

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

the process of developing knowledge and skills from direct experience; **LEARNING THROUGH ACTION**

Based on the foundation of Dewey (1916) and Kolb's (1984) research, experiential models involve: engaging in active experience, reflecting on the experience in a purposeful way, developing generalizations from the experience, and testing implications of the generalizations in new social contexts.

HIGH-IMPACT PRACTICES

High-Impact Practices (HIPs) typically include considerable time and effort, facilitate learning outside of the classroom, require meaningful interactions with faculty and other students, encourage collaboration with diverse others, and provide frequent and substantive feedback.

1

FIRST YEAR SEMINAR: Students are encouraged to integrate learning across courses and to be involved with "big questions" that matter beyond the classroom. Students take two or more linked courses as a group and work closely with one another and with their professors. Many learning communities explore a common topic and/ or common readings through the lenses of different disciplines. Some deliberately link "liberal arts" and "professional courses"; others feature service learning. The first year seminars / experiences bring small groups of students together with faculty or staff on a regular basis. The highest-quality first-year experiences place a strong emphasis on critical inquiry, frequent writing, information literacy, collaborative learning and other skills that develop students' intellectual and practical competencies.

2

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH: Students are involved with actively contested questions, empirical observation, cutting-edge technologies, and the sense of excitement that comes from working to answer important questions. This can emphasize writing at all levels of instruction and across the curriculum, including final-year projects. Students may be encouraged to produce and revise various forms of writing for different audiences in different disciplines. Approaches range from being writing intensive and collaborative in assignments and projects.

3

INTERNSHIPS, PRACTICUM, AND STUDENT TEACHING: Students gain direct experience in a work setting - usually related to their career interests - and to give them the benefit of supervision and coaching from professionals in the field. If the internship is taken for course credit, students complete a project or paper that is approved by a faculty member.

4

SERVICE LEARNING: Students benefit from a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection. Students gain direct experience with issues they are studying in the curriculum and with ongoing efforts to analyze and solve problems in the community. A key element in these programs is the opportunity students have to both apply what they are learning in real-world settings and reflect in a classroom setting on their service experiences. These programs model the idea that giving something back to the community is an important college outcome, and that working with community partners is good preparation for citizenship, work, and life.

5

DIVERSITY AND GLOBAL LEARNING (STUDY ABROAD): Courses and programs that help students explore cultures, life experiences, and worldviews different from their own. These studies—which may address U.S. diversity, world cultures, or both—often explore "difficult differences" such as racial, ethnic, and gender inequality, or continuing struggles around the globe for human rights, freedom, and power. Frequently, intercultural studies are augmented by experiential learning in the community and/or by study abroad.

