forest preserves, parks and marine sites used by students and faculty in the environmental sciences, geography and archaeology.

   To provide some context, most environmental science majors conduct research in collaboration with a faculty member at one of the faculty member's research sites. These sites can be anything from the urban forest in Lincoln Park, to forest

preserves, wetlands and prairies in Chicagoland. After serving a sort of 'apprenticeship' (or indentured servitude!) with the faculty member, the student and faculty mentor develop a senior thesis project at that particular site. The student is given full intellectual ownership of his/her project. Part of the requirement is that they have to form a thesis committee, write a research proposal, and present it in some way to the committee. The selection of the site by a faculty member is often made based on the nature of the research questions being asked – with considerably less attention given to other factors, such as safety.

Guidelines/Best Practices for Selecting Sites

1. *Group size*. Will students be conducting the field activity alone, with a partner or in groups?

2. *Group composition*. Will students visit/attend sites with or without a faculty or staff member? Will students generally visit/attend without faculty but be joined by faculty for a site visit at one or several points during the project?

3. *Responsibility for site selection*. Will students suggest sites of their own choosing, select from a list of sites prepared by the instructor, or be assigned specific sites? Do sites need the approval of faculty?

4. *Frequency and timing of site visits*. How often, when and for how long will students be on site? Can times be reconfigured to avoid risks associated with time of day/week?

5. *Coaching students in the selection of sites*. When students are asked to suggest and select their own sites, can they be educated about the criteria for selecting a site? Many research methods text books include discussions on the selection of research sites. Such a reading appropriate to the discipline and project can frame discussion of guidelines for site selection. If no such reading exists, can a handout be prepared with guidelines and criteria for site selection? (See attached example from ANT 201)

6. *Flexibility*. Is the site the best one in terms of fulfilling the learning goal of the field activity AND insuring access and safety? If a site is great for addressing a particular research question but poses some safety issues, then the researcher should look for another site that is safer while at the same time allowing him/her the opportunity to conduct high quality research

7. *Knowledge of the site*
   a. Who owns or manages the site?
   b. Do you have permission to use the site for the field activity?
      - Is there a permitting process?
      - Is a written permit required?
   c. Is there a site manager or local contact person/representative?
      - This would be a person whom we could call in case of emergency

d. Know directions to the site:
    - Major roads
    - Latitude and longitude of site
    - Distance from police and fire stations

8. *Site safety*
    e. Should each student be required to fill out a medical report and emergency information form? To be kept on file in your department's office and/or van?
    f. Each student receives a laminated card with phone numbers of contact persons at DePaul (department, Public Safety Office), site manager, area roadside assistance, etc.
    g. Students should go to site in groups. If traveling alone, student MUST notify the instructor of their travel plans, their intended destination, and how long they plan to be at the site.
    h. Each student should have a cell phone. If they do not own one, then perhaps the instructor can provide one.
    i. First aid kit, water, snacks

9. *Appropriate Field Dress/Gear*
    j. Field gear must be appropriate for the particular site and should include:
        - Breathable long sleeve shirt and pants to ward off bugs
        - Hat
        - Sunscreen
        - Shoes (typically boots)
        - Note: you would not believe what some students wear to the field!

10. *Other Issues*
    a. Overnight stays at field sites
        - Faculty and students housed in same or proximal facility whenever possible. Be sensitive to making appropriate accommodations for students.
        - Alcohol policy?
        - First-aid and life-saving training?
            - Should members of a research team be trained in CPR and/or basic first aid techniques?
            - What to do if a member of a research team experiences:
                - Diabetic shock
                - Seizures
                - Heart stoppage?

        - Provision of faculty cell phones.
        - Laminated card with emergency contact information, including contacts local to the site and contacts on campus.
        - Emergency calling tree organized through DePaul Public Safety.
        - Calling tree arranged within group traveling together.
        - Vaccination?

SECTION THREE:
CONSTRUCTING SYLLABI

Courses requiring student field activity should include information in the following areas. Please note that these are simply suggestions, but providing information in the areas specified below will provide greater consistency across differing curricular contexts.

1. Course status and the type of field activity
    a. Service learning/community-based research
    b. Internship
    c. Field based assignment structure
    d. International
    e. Other_____

2. The number of hours required
    a. The number of hours required.
    b. How the hours will be documented.
    c. When the documentation is due.
    d. An attached form that could be used to document student hours of participation.

3. Placement information and supervision (arranging a site for the student)
    a. Steans Center
    b. Faculty Member
    c. Student Initiative
    d. Clarification of who will arrange the placement
    e. Description of how the placement will be monitored

4. Rationale for the required activity
    a. Description of course objectives
    b. Relationship between course objectives and required activities.
    c. How the required activity will build upon or reinforce information provided in the classroom
    d. Why the activity is essential or relevant to the exploration of course content
    e. How the field activity will influence the learning that occurs in the course

5. Pedagogical suggestions (adapted from junior year experiential learning syllabus requirements.) Classroom discussion and reflection that:
    a. Applies concepts from readings and lecture to an analysis of the activity or experience.
    b. Provides opportunity for students to reflect upon the impact of the activity or experience on their understanding of course materials.
    c. Explores how would "new understandings" influenced by the activity or experience outside of the classroom influence the student in future decision making or problem solving situations.

6. Writing assignments that:
    a. Create linkages between concepts from readings and lectures and the student's experience outside of the classroom.
    b. Explore how student perception of course content is influenced by the experience or activity outside of the classroom.
    c. Examine how the activity or experience outside of the classroom might inform future decision making or problem solving situations.

7. Safety guidelines
    a. Safety guidelines for students to follow while in the field could be incorporated into the syllabus.
    b. Guidelines should be adapted to provide specific advice for particular kinds of placements.
    c. Important for students to follow safety guidelines; cannot compromise safety.
    d. Sample safety guidelines are contained in Section Six: Safety Guidelines

8. Objectification

    a. A well-constructed syllabus and course plan includes dedicated times/class sessions in which the instructor engages students in critical reflection on the variety of stereotypes and preconceptions often affixed to the communities in question. Critical discussion ideally occurs both before and after the students engage in their field activities. One particularly important issue for critical discussion involves the potential for field activities to "backfire" wherein the activity itself reinforces, deepens, and/or perpetuates the very stereotype(s) the instructor had hoped the activity would dispel, challenge, or undermine.

    b. Additionally, instructors would do well to sustain a critical dialogue with students about the risk of "objectifying" communities (and their inhabitants) where field activities occur. With too little guidance and critical reflection on this issue students may end up romanticizing, glorifying, and/or objectifying the people and themes the course emphasizes. Proper guidance through critical analyses will help students avoid the all-too-common pitfall of treating communities as "specimens under glass" and/or reducing communities and residents to their "problems" (e.g., students doing field research on drug addiction, without critical guidance, may end up reducing substance abusers to their addictions thereby failing to appreciate the complexity of human life).

9. Human Subjects Protection

    a. Regardless of the nature of the field activity, high-quality instruction involves the use of online resources concerning the protection of human subjects. Whether the field activity is a field trip, site visit, research study, internship, or service learning experience, every instructor and his/her students would be well-served by dialogue centered on the history of human subject ethics

(including violations of ethical conduct) and on techniques for protecting subjects from undue harm. Instructors might want to consider visiting DePaul University's Institutional Review Board website (http://research.depaul.edu/) and either requiring students to participate in the recommended online human subject protection tutorial (http://cme.cancer.gov/clinicaltrials/learning/humanparticipant-protections.asp?action=register) and/or assist students in critically navigating, discussing, and learning from the material contained in this online certification program.

The syllabus could also include links to useful resource information for students.

SECTION FOUR:
MONITORING STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Guidelines for Courses that Incorporate a Field Activity with a Community Partner

1. Prior to the course, be clear with the site representative about the tasks students will be performing on site. Periodically check with the representative throughout the quarter to determine whether the tasks have changed. Confirm this with students.

2. Deliver a copy of the course syllabi, internship, or field requirements to any external partner organizations. Let the organization know that you will be asking them to evaluate students' work at some point(s) during the quarter.

3. If relevant, discuss the best way for you and the site supervisor to keep in contact and maintain open communication regarding students' progress.

4. If possible, visit the field site multiple times during the quarter. Be sure to call the site supervisor in advance to let him/her know you are coming. Following are questions that can be asked of the external partner:

    a. Have all students begun their work?
    b. Have there been any problems with tardiness or absenteeism?
    c. What tasks/work have the students been doing? Are they the same as they were at the beginning of the quarter? (e.g., Is this work fulfilling clients' needs?)
    d. Has any of the contact information or personnel at the organization changed?
    e. Is the site supervisor satisfied with the quality of the work being done or is there room for improvement?
    f. Have there been any difficulties with supervising the students? From your interaction with the site supervisor, does (s)he seem overwhelmed with the students or have they been taxing the organization's energy?
    g. Ask whether there is anything you can do to support the site supervisor.
    h. Do they have any complaints or suggestions for improvement?
    i. What is there evaluation of the students' performance at this point in the quarter? Do they seem engaged and committed, lax and unconcerned, or something in between?
    j. How well are students supervised by the site supervisor?

5. Before the quarter ends, assess how things went and look ahead to the upcoming quarter.

    a. Deliver a Program Evaluation Form and wait while the site supervisor fills it out.
    b. Discuss how things went over the past quarter. Encourage the supervisor to be frank so that any problems can be addressed.

c. Consider the quality of the communication between you and the site supervisor over the course of the quarter. What worked? How might it be improved?
d. Is the site supervisor satisfied with the way problems were managed during the quarter? What improvements might be necessary?
e. Discuss the work students did during the quarter. Was it beneficial? How? Why?
f. Does the site supervisor believes (s)he received the appropriate level of support from you as an instructor or DePaul staff supervisor?

Guidelines for Courses with No External Partner

1. When sites are selected by faculty/students verify the appropriateness of the site (refer to Section Two: Site Selection)

2. If appropriate, inform personnel at the site about the planned research and ascertain whether any personnel at the site could assist in monitoring the student work

3. Provide mid-term and final evaluation opportunities for students to evaluate their experience at the research site

4. Assignments as Assessment/Monitoring:
   a. Provide students with a clear list and schedule of tasks and/or deliverables.
   b. Frequent short assignments rather than one large final paper may allow you to more effectively monitor the students' progress at the site.
   c. Read assignments quickly enough to notice any problems arising in the work on site
   d. Return assignments quickly enough to allow students to implement the feedback in their on-going work at the site
   e. Design assignments and assessment tools that ask students to explicitly discuss or integrate their experience at the site
   f. Provide reflection opportunities as well as the analytically/disciplinary-based exercises

5. Periodic Conversations to Monitor Work on Site:
   a. Discuss the work with students in regularly scheduled meetings. These could take place in class, small groups or meetings with individual faculty.
   b. If appropriate, schedule a site visit with the students. This can take the form of a informal presentation of the work to the faculty member or a consultation with a more experienced researcher wherein the faculty suggests ways of proceeding in the work
   c. If site visits are not possible, consider asking the students to phone in occasionally from the site to discuss their activities that day. Pair or group students and ask them to schedule peer site visits to provide feedback on the work being conducted at the site.
   d. Provide reflection opportunities as well as the analytically/disciplinary-based exercises

SECTION FIVE:
STUDENT BEHAVIORAL RESPONSIBILITIES AND CONDUCT

While participating in any field activity (on-campus or off-campus), as a student of DePaul University, the student agrees to abide by the policies and procedures as outlined in the DePaul University Student Handbook (http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/handbook) and also agrees to abide by any policies and procedures established by the course or program through which the field experience is offered. The student also acknowledges the professor's or program director's responsibility to establish the policies, procedures, guidelines, and expectations. Finally, the student agrees to observe standards of conduct that will not compromise DePaul University and/or the department or program through which the field activity is offered.

Responsibilities and Conduct of Students in the Field

1. As appropriate for the site, the student is to:

a. view all field experiences and work activities as a learning experience
b. expect to step outside of his/her comfort zone
c. understand, conform to and respect the professional standards of the site
d. be sensitive and respectful of ethical considerations at the site
e. keep information private and confidential; no gossiping
f. behave in a professional manner in terms of language and appearance
g. be aware of how his/her behavior might be perceived
h. manifest good work habits, including
   - punctuality
   - no absenteeism
   - complete assignments thoroughly and on time
   - recognize that assigned tasks are not optional
   - respond to inquiries
   - take direction
   - demonstrate initiative and motivation
   - interact respectfully and cooperatively
i. be responsible for all his/her actions
j. manage his/her own risks
k. disclose any uncomfortable situation to the professor/program director
l. maintain responsibility for his/her own workload and your own safety; if the student ever feels anxious, worried, or frightened of an upcoming or planned field activity, it is his/her responsibility to talk things over with the instructor, the instructor's department chairperson, or the Dean of Students
m. related to the above point, if the field activity involves working in a group, the student should make sure that he/she pulls his/her own weight without compensating for other members' failure to pull their own weight
n. never put pressure on any of your fellow group members to carry out field activities in violation of the safety guidelines or any other protocol governing the course's field activities

o. engage in critical reflection on preconceptions and stereotypes he/she may hold in relation to the communities (and their residents) within which the field activities take place and discuss these with the instructor as soon as possible
p. avoid allowing his/her preconceptions and/or stereotypes to lead him/her down the path of glorifying, romanticizing, objectifying, or treating as "specimens under glass" the people who occupy the communities in which the field activities occur

2. These guidelines should be included in the syllabus and should be discussed in class.

For additional guidelines for students (e.g., travel safety), please refer to the Steans Center's Community Conduct and Safety Tips.

SECTION SIX:
SAFETY GUIDELINES

Obviously, an important consideration when designing and facilitating any field activity is ensuring that students have been given sufficient information about how to be safe in the environment in which they will be participating and working. While student safety can never be 100% guaranteed, it is the responsibility of the faculty and staff who design and implement field activities to take serious and deliberate efforts to provide students with sufficient *information and training* so that they have the tools to be reasonably safe while traveling to and participating in field activities. Although safety guidelines will necessarily be tailored to fit the particular structure, educational goals, and other aspects of any field activity, below are some basic tips related to safety guidelines for field activities.

1. Empowering Students To Take Responsibility For Their Own Safety. While *telling* students about the various safety guidelines and protocols that are relevant to a particular field activity is an important first step in any effort to ensure student safety, *students should be empowered to take responsibility for their own safety at all times*. It should be clearly communicated to students that, regardless of the articulated safety guidelines, they should always be alert to the changing circumstances in any field activity, and should always be conscious of adjusting their behavior—and responding appropriately—in accordance with these changing circumstances. Students must be told that they should feel comfortable to speak to their instructor if they feel *at any time* as though they are not safe in connection with the field activities in which they are participating. Indeed, it would be beneficial to offer students regularly scheduled and structured in-class opportunities to provide this feedback to the instructor, and each other.

2. Incorporating Safety Training Into the Curriculum. One of the most frequently asked questions is: "When is the right time to talk about safety?" Talking about safety too early can lead to a situation in which safety—rather than other important topics like educational goals or skills to be learned—can dominate the class or conversation. Talking about safety too late can lead to a situation in which safety feels like an "afterthought" (or the student attention-span has simply run out). In the end, the best practice is that *a discussion of safety should be incorporated into all regular training sessions*. Safety can, and should, be an integral part of a student's training for field activities. Issues such as how different safety measures relate to curricular goals, or how the safety measures are necessarily dictated (at least in part) by the work that will be done during the field activity, can provide an appropriate bridge between basic safety issues and more pedagogical topics.

3. Keeping Track of Students. While some field activities are designed to be performed as a group with an instructor present, the vast majority of field activities are independent activities conducted by students alone or in small groups. *It is imperative that instructors develop, communicate, and enforce a system for keeping track of when each student will be participating in any field activities that do not involve instructor supervision.* In the case of some field activities, such as regularly scheduled internships and community-based service learning, this system could be as simple as keeping student schedules on file.

In the case of small-group "in the field," these systems might need to be more complex or individualized. Below are some examples that can be used to keep track of students, as appropriate:

a. If possible, require students to travel in groups (or at least with a "buddy").
b. Require students to submit their schedule for field activities in advance.
c. Require students to keep and regularly submit attendance logs and/or time sheets.
d. Require students to send an email to the instructor before they leave to participate in a field activity, and to send another email when they return.

4. Travel Safety *(if applicable)*. Depending on the field activity, students may need to be informed about how to travel safely to the activity. This aspect of safety training is all the more important in situations where students will be traveling long distances, where students will be traveling using public transportation, or where students will be traveling to the field activity without an instructor (either in a group or alone). While travel guidelines will obviously need to be adapted to each field activity, some general considerations include:
    a. Do students have adequate directions to get to the activity site in the safest manner possible?
    b. Have students been educated about ideal/appropriate travel times?
    c. Have students been trained about any unique aspects of the method of transportation?
    d. If possible and appropriate, have the students been encouraged to travel in pairs or groups?
    e. Do students know what to do/who to contact if they get lost?
    f. Has travel safety been communicated in a non-judgmental manner? *This is particularly important when students are traveling to areas that may be perceived as "unsafe." It is important to convey that students need to be safe without creating an unnecessary (and perhaps counterproductive) stigma.*
    g. See the Steans Center's Community Conduct and Safety Tips in "Resources."

5. On-Site Safety. Even more than with guidelines for travel safety, guidelines for on-site safety also need to be uniquely tailored to each particular field activity in which students will be participating. Without a doubt, students who will be working as a group on deforestation project in rural Illinois with their instructor present will receive a very different set of safety guidelines than a student who will be independently traveling to a North Lawndale community center each week to participate in a service learning project. Nonetheless, there are some common safety themes and topics that are applicable to a wide-variety of field activities. Below is a list of potential safety issues about which to consider formulating guidelines, as appropriate:
    a. Have students been properly trained (from a practical and a pedagogical standpoint) to perform the work they will be performing as part of the field activity?
    b. How can students better ensure their own safety by respecting the norms of the site/community? This could include dress, language, behavior, etc.
    c. What is the appropriate level of student interaction with other participants at the site? Are there any rules or norms that should guide these interactions?

d. Do students know what to do if they encounter problems while on-site?
e. Will students be receiving any on-site training from a supervisor, community partner, etc.?
f. Do students know what to do in the case of an emergency? (See Section Eight: Emergency Responses)
g. If you are working with a site, does the site have an emergency evacuation procedure?

6. Document Training. Once students have been informed/trained about safety issues relevant to the particular field activity, their participation in the training should be recorded, and ideally, their full understanding of the substance of the training should be validated. Some ideas for documenting and validating training, include:
    a. Giving a short "pop quiz" on safety guidelines
    b. Requiring a journal entry or other written project related to safety guidelines
    c. Designing another in-class or other participatory activity regarding the safety guidelines
    d. Developing an assignment in which students write their own safety guidelines
    e. Having students sign an acknowledgement that they have received, reviewed, *and will comply with* the safety guidelines

SECTION SEVEN:
USEFUL RESOURCES

1. Steans Center (http://cbsl.depaul.edu/)
    a. Community Conduct and Safety Tips.

2. Office of Research Protections: Institutional Review Board (http://research.depaul.edu/)

3. Study Abroad Office (http://studyabroad.depaul.edu/)

4. Legal Counsel
    a. Marla Swartz – Associate General Counsel, 55 East Jackson, 22nd floor, 312/362-6372; mswartz1@depaul.edu

5. Faculty and Staff
    a. Natalie Bennett – Women's and Gender Studies - nbennet1@depaul.edu
    b. Bro. Mark Elder – Art - melder@depaul.edu
    c. Roberta Garner – Sociology – rgarner@depaul.edu
    d. Troy Harden – Social Work – tharden@depaul.edu
    e. Jim Montgomery – Environmental Science – jmontgom@depaul.edu
    f. Sharon Nagy – Study Abroad & Anthropology - snagy@depaul.edu
    g. Karen Roloff – Communication – kroloff@depaul.edu
    h. Howard Rosing – Steans Center – hrosing@depaul.edu
    i. Bernadette Sanchez – Psychology – bsanchez@depaul.edu
    j. Greg Scott – Sociology – gscott@depaul.edu
    k. Marla Swartz – General Counsel – mswartz1@depaul.edu

SECTION EIGHT:
EMERGENCY RESPONSES

An emergency is best described as simply the absence of safety. Emergencies threaten the immediate safety or well-being of a student, instructor, or (if appropriate) other participants in the field activity. Depending on the field activity, an emergency could be as simple as a van getting a flat tire on the way to engage in service learning on the West Side of Chicago, or as catastrophic as a student or instructor being seriously injured in a fall while conducting plant experiments on a nature trek in the Amazon. Emergencies can impact whole groups of students, a single student participating in a group field activity, or a single student engaging in an field activity on his or her own. No matter how much training and caution goes into planning field activities, emergencies are bound to occur. This is, at least to some extent, out of our control. *However, the degree to which we are prepared to respond to emergencies is within our control.* Although emergency responses—and how those responses are communicated and executed—will necessarily have to be tailored to fit the particular structure, educational goals, and other aspects of any field activity, below are some basic tips related to handling emergencies that occur during field activities.

1. Successfully Establishing an Emergency Protocol. Emergency protocols are only effective if they are disseminated to those individuals who will be implementing the protocols. Moreover, emergency protocols are only effective if those individuals who will need to implement them have received sufficient training. The vast majority of field activities are conducted without the immediate presence of an instructor. The means that, in most circumstances, students themselves need to know the required and appropriate protocols for responding to a variety of emergencies, and need to be adequately trained in how to assess when and how to implement those protocols. As with training and education about safety guidelines, training and education about emergency responses can—and should—be worked into the curricular goals related to an field activity. In most circumstances, *emergency protocols should be distributed, in writing, to all students* who will be participating in field activities (particularly those who will be participating in field activities that do not involve an instructor being on-site). Additionally, students should receive *adequate training as to when and how to implement these protocols*. As with safety guidelines that are communicated to students, students' participation in emergency response training should be *documented*, and ideally, their full understanding of the substance of the training should be validated via a curricular activity.

2. Elements of an Emergency Protocol. Obviously, emergency protocols will necessarily differ substantially based on the type of field activity to which the protocol applies. Nonetheless, there are some common elements that should be considered, and as appropriate, included in any emergency protocol:
    a. *Triggers*. Under the circumstances particular to the field activity, what is an "emergency"? In other words, when should these protocols be initiated? And conversely, what are the circumstances in which it would *not* be appropriate to execute the protocol?
    b. *Chain of Command*. Who will be responsible for making key decisions? What is the contingency plan if that person is unable to make decisions?

c. Immediate Response. What needs to be done right away to secure the safety of everyone impacted by the emergency?
d. *Immediate Communications*. Who needs to be notified of the incident immediately? On-site supervisors? Police? A chain of communication should also include immediate calls to individuals at DePaul who are not physically present at the field activity (for example—an instructor or other staff professional who is not present, Public Safety, etc.).
e. *Later Communications*. Who needs to be notified of the incident secondarily? Has the Chair of the sponsoring department been contacted? The Dean? If appropriate, have Student Affairs professionals (for example, the Dean of Students) been involved in the conversation? Does contact need to be made with the Office of the General Counsel or Public Relations?
f. *Documentation*. Have the individuals who are responsible for carrying out the emergency protocol sufficiently documented their actions? *Documentation of emergency responses is absolutely essential to protect the university from liability.*
g. *Plan B*. What is the back-up plan? An emergency is just that…emergent. As indicated above, an emergency protocol should always have alternative back-up plans. The biggest downfall of any emergency protocol is hinging the entire protocol on the activities of any single individual.

3. Supporting Students in the Wake of an Emergency**.** All too often, emergency response protocols end once an immediate danger has passed. This shortcoming can result in a situation where a student who has experienced an emergency feels abandoned soon after immediate needs and urgencies have been addressed, or where students who have tangentially experienced or been witness to an emergency situation are not adequately supported. A good emergency response is an ongoing process that must, as appropriate, takes into account the more long-term needs of several different constituencies, as appropriate:
    a. Have resources for on-going support been offered to the students who are directly impacted?
    b. Have other indirectly impacted students (classmates, roommates, etc.) been provided with any necessary and appropriate supports?
    c. Has sufficient logistical support been provided to other students? Have personnel gaps been filled? Have decisions been made as to whether related or similar field activities may proceed?
    d. Have instructors who are impacted by the situation been provided with any necessary and appropriate supports?
    e. Can the situation be a teaching moment? Is there an appropriate and sensitive way to incorporate reflections on the incident in a classroom or other curricular experience?
    f. Are gossip and speculation being controlled with frankly conveyed information to the necessary and appropriate individuals?