

Religion and CAS: A Guide for Proposing Activities and Projects

IBO Guidelines on Religion and CAS:

"[Religion] is recognized that this is a sensitive and difficult area. Nevertheless, the general rule is that religious devotion, and any activity that can be interpreted as proselytizing, does not count as CAS...Work done by a religious group in the wider community, provided that the objectives are clearly secular, may qualify as CAS...Service (even of a secular nature) that takes place entirely within a religious community can at best only partially meet the aims and learning outcomes of CAS, so there would need to be evidence from students' other activities that all the required outcomes had been met" (CAS Handbook 2010).

To specify, the following are examples of activities deemed to be of "religious devotion" and cannot count:

1. Attending any religious service
2. Actively participating in any religious service (i.e. church choir, being an altar boy)
3. Participating in a Bible or Qur'an study group
4. Group or individual prayer
5. **Proselytizing** in any form violates the IBO definition of service, which states clearly that all service must be a "voluntary exchange" between the student and others. These activities include:
 - A. Recruiting or providing handouts door-to-door in your neighborhood;
 - B. Offering service to or volunteering for an individual in exchange for unsolicited religious presentations by the student OR any other part of that group
 - C. Mission trips
 - D. Participating indirectly or directly in religiously and/or politically virulent issues that are both personal and create divisions rather than unity (i.e. anti-abortion or pro-life activities)
 - E. Any other activity that directly or indirectly promotes your religion to individuals who did not willingly solicit it

Activities That Are Permitted:

Secular activities that occur as part of a religious group can certainly count for CAS provided that they both fit the definitions of creativity, action, or service, does not proselytize, and the student can articulate how that secular activity adheres to one of the eight learning outcomes. Examples include the following:

1. Any secular service activity as part of a church youth group (such as a canned food drive, Thanksgiving baskets, or visiting a soup kitchen)
2. Teaching Catechism (provided that goal is secular in nature, focused on lesson-planning or classroom behavior techniques)**
3. Any fundraising where proceeds go outside the church to the community
4. Organizing team-building activities within a church group
5. Teaching Arabic, but not the Qur'an itself

**Note: This is not proselytizing since recipients are part of the same religious community

If you have questions regarding other activities that are not explained here, please see your CAS advisor or the CAS Coordinator.