

Helpful Information when Constructing an Agreement with a Higher Education Institution

It is important to develop a detailed memorandum of understanding between the community-based organization and a university to clarify responsibilities and avoid misunderstandings. Here is some helpful information to keep in mind when crafting the agreement:

Universities usually can....

- Provide a source for training on a variety of topics
- Provide a wealth of technical skills
- Provide diverse views / multiple perspectives
- Provide a source for student, faculty and staff volunteers
- Provide an opportunity to work with the next generation of community citizens
- Provide a wealth of expertise on a variety of topics
- Provide contact information for student organization and Greek chapters
- Provide access to meeting rooms, museums, planetariums, athletic fields/pools, library facilities
- Provide publicity for your community-university partnership activities
- Provide opportunities to meet with student leaders or student athletes
- Provide opportunities for you to talk about your agencies' efforts to improve your community
- Provide opportunities to help recognize the efforts of your student, staff and faculty partners
- Provide speakers or presenters for conferences and events
- Participate as a partner in seeking funds for projects in which both are engaged
- Act as research partners to explore topics of mutual interest

Universities usually can't...

- Adapt quickly (at least one quarter/semester ahead)
- Change the academic schedule/breaks (planned years in advance)
- Change the reward system for faculty
- Achieve large-scale coordination of efforts
- Respond to your needs with unlimited time and funds
- Change the reporting structure/organization chart
- Respond to requests during finals week, academic breaks, or during the summer without advanced planning
- Donate money directly to your agency, although faculty, staff and students can
- Endorse political leaders or political parties
- Place students in roles for which they are not prepared or trained
- Launch research projects involving other people/clients without university approval
- Circumvent the chain of command/organization approval structure when making major decisions
- Utilize their alumni contacts for your fundraising efforts