Leading an Alternative Break is an extremely rewarding experience, one that offers students an opportunity to learn a great deal about facilitation, communication, and leadership. Break Leaders are required to plan a service-learning trip to take place during the academically scheduled Spring Break. This planning includes scheduling events with non-profit organizations, fundraising and budgeting, securing lodging, and recruiting participants.

As a service-learning program, Alternative Breaks incorporates education into its service and reflection activities. Break Leaders are required to plan and facilitate a spring DeCal that offers rigorous academic context for the issues being addressed on the service trip. This includes syllabus planning, reading selection, and guest speaker solicitation.

Learning to lead a service-learning trip and incorporate elements of service, education, and reflection requires a considerable commitment of time and effort. This is a significant leadership role and it will be difficult for you to do well if you are overcommitted. The weekend retreat and bi-monthly meetings offer in-depth training and preparation for leading an Alternative Break. The training program provides 1) teambuilding and a space for mutual support; 2) step-by-step instruction and guidance; and 3) leadership training tailored towards the duties of a Break Leader. Training continues with spring meetings and observation of your DeCals.

ALTERNATIVE BREAK LEADER RESPONSIBILITIES

Summer Reading and Community Building:
In an effort to build a cohesive group and support you in articulating the vision, values, and foundational principles of the program, all break leaders are asked to engage in approximately 10 of programmatic readings and community building assignments over the summer.

Alternative Break Leader Weekly Trainings: The group meets on Tuesday’s from 6-8pm throughout the year. These trainings will prepare you to make a formal presentation and gain approval to lead an Alternative Break. Each break leader will be matched with a staff, faculty or community member to serve as a mentor for planning.

Break Leaders’ “Alternative Weekend” Retreat: This occurs within the first few weeks of the fall semester (September 11-13 for the 2015-16 program). The Alternative Weekend offers Break Leaders direct exposure to the essential components of an Alternative Break, an in-depth look at the planning process, a forum for value exploration, and an opportunity to have fun and get to know the Alternative Breaks team.

Break Proposal: Break Leaders work with each other to create a Break Proposal. This is a written document and a formal presentation to your fellow leaders and the director team. The proposal will lay out the purpose and goals of the trip, along with anticipated and confirmed community partners and lodging. Please note: You will not be able to begin recruiting for participants until the Immersion Experiences Program Coordinator or Program Director has approved this proposal!

Fundraising and Budgeting: Break Leaders attend group fundraisers and work with the Finance Director to establish fundraisers and apply for applicable grants. Leaders must also create a feasible working budget. A detailed fundraising timeline and grants deadline will be provided.

Publicity and Recruitment: In order to draw the diversity and numbers needed for quality service-learning experience, Break Leaders are instrumental in publicizing all trips. Leaders must commit to the minimum standards
of recruitment activities as determined by the Communications Director. These activities may include (but are not limited to) flyering, classroom/student organization announcements, e-mailing to listservs, or tabling at service events. The Communications Director will coordinate the publicity efforts.

**Alternative Break Participant DeCal:** DeCals serve as a forum to academically explore the relevant issues to each trip theme and location in preparation for the service trip. This peer education format emphasizes discussion and reflection. The DeCal will also provide opportunity for post-trip reflection and potential planning for further service work. Break Leaders will facilitate this spring DeCal, and will be eligible to receive 2 units. Break Leaders work with the Training Director to

- create a **syllabus connected to community needs and program goals**,  
- create lesson plans (submitted for approval two weeks before class),  
- meet with co-leaders on a weekly basis to plan for class  
- co-facilitate class dialogues based on readings, films, guest speakers, and other information.  
- **ALL DeCals will take place Wednesday, 6-8pm.**  
- **NOTE** that the first and last classes will be held as all-participant gatherings.

**Plan and Lead a Week-long Service Trip:** Trip planning entails contacting community based organizations for service projects and guest speakers, practicing sound risk management techniques, and the scheduling of the entire trip. Break Leaders are required to attend and lead the actual trip.

**Promote Civic Agency:** Support participants in thinking through how they can bring their experience back to the Bay or to their hometown in concrete ways through a November and Spring Day of Action.

**Post-trip Reflection and Center-Wide Newsletter:** Upon return, Break Leaders will coordinate the creation of a program-wide newsletter to be copied, bound and distributed to all participants, with one copy for the Public Service Center and one to all community partners. The Newsletter is a great way to save the memories and leave a lasting impression of your trip for future participants and leaders.

**Break Summary and Contacts:** A Break binder is to be maintained throughout the preparation and duration of your planning experience, which includes all essential information needed to execute a Break of a similar nature. Upon return, the information must be condensed to no more than five pages. You are preparing a guidebook for future Break Leaders who may coordinate a similar break. Therefore, provide itinerary, organization contact list with brief evaluation about the organizations, syllabus and reading list, budget, and an evaluation summary from participants and leaders on what to definitely do again as well as improvements for future Breaks of a similar nature. All of your documentation should also be saved on the Public Service Center server so it can be easily accessed in the future.

**Participant Celebration:** Within a month after your break’s return, Break Leaders will attend a potluck that brings together participants from all trips. At the potluck each Break will have an opportunity to dialogue with participants on other trips about their experiences. The purpose of the potluck is to offer participants and Leaders a chance to exchange experiences and celebrate the success of the program.

**Committees:** You each will be part of a committee that will be focused on different parts of the program. Some of these committees may focus on sustainability, media, finance, days of service in the bay, and all community meetings. In these spaces, you will be guided by a director and will collaborate with break leaders to plan events and think creatively about how to improve and strengthen Alternative Breaks.