Experiential Learning
within Undergraduate Education (UGE)

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Experiential Learning (EL) refers to the process of making meaning from direct experience, or learning from reflection on doing.

As a pedagogy EL has broad appeal with the following noted benefits for undergraduate students:

...deepened and integrated theory and knowledge
.....practice with problem solving and innovation
.......a sense of agency with regard to community impact
..........consolidation of beliefs, ideas, and aspirations
............customization of academic portfolio and credentials
...............competitive edge for honors, awards, and graduate opportunities
History and Status of EL

Once viewed as a radical departure from traditional education and the cornerstone of progressive models, EL is widely embraced as a complement to traditional instruction.

SUNY 2013:
As SUNY addresses the rising costs of delivering post-secondary education in the 21st century, we must reflect on the needs of our students, our communities, and our state and nation as we continue to build a better SUNY. On top of the traditional study of theory and practice, we must now turn our attention to giving our students opportunities to apply their knowledge and gain work experience while earning a degree, making them globally competitive amongst their peers and ready to enter the workforce. This kind of hands-on education is one area where SUNY can deliver the value-added of attending our institutions. To this end, SUNY has codified existing opportunities into a larger portfolio which we are calling “Experiential Education.” This structure will allow us to expand the opportunities offered to our students, while supporting and strengthening the work already being done on our campuses.
Common Forms of Experiential Learning

- Capstone Courses
- Clinical Rotations
- Collaborative Assignments
- Co-ops
- Field Work
- Internships
- Performance
- Practicum
- Teaching

- Diversity and Global Learning - travel and cultural experiences which combine academic learning and extra-academic experiences designed to enhance personal growth and increase awareness of global diversity and differences

- Service and Community-Based learning - Structured experiences within community where specific learning objectives balance volunteer service with substantive intellectual reflection

- Scholarly Communities - membership and participation in living-learning communities organized around shared intellectual interests

- Undergraduate Research - Mentored scholarly or creative activity that leads to the production of new knowledge
Student Benefits

Deep Learning, Retention and Personal Growth
- Attracting students
- Retention
- Students’ assessment of their own learning
- Deeper mastery of material
- Improved sense of practical applications
- Personal growth

Employment and Employability
- 74% of employers would like colleges and universities to emphasize more the ability to apply knowledge and skills to real world settings through internships or hands-on experiences (AA&U)
- 42% of seniors who had internship experiences and applied for a job received at least one job offer (NACE)
- Employers taking part in the NACE 2010 Internship Survey reported that 45% of their class hires came from their own internship programs

Admission to Graduate School
- Also national fellowships and scholarships
EL has been shown to support many goals and outcomes related to strategic priorities

- Enrollment
- Retention
- Diversity
- Community Engagement
- General Education
- Workforce Readiness
- Innovation and Entrepreneurship
- Development

Not surprising that Experiential Learning is broadly embraced as a high impact institutional investment
EL and Liberal Arts

The national Leadership council (AAC&U) recommends that every student engage in some form of field-based learning and that faculty and staff create reflective forums for students to learn collaboratively and systematically from these experiences.

To date, 340 colleges and universities have pledged to advance essential liberal arts outcomes within general education, by adopting LEAP high impact practices which include EL practices:

- Undergraduate research
- Diversity/ global learning
- Learning communities
- Service-learning, community based learning
- Internships
- Capstone programs
EL At UB: Broad Participation

Breadth of offerings, programs, and resources both within academic programs and centralized offices

Estimates of student participation in EL activities suggest: Difficult to track participation

- The number of students who engaged in academic service-learning: 609
- The number of students who engaged in at least 20 hours of any kind of community service per academic term: 1904
- The total number of all community service hours engaged in by the institution's students: 29323
EL Within UGE

Bounty of programs and offerings related to Experiential Learning and Engagement

- Academies
- Cora P Maloney College
  - Daniel Acker Scholars Program; UB-STEM programs (LSAMP; Bridge to the Doctorate; S-STEM); Trio Grants; ACE and EOP
- Center for Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity (CURCA)
- Honors College

Evolving effort to accommodate new lenses related to EL opportunities including:
- Service learning
- Academic internships
- Mentored research
- Travel-based courses
New Office Within UGE

Associate Dean for Student Engagement and Experiential Learning

- portal for engagement and experiential learning within UGE
- incubator for new courses and offerings
- collect and share data related to student engagement and EL
- connect with external constituents around UGE offerings
- Collaborate with other offices and units within and outside UB
Mara B. Huber, PhD
Associate Dean
Mara holds a PhD in Cognitive Psychology and formerly served as founding director of Center for Educational Collaboration; director of UB- Buffalo Public Schools Partnership; and Special Assistant to the President for Educational Initiatives

Tim Tryjankowski
Tim has served as Founding Director of CURCA since 2003 and previously worked in Admissions in various capacities; he also sits on the Research Foundation’s Enhancing STEM Research Experiences Pilot Program Assessment Team and the SUNY Faculty Senate Undergraduate Education subcommittee.

Katie Biggie (PhD Candidate)
Katie served as director of Kids VotingWNY and led a number of civics and community-based initiatives through the CEC; is co-founder of the Buffalo Tanzania Education Project (BTEP), and is leading a UGE course to Tanzania for Wintersession. She will be working with faculty and departments to help develop EL courses with a focus on travel and global experiences

Cathleen Morreale, PhD
Cathleen brings extensive experience and affiliations related to mentoring, academic internships, and service-learning and is a trained facilitator for various high impact and innovative pedagogies and assessment tools. She also teaches the Public Service Internship Program through CPMC.

Jessica Wangelin (PhD Candidate)
Formerly with Community Relations, Jessica brings a wealth of experience in program development and communications, with a focus on service learning and Experiential Learning. She will serve as the contact for related resources and information and will help to build out this new office and its links to existing programs and opportunities for students and faculty.
CUR Enhanced Institutional Membership
All UB faculty, students, and staff now have access to full portfolio of resources, opportunities, and trainings offered through CUR. Contact Tim Tryjankowski at CURCA for details (tat@buffalo.edu)

Assessment Roundtable with NY Campus Compact
Leaders from the Sienna Research Institute and NY Campus Compact will present and discuss data from the National Assessment of Service and Community Engagement (NASCE) Survey October 16th, UB Location TBD, contact Jessica Wangelin (jbiegaj@buffalo.edu)

Genteels Lecture: Experiential Learning
Ira Harkavy, University of Pennsylvania
November 14th, UB Student Union, contact TLC for details