

Service and Discipleship

The Azusa Pacific community believes that the good news of Jesus' love transforms every people, culture, and condition, that all people are created in the image of God, and that every person matters. This simple but critical belief inspires healthy and God-honoring steps to advance the work of God in the world. The Office of Service and Discipleship (<https://www.apu.edu/spiritual-life/service-discipleship/>) equips and empowers APU students to faithfully pursue God and to participate in God's transformative work in the world through intentional service and discipleship opportunities including, but not limited to, Local Engagement, Global Engagement teams, Discipleship Groups, and G.A.P. Years.

University Service Requirement

Service, one of Azusa Pacific's Four Cornerstones (<https://www.apu.edu/about/cornerstones/#cornerstones>), stands at the heart of the university's local and international outreach, short-term service trips, and service-learning endeavors. The university desires to see the service experience connect to a deeper relationship with Christ, develop in students a greater sense of community, and model scholarship put into practice. To this end, the university desires that every student have an intercultural experience during his or her time at APU.

A student's service may correlate with his or her academic coursework or it may be an opportunity to branch out of the classroom experience. There are a variety of ways for students to engage in service outside of the classroom through the Office of Service and Discipleship. Visit our website to learn more about the Service Requirement (<https://www.apu.edu/spiritual-life/requirements/#service>) and the programs that fall within the requirement, or visit the Office of Service and Discipleship (<https://www.apu.edu/spiritual-life/service-discipleship/>) on East Campus.

Service Opportunities

In addition to the diverse service opportunities offered through Academic Service-Learning (<https://www.apu.edu/service-learning/>) and Study Away (<https://www.apu.edu/global-engagement/>), the Office of Service and Discipleship provides opportunities each year for students to serve in Azusa and greater Los Angeles, throughout the United States, and internationally.

Local Engagement Opportunities

Local service opportunities (<https://www.apu.edu/spiritual-life/service-discipleship/#local-engagement>) encourage students to invest time and energy with neighbors across the street in Azusa and throughout greater Los Angeles. Focused on collaborative relationships with organizations and churches, these service programs give students the chance to invest in the lives of local families and neighborhoods. This past year, opportunities included retirement center ministries, high school youth outreach, local food banks, sports ministries, community development opportunities, children's ministries, and educational immersion trips engaging the city of Los Angeles.

Global Engagement Teams

Each year, the Office of Service and Discipleship mobilizes more than 15 student teams to serve in a short-term capacity in more than 30 countries (<https://www.apu.edu/spiritual-life/service-discipleship/#global-engagement>) around the world, including several teams dedicated to serving within the United States. Depending on the need and partnership with local hosts, the type of ministry during the spring midsemester break and summer months requires all majors and a diversity of strengths and skills among the various teams. Previous partnerships have included a STEM team, youth and community development, evangelistic outreach, children's ministries, economic development, sports ministry, and church partnerships, all designed to advance the work of God in the world.

G.A.P. Years

At Azusa Pacific, service doesn't end at graduation—it should be a part of every student's lifestyle as she or he goes on to make a difference in the world. G.A.P. Years (Go And Prepare) (<https://www.apu.edu/spiritual-life/service-discipleship/#gap-years>) supports students passionate about serving among the world's least-reached people groups. This two-year sending program equips volunteer alumni and connects them with service opportunities overseas through Christ-based community development and mission organizations. During the students' two-year service, APU helps pay their student loans.

Discipleship Opportunities

Discipleship Groups (D-Groups)

This ministry provides the opportunity for groups of 5-10 students to meet for spiritual growth. Each Discipleship Group (D-Group) (<https://www.apu.edu/spiritual-life/service-discipleship/#dgroups>) incorporates prayer, Bible study, accountability, and fellowship in meetings.

Discipleship Retreats

Each year, the Office of Student Discipleship provides students an optional discipleship-focused retreat. This allows students the chance to get away and focus on how they can see God in their own lives, practice spiritual disciplines, and create a community centered around intentional discipleship.