Leading an Alternative Breaks trip is an extremely rewarding experience, one that offers students an opportunity to learn a great deal about facilitation, communication, leadership, and how to effect social change. Break Leaders are required to plan a service-learning trip to take place during the academically scheduled winter or spring break. Winter break trips are traditionally two-weeks long and spring trips run for one week.

Planning for the trip includes scheduling service work with non-profit organizations and community partners, fundraising and budgeting, securing lodging, recruiting participants, and planning and facilitating a semester-long DeCal (during the fall semester for winter trips and during the spring semester for spring trips).

As a service-learning program, Alternative Breaks incorporates education into its service and reflection activities. The DeCals offer rigorous academic context for the issues being addressed on the service trip. 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 retreat and meetings offer in-depth training and preparation for leading an Alternative Breaks trip. 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.

Please note, we prefer returning break leaders or student directors for the winter break leader position. The winter trips run longer and winter break leaders need a high level of experience, independence, and self-sufficiency as they historically receive less support than the spring trip leaders. Students who are applying to the break leader position for the first time are encouraged to apply for the spring trips, but anybody who lists a winter trip as one of their preferences will certainly be considered for the position.

**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 **Tuesdays 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. *(NOTE: winter break leaders are not required to attend BLTs)*

**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. *(NOTE: winter break leaders are encouraged to attend the retreat; there may be an additional mini-retreat specifically for the winter trips)*
**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.

**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 DeCal and will be eligible to receive 2 units. Break Leaders work with the Training and Sustainability 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;
- and co-facilitate class dialogues based on readings, films, guest speakers, and other information.

**ALL DeCals will take place Wednesdays, 6-8pm.**

**Plan and Lead a 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.

**Center-wide Leadership Trainings:** The Public Service Center will be offering monthly center-wide leadership trainings that will help you sharpen your professional and interpersonal skills. These CWLs are mandatory.

**Transition documentation:** Transition documents are to be maintained throughout the preparation and duration of your planning experience, which include all essential information needed to execute a break of a similar nature. You are preparing work plans for future Break Leaders who may coordinate a similar break. All of your documentation should also be saved on the Public Service Center server so it can be easily accessed in the future.

**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.

Questions? Concerns? Need for clarity? Contact Scott Hovdey, the Alternative Breaks Coordinator, at shovdey@berkeley.edu or at (510) 642-5886 Mondays-Wednesdays.