

APPENDIX E

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Introduction

Experiential Learning (EL) helps link education to employment by immersing the students in a real-world application of their learning. Research by numerous organizations, including the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AACU) and New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) has shown that EL helps promote student engagement, persistence, and success – especially for historically under-represented student populations.

NSEE Experiential Learning Criteria

The National Society for Experiential Education (NSEE) has identified criteria for what constitutes Experiential Learning:

1. **Authenticity and Intent:** The experience must have a *real world context and/or be useful and meaningful in reference to an applied setting or situation*. All parties must be clear from the outset why experience is the chosen approach to the learning that is to take place and to the knowledge that will be demonstrated.
2. **Preparedness and Planning:** *Clear goals and objectives are identified* for the experiential activity to ensure that participants enter the experience with a sufficient foundation to support a successful experience. There is focus from the earliest stage of the experience on the identified intention and sticking to the goals and objectives.
3. **Reflection:** Reflection is the element that transforms simple experience to a learning experience. The knowledge must be internalized by testing assumptions and hypothesis about the outcomes of the decisions and actions taken. *The outcomes are then weighed against past and future implications* by the student as part of the process.
4. **Orientation and Training:** For the value of the experiential learning activity must be accessible to both the student and instructor and others participating. Therefore it is essential that *appropriate training will take place in and background information related to the experiential activity is provided*.
5. **Monitoring and Continuous Improvement:** The experience will be dynamic/changing and the parties involved all bear responsibility for ensuring that the experience continues to provide the richest learning possible. It is critical that there is a *feedback loop and evaluation tools* in place.
6. **Assessment and Evaluation:** *Outcomes and processes should be systematically documented* with regard to initial intentions and quality outcomes.
7. **Acknowledgement:** Recognition of learning and impact occur throughout the experience by way of the reflective and monitoring processes and through *reporting, documentation and sharing accomplishments*.

Some EL activities have already been nationally recognized as Experiential Learning. LCCC has identified those activities as Tier I EL and include the following activities:

- EL1: Clinical
- EL2: Co-op
- EL3: Fieldwork/Work-based learning
- EL4: Internship
- EL5: Practicum
- EL6: Service Learning
- EL7: Student teaching

Faculty, however, also include other great activities in their courses that provide the students with an experiential opportunity. These would include activities that address the 7 NSEE criteria listed above and would encompass approximately 15 hours of time commitment on the part of the student (2-5 hours of this could be in class work for training or orientation). LCCC wants to acknowledge those activities as EL, as well, and will designate these as Tier II EL8 activities. Examples of such “alternative” EL activities would include, but would not be limited to:

- Civic Engagement: community development or community-based research projects, oral history research, field research (including site visits)
- Creative Activities: art/architecture exhibits, creative projects, original designs, performance, recital, original writing, editorial writing, lighting/set/costume design, portfolio
- Practical Experience: applied workshop, apprenticeship, experiential/inquiry-based lab, entrepreneurship, leadership/management experience, capstone project, human subject research (e.g. sociology or psychology survey, behavior research)

For E8 Experiential Learning activities, additional information will need to be provided about how the course addresses the 7 NSEE Experiential Learning Criteria – describe the course activities that will contribute to the Experiential Learning in the course.

E8 Experiential Learning Documentation Form (ELDF)

Type of experiential learning activity:

Briefly describe how the course activity addresses each of the seven National Society for Experiential Education (NSEE) criteria:

Authenticity and intent

Preparedness and planning

Reflection

Orientation and training

Monitoring and continuous improvement

Assessment and evaluation

Acknowledgement

Identify the learning objective from the course that is linked to your experiential learning activity.

Remember that **ALL sections of the course MUST include the EL component** for the course to be identified as an EL course. EL is a course-wide component, not a section-to-section activity. If the activity will NOT be included in all sections of the course, completion of EL documentation will not be necessary.