

# Overview

Before registering for CSER, students must read and agree to the following policy. The LU Serve office reserves the right to deny any organization, supervisor, or student request for CSER approval. Any questions or concerns not covered by the following policies should be directed to LU Serve.

**Location:** Dorm 20, 1st Floor

**Hours:** M-F 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

**Phone:** (434) 582-2325

**FAX:** (434) 582-2660

**E-mail:** [cser@liberty.edu](mailto:cser@liberty.edu)

**Website:** [CSER/LU SERVE](#)

To fulfill Christian/Community Service (CSER) graduation requirements, students should read the policies outlined in these four areas: I) Criteria, II) Enrollment and Participation, III) Evaluation & Credit, IV) CSER Course and Organizations, and Section V) Special Policies.

## I. Criteria

### A. Qualifications of a Valid CSER

1. A student must serve a minimum of 20 hours with one organization in a single term.
2. Organizations may be one of the following:
  - Liberty University department
  - Church or religious establishment
  - Non-profit 501c3 organization
  - Exceptions: These organizations are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Approval is not guaranteed, and students must receive approval before serving.
    - Government organizations
    - Public or private schools and universities
    - Nursing Homes/Retirement Homes
    - International NGOs
    - State Non-Profits
    - Other 501c Organizations
3. An organization representative must complete a CSER contract to be an approved supervisor.
4. Each student must serve under one supervisor, and the service must not occur in a private residence.
5. The student and supervisor must complete the CSER registration and evaluation process for the student to receive credit.

### B. Restrictions:

1. Restricted Compensation: Students may not earn CSER credit if they earn any of the following for the same service hours:\*
  - Monetary compensation
  - Academic credit
  - A scholarship
  - Fulfillment of court-ordered community service
  - Volunteer service at their place of employment\*

*\*Due to the Fair Labor Standards Act, students are ineligible to receive CSER credit with organizations or departments at which they are employed.*

2. Restricted Service Activities
  - Childcare for a private party/family or for-profit organization.

*\*Liberty University does not insure students providing professional services, including those requiring certification or licensure. Students are responsible to contract with the organization for liability coverage to earn CSER credit.*

3. A CSER must fit within the framework and purpose of LU Serve, which may include any or all of the following:
  - Evangelism
  - Discipleship
  - Tutoring/mentoring
  - Civic and community services (this does not include political campaigning)
  - Community improvement
  - Alleviation of human suffering
  - Assisting the underprivileged and less fortunate
  - Education and development of children/adults
  - Educational assistance
  - Stewardship of the earth (Environmental projects, animal care, etc.)
  - See our listing of CSER opportunities that fit these criteria.
4. LU Serve partners with organizations that align with Liberty University's core theological and moral beliefs. Students will not be permitted to earn CSER credit with any organization LU Serve determines does not meet this standard.

**Exceptions to these restrictions must receive prior approval from LU Serve. Without prior approval, a student's CSER may be denied or canceled.**

### **C. Exceptions**

1. Earning CSER with a for-profit organization
  - For-profit nursing homes and retirement communities may be approved for CSER on a case-by-case basis.
2. Earning CSER through an internship

- Students may receive CSER credit for an internship at a non-profit organization if they do not receive monetary compensation or academic credit.
  - If students receive academic credit for an internship at a non-profit organization, they may also earn CSER credit provided they volunteer a minimum of 20 hours of service above and beyond the hours required for the internship.
3. Earning CSER through an academic course.
- Students may not earn CSER credit for service hours required as part of an academic course. However, students may earn CSER credit by completing a Service-Learning component within an academic course. The student should read the Service-Learning policy (Section 5.E.), and the faculty must adhere to LU's Serve's Service-Learning CSER Handbook.

## **II. Enrollment and Participation**

### **A. Basic Student Requirements**

1. All residential undergraduate students are required to earn one CSER credit for each fall and spring semester they are enrolled full-time, up to a maximum of eight semesters. Students enrolled full-time for more than eight semesters are not required to complete more than eight CSERs.
  - Undergraduate students are considered full-time if they are taking 12 or more credit hours in a semester, whether these courses are residential or online.
  - This CSER requirement does not apply to dual-enrolled students unless they have 12 undergraduate credits during their dual-enrolled semester.
  - This only applies to full-time, residential students and not to LU Online students taking residential classes.
2. Students must obtain approval from their CSER supervisor before registering or dropping a CSER.
3. CSER registration occurs through the online CSER Dashboard, which may be accessed through LU Serve's website.
  - Through CSER Dashboard, students may search for existing organizations or submit a request for a new organization to be approved.
  - Students should consult the CSER Dashboard for a historical record of their CSER registrations, evaluations, and grades.
4. Each CSER requires a minimum of 20 hours of volunteer service. Some organizations and supervisors may require more than the minimum. If so, they are required to inform the student in advance.
5. No credit will be given if a student fails to serve a minimum of 20 hours. Hours served during one term may not apply to a CSER in another term.

### **B. Timeline**

1. Students may enroll in CSER during any term. CSER is not required during the winter break or summer semester, but a CSER earned during these terms may count toward the student's graduation requirement.
2. Students must complete their service hours within the term they registered and with the organization and supervisor they registered. Students are not permitted to complete a CSER with multiple organizations or supervisors. Each CSER must be completed with one organization and one supervisor. Switching from one supervisor to another within an organization requires approval from LU Serve.
3. The dates for each term mirror the Registrar's academic calendar.
4. Fall Semester
  - The Add/Drop deadline for Fall CSER is the first Monday in October. After this deadline, Registrar will apply a \$10.00 late fee to the student's account.
  - The LU Serve Expo, which occurs near the beginning of each semester, hosts several CSER organizations and supervisors. Students may attend the Expo to find a CSER opportunity. CSER supervisors are encouraged to represent their organizations and assist students in the registration process.
  - Students are expected to serve with the same organization for one academic year (fall and spring semesters) and should register with the same organization in both fall and spring terms. However, students are permitted to choose a different organization in the spring term. Students should communicate their intentions with their CSER supervisor before the end of the fall semester.
5. Spring Semester
  - The Add/Drop deadline for Spring CSER is the first Monday in March. After this deadline, the Registrar's Office will apply a \$10.00 late fee to the student's account.
6. Summer/Winter Terms
  - The Add/Drop deadline is the first Monday in July for Summer CSER and the first Monday in January for Winter CSER. After these deadlines, the Registrar's office will apply a \$10.00 late fee to the student's account.

#### **D. Enrolling in Multiple CSERs**

1. While students are required to complete one CSER for each semester they are enrolled full-time, they may complete more than one CSER during any semester. There are two ways students may do this:
  - Students may earn double credit for a CSER by serving a minimum of 40 hours of volunteer service with one organization and one supervisor.
  - Students may register with multiple organizations and serve a minimum of 20 hours of volunteer service with each organization. They may earn double credit with each organization as well.

2. Students may not earn more than two CSER credits with the same organization and supervisor in a single term.
3. Students may count these CSER credits toward any semester. Students should contact their academic advisors to ensure they fulfill all graduation requirements. Students may also check their DCP audit.

#### **E. Additional Hours and Fees**

1. Organizations are permitted to require additional hours as long as the students are given advance notice in writing and before registration.
2. LU Serve also recognizes that organizations may incur additional costs by offering CSER opportunities. If so, these organizations are permitted to charge a small fee to offset their additional costs for training or supervision. If the organization chooses to charge a fee, the organization must first receive approval from LU Serve, and the fee must be stated clearly in the organization's CSER description. The organization is required to give students advance notice of any fees they will incur. Charging a fee without prior approval from LU Serve or failing to disclose the fee could result in removal from the CSER program.

### **III. Evaluation and Credit**

#### **A. Evaluation Process**

1. The evaluation process is designed to provide students with feedback on their service. Supervisors are encouraged to use the evaluation form for mentoring and instruction.
2. students must log their hours and complete a self-reflection by the end of each term. Students will do this through the online CSER Dashboard.
3. Once students complete the self-reflection, supervisors will complete an evaluation and assign a grade. Supervisors will do this through the online Supervisor Dashboard.
4. Once the grade is assigned, students will electronically sign the evaluation form acknowledging the supervisor's comments and grade. After the form is signed, a grade will be posted to the student's transcript.

#### **B. Grading and Transcripts**

1. Each student will receive a letter grade of A, B, C, D, or F, according to the following criteria:
  - **A** - student displays exceptional service; excellent attitude; volunteered at least 20 hours
  - **B** - displays satisfactory service; punctuality; appropriate attitude; volunteered at least 20 hours

- **C** - displays acceptable service; usually punctual; acceptable attitude; volunteered at least 20 hours
  - **D** - displays unsatisfactory service; not punctual; volunteered at least 20 hours
  - **F** - designates "failure"; unacceptable service; volunteered less than 20 hours
2. A supervisor may assign a grade of “F” if the student serves less than 20 hours or provides dissatisfactory service. LU Serve will automatically assign a grade of “F” if a student does not complete the evaluation process by the final grade deadline. If a student receives a grade of “F,” the CSER registration will not count toward the student’s graduation requirement but will remain on his or her transcript. The student may remove the “F” by (1) dropping the CSER (with the approval of the supervisor); (2) completing the evaluation process and having the grade updated; or (3) using the repeat policy.

### **C. Credit for Unregistered Service**

1. Students may earn CSER credit for service they performed while an undergraduate student, even if they did not register that service as a CSER.
2. The service hours must meet all CSER requirements and receive approval from LU Serve. Students will be charged a \$10 fee for late registrations.
3. Students cannot receive credit for the service they performed before matriculation as an undergraduate student. CSER credit may only be awarded for service performed after matriculation. For example, an incoming student cannot earn CSER credit for service performed during the summer before matriculating in the fall semester.

### **D. Post-Graduation CSER Requirement**

1. If students have completed all academic coursework but have not earned their degree because they lack CSER credits, the limitations in Section II.D no longer apply. Students may serve as many hours as necessary with one organization in a term to fulfill their graduation requirements.
2. For each CSER credit needed, the student must serve a minimum of 20 hours of volunteer service.

## **IV. CSER Codes and Organizations**

### **A. Pre-Approved CSER Codes**

1. CSER organizations are divided (generally) into categories. These categories do not represent difficulty levels, so students may register for organizations at any level (with supervisor approval).
  - CSER 200: Serving in the Local Church
  - CSER 300: Serving on and through Campus
  - CSER 400: Serving through Liberty University Athletics
  - CSER 500: Serving with Community Partners

- CSER 600: Service-Learning
2. Organizations with pre-approved CSER codes have an established relationship with LU Serve and provide regular opportunities for students to serve. Students who do not find a suitable service opportunity among these organizations may request approval for another organization through a CSER 279 – Church Extension or a CSER 399 – Special Project.
  3. Organizations that supervise ten or more students for two consecutive semesters are eligible for a pre-approved CSER code. They must supervise at least five students per semester to maintain this eligibility.
  4. Service-Learning courses are exempt from this policy and may apply for a pre-approved code without a minimum of five students. However, Service-Learning courses are reviewed on an annual basis.

#### **B. CSER 279 - Church Extensions**

1. The Church Extension CSER course encompasses all students who serve in churches other than Thomas Road Baptist Church. Approved churches must be of similar faith, ethic, philosophy, and practice to the doctrinal position of Liberty University.
2. LU Serve will request a doctrinal statement from the prospective church. Any church or religious organization LU Serve considers to be outside the stream of traditional evangelical orthodoxy concerning doctrine, or ethics will not be permitted as a valid CSER site.
3. The organization is expected to respect the doctrinal and ethical positions of Liberty University.

#### **C. CSER 399 - Special Projects**

1. Special projects are available for students who desire to participate in a service opportunity that is not pre-approved.
2. Special projects encompass any non-profit organization that is not pre-approved and does not fall under CSER 279 – Church Extension. This may include either other religious organizations, non-profit organizations, or exceptions.
3. Each organization and student registration must meet the minimum CSER requirements.
4. Organizations are required to provide documentation of their 501(c)(3) status or state equivalent. Exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

### **V. Special Policies**

**A. BWVW 101/102 and RLGN 105**

1. According to the student's Degree Completion Plan (DCP), BWVW 101 and BWVW 102 are a student's first two CSER requirements. This applies to students who have DCPs predating the Fall 2017 semester. Students who have failed either BWVW course will be required to complete any necessary CSERs to avoid falling behind in their graduation requirements.
2. As of Fall 2017, BWVW 101 and 102 are no longer available. Students who have successfully completed each of these courses will receive one CSER credit for each course. Residential students enrolled after the Fall 2017 semester may be required to complete RLGN 105, which replaced BWVW 101 and 102. Students will not receive any CSER credit for completing RLGN 105. Therefore, all new residential students enrolled at full-time status are encouraged to register for CSER in their first semester.

**B. Student Leadership**

1. Students who serve in leadership roles—Resident Assistant, Resident Shepherd, or Community Group Leader—are eligible to earn CSER credit for their service.
2. The CSER minimum of 20 service hours must exceed any hours these roles require for a student scholarship.
3. CGLs will receive double CSER credit for their service.
4. Student leaders are approved and selected by Residence Life and LU Shepherd, respectively. Resident Directors supervise Resident Assistants, and LU Shepherds supervise Resident Shepherds and Community Group Leaders.

**C. Student Clubs**

1. CSER is available through student clubs that LU Serve approves. Approved student clubs will be given a pre-approved CSER code (e.g., SGA Gardening Club: CSER 311-036).
2. The CSER supervisor must be the club's faculty or staff advisor of record. Students must register the club advisor's name as their CSER supervisor.
3. Club officers may earn CSER credit under the following guidelines:
  - The officer must serve at least 15 of 20 hours by fulfilling their officer role, mentoring club members, or service engagement to the community. A maximum of five hours of club meetings may count toward CSER credit.
4. Club members may earn CSER credit under the following guidelines:
  - The club is an approved CSER organization with a unique code (e.g., SGA Gardening Club: CSER 311-036).

- The club member must serve at least 15 of 20 hours through service engagement to the community. A maximum of five hours of club meetings may count toward CSER credit.

#### **D. LU Send, and LU Serve Now**

1. Students may earn CSER credit through participation in LU Send and LU Serve Now travel.
2. LU Serve Now
  - To earn CSER credit through LU Serve Now, students must be accepted into the LU Serve Now program and must serve a minimum of 20 hours of services in one term with approved LU Serve Now activities.
  - Travel time to and from locations does not count toward CSER.
3. LU Send (Domestic Travel):
  - Students can earn CSER credit the same as serving in a standard CSER course. Students must complete a minimum of 20 hours of service with one organization while on location.
  - Travel time to and from locations does not count toward CSER.
  - Students cannot earn academic credit and CSER credit on the same LU Send trip without prior approval from LU Serve.
4. LU Send (International Travel):
  - Students may earn CSER, which LU Serve must approve during the trip proposal process. Students may earn credit by serving 20 hours of service on location as they would a standard CSER course.
  - The CSER supervisor (trip leader) will evaluate the student's service hours and assign a grade.
  - Travel time to and from locations does not count toward CSER.
  - Students cannot earn academic credit and CSER credit on the same LU Send trip without prior approval from LU Serve.

#### **E. Service-Learning: Earning CSER Credit in an Academic Course**

1. Service-Learning offers a unique way for students to earn academic credit while completing their CSER requirement. This involves completing a service project and reflection assignments in conjunction with the academic course.
2. Students should consult faculty members for Service-Learning opportunities. Faculty should work with LU Serve to have their Service-Learning projects approved for CSER credit.
3. Service-Learning CSER credit requires a minimum of 20 hours of service divided between three categories: Pre-Reflection assignments, Serving with a community partner, and Post-Reflection assignments.

- Pre-Reflection assignments require a minimum of five hours and should include assigned reading about Service-Learning. The faculty member will determine these readings.
  - Serving with a community partner requires a minimum of 10 hours (which cannot include travel time).
  - Post-Reflection assignments require a minimum of five hours.
4. The faculty member must agree to be a CSER supervisor.

## Procedures

### A. REGISTRATION

1. Review the Student Policy Handbook.
2. Ensure that someone at the church or non-profit, preferably a staff member, can serve as your supervisor.
3. Log into your [CSER Dashboard](#).
4. Click on “Register for CSER.”
5. Select the semester for which you need to register (when you complete the volunteering, not necessarily when you need the credit applied).
6. Use the search boxes and filters to find organizations. When you are ready, click “Search.”
7. If you do not see your organization listed, click “Add New Organization” below the search results.
8. Fill out the information form and click “Add Organization.”
9. Ensure your registration information is correct and click the check box to acknowledge the CSER policies.
10. Sign the form and click “Submit for Approval.”
11. After you submit your registration, you will receive a confirmation code and e-mail. Keep a copy of the confirmation. Your supervisor will also receive an e-mail within 24 hours letting him know that you have requested him to take the next step in your registration.

### B. EVALUATION (STUDENT REFLECTION)

1. Go to the CSER webpage, [www.liberty.edu/CSER](http://www.liberty.edu/CSER)
2. Click on “[CSER Dashboard](#).”
3. Log into your Liberty student account.
4. Current CSER registrations are displayed on the right side of the page. On the correct term, click on the “Log Time” button.
5. Log your hours by filling in the required fields. A minimum of 20 hours is required before you can submit the evaluation.
6. After logging a minimum of 20 hours, please click the “Fill out Evaluation” button at the bottom of the screen.
  - If you log at least 40 hours, you may request double credit. Select the checkbox indicating that you are requesting double credit.
7. Complete your personal reflection by filling in all the required fields.
8. Click on “Complete Evaluation.”

### **C. DROP REQUEST**

1. Log into the [CSER Dashboard](#)
2. Click on "View Past CSER."
3. Find the CSER to drop. In the bottom left corner, select "Drop Registration."
  - After submitting a drop request, you will receive a confirmation code and email. Your supervisor must approve the request. Upon approval, your CSER registration will be dropped.

### **D. DISPUTE RESOLUTION**

1. Contact your supervisor or organization to resolve the dispute.
2. Document any communication with the supervisor or organization.
3. If the dispute cannot be resolved between the student, the supervisor, or the organization, the student should contact LU Serve for assistance.

### **E. ADVERTISING A VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY (SUPERVISORS)**

1. Visit the CSER Now page at: <https://www.liberty.edu/osd/lu-serve/cser/cser-now/>
2. Click on the "Advertise" button and complete the provided form.
3. After submitting the form, our office will contact you if we have any questions or concerns regarding your request or the organization's approval process.

Advertised CSER opportunities must meet the following guidelines:

- A church or 501c3 non-profit organization
- Provide at least 20 hours of service to each student
- Provide a supervisor for the students
- Cannot offer compensation for service (academic, monetary, gifts, etc.)
- Cannot take place in a private residence (unless given prior approval)
- Should be within reasonable driving distance from the Liberty University campus

### **F. REQUESTING A SERVICE-LEARNING COURSE (FACULTY)**

1. Navigate to the [SERVICE-LEARNING HOMEPAGE](#)
2. Click "Faculty Resources and Application."
3. Review the [Service Learning CSER Policy Handbook](#)
4. Click "Apply Now."
5. Submit the online application, or complete a hard copy, and submit it to LU Serve.