

NMSU Strategic Initiative to Advance Experiential Learning Modified from Vision 2020 Document, to be presented to ADAC, ADC, and Faculty Senate

Building upon NMSU's best practices and significant footprint in *Experiential Learning*, the Regents' Student Success Committee will collaborate with the Faculty Senate in promulgating *Experiential Learning* across the institution. To support this effort, members of the Central Administration will work with Faculty through the Faculty Senate in an effort to embody and quantify *Experiential Learning* across all academic degree programs. An initial framework follows, intended to serve only as a starting point for this effort.

Definition

Experiential Learning is defined as students "applying their knowledge and conceptual understanding to real-world problems or situations where the instructor directs and facilitates learning."¹ *Experiential Learning* and development is achieved through personal experience and involvement – it is an applied knowledge endeavor. *Experiential Learning* may include:

- Off-campus paid or unpaid internship or co-op: medical, teaching or scientific practicum; or study abroad;
- On-campus paid or unpaid intern experience: research internship, academic mentor internship, technical developer internship, marketing internship, business services internship, etc. The student employment experience may or may not be supported by work study funds;
- On-campus or off-campus paid or unpaid leadership experience or work-related scholarship;
- Course-Based Undergraduate Research Experience (CURE);² and
- Documentable service learning activity that is part of an existing class.

In addition, the learning experience:

- Calls for a specified amount of time to be invested (at least 100 hours), dispersed over one or multiple experiences (e.g., experience one - 25 hours, experience two - 25 hours, experience 3 - 50 hours). The student will write a reflection that summarizes what he/she learned during the course of each experience. The reflection will be evaluated by a faculty member (supervisor of the experience) in the student's home department.
- The hundred-hour obligation with reflection is roughly equivalent to a 3-credit hour course. Making the connection between time spent in experiential learning and credit hours helps both students and faculty understand that the experience should be accompanied by significant learning.
- May or may not be credit bearing.
- May or may not be a defined element of a major.
- Will be certified by the department head, based upon an acknowledgement by the supervisor of the experience, and will be placed on the student's transcript.

Milestones

- December 2016 – The Board of Regents formally includes *Experiential Learning* in Vision 2020.

¹ The University of Texas at Austin, Faculty Innovation Center, available at <https://facultyinnovate.utexas.edu/teaching/strategies/overview/experiential-learning>

² CURE is detailed at https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Colleen_Mclinn2/publication/260486291_Assessment_of_Course-Based_Undergraduate_Research_Experiences_A_Meeting_Report/links/5401d8510cf2c48563af5165.pdf

- February 2017 - Inventory of *Experiential Learning* by academic program is begun, with the expectation that this process will occur in parallel with the development of a plan of action noted below. This inventory will also be updated every six months.
- February 2017 - The Regents' Student Success Committee leadership engages with the Faculty Senate to initiate a faculty driven curricular process for *Experiential Learning*.
- Feb-Apr 2017 - The Faculty Senate Chair and Provost engage multiple academic bodies (relevant deans, department heads and Senate members) in providing an initial assessment and plan of action, which may include opportunities to leverage and share best practices across programs, pilot initiatives, consider scholarly evaluation of outcomes, etc.
- May 2017 - Review of plan of action by the ADAC, ADC, and Faculty Senate, leading to implementation in fall of 2017.
- August 2017 - Completion of an *Experiential Learning* plan for each academic program, detailing types of experience, credit bearing /no credit, preparation, number of hours required, etc.
- March 2018 - Vision 2020 and NACE ³ reporting of *Experiential Learning* - the percent of students graduating with an embedded learning experience by academic program, updated at least annually.
- August 2019 - Full adoption of *Experiential Learning* across all new and existing academic programs in 2019-2020 (unless a meritorious case is made by the program's faculty advising against adoption).

DRAFT

³ National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE): <https://www.nacweb.org/>