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Explore. Create. Innovate in your region!
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PARALLEL SESSION 3: Education for innovation….. Experiential Learning

The knowledge to compete

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Experiential Learning

Experiential learning is the application of theory and academic content to real-world experiences, either within the classroom, the community, or the workplace, which advances program or course-based learning outcomes that are specifically focused on employability skills.

It may be undertaken independently or in teams. It advances learning outcomes and encourages reflection and application of skills and knowledge in contexts that prepare students for the workplace and civil society.

Learning occurs when someone creates knowledge though experiential transformations (Kolb, 1984).
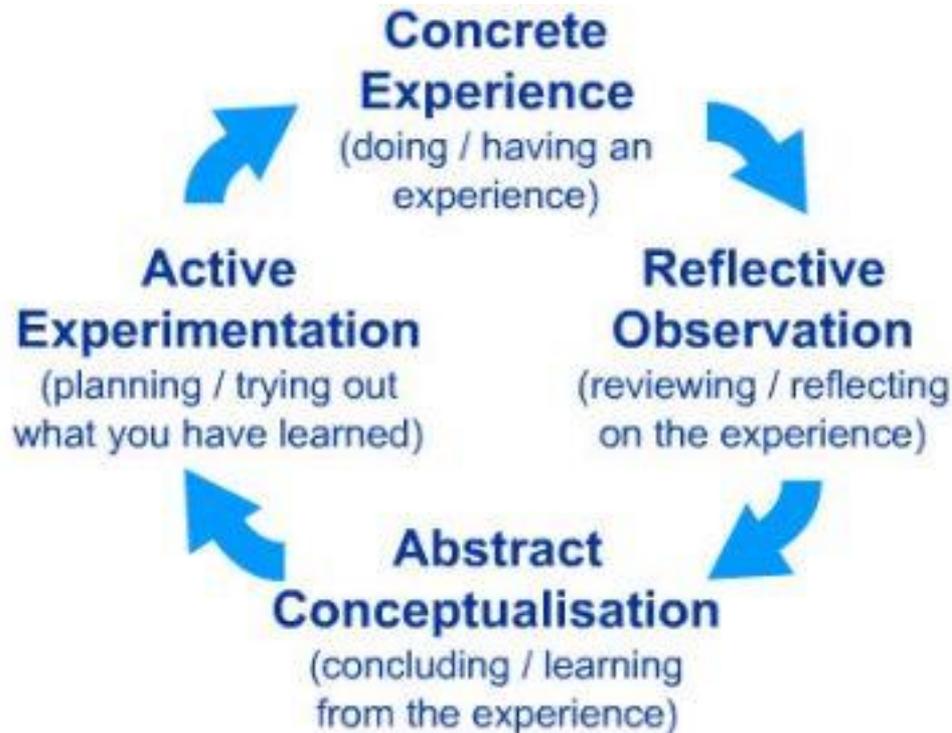
Concrete Experience: The learner encounters a new experience or engages in a reinterpretation process of an existing experience.

Reflective Observation: The learner reviews and reflects on the new experience and identifies any inconsistencies between experience and understanding.

Abstract Conceptualization: Through the reflective process, the learner creates a new idea/concept or modifies an existing abstract concept – analyzing the concepts and forming conclusions and generalizations.

Active Experimentation: The learner plans and tries out what was learned and is able to apply the new knowledge to other situations – conclusions and generalizations are used to tests hypothesis and thus the learner engages in new experiences.

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The conditions needed to ensure that experiential learning is effective……..

- Experiential learning occurs when carefully chosen experiences are supported by reflection, critical analysis and synthesis.

- Experiences are structured to require the learner to take initiative, make decisions and be accountable for results.

- Throughout the experiential learning process, the learner is actively engaged in posing questions, investigating, experimenting, being curious, solving problems, assuming responsibility, being creative and constructing meaning.

- Learners are engaged intellectually, emotionally, socially, soulfully and/or physically. This involvement produces a perception that the learning task is authentic.

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The conditions needed to ensure that experiential learning is effective……..

- The results of the learning are personal and form the basis for future experience and learning.

- Relationships are developed and nurtured: learner to self, learner to others and learner to the world at large.

- The educator and learner may experience success, failure, adventure, risk-taking and uncertainty, because the outcomes of experience cannot totally be predicted.

- Opportunities are nurtured for learners and educators to explore and examine their own values.

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The conditions needed to ensure that experiential learning is effective……..

- The educator's primary roles include setting suitable experiences, posing problems, setting boundaries, supporting learners, insuring physical and emotional safety, and facilitating the learning process.

- The educator recognizes and encourages spontaneous opportunities for learning.

- Educators strive to be aware of their biases, judgments and pre-conceptions, and how these influence the learner.

- The design of the learning experience includes the possibility to learn from natural consequences, mistakes and successes.

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Types of experiential learning

Applied research project

Involves, as a major course component, a process of substantial discovery, synthesis and/or application of information to solving a particular problem in an original way. The research process can be undertaken independently or in teams.

Campus entrepreneurship/incubators

Students cultivate, organize and/or manage a business, social enterprise or creative idea from development through implementation.

Case studies

Provides an opportunity for students to apply their learning to real-life scenarios by working through complex, ambiguous real-world problems. Learner are encouraged to work out their own approach to defining, analyzing and solving the challenge.

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Types of experiential learning

Co-op

Co-operative education links an academic program with progressive discipline-related work experience and brings substantial, unique benefits to students, employers and the university. Students obtain valuable paid work experience during their course of study that directly relates their classroom learning to relevant employer needs and practices.

Field experience

Field experiences may be directed or mediated by the instructor and include a range of time-intensive endeavours that require varying levels of student interaction. For example, field experiences include short-term field trips, fieldwork and observational activities, such as classroom observations or attending a performance. Field experiences may or may not involve student interaction with members of the external community. Field experiences account for work-integrated educational experiences not encompassed by other forms, such as co-op, clinical placements, practicum and internships.

Types of experiential learning

Industry/community research projects

Students work on a project that has been developed through collaboration with a community partner or organization to identify and analyze issues or opportunities and develop solutions. This can take place in the community or the classroom. Not only must the collaboration satisfy the student learning outcomes of the course but it must also satisfy the needs of the partner.

Interactive simulations

Students engage with academic content through content-specific activities such as simulations, demonstrations, archival or design work and/or role-plays. Activities are designed to simulate "real-life" situations.

Internships

Internships refer to work assignments that are part of academic programs and allow students to apply and expand their knowledge and skills in a work-related, professional environment. Internships can be part-time or full-time jobs, for which the student may receive reimbursement. Students may submit a final work report. Students' work is evaluated based on predetermined learning goals set by all stakeholders involved.

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Types of experiential learning

Labs

Provides hands-on application of course concepts in a controlled environment, including activities such as observing, measuring, testing and experimenting. Labs may be scientific or technological in nature, however, other types of labs may also qualify, such as language labs.
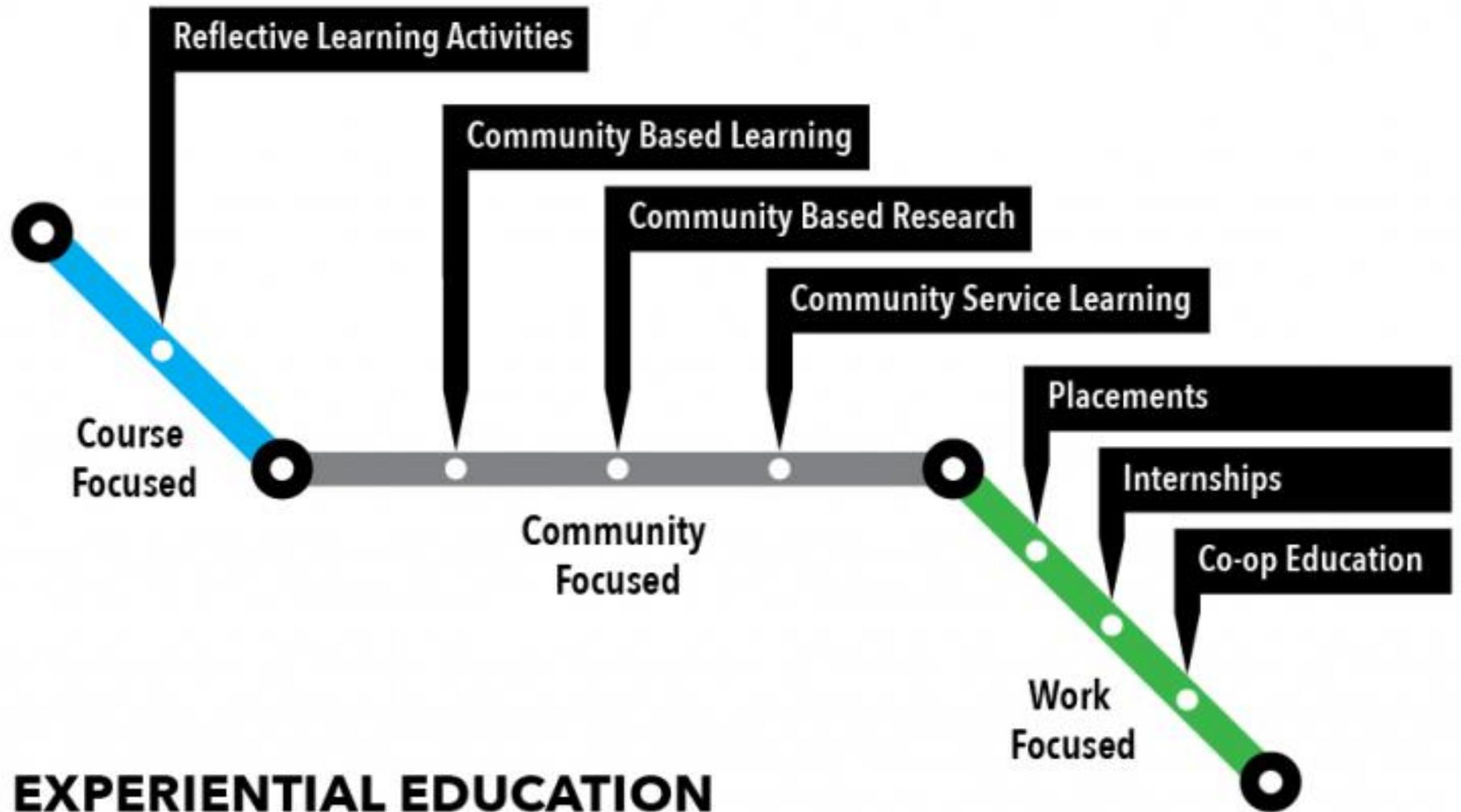
Performance-based learning

Involves an individual or team-produced dramatic, artistic or musical performance, exhibit or display that is prepared for an audience. This activity constitutes an integral component of the course.

Practica or placements (including clinical placements)

Placements and practica provide the opportunity for students to apply theories and concepts they have learned to a supervised practice-related environment and provide relevant reflections of such work. Usually these are linked to professional programs. Students are generally not paid for their work, but they receive credit and are evaluated. Placements/practica often include ongoing classroom instruction. This includes clinical placements

Service learning

Integrates unpaid community service that addresses community needs into a credit-bearing course with an explicit educational framework that includes student reflection on the experience.

EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION

Thank you!