LIABILITY IN COMMUNITY-BASED LEARNING:

Tips and Tools for Managing Risk for You and Your Students
**Why Risk Management?**

- The CIC is committed to the promotion of service-learning and community engagement.
- This commitment implies working with organizations and populations apart from the traditional university setting.
- Liability issues arise for the CIC and its affiliates (e.g. faculty, staff, and partners) when students are engaged off-campus.
Our Goal

- Minimize risk to faculty, staff, students, and partners by engaging in communication that recognizes risk and aims to minimize it.
HOW DO WE MEET THIS GOAL?

1- Community Partners’ (and the CIC’s) Responsibility: MOU and assurance that all other parties are educated on risk (students, faculty, and each other)

2- Students’ Responsibility: Informed Consent

3- Faculty and Staff’s Responsibility: Attend workshops such as this one and educate yourself on how to protect yourself, your students, and Weber State. Utilize tools that are provided to you for risk management purposes.
PARTNERS AND THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING:

Our Risk Management Work With Community Partners
WHAT DOES THE MOU DO? IT:

- Formalizes the CIC’s relationships with community partners.
- Lists the responsibilities of each party in the agreement.
- Provides the ground work for further development and partnering between the organizations based on outcomes.
- Reduces liability by including language that mandates proof of insurance and assurance of proper background checks and screening to protect both students and partners. This implicitly protects the CIC’s on-campus constituents and the CIC itself.
"Provide to you, our partner, with training modules on ethics, cultural competency, and professionalism for use as you desire in training your volunteers and provide certificates of completion to student volunteers if required by your organization."

"Provide enrolled student volunteers with:

a. Ongoing support and regular communication, and
b. Beginning January 2010, all students volunteering though the CIC will be asked to agree to information on their rights and responsibilities as a volunteer and other important volunteer information via a consent form."
LANGUAGE OF NOTE

“Attempt to fill your volunteer needs by promoting, publicizing your volunteer requests and recruiting and referring student volunteers to your agency by:

- Providing access to the CIC’s community calendar;
- Providing a listed description in our online Service Opportunity Directory;
- Providing access to our bulletin board postings.”
LANGUAGE OF NOTE

○ “Maintain communications with the Community Involvement Center by:
   a. Keeping this document current; and
   b. Notifying the CIC of address, email, phone and contact person changes”

○ “Provide the Community Involvement Center with Proof of Insurance.”

○ “Ensure that student volunteers are kept in line of sight of a supervisor at all times unless they have been satisfactorily background checked to your agency’s standards, hence the CIC is not responsible for any unacceptable or inappropriate behavior or performance of the student volunteer.”
We want you to be aware of what we are agreeing to with our partners.

We would like you to stipulate in your syllabi that students will have to sign an Informed Consent, as this is a component of our agreements with partners and our expectation of ALL students who work through the center.

We encourage you to provide your students incentive to complete the training modules on ethics, cultural competency, and professionalism-or collaborate with your partners to accomplish this aspect of volunteer education.
STUDENTS: INFORMED CONSENT

Required beginning January 2010
 Why Have An Informed Consent?

- To inform students of their responsibilities and of risk.
- To ensure they consent to certain stipulations as participants in CIC programs.
- Because we guarantee our partners that students will be consenting to these stipulations.
- It relieves you as faculty of a certain degree of liability by reinforcing student’s responsibility.
**LANGUAGE OF NOTE**

- “I certify that I have medical insurance or otherwise agree to be personally responsible for costs of any emergency or other medical care that I might receive.”
- “I will abide by the established rules and practices outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding.”
- “I understand that I will be traveling between the campus and the community agency. I agree to secure motor vehicle insurance as required by state law, and assume financial responsibility for any damages or collisions that may result.”
What If Your Student Does Not Consent?

- After first reports are filed (five weeks) we will inform you of those students who have failed to file a consent form with us.

- It is important for students to understand that they CANNOT engage in service-learning as an agent of the CIC or WSU without this consent form on file. Their hours will NOT be tracked.

- When teaching CBL courses, you should have a back-up plan for students who will not be willing to engage in community service and/or sign the consent form. However, you should also know that in registering for a CBL designated course, a student implicitly complies to engage in service-learning activities. If you are struggling with any student, please let us know.
**Why Should This Matter to You?**

- The onus rests heavily on you as a CBL faculty to ensure that students are aware of this stipulation to service-learning on the first day of class.
- We will have the document available at our website for students to print and return to us. We ask that you simply let them know they will need to sign one and where to find it.
- You should be aware of the language in this document that you should adhere to (i.e. **not** arranging transportation for students).
- We will keep all of these documents on file in our office. If you ever have a question about them, feel free to call or email us, or drop in.
OTHER TIPS AND TOOLS

- Let’s take a look through the “Do’s and Do Not’s”
- The survey in the packet is meant for community partners, but it may be helpful to you as you establish partnerships with off-campus organizations.
QUESTIONS?