**Faculty Internship Guide**

**Writing your learning agreement plan**

Three common domains for experiential learning fall within cognitive development, skill development, and personal or professional development. The National Society for Experiential Education outlines eight best practices for empowering faculty facilitators and students in these areas. Faculty facilitators are expected to ensure the quality of the learning experience, the demonstrated learning within work produced, and in supporting the learner’s use the principles underlie the pedagogy of experiential education.

**NSEE 8 BEST PRACTICES**

1. **Intention:** Clear understanding of why experiential learning is the chosen educational approach and how knowledge will be demonstrated and applied as a result from it. Intention represents the purposefulness that transforms experience to lasting knowledge and, as such, provides a deeper understanding of theory and application.
2. **Preparedness and Planning:** Ensure that students enter their experiences with sufficient foundation to support successful outcomes. From the outset, students should have established goals for their experience and clearly defined steps leading to the achievement of these goals. This includes intermediary objectives and activities that incorporate mechanisms for producing measurable outcomes. At the same time, objectives and activities should be flexible enough to allow for adaptations as experiences unfold.
3. **Authenticity:** The experiential education triangle of the student, the employer, and the college must agree on the objectives and parameters of the experience. The internship should complement the student’s major and better prepare them for the workforce and/or graduate studies.
4. **Reflection:** Reflection transforms a practical experience to a learning experience. For knowledge to be discovered and internalized, the learner must consider their actions and weigh the outcomes and future implications of their work. The reflective process is integral at all phases of experiential learning; from experience selection and challenging of preconceptions, to self-observations regarding personal and professional growth. Reflection is also an essential tool for adjusting the experience while in progress to measuring outcomes.
5. **Orientation and Training:** Orientation should take place prior to the internship. Students need to understand the expectations of the college and to think about how to optimize their experience. Topics such as employer expectations, professional behavior, time management, and social relationships should be discussed. Employers also need to provide an orientation at the site when students first arrive.
6. **Monitoring and Continuous Improvement:** Internshipsare dynamic and, as such, all parties involved bear responsibility for ensuring experiences continue to provide the richest learning possible. Feedback loops should be incorporated to revisit intentions, goals, and objectives. The structure of the experience and assignments should be sufficiently flexible and responsive to changes that occur during the experience.
7. **Assessment and Evaluation:** Systematic documented of work related to initial intentions and desired outcomes is a means to developing and refining learning goals and objectives identified in the planning stage of the experience. Evaluation provides comprehensive data about the experiential process and whether it met the intended theoretical and practical learning for which it was designed.
8. **Acknowledgment:** Completion of the experience should culminate in a celebration of learning that has taken place. Recognition of student success helps to provide closure and to sustain the impact of the experience. All parties to the experience should be included in the recognition of the student’s accomplishments.

# LEARNING OBJECTIVE DEVELOPMENT

Learning objectives are a student’s strategic plan for what they intend to learn during the

internship experience. Learning objectives foster reflection, which leads to deeper learning.

As you work with your student to develop learning objectives, consider these to be a written

agreement negotiated between you, the student, and the work site supervisor. A written plan

helps the student and site supervisor to direct, manage and reflect upon the learning process.

Each objective should have the following three components:

A.) Learning Objective: What it is that I want to learn?

B.) Activities/Resources: How am I going to learn it?

C.) Evaluation/Verification: How am I going to demonstrate what I learned?

**IDEAS FOR ACADEMIC ASSIGNMENTS**

**Blogging / Journaling**

* Provides continuous qualitative assessment over the course of the experience
* Requires specific parameters and rubric to assure quality writing
* Should go beyond a log of activities to record insights and lessons learned

**Reports / Papers**

* Translate academic topics to themes present in the work-site’s mission, culture, management, communication, etc.

**Portfolio**

* Flexible for media rich environments that produce traditional or nontraditional products, artistic or creative works
* May include samples of work, newsletters, spreadsheets, graphics, database screen shots, letters of substantiation or reference, forms created or used, photography, etc.

**Research Project**

* May be a beneficial extension of work created or started in previous courses
* Focus may be on a current or emerging issue for the organization or industry

**Executive Summary / Annual Report**

* May include SWOT analysis, organizational description, annual accomplishments, future plans, financial data

**Group Seminars / Meetings (Physical or Virtual)**

* Group discussion of experiences, normalization of difficulties, brainstorming of solutions, role playing of workplace situations, expands learning beyond one experience, and peer feedback

**Oral Presentation**

* Prepares students for academic and professional public speaking, requires consideration of audiences, forethought of material and self-presentation, use of technology, allows for faculty and peer feedback, can provide synthesis of learning throughout experience

**Student Evaluation**

* Provides opportunity for the student to thoughtfully offer feedback on the strengths of internship site leadership, environment, site supervisor, and how well the student was utilized by the employer

**Academically Related Activities**

* Annotated Bibliography, Case Studies
* Journaling (*summary* of sections – beginning, mid-point and end of experience)
* Idea File/Listing, Meeting Notes, Presentation Notes
* Informational Interviews with Professionals
* Reading Reviews/Reactions, Reflective Commentary/Essay
* Resumé, Career Assessments

**IDEAS FOR EXPERIENCE VERIFICATION**

**Resources/Activities Options & Ideas:**

Workplace training, experiences, projects and/or activities:

* Orientation, Training sessions (internal & external)
* Work projects/activities
* Experiences in other departments within the organization
* Attend meetings within the organization (staff, team, department, board)
* Site visits to other organizations
* Attendance at professional conferences or at professional organizations
* Shadowing or observation of other professionals

# Documentation/Verification Ideas

Artifacts or Work Samples:

Agendas Legislation

Audio files Manuals

Brochures Newsletters

Budgets News stories

Case Notes Photos

CDs / DVDs Podcasts

Contracts Posters

Cost analyses Press Release

Correspondence Printouts

Databases Program Outlines

Demonstrations Proposals

Designs/Artwork Software Presentations

Displays & Exhibits Spreadsheets

Documentation Survey Reports

Financial Reports Video

Flyers Webpage Designs

Lab Reports

**Attestations:**

Articles (about student) Evaluations

Certificates Photos

Citations & Awards References

Commendations Thank You Notes (sent to student)