Frequently Asked Questions (and answers!)
Community Service Partners

How do I become a Community Partner Site?
Contact the Community Service program to talk about your interest. The staff will determine if an additional meeting should be made with the director of the Community Service. The deadline to be considered as a partner site is August 1st for the fall semester, April 1st for the summer session, and December 1st for the spring semester.

What exactly is the Community Service requirement?
- Wittenberg students pick one semester before they graduate to register for Community Service 100 (CMSV 100), the course students take to complete the service requirement.
- Students complete 27 hours of service and 3 hours of reflection in the semester they register for CMSV 100.
- All students will be asked to complete at least 20 of their 27 hours at one site.
- The course follows all add/drop deadlines as determined by the Registrar’s Office.
- Students are to turn in a Placement Confirmation form (for 20+ hour service site) by the end of the 5th week of the semester.
- Students turn in a self-evaluation and reflection essay at the end of the semester.
- Service sites verify and submit a service log and site evaluation for each student completing 20 or more service hours with their organization.
- There is no cost to register for CMSV 100 since the course is 0-credit.
- Students must complete all requirements within the semester or lose earned hours, and they must begin again in a future semester.

How many hours do CMSV 100 students complete during the semester?
CMSV 100 students will be required to complete 27 hours during the semester and they must compete 20 of their 27 hours at one-site. Most students will complete all 27 with one site. However, it is possible that students will complete 7 hours or less for you. These students need a Special Project Log verified by you. If your program requires that students need to be on-site for more than that amount, you should not change the expectations to fit the students.

Will students stay beyond one semester?
As you know, students’ schedules and commitments change from semester to semester. While juggling classes, part-time or full-time work, and other activities, students tend to make decisions based solely on time and how they manage that time. Know that having the expectation that students stay beyond a semester may not be realistic, but you can help create a culture that makes students want to stay longer. Provide a meaningful and rewarding experience, let students know that their work is valued, appreciated, and critical in fulfilling your agency’s mission and stress the value of continuity.

How many students will serve with us for the semester?
First, it is very important that you consider the number of students you can support each semester, knowing what they will need to do to complete their requirement. Students are then given a list of pre-determined sites to choose from and they select the best site for them. Most students take location, time and scheduling, organization mission, and their own personal experience or passion into consideration.

When can I expect students to start?
If you refer to the calendar provided to you by the Community Service program, you can note when semesters begin and end. Students are expected to contact a site within the first few weeks of the semester, and Placement Confirmations are due the 5th week of the semester. It is not uncommon for students each semester to wait much longer to begin their service. If you receive a call from one of these students, do not feel obligated to fulfill their request. You can take them late in the semester if it works for your site. You are not required to accept late students just because they seem anxious about fulfilling their requirement.
What if students don’t show up, stop coming, or don’t complete their hours?

It is possible that some students will not follow through with their commitment to your organization. In the event that students say they are going to show up and don’t, or if they stop coming all together after coming a few times, the first thing to do is contact the student directly and ask what happened. In most cases the situation can be resolved at this step. If you are unsuccessful at reaching them or they do not return your calls, please contact the Community Service program staff. We are here to help you work most effectively and successfully with students. Even if you only want to report the issue, and not necessarily have the students return, it is important for us to keep track of these situations as they occur.

Are there events for me to attend?

1. In late July/early August we ask that you attend a mandatory meeting, where you can meet and talk about issues relating to the partnership with the Community Service program and get/provide updates.
2. At the beginning of fall and spring semester we host a Service Fair/Orientation which is attended by students who are registered for CMSV 100.
3. Throughout the year we host the Community Partner Development Series- a variety of educational sessions that allow you to grow professionally and personally, to meet faculty and staff at the university, and to network with other partner sites.
4. In addition, we invite you to special events; you will receive that information directly through emails, direct mail, or phone calls.

Can I get a group of students for a one-time event at my site?

While the Community Service program doesn’t specialize in one-time group projects, we are happy to try and connect you with student organizations or other members of our university community. Contact our office or go to our website to fill out the Project Request form, which asks for particular information about your event that we use in soliciting help for you.

Who from Wittenberg University might have an interest in connecting with you?

CMSV 100 Students:

• The majority of students who will be asking to do service at your site are connected to CMSV 100.
• These students are doing service for completion of their 27-hour requirement.

Student Coordinators or Community Engagement Scholars:

• Coordinators work with the Community Service program. As part of their job, they are required to do a minimum of 20 hours of service per semester.
• Community Engagement Scholars need to complete 20 hours of service a semester to maintain their scholarship.

Student Organizations/Groups

• A student organization/group may want to do service together as a team-building activity and to expand their knowledge of the Springfield community. They may want to do a one-time activity or establish an on-going partnership with you.

Service Learning courses/Community-based research:

• A student may need to perform a service as part of a class requirement or a professor might want to create a service experience to enhance the learning of a course. The requirements are unique for each professor and the specialized class. In addition, a student also has the option to add one-credit to any class at Wittenberg by completing service and then doing additional work for the class on their service experience. Professors are often willing to take on or are looking for research opportunities. The research could be part of a course or matched to an individual student or small group of students. Contact Warren Copeland, Faculty Director in the Hagen Center, wcopeland@wittenberg.edu, for more information.

50/50 Employment Program:

• The 50/50 Employment Program offers students the opportunity to work in the local community with non-profits, schools, businesses and many other types of settings. The employer pays 50% of the hourly wage. Contact the Hagen Center, 937-327-7523, for more information.

Career Services/Internships:

• An internship is a structured, often credit-bearing, work experience in a professional work setting during which the student applies and acquires knowledge and skills. It involves the application of learned skills in a setting, agency or organization related to the department that coordinates the internship. Contact the Director of Career Services, careers@wittenberg.edu, for more information.

WittCAM:

• The Wittenberg Center for Applied Management, better known as WittCAM, offers alternative classes to upper level students who are focused in management. WittCAM provides students with the opportunity to act as business consultants for non-profits organizations. Contact- wittcam@wittenberg.edu or 937-327-7902 for more information.

Adapted from Frequently Asked Questions, Career and Community Learning Center at the College of Liberal Arts University of Minnesota.