

Alternative Break Research

Compiled by Break Away and

The Office of Community Engagement at The College of William & Mary

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Author/s	Paper Title and Information	Summary
Benson, R. T., Amy Gideon, David Lesesne, Jim Fatzinger, and Will Doyle.	<i>Relationships between Participation in Alternative Spring Break Trips and Attitudes about Poverty and the Causes of Poverty.</i> Thesis. Vanderbilt, 2007. N.p.: n.p., n.d. Print.	Investigates whether participation in an ASB alters students' perceptions of the poor and the causes of poverty. Alternative Spring Breaks have become the chief method of service learning within the context of an overall decline in civic participation. Authors found that participants' opinions regarding causes of poverty failed to undergo any discernible transformation from pre-trip to post-trip. This may be because participants already had a firm mental construct of the causes of poverty. However, the study lacked a control group and thus the analysis lacks some credibility.
Bowen, Glenn A.	"Fostering College Students' Civic Commitment through Alternative Breaks." <i>Journal for Civic Commitment</i> 2011th ser. 16. January (2011): 1-13. Web. 18 Oct. 2013.	"Despite the limitations of short-term service projects, students who participated in alternative breaks became sensitive to social issues and seemed committed to community causes...Three recommendations are offered with a view to student civic commitment, program enhancement, and knowledge building: Organize follow-up trips, Facilitate purposeful reflections, Conduct additional research."
DuPre, Carrie.	"Alternative Break Service Trips, The World as Classroom." <i>About Campus</i> July-August (2010): 25-28. Wiley InterScience. Web. 16 Oct. 2013.	Alternative breaks bridge the gap between classroom learning and field experience. They allow students to actively employ their academic knowledge to tackle community issues while practicing leadership skills and forming lasting relationships with their peers and community partners. Participants have the opportunity for personal growth and will contribute to allow the entire campus to grow and participate in their project by bringing back what they learned and sharing it with peers. Spirit of caring must be maintained once students return to campus.

		Students should participate in reflection sessions throughout their service trip while highlighting both positive and negative experiences in order to foster and develop learning.
Ivory, Brian T.	"The Re-entry Crisis of Students Returning to Campus following a Volunteer Alternative Break Experience: A Developmental Opportunity." <i>College Student Affairs Journal</i> Spring 16.2 (1997): 104-12. Web. 21 Oct. 2013.	Many students coming back from an alternative break experience a re-entry crisis as they make long term and short term adjustments to campus life and reconcile their new perspective. Many post-experience events deal with social nostalgia instead of further developing the lessons learned from the trip to campus life. Post-experience re-orientation should may include de-briefing as well as further training, simulations, and counseling sessions in order to assist students integrate their learning into campus life.
Jones, Susan R., Heather T. Rowan-Kenyon, A. M.Y. Ireland, Elizabeth Niehaus, and Kristan C. Skendall.	"The Meaning Students Make as Participants in Short-Term Immersion Programs." <i>Journal of College Student Development</i> March/April 53.2 (2012): 201-20. Web. 21 Oct. 2013.	"This study is one of the first to explore the impact of short-term immersion programs in the past 10 years. As programs continue to grow, there is much more to understand with regard to the students who participate, the potential impact on institutions who host such programs, and the communities in which programs are located. As one participant noted, "There are no words to tell people how much it meant to me and how much I learned and just what an amazing experience it was." This study, and future research, represents an attempt to capture the meaning students do make of these experiences with words."
Keene, Arthur, and Danyel Addes.	"The Professorless Classroom." <i>Campus Compact</i> (n.d.): 227-40. Web. 25 Oct. 2013.	Explores community engagement education efforts at U. Mass. Amherst in which the role of instructor was steadily minimized and eventually eliminated. This was done in an effort to empower students and lead to more active engagement for students as both learners and educators to their peers. While the lesser degree of structure has made evaluation/curriculum more difficult to define there has been a huge increase in enthusiasm among student population to take part in service learning/community engagement education.
McElhaney, Kellie A.	<i>Student Outcomes of Community Service Learning: A Comparative Analysis of</i>	Seeks to answer the following questions: How does service-learning as a form of experiential education affect

	<i>Curriculum-Based and Non-Curriculum Based Alternative Break Programs</i> . Thesis. The University of Michigan, 1998. N.p.: n.p., n.d. Print.	undergraduate students? What is the relationship between service learning as a form of experiential education and student outcomes? What are the changes that undergraduate students undergo throughout their service experience? Why does service learning lead to these student outcomes and/ or changes?
Porter, Melody C.	"Assessing Alternative Breaks Moving Beyond Sleeping on Floors and Pass-the-Candle Reflection." <i>About Campus</i> November/ December (2011): 21-24. Web.	William and Mary Branch Out Alternative Breaks utilizes the framework for Alternative breaks set by Break Away. This includes eight quality components (strong direct service, education, orientation, reflection, reorientation, alcohol and other drug free, and diversity) with the goal of developing active citizens. Greatest limitations lie in the inherent flaws of student self-reporting during process of evaluating trips.
Rhoads, Robert A., and Julie Neururer.	"Alternative Spring Break: Learning through Community Service." <i>NASPA</i> 35.2 (1998): 100-18. Web. 16 Oct. 2013.	Article addresses dilemma that the "learning outcomes of student volunteerism is poorly understood". Community service produces a better understanding of oneself and oneself's values, an understanding of others different from oneself, and clarifies one's understanding of a community and a greater commitment to that community. These outcomes contribute to higher education's goal of creating better citizens. We see these outcomes because service entails mutuality, student learning is enhanced by careful processing including reflection, students must construct their own learning experience, and a clarity of purpose in student volunteerism.
Straus, Tamara.	"Creating Engaged Citizens." <i>Stanford Social Innovation Review</i> Winter (2011): 63-64. Web. 18 Oct. 2013.	Break Away was established in the 1990s to assist in the planning of service trips. It includes a strict framework for service with eight quality components (strong direct service, education, orientation, reflection, reorientation, alcohol and other drug free, and diversity) with the goal of developing active citizens. Participants in Break Away trips have gone on to be more socially and civically engaged.