NJIT Albert Dorman Honors College
Community Service Guidelines

**Effective Fall 2015**

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I. Purpose of Community Service

Community service is an integral part of students’ learning experiences and offers meaningful opportunities for students to engage with individuals of their communities on a deeper level and understand the true concept of giving back. One of ADHC’s missions is to prepare leaders that are dedicated to the improvement of society. Encouraging students to become proactive members of not only the NJIT community, but also the surrounding Newark community, is an important component of nurturing a healthy and abundant relationship. Community involvement incites personal growth, builds camaraderie, encourages civic engagement, and offers insight into the challenges our communities face. Developing a deeper understanding of the workings and infrastructure of our communities is the first step in making a difference. This is a difference each and every member of the ADHC community is capable of making.
II. Basic Requirements

Effective fall 2015\(^1\), the Honors College requires 15+15 hours of community service per semester in order to maintain good standing with ADHC and be certified for graduation. Community Service is defined as unpaid work which is meaningful and done toward the benefit of others without expectation of repayment whether monetary or otherwise. The intent of this requirement is that Honors students make an impact, however large or small, on the community in which they are volunteering their time. The main requirement of community service is summarized below:

1) A total minimum of required service hours is 15+15 hours per semester as follows:
   - A minimum of 15 hours of community service within the NJIT Campus (internal)\(^2\)
   - A minimum of 15 hours of off-campus service at a non-profit organization (external)\(^3\),

2) Submitted hours should have the organization supervisor’s contact information listed appropriately. Organization supervisors hold the right to not approve hours which are completed in an unsatisfactory manner. The Honors College will contact supervisors for feedback on service outcomes.

III. How to Obtain Community Service Hours

The Honors College will occasionally maintain, update and publish a list of approved community partners in Newark and beyond with their respective community service areas (e.g., helping the homeless, cleanup and rebuilding, mentoring, tutoring, helping the elderly). Students should contact the Honors College if they have any questions about the suitability of a specific activity to the service requirements herein specified.

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\(^1\) For the incoming freshman class of 2019, and incoming accelerated students. Current sophomores, juniors, and seniors (classes prior to 2019) have the option to pursue either the old 15-hour requirement, or the new 15+15 requirement. An email will be sent out at the beginning of each semester with instructions on how to “opt out” of the new requirement. Note that you will be held to the updated policy unless you complete the “opt out” procedure.

\(^2\) This is similar to the NJIT service that students are currently completing.

\(^3\) External service should be fulfilled within the Newark community if possible. However, exceptions to this rule will be made for meaningful service with organizations which serve the global community and play a significant role in solving complex societal issues. Examples are Engineers without Borders, Habitat for Humanity, UN Volunteers and similar organizations. These extra 15 hours of engaging service could be completed in winter and summer sessions to facilitate special projects. The 15 extra summer hours can be reported in the fall; winter hours can be reported in the spring.
Details pertaining to what activities are counted as community service and how these hours are logged in are described as follows:

1) Toward the end of each semester, the Honors College will open a Google Form housed in Moodle which students must fill out completely before the end of the semester deadline in order to receive credit for their community service.

2) Honors staff will review and approve the submission of service activities. The staff member leading the review will then submit the credit hours using Moodle, nature of the assignment and will record the total number of hours approved. Students will be able to review whether service hours were registered correctly by looking at the gradebook. Please note that updates are completed only twice a year – namely, at the end of the fall and end of spring semesters.

- **Internal Opportunities:**
  - Hours completed on campus should be verifiable by either a department within the university or club president.
    - Hours will be granted for:
      - Verifiable events lead by faculty, X, Y, or Z clubs. (Hours depend on event)
      - Elected membership in X Clubs and Honors Student Council (15 hours maximum)
      - Student Center Monitors, Social Committee, and Community Service Committee membership (15 hours maximum)
      - Specific hours may be allocated to verifiable semester long commitments
      - Honors College student athletes’ 12 service hours as required for their team (but must complete the additional 18 hours for the Honors College service requirement)
      - Honors College primary leadership committees such as Technology Observer, Honors Newsletter, Honors Ambassadors, Freshman Retreat Leaders and Honors Passing the Torch Peer Mentors
    - Hours will not be granted for:
      - General club membership
      - Any activities that primarily serve a student’s own interests

- **External Opportunities**

  There is a good amount of flexibility in external service opportunities and students are encouraged to think about making a meaningful impact on the community through creative and innovative approaches. For example, students have connected to global organizations to reach out to underserved communities. The goal of each student’s service should be to benefit a particular community, rather than the individual.
The primary criteria for external opportunities is that they satisfy two categories:
1. It serves the community
2. No compensation

For example:
- Hours **will** be granted for:
  - Food Delivery Volunteer/Soup Kitchen Volunteer
  - Volunteer K-12 Tutoring/Coaching
- Hours **will not** be granted for:
  - Jobs, Internships, and Co-ops
  - Shadowing at physician’s offices or hospitals or apprenticeship
  - Work in which payment was received
  - Non-verifiable work (the student must be able to present the name, phone number, and email of the third party organization through which service was completed)
  - Service performed for a parent or a relative

- Community service events sponsored by religious organizations are permitted, with a particular focus on serving the local Newark community. However, students should take leadership roles in these service activities beyond simple participation.
- Note that attendance at a student’s own religious organization events are not considered community service activities. Similarly, worshipping times and religious education are not part of community service.

**IV. Expectations on service commitments**

- When working with internal and external organizations, students should act professionally and with integrity.
  - Service commitments must be maintained.
  - If circumstances prevent a student from completing the service to which s/he originally committed, the student should make the best effort to find a substitute.
  - Students should always alert organization supervisors if they are unable to participate in a scheduled service activity. The supervisors reserve the right not to certify a student for service if too many absences are reported.
  - *The Honors College will conduct selected audits on the hours reported.*

- Students should remember that they represent both NJIT and the Honors College and should always use the best academic and professional conduct when completing service requirements.
• While service is a required activity, students will select special, leadership building service opportunities based on their interests. However, they assume full responsibility for the activities they select. NJIT will not be liable for the volunteering activities in which students voluntarily select to engage.

• The Honors College is not responsible for the acts or omissions of any community based organization. Students who choose to contact any such organization do so at their own risk, and in doing so assume any and all risks of damage, loss or injury resulting from contact with any such organization, and release and discharge the Honors College from all related liability.

• The Honors College does not provide transportation to community based organizations. Therefore, travel to and from such organizations must be arranged by the students on their own. For some organizations public transportation may be available. Should a student choose to travel to any organization for community involvement, s/he does so entirely at their own risk.

• Students should understand that many community based organizations may have their own policies and screening procedures (including a criminal background check or sex offender registry check) to which all students must abide as a condition of their participation with that organization.

• Students agree to grant the Honors College and the organization permission to reproduce, without compensation, their name and image in photos, audio or video and in publications of the Honors College and the organization related to their service.