

Experiential Learning Definition

Experiential Learning is a structured, curriculum-related endeavor (either on campus or off) which asks the student (of any class) to apply their knowledge and skills outside the traditional classroom experience. It is characterized by variability and uncertainty; can be course-based or sought independently; and in its best form is conducted through four phases: 1.) design, 2.) conduct, 3.) reflect and 4.) evaluate. Experiential Learning endeavors fall into three tiers¹ and encompass activities including internships, service learning, undergraduate research, study abroad, and other creative and professional work experiences which are seen as a progressive and developmental process.

4 PHASES:

DESIGN

What will the experiential learning endeavor look like?

The first step of the process will be a student working in tandem with a professor in their major and a representative in the Internships & Placement office. Together they will explore opportunities they deem appropriate for the student considering their goals, academic load/schedule, major, etc. This is where the student's learning objectives will be laid out and a 'game plan' will be made.

CONDUCT

Actually participating/ 'doing' the experience

The student will acquire relevant, hands-on experience. If it is an internship or related to a course, the student will also keep up with their learning objectives and other related coursework as deemed appropriate by the faculty internship adviser/professor.

REFLECT

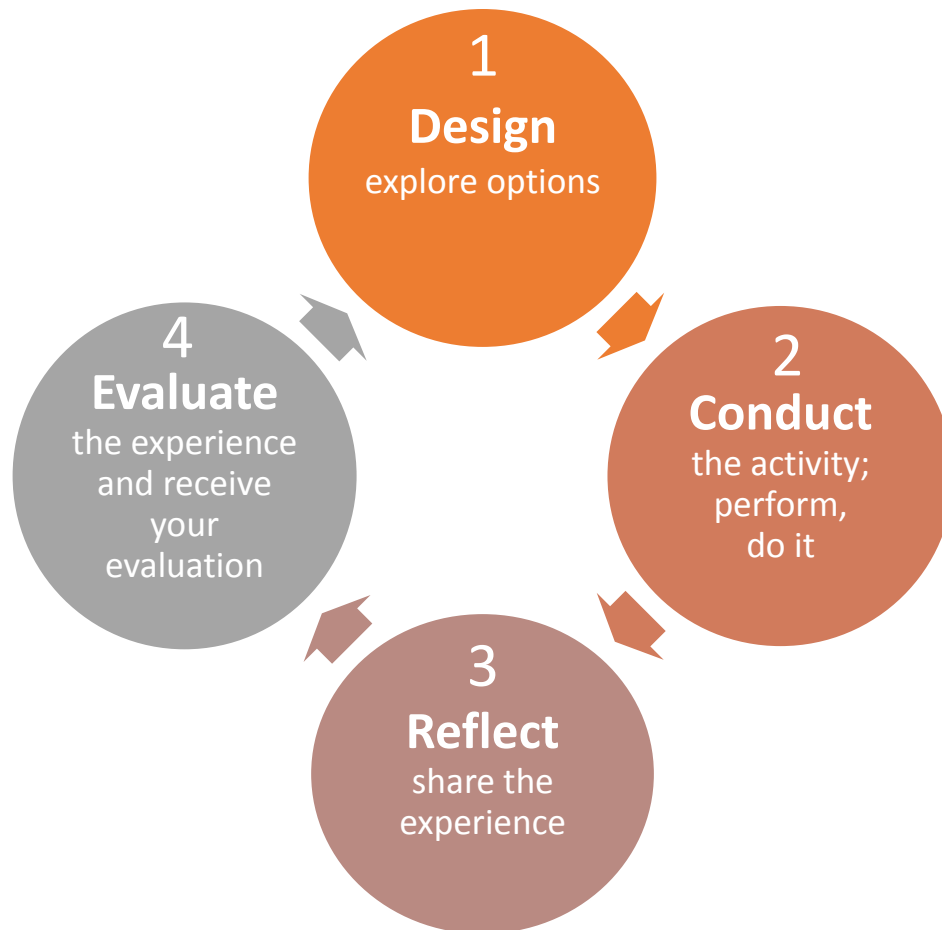
What happened? What did you learn? How will this make you more marketable?

If the experience is tied to a class, the reflection will take part within the class or with the faculty internship adviser. If it is not tied to a class, the reflection can take place with a representative of the Internships & Placement office. . This reflection may be one of many forms such as written reflection paper, a presentation, discussion, a journal, video diary, blog, etc.

EVALUATE

How did you do?

Students will receive/conduct evaluations throughout their experience (if it's an internship). If the experience was being conducted for academic credit, the student will be formally evaluated by the instructor in the form of a grade and the student should sit down with the Internships & Placement representative to informally evaluate their overall experience so it can be tracked (this information is useful in determining future experiences/opportunities for students).

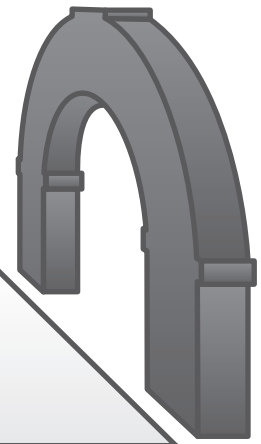


1.

What are the Tiers of Experiential Learning?

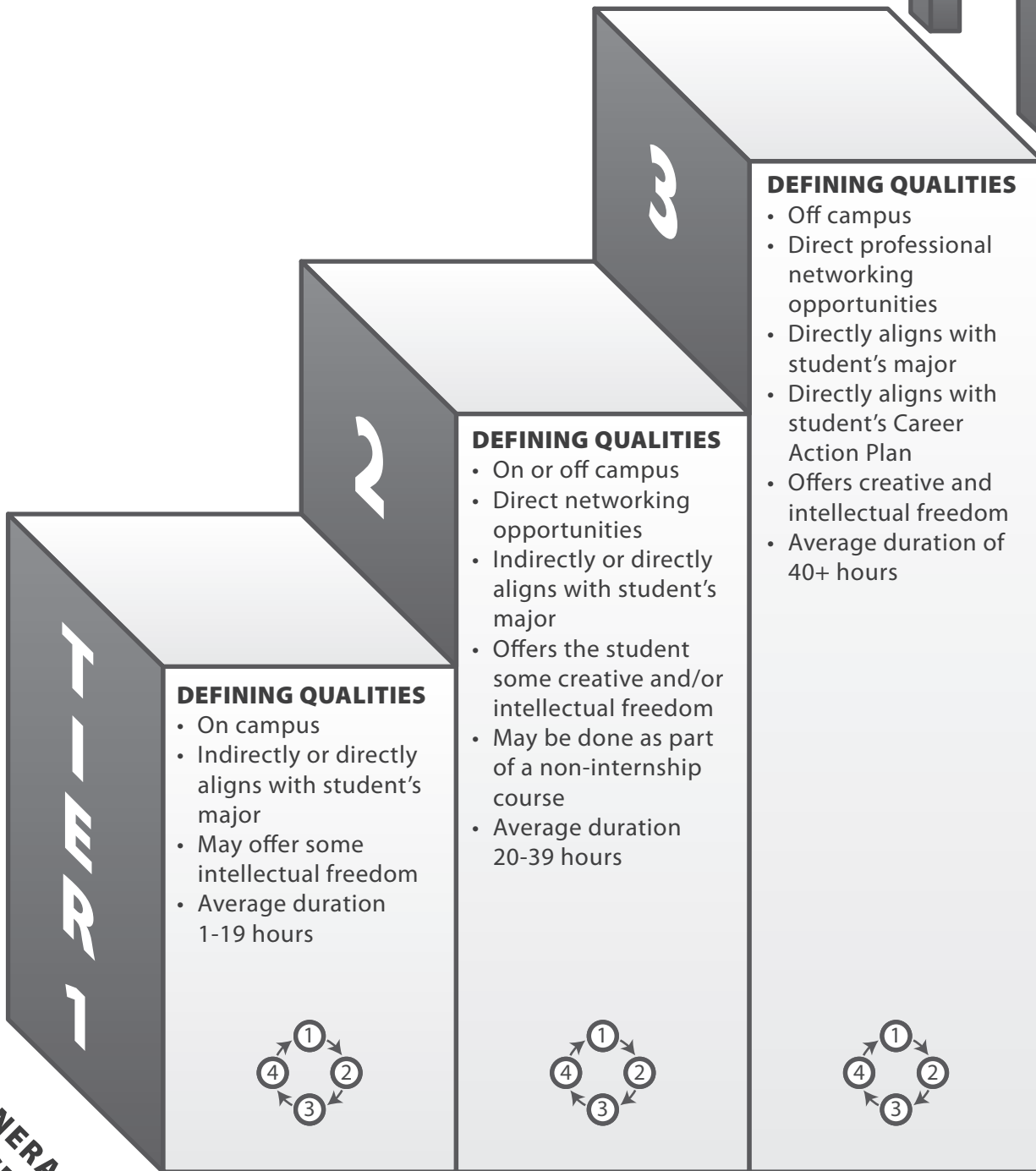
Tiers of Experiential Learning are based on the generally perceived scale of benefit the student receives by participating in the particular endeavor. Experiential learning opportunities with a lower tier value are of lesser perceived value—from a career development perspective—than those of a higher tier. Characteristics of the experience affecting the tier are things such as whether it's on campus or off, whether it provides professional networking opportunities, the degree of creative and intellectual freedom offered to the student, and the degree to which it aligns with the student's major and career action plan. Value is also perceived through the variety and diversity of the experiential learning endeavors. Refer to the definition for examples of what is generally considered to be Experiential Learning.

THE TIERS OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING



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GENERALLY PERCEIVED BENEFIT

ON CAMPUS

OFF CAMPUS

