

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING GUIDE

The HONORS COLLEGE Service and Experiential Learning contract is required of all Honors service and experiential projects. Please review the guidelines carefully to ensure that your project/activity will be approved.

WHAT IS EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING?

Kolb describes experiential learning as "the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Knowledge results from the combinations of grasping and transforming the experience."

Examples of service and experiential learning activities include:

- Community outreach
- Study-abroad or semester exchanges
- Career shadowing and mentoring
- Internships
- Undergraduate research or professional scholarship
- Leadership activities
- Creative activities and performances

The Experiential Learning activity is designed to provide students with enhanced opportunities in applied research and problem solving in a practice setting. Successful learning projects require structures to formalize the activities and provide clarity to the project outcomes. Several concerns must be addressed before engaging in an experiential learning activity:

- Alignment of the activities to the Honors learning outcomes;
- Careful planning about expectations, timeline, and reflections;
- Documenting the skills and knowledge that are being refined and developed;
- Oversight by a mentor, faculty member, or expert in the field or activity; and
- Finally, students must consider how the activities connect to education goals both short and long-term.

Experiential Learning activities are competency-based with artifacts and reflections in an ePortfolio. Students are required to complete 45 service hours for each experiential learning activity.

WHAT ARE THE HONORS PROGRAM OUTCOMES FOR EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING?

Projects must meet at least one of the five outcomes listed below.

1. Students will learn the arts of inquiry and conversation, culminating in structured research and creative endeavors, academic writing, oral presentations, and creative production.
2. Students will practice the organizational skills of collaboration, planning, and assessment, and the personal skills of self-discipline and task management, culminating in the capacity to guide or direct group-based work.
3. Students will understand the importance of civic involvement and giving back to the larger community, culminating in occasions of service that draw upon scholarship, creativity, and leadership capacities.

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4. Students will incorporate an understanding of diverse global and cultural perspectives in their scholarly or creative inquiry, culminating in an international exchange of ideas and activities.

5. Students will incorporate an understanding of diverse disciplinary perspectives in their scholarly/creative inquiry, culminating in a collaborative, interdisciplinary project.

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING ACTIVITIES?

- Students must complete the Service and Experiential Learning Contract on the Honors College website by the designated deadline;
- Students must designate the type of project that is being proposed, such as career shadowing, internship, service project, research project, leadership activity, or professional activity.
- Students must provide a timeline including a log of activities and critical reflections.
- Students must submit their materials in the Honors ePortfolio (Blazeview Honors Community).
- Students must designate a faculty member, supervisor, mentor, or other expert in the field as a point of contact.
- Students must have clear goals and expectations for the activities.

HOW ARE ACTIVITIES EVALUATED?

Assessment is an integral part of the learning process. As noted, all materials must be formalized before, during, and after the activity. These materials must be submitted to the Blazeview portal and reviewed for credit. Attached to this document are guided reflections and assessments for students to complete.

ARE THERE ASSIGNMENTS FOR EXPERIENTIAL AND SERVICE LEARNING?

In alignment with KOLB's four components of the experiential learning cycle, reflection is an essential part of the learning process. The reflection sections are sequentially completed at the point of the experience or activity.

CONCRETE EXPERIENCE – FIRST STEP OF THE EXPERIENTIAL PROCESS

1. Describe your activity.
2. What made you choose this activity?
3. What are your short and long-term goals related to this activity?
4. How does this activity connect to one of the Honors outcomes listed above?
5. What are the necessary skills for this activity?
6. What are your notions of the work or activity ahead?
7. What are some challenges you expect to encounter?

Planning

8. Keep a daily log of activities with specific comments about your observations
9. Make careful notes concerning your expectations and the reality of the experience
10. Plan to put these reflections in a document such as a paper, video, blog, etc.

REFLECTIVE OBSERVATION – SECOND STEP SHORTLY AFTER THE EXPERIENCE

Academic

1. Did you connect your experiences to one of the Honors outcomes? Which one?

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2. Can you find any articles or other materials related to practice, leadership, or experiences similar to yours?
3. Did you have clearly identifiable goals that you review regularly?

Career Development

1. Did your activities relate to your future career goals?
2. Did the activities provide you with group learning and collaborative opportunities? If so, how do you function in a group?
3. What skills did you develop for your portfolio or resume?

Observations

1. Have your activities exposed you to new and unique opportunities, ideas, experiences?
2. Did you find that the outside of class activities expands your learning opportunities?
3. Has less structured learning posed a challenge for you?

Personal Reflections

1. Were there any items that you feel are most important to document from this experience?

ABSTRACT CONCEPTUALIZATION – THIRD STEP CONTEMPLATING PREVIOUS EXPERIENCES AND DEVELOPING OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THESE EXPERIENCES

Assessment

1. What Honors Learning Outcomes do you feel were successfully met?
2. What evidence can you provide to support your success?
3. Do you have evidence of support from a supervisor, mentor, or faculty member?
4. What reflections and/or other documentation can you provide to support successful outcomes?
5. Has this experience changed your perspectives, goals, or career objectives in any way?
6. Do you feel that you have a better understanding of leadership, teamwork, or collaboration?

ACTIVE EXPERIMENTATION – FOURTH STEP DEALS WITH THE PROCESS OF TESTING EXISTING IDEAS BY CREATING NEW EXPERIENCES

1. Are there any things that you would do differently?
2. Will this experience assist you with future tasks?
3. Are there lateral skills or ideas that presented opportunities for learnings (such as collaboration, time management, and organization)
4. Kolb's cycle represents ongoing development and learning, do you find that this process will be helpful in future/further experiences?