

Resources/Guidance on Navigating Logistical Issues related to Community-Based Learning Activities

Transportation Options

There are a variety of options available for students to access CBL sites in the Greater Scranton area. Some sites are within walking distance. Students can choose to drive their own vehicle, ride with classmates, use an Uber (or other taxi service), or use the free COLTS bus transportation (students must show their Royal Card), which we recommend as an important teachable moment/experience for students to be able to better understand challenges that low-income residents with limited transportation options might face. In other cases, transportation may be provided by faculty or staff (either their own vehicle or a rented vehicle/van) or through the Center for Service and Social Justice van. For additional information, visit: <http://www.scranton.edu/ministries/center-service-social-justice/transportation.shtml>. For details on whether transportation waivers are required see below.

Transportation Waivers

*Transportation for CBL classes where the community engagement is mandated as part of the course: Waivers **not** required*

In the case of an academic course where the community-based learning activity is mandated (when students enrolled in the course engage in the activities because of course requirements/not as a voluntary activity), the University does *not* need a waiver for transportation to and from an off-site location as the activity is covered under the University's general insurance. Students can drive in their own vehicles and/or faculty can opt to drive students in their own vehicle. Some exceptions apply in the following cases: where the CBL activity goes beyond the requirement of the course or are undertaken prior to or after the academic semester in which the course occurred. Faculty are encouraged to place on their syllabus this statement regarding CBL:

“Community-Based learning is a mandatory requirement of this course. For any travel to a CBL site associated with this activity, you can choose to drive your own vehicle (in which case your insurance should be current), use COLTS buses, or a ride may be requested (per availability) through the Center for Service and Social Justice van. In other cases, I, the faculty member, may arrange transportation.”

*Transportation for CBL course-related activities where it is not a requirement, i.e. offered as a voluntary or extra credit option in connection with the course, or as one choice among different co-curricular activities: Waivers **required***

In the case of an academic course where the community-based learning activity is not mandated as part of the course/course assignment (is a voluntary or extra-credit activity), the University does require that students sign a waiver for transportation to and from an off-site location. Students can drive in their own vehicles and/or faculty can opt to drive students in their own vehicle – in either case, with a waiver in place and signed prior to the activity. Contact Laura Carroll (laura.carroll@scranton.edu) in the Office of the General Counsel ideally two weeks prior to the activity for a sample waiver and to create a waiver specific to your activity.

Activities involving Minors

See the University's minors on campus policy (<http://www.scranton.edu/hr/compliance-corner/index.shtml>) for more information about programming involving minors, e.g. it does not apply for programs where minors are on campus under the supervision of a parent, guardian, or other authorized adult. Also, if you are conducting an activity with children that may involve some risk (e.g. play, involving animals, etc.) contact the Office of General Counsel for a waiver. It is important to register all programs involving unaccompanied minors, organized by a University staff or faculty member with the Office of Human Resources. The registration form can be completed electronically and must be done prior to the start of the program.

For information or questions regarding programming and the minors on campus policy, contact Melissa Abda (Melissa.abda@scranton.edu) in the Office of Human Resources.

Clearances

Background checks, including Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance, Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Record Check, and FBI Criminal Background Check, are required for work with minors in an on-campus setting if the activity falls under the minors on campus policy (see above) and in an off-campus setting, such as a school, if the activity is on-going (not one-time or periodic) or the community agency otherwise requires them. Check with your community partner about their policies and requirements. In some cases, some and not all clearances are required, and students qualify for reduced fees.

For information on how to obtain employee clearances (or student clearances paid by the University), contact Melissa Abda in the Office of Human Resources. The Center for Service and Social Justice is available to students needing assistance with obtaining clearances, either in person at their office in The DeNaples Center or by visiting the website: <http://www.scranton.edu/ministries/center-service-social-justice/clearances.shtml>.

This guidance (last updated June 2022) is subject to continual review and revision by The University of Scranton Office of Community Based Learning and General Counsel.