

COVID-19 Student Service Corp (CSSC)
Toolkit for New Chapters



This Toolkit is designed to assist institutions in launching chapters of the COVID-19 Student Service Corp (CSSC) in the response to the evolving health systems needs during the COVID-19 pandemic. By understanding the needs of local health systems and utilizing the diverse skillsets of volunteer healthcare professional trainees and their faculty mentors, CSSC offers students the opportunity to engage in a service learning model and engage remotely to both promote social distancing and address urgent health systems concerns.

CSSC was founded at Columbia University Irving Medical Center. Schools that are currently participating at Columbia include the Columbia University Roy and Diana Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons, the Mailman School of Public Health, the Columbia University School of Nursing, the Columbia University College of Dental Medicine, and Columbia Commons IPE. The number of collaborating schools is increasing daily.

The national organization is led by the Columbia team and open to all who wish to join and agree to abide by the CSSC guiding principles.

Mission:

To support health systems and their patients, workforce, and communities facing the COVID-19 pandemic through interprofessional student service-learning projects.

Guiding Principles:

Chapters of CSSC agree to abide by the following guiding principles:

- **Needs are identified by the healthcare system** and brought to the local CSSC Oversight Committee (see below) to develop teams designed to address the need.
- The CSSC follows a **service-learning model** in which students learn, reflect, and grow in their professional and personal identities while serving their communities.
- When possible and appropriate, **the collaboration is interprofessional from the outset** to promote students learning, with, from, and about each other through their service.
- Every point of leadership requires a **strong connection between students and faculty**, so students can meet the needs of the healthcare system and communities with appropriate oversight and supervision.
- Opportunities for students to volunteer prioritize options that facilitate **social distancing**. This may change as local circumstances evolve.

Organization:

We recommend each chapter form the following groups to facilitate the work of CSSC:

- **Oversight Committee:** **Faculty Chair(s)** and **Student Chair(s)** oversee the volunteer projects, recruitment, and leadership structure. They work with the healthcare system to identify needs and deploy teams to address them. An **Administrative Chair** facilitates the administrative connections needed to efficiently support the needs of each Project.
- **Project Leaders:** Each project has **Faculty Leader(s)** and **Student Leader(s)** who directly manage the project under the supervision of the Oversight Committee. The Project Leaders train and deploy volunteers and adapt the project as the needs of the health system change.
- **Coordinators:** **Student Coordinator(s)** assist the Project Leaders with Project organization, scheduling if applicable, and volunteer communication.
- **Email:** A centralized email account can assist in triaging of Project requests. Use an account in the format `cssc@[yourschool].edu`
- **Social Media:** Abide by institutional regulations and confidentiality guidelines. Use a Twitter handle in this format `@[yourschool]CSSC` and follow `@CSSCNational`

Service Projects:

Projects will be unique to each health system and will change with the local environment. Some early projects that may be common across settings include:

- **COVID-19 Community Hotline** provides staffing support for a community informational line about COVID-19.
- **COVID-19 Research** works with principal investigators who are engaged in time-sensitive COVID-related projects.
- **Information Services** produces high-quality, summarized and digestible resources on the COVID-19 pandemic and management for patients, families, faculty, and students, and supports the technological and publishing needs of other service projects.
 - Teams within the Information Services project include *Patient Education and Design*, *Language Translation*, *Literature Assessment and Summary*, *Web Design*, and *Outreach*
- **Medical Education** works to enhance the virtual curriculum to ensure high-quality ongoing curricular experiences for preclinical medical students.
- **Mental Health and Well Being** supports the well-being of students, faculty, staff, and community members through projects such as:
 - *Hero Meals*, a service that supports local restaurants and business by fundraising to employ a lean staff to provide nutritious, comforting fare to hospital staff, working the front lines.
 - *Virtual Community-Building* projects, such as yoga and meditation.
- **Overflow Staffing and Support** works with relevant stakeholders to prepare students for possible clinical and non-clinical back-up staffing roles in the pandemic.

- **Patient Population Outreach Projects** gives providers with high risk populations, via CSSC students, the opportunity to communicate anticipatory guidance about COVID and provide guidance for when to seek care.
- **PPE Task Force** organizes procurement, donation, and manufacturing of personal protective equipment from interested parties in the community.
- **Provider Childcare Task Force** connects healthcare professionals with existing childcare services (not students) and seeks to grow the network of services.
- **Telemedicine COVID Follow-Up** engages in remote monitoring of COVID-positive patients after discharge. This project uses students with clinical training and licensed supervision.
- **Telemedicine Patient Assist** works with outpatient clinics to rapidly onboard patients onto institutional telehealth platforms, allowing for more efficient clinic flow and reduction in in-person encounters.
- **Workforce Health and Safety** provides staffing support for the hospital service tasked with receiving calls and following potential cases of COVID-19 among staff and providers.

Service-Learning:

- Service-learning projects include all of the following:
 - Service to the community in activities that respond to community-identified concerns.
 - Student preparation to better understand context of service and develop needed knowledge and skills.
 - Student reflection on the relationships among their participation in the activity, their medical school curriculum, and their roles as citizens and medical professionals.
- Some schools may award academic credit to students participating in CCSC projects. If credit is to be awarded, we recommend:
 - Designating course directors (may be from among the Faculty Chairs).
 - Requiring a minimum of 15 hours/week of service.
 - Requiring faculty-precepted reflection sessions (virtual; weekly or biweekly) for:
 - Debriefing activities
 - Sharing observations about navigating ethical challenges or dilemmas
 - Sharing observations about interprofessional collaboration
 - Obtaining formal approval from the school's committee on instruction

Starting a CSSC Chapter:

We recommend interested institutions complete the following steps:

1. Ensure the Guiding Principles conform with your vision.
2. Form an Oversight Committee comprised of highly organized, highly motivated and responsive faculty and senior students with a history of leading and engagement in service-learning.
3. Develop a mission statement that identifies the purpose of the CSSC chapter within the context of supporting the health care system, engaging in service-learning, and responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

4. Obtain explicit approval to proceed with the project from institutional leaders.
5. Establish partnerships with leadership at multiple schools across the institution, if applicable, to facilitate interprofessional collaboration.
6. Identify stakeholders within the healthcare system who can identify areas of need.
7. Develop potential Projects that can address identified areas of need.
8. Recruit highly organized students and faculty, perhaps with expertise in the area of interest, who can serve as Project Leaders.
9. Work with Project Leaders to evaluate the steps necessary to address the need, including additional stakeholders and any requirements or skills necessary to volunteer.
10. Recruit students interested in volunteering to the project that best aligns their skills and interests.
11. Assist Projects by facilitating connections among students, faculty, and administrators with skills and expertise in the area of need.
12. Develop feedback systems for continual evaluation and oversight of the Project.
13. Engage in weekly, interdisciplinary, and inter-Project reflections on the volunteer experience and further formation of professional identity according to the service-learning principles above.
14. **Reach out to CSSC National (cssc@cumc.columbia.edu) with your chapter location and leadership contact information to let us know about your chapter so we can add you to the chapter directory for the purposes of outreach and coordinating national efforts.** Have your chapter follow @CSSCNational on twitter!

Tools that may be useful:

- Survey tools, such as Qualtrics or SurveyMonkey for volunteer signups.
- A CSSC email address, such as [cssc@\[yourschool\].edu](mailto:cssc@[yourschool].edu)
- An organizational system for communication, document hosting, and schedule management, such as Microsoft Teams
- A platform for engaging in reflections, such as Canvas or Blackboard

For more information, contact us at cssc@cumc.columbia.edu and follow us on Twitter @ColumbiaCSSC and @CSSCNational