

FAQ about Sophomore Christian Service

Who am I serving?

Sophomore year you perform DIRECT Christian service hours for your faith community.

Why am I serving my faith community?

The population you serve corresponds to the curriculum in your religion class. Sophomore year you study Jesus and Church. Learning about the early Church and the community of disciples (among other topics) corresponds to the enactment of the principles you learn through your service hours. You are serving those in your own faith community to help grow the Kingdom of God on Earth.

What does it mean to do DIRECT service?

It means you are interacting face-to-face with the members of your faith community. You are building relationships with those you are serving.

What are some examples of the types of places I could do my service hours?

- Religious Education-many faith communities offer classes and camps for the youth in the community.
- Liturgical Ministries-such as altar serving, choir, ushering, lectoring, etc. may be used to account for up to 10 of your total hours.
- Babysitting during events at the faith community so that parents can attend meetings, classes, or religious groups.

Can I file papers in the church office? What about fundraising?

No. While this is service, it is NOT direct service. You are only indirectly helping the faith community.

How do I know if the position they assign me qualifies for my required hours?

If you are getting paid, it does NOT count. The required Christian service hours are volunteer (i.e. free). If you are simply taking the place of a paid employee, the hours will not count.

How many hours do I need?

20 hours.

Must I complete them all at the same service placement?

Yes.

Why?

Not only does it require a significant amount of time to build relationships, you are also making a commitment to the faith community. St. John's has high standards for students honoring their commitments.

What if there is a problem at my service site – can I switch?

Any potential switching of faith communities **MUST** be approved by the Office of Mission & Ministry. Only certain rare circumstances justify switching once you have made a commitment. For example, if the faith community is not providing you with **DIRECT** service opportunities, then you may switch to ensure you fulfill your requirement.

May I complete them over the summer prior to my sophomore year?

Yes. The site must be pre-approved by the Office of Mission & Ministry. A signed Christian Service Agreement Form must be completed prior to beginning the service at the end of the current school year. The service hour log sheet and reflection assignment must be submitted to the Mission & Ministry Center on the first day of school in the fall. If you fail to finish your hours or to complete the essay by then, you will be required to start over.

May I split my hours between the summer and during the school year?

No. Hours must be completed in the summer **OR** during the school year. No combinations will be accepted.

What are extracurricular hours?

Extracurricular hours are service hours that are beyond what is required in any given academic year. If you perform more hours than the required 20, which may be direct or indirect, you may submit an Extracurricular Hours form to the Mission & Ministry Center. The form is available for printing on the website.

Why would I want to record those?

Extracurricular hours will be recorded on your transcript and colleges will know that you went above and beyond what is required in terms of serving the community.

What if I don't have a faith community right now?

There are 2 options:

- You can elect to reach out to a faith community and establish a relationship and complete your service hours through that faith community.
- You can partner up with a friend who has a faith community already and complete your service hours through their faith community.

How do I get my Christian Service Agreement signed?

DO:

Politely call and ask for an appointment to talk or meet with the Volunteer Coordinator or other person in a position of management.

Leave a message if no one answers with your name, contact info, and reason for calling.

Show up to an appointment on time and well dressed.

Ask what volunteer opportunities are available.

Show your enthusiasm for serving your faith community.

Ensure they have 20 hours of volunteer work available for you.

Ask when and how often you can volunteer.

Ask for a full time employee to be your supervisor (not a family member), who can verify the hours once you've completed them.

DO NOT:

Demand a meeting.

Have your parents call or set up meetings for you.

Ask a parent to be your supervisor, even if they work at the faith community.

Show up late or disheveled to appointments.

Hand over the form without explaining the purpose of your interest in volunteering.

Use the lack of a call back as an excuse not to turn in your form.

How should I conduct myself at my placement site?

DO:

Show up when you sign up.

Be courteous and follow instructions from staff.

Bring your log sheet and have your supervisor sign it each time you volunteer.

DO NOT:

Fail to show up at your scheduled time for volunteering without calling and letting them know.
They are counting on you.

Wait until the last minute to complete your hours.