



Alternative Spring Break
Supplemental Participant Application
2016-2017

PROGRAM INFORMATION

The Rice University Alternative Spring Break (ASB) program empowers Rice students to engage with new communities through education, direct service, and advocacy. Participants gain awareness through in-depth training around a specific topic in social justice and further engage with the issue alongside community partners in Houston and another U.S. location. Throughout this experience, student groups learn about the value of the reflection process and connecting with others through meaningful dialogue.

This supplemental application must be uploaded through the “APPLY NOW!” button at <https://ccl.rice.edu/application/>. Applications are due by 5:00pm on October 5th and group interviews will take place during the following two weeks. **If selected for a group, students may apply for need-based financial aid that may cover up to the whole student cost for any trip.** Financial need is NOT known or considered during selections. Standard student costs are \$150 for driving trips and \$350 for those that require a flight. Flying trips are distinguished by a * next to the trip title in the last part of this application.

Questions regarding ASB and the application process may be directed to Morgan Kinney, staff advisor, at mbk3@rice.edu.

APPLICATION

PART I: General Participant Information

Legal First Name: _____

Legal Middle Name: _____

Legal Last Name: _____

Birthdate: ____/____/____ Net ID (i.e. mbk3): _____

T-Shirt Size (unisex): _____ Preferred Name: _____

Do you have any roommates and/or significant others who are currently also applying for ASB?



Are you currently, or are you planning to study abroad?

(Note: Those planning to study abroad for Spring 2017 are ineligible for an ASB occurring during that same semester.)

Are you a student athlete?

(Note: Student athletes must have written approval from the team coach stating their release from practice/competition events for the full duration of the ASB program—3/11-3/19.)

If you will be at least 21 years of age as of 3/11/17, please indicated whether you would be willing to drive a vehicle during the trip:

_____ Yes, 12-passenger van _____ Yes, 8-passenger mini-van _____ No

PART II: Short Answer

1) Please describe your motivations and expectations (social, professional, academic, ideological, spiritual, and/or other) for participating in Alternative Spring Break.



2) Please describe your previous experience with service-learning and/or civic engagement. What impact have such experiences had on your life and development? If no prior experience, please explain what is motivating you to get involved now.

3) What strengths and weaknesses do you bring to a team dynamic? Please include at least two of each and explain how they impact your involvement in a group setting.



4) For each trip that you rank, please use the space below to explain your interest in that specific trip (150 words each).



PART III: Trip Descriptions and Ranking

Below are titles and brief descriptions of each ASB trip planned for spring 2017. Please indicate your trip preferences by inserting a “1” next to your first choice, “2” next to your second, and so on. **Only enter numbers**, and do not enter the same number for two different trips. If you have no interest in a trip, you do not need to put a number next to it.

Applicants may be requested to come in for a group interview. Below each trip description, please indicate which interview times you **are** available for, and you will be contacted if you are invited to attend. **You only need to select interview times for the trips you have ranked.** If you are unable to attend any of the interview times, please e-mail Morgan Kinney (mbk3@rice.edu) to be connected with the trip’s site leaders. It is up to the site leaders’ discretion to determine how to address candidates that are unable to attend interviews. Site leader contact information can be found on the trip description pages online.

_____ Trip A: Defined with an Identity Intertwined: Facing Historical and Current Challenges to Refugee Resettlement*

The history of the term “refugee” is complex and intertwined with migration, fighting for the recognition of statelessness, and lack of rights. Today, over 21.3 million people claiming the title of refugee around the world are either internally displaced or displaced somewhere around the globe. While Houston is #1 in the United States for refugee resettlement, New York City’s narrative of immigration traces its way well back into the mid-nineteenth century. As such, the historical foundation of this city will allow us to explore the depths of challenges and tribulations facing refugee populations in America and the agencies that seek to serve them.

Using Houston’s wealth of resettlement agencies and services as a comparison for our education, we will explore histories of migration and the ways in which policy enacted on a local and national level affect services offered for refugees in America. While stationed in New York City, we will connect with a wealth of refugee agencies who must operate within a complex legal framework. Some focus on helping their populations build communities and acquiring necessary skills to live in a new country and some organizations assist specific ethnic groups. In the political and social milieu of a country stricken with xenophobia over the recent Syrian refugee influx, our work hits the zeitgeist, demystifying history, fact, and truth to lay a foundation for personal insight and communal understanding.

Trip A Interview Timeslots (please check all that you can attend)

_____ 10/13 at 8:00pm _____ 10/17 at 8:00pm _____ 10/16 at 2:00pm



_____ Trip B: Stigma v. Science: Sociocultural Impact on the HIV/AIDS Disease Experience*

Our trip focuses on the development and impact of disease stigma, using HIV/AIDS as a model. Beyond the biological effects of sickness, community and individual discrimination of HIV/AIDS can further exacerbate the disease experience. Through continual learning, advocacy, and service, we can reshape sociocultural perceptions of disease. Our pre-trip education and discussions will prepare us to explore the rich history of HIV/AIDS in San Francisco and join their inspiring efforts toward a community of acceptance and support for people living with HIV/AIDS. We will engage in a range of service, from direct interactions with HIV-positive individuals in hospices to administrative assistance for non-profit organizations.

Trip B Interview Timeslots (please check all that you can attend)

_____ 10/16 at 4:00pm _____ 10/17 at 7:00pm _____ 10/19 at 5:00pm
_____ 10/17 at 8:00pm

_____ Trip C: After the Storm: How Natural Disasters Expose and Perpetuate Homelessness and Housing Inequality

When a natural disaster strikes, not everyone in an area is affected equally. While the natural hazard itself cannot differentiate between race, social class, ability status, or sexual orientation, the social structures already established in an area cause the effects of a disaster to be unequal and discriminatory. At every stage -- preparedness, ability to evacuate, emergency aid, long-term response -- disasters are sociological. As a result, two of the most vulnerable populations when a disaster hits are the homeless and victims of housing discrimination. Quality of life is severely impacted by where you live, and the homeless, without a permanent residence anywhere, experience the most severe form of housing discrimination.

Our ASB is focused on the intersection of homelessness and housing inequality, through the lens of natural disasters. We are interested in how homelessness and housing inequality are not only exposed by but also perpetuated by natural disasters. We will be spending spring break in New Orleans, a city with a vibrant cultural history but riddled with hurricanes. When Hurricane Katrina hit in 2005, the neighborhoods that suffered the most were majority African-American. Despite the storm's damage, however, residents of these neighborhoods have displayed remarkable resilience and desire to return to the communities they call home. Although our group will learn about homelessness, housing discrimination, and how they relate to natural disasters prior to the trip, direct experience once in New Orleans will provide a deeper and invaluable



understanding. This will then allow participants to connect with the issues on a more personal level and become advocates for the issue back in Houston.

Trip C Interview Timeslots (please check all that you can attend)

_____ 10/16 at 4:00pm _____ 10/18 at 4:00pm _____ 10/19 at 7:00pm
_____ 10/21 at 3:00pm

_____ **Trip D: Troubled Waters: Exploring Environmental Advocacy and the Human Right to Water***

From Fresno to Flint, many citizens around the United States are experiencing various water problems that are exacerbated by the fact that many of our water infrastructure systems and methods of distributing water are outdated. The intersection between socio-economic disparities and environmental problems has made water justice a complex humanitarian issue. The Human Right to Water, which was recognized by the United Nations in 2010, is a bill which states that every individual should have access to clean, safe, and affordable water. This right has been officially passed in only one state in the US: California. We will explore water access through policy, public education, and environmental advocacy.

On this Alternative Spring Break trip, we will be going to Sacramento, California, where we will engage with local environmental justice groups. These organizations act as a middle ground between communities and policymakers. They work to ensure that vulnerable communities have access to water and have a collective voice. We will also be learning about water issues through the lens of policymakers in the California capitol and participating in direct service that reflects how our personal lives are tied to communities affected by water justice issues.

Trip D Interview Timeslots (please check all that you can attend)

_____ 10/14 at 7:00pm _____ 10/14 at 8:15pm _____ 10/16 at 3:00pm
_____ 10/16 at 4:15pm

_____ **Trip E: Respect is the minimum: Exploring and Understanding the Fight for Gender Equality and Reproductive Justice for All***

On this ASB we will be traveling to Washington D.C. to explore the issue of gender inequality, specifically through the lens of reproductive justice. Together we will examine the politics and policies that shape the discourse and reality of reproductive health in America today, and the broader ramifications of the situation, particularly for low-income women of color.



As the center of policy making in the United States, D.C. will give us the unique chance to meet with various policy organizations devoted to the issue of reproductive justice and its broader implications. By combining our service learning experiences with women's organizations in the area, along with what we learn in our policy meetings we will gain an in depth understanding of how important reproductive justice is. We will explore these concepts not just in terms of public health, but also through the lens of the broader fight for social justice and equality being played out in the American public today.

Trip E Interview Timeslots (please check all that you can attend)

_____ 10/14 at 8:00pm _____ 10/18 at 7:00pm _____ 10/21 at 7:00pm

_____ Trip F: Cara a Cara: Painting a Face to the Young Immigrant's Educational Experience

You know that immigration, more now than any time in the recent past, has become a hot-button topic of our nation. On the national level, the current presidential race has propelled immigration to a national discussion. And the world, as evidenced through measures like Brexit, is feeling nativist pulses as "terrorist" attacks from "outsiders" become prominent in the media. This is why we feel that now is the time to have discussions about immigration and immigration as a social justice issue. Who are immigrants? How is the immigrant experience different than that of a non-immigrant? What does it feel like to be invisible in the classroom? How do social class, ethnicity, and language intersect to form the immigrant experience? Now is the time to have these discussions.

In particular, our trip focuses on how differences in language affect the educational experiences of young, immigrant children. We will interact with this social issue in the Rio Grande Valley (South Texas), where discussions about topics like bilingual education are prevalent. We have some exciting partnerships forming with UTRGV and community partners in the area. NOW is the time to have these important discussions. Please join us if you're interested in developing empathy, learning about engaged citizenship, and having real conversations about this social issue.

Trip F Interview Timeslots (please check all that you can attend)

_____ 10/15 at 1:00pm _____ 10/15 at 3:00pm _____ 10/16 at 1:00pm
_____ 10/18 at 8:00pm



_____ Trip G: From Communities to Clinics: How Your Zip Code Determines Your Health

What comes to mind when you hear the word “health”? Most people think of doctors and hospitals, but research shows that it’s what happens outside the hospitals that serves as a stronger determinant of health. Your neighborhood’s access to resources and infrastructure, safety, and community involvement and support all contribute to community health. We aim to explore how and why people’s neighborhoods of residence have become strong indicators of their health outcomes, and how the health disparities between neighborhoods can be mitigated through health policy and healthcare institutions. Because the state legislature will be in session during our trip, Austin, TX is the ideal location to collaborate with policy makers, healthcare institutions, and local non-profits. By the end of this experience, we hope to better understand the complexities of the root causes of health inequity and learn to become better advocates for change.

Trip G Interview Timeslots (please check all that you can attend)

_____ 10/18 at 4:00pm _____ 10/19 at 4:00pm _____ 10/19 at 5:00pm

_____ Trip H: Breaking Down Barriers: Exploring Adaptation to Disability and Independent Living*

The idea that people with disabilities do not live independently is a widespread stereotype and misconception that offers incredible potential for challenging and learning new perspectives. This trip aims to motivate all members to become better advocates for people with disabilities and learn through pre-trip education about how people with disabilities are limited by a lack of resources to adapt accordingly to their surroundings. Disability policies and resources differ drastically from state to state. Our group will be traveling to Colorado in order to compare the accessibility of resources for individuals with disabilities to those in Texas. We will be working with individuals with all types of disabilities, with a particular focus on the visually impaired.

We'll begin our pre-trip education in Houston with local agencies like "Disability Rights Texas" to begin exploring the contrast between Texas and Colorado. Once in Colorado, we will start the trip in Winter Park, CO, home to the National Sports Center for the Disabled (NSCD), one of the largest outdoor therapeutic recreation and adaptive sports agencies in the world. We will then travel to Denver, CO where we will spend a day learning from the Colorado Cross Disability Coalition before moving on to our final destination, the Colorado Center for the Blind (CCB). Our participants will have a hands-on service learning experience over the course of the year and learn to be more effective advocates. In addition, participants can expect to develop a more holistic



conception of disability, including the ins and outs of daily life, social and personal implications.

Trip H Interview Timeslots (please check all that you can attend)

_____ 10/13 at 7:30pm _____ 10/14 at 7:30pm _____ 10/15 at 11:00am
_____ 10/15 at 2:00pm

_____ Trip I: Breaking Bonds and Lifting Barriers: Addressing How Race Defines Cycles of Incarceration and Homelessness*

In the United States, one's risk of experiencing homelessness is no longer only related to their economic status. Statistically, people who have previously been incarcerated are at a much higher risk of experiencing homelessness, and people who have been homeless make up a large majority of the incarcerated population. Studies have shown that many within each group often shift toward the other, creating what is known as a cycle. Furthermore, people of color make up a stark majority of both populations. We must confront not only how homelessness and incarceration are directly perpetuating each other, but also how racial injustice plays a pivotal role in the overrepresentation of racial minorities in this cycle. Our ASB examines not only the policies in place that perpetuate racial bias in this relationship, but also the responses of the respective communities to this issue. We'll collaborate with policy advocates, government agencies, and community leaders in how they are tackling this issue in order to strengthen ourselves as advocates in our own communities. With New York City as the location of our trip, we'll work with these local partners and see how these efforts could fit into the community of Houston.

Trip I Interview Timeslots (please check all that you can attend)

_____ 10/14 at 7:00pm _____ 10/15 at 1:00pm _____ 10/16 at 1:00pm
_____ 10/17 at 7:00pm