

Criteria For Effective Experiential Education

Experiential education should enhance the relevance of academic content to the real world. It should provide opportunities for students to develop and apply their knowledge beyond the classroom as well as contribute to their psychosocial development.

Curricular design in experiential learning depends on a number of factors including:

1. Course learning objectives
2. Experience of the instructor with the pedagogy of experiential education (faculty experiment with curricular design and may make course modifications and adjustments from one semester to the next)
3. The type of engaged learning experience under consideration (see the continuum of engaged experiential learning)
4. The number of students expected to enroll in the class
5. The classroom structure (i.e. traditional, online, hybrid, large lecture)

An effective experiential learning course should include: a connection to academic learning, analysis of connection between academic content and service, mutual benefit involvement, student preparation and support, plan for assessment and sustainability.

I. Enhance Academic Learning:

The following categories of engaged experiential learning was designed to serve as guide to selecting the type of experience that best fits a course and/or student. Visit www.kent.edu/experiential for a more comprehensive description and examples.

*Category 1	Category 2	Category 3	Category 4
Engaged Learning Broadens students' view of community and offer opportunities to serve.	Engaged Service-Learning Broadens an appreciation of academic content, and forwards the goals of an organization.	Engaged Service Scholarship Promotes an understanding of civic issues and provide a rationale for creating community solutions.	Engaged Community Development Facilitates collaboration to develop, implement, and sustain locally controlled initiatives.
Types of Engaged Learning	Types of Engaged Service-Learning	Types of Engaged Service-Scholarship	Types of Engaged Community Development
Community-Based Learning Campus-Based Learning Exposure to campus and community-based environments that contributes to an understanding of organizational efforts and real-world issues.	Service-Learning Project-Based Service-Learning Using course objectives to integrate community service, enrich the learning experience, promote civic purpose, and strengthen communities.	Basic Service-Scholarship Applied Service-Scholarship Combining service-learning and research methods to develop skills in information gathering and critical analysis to guide objective plans for community solutions.	Community Based Advocacy Community Development Using research findings to create public dialogue, and promote the development and implementation of effective long-term, autonomous community solutions.
<i>*Each category of experiential learning builds on the previous</i>			<i>Kandakai and Shuck, 2009</i>

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- A course syllabus should include:
 - Experiential learning objectives. To explore development of learning objectives visit the [Faculty Professional Development Center \(fpdc\)](#).
 - Explicitly describe the connection between the experiential learning activity and the academic components of the course. Sample syllabi can be accessed from the [OEECE website](#).

II. Prepare students for the experiential learning component:

- Explore course objectives to engage students in a manner that is relevant to the course. Use the OEECE website (www.kent.edu/experiential) as a resource to explore course activities and identify potential partnerships.
- Announce experiential learning opportunities to the class and include the following:
 - A syllabus containing a clear description of the engaged learning activity and expectations.
 - *If course activities include civic engagement*, provide students with community/campus partner's contact information.
- Inform students of other requirements such as training, specific skill-sets, or background checks.

III. Provide relevant and meaningful engagement for all involved:

- A course syllabus (or supplemental materials) should provide:
 - A description of the partnering community agency (if applicable).
 - Statements regarding the significance and benefits of the activities.
 - MOUs to clarify expectations and establish agreement among stakeholders. For assistance in developing meaningful partnerships and projects, contact the OEECE Coordinator, Tina L. Kandakai, PhD at x28723 or tkandaka@kent.edu.

IV. Student assessment and evaluation:

The learning experience should include structured time for students and community participants to reflect on and analyze the service experience. Providing structured reflective discussions and/or assignments can facilitate students ability to connect civic engagement to course content and, conversely, to apply the content to the service experience.

- A course syllabus should include:
 - A description of how students will engage in activities that demonstrate an understanding of the connection between civic engagement and course objectives.

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Reflective analysis of various forms can be used. For more information on reflection and assessment, visit [Campus Compact](#).

- Student assessment for civic engagement activities should be incorporated into the grade requirements and clearly written in the course syllabus. For example, a community service project may constitute 20 percent of the overall course grade.

V. Sustainability

Sustainability in experiential learning refers to the frequency of assignments, the duration of the activity (i.e. one-time or weekly activities), length of partnership, and type of service (one-time versus on-going programs). Longer term sustainability is influenced by departmental and faculty commitment to offer the course as a service-learning course.