

Experiential Learning Proposal



A PIVOTAL EXPERIENCE

My pivotal experience



What was
yours?

Are you here because of a pivotal experience?

STUDENT EXPERIENCES



“I learned that I am capable of a lot more, professionally, than I thought I was, and that setting goals is crucial to measuring growth.”

Parker Smith, WOU CiP, Biology Online Teaching Intern

On the verge of dropping out: “The people on those trips became my community, which was what I needed I loved being actively engaged, getting to see the direct impact of our work. It really helped me get a better understanding of myself and of life”.

Eli Cox, AB Honduras and India



“I have enjoyed the experience of building a community project, being pushed to take on stronger leadership roles with my group and with collaborating with other agencies to get our program implemented. Thank you for . . . guiding the learning experiences and skill building opportunities in creative and useful practice.”

Anonymous, David Foster’s EL Leadership class

What would it look like if every student at
WOU participated in EL?

If not all students participate,

how do we decide who doesn't get to have
Experiential Learning?

“



Connecting students with communities through engagement in service, experiential learning, creative problem-solving opportunities and co-curricular collaborations.

(Forward Together, Vision, page 2)

WHY EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

- EL is about social justice and upward mobility.
- Low income, first generation and URM benefit most from EL. Need institution for cultural and social capital.
- EL is highly correlated with career readiness. It makes learning real.

“



“The interaction of knowledge and skills with experience is key to learning”.

“We do not learn from experience We learn from reflecting on experience”.

— John Dewey

WHY NOW

- **Increased affordability, enrollment and retention**
- **Social justice**
- **Strategic Plan**
- **General Education Program**
- **Accreditation**
- **Affordable training**

Strategic Initiative

- WOU is committed to personalized and transformative learning; experiential learning epitomizes this mission
- All pillars in the strategic plan support the creation of an EL program, but the most prominent are:
 - **Community Engagement** (1.1 – 1.3, 2.1 – 2.6)
 - **Student Success** (1.1 – 1.3, 3.1 – 3.3, 4.4)
 - **Academic Excellence** (1.2, 2.2, 2.4, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 5.1-5.4).
- Experiential Learning Strategic Action Team was formed

EL Strategic Action Team

- Rob Winningham, Provost – co-chair
- Adry Clark, Service Learning & Career Development – co-chair
- Erin Baumgartner, Director of General Education Program, Biology
- David Foster, Psychological Sciences
- Ava Howard, Biology
- Lars Soderlund, English
- Kathryn Plummer, Service Learning & Career Development, EL
- Ernie Buncal, International Programs
- Gregory Zobel, Education & Leadership, Director, PURE

Team is growing - Academic Affairs, Integrative Learning PLC

Many possible partnerships, including FYS, Housing, Student Engagement

Building on Existing Programs

- **PURE**
- **WOU Community Internship Program**
- **Alternative Break**
- **Study Abroad**
- **Career Mentoring**
- **Leadership Certificate**
- **Service Learning & Career Development**
- **Faculty applying EL pedagogy**

Outcomes

- **Outcome 1 Affordability**
- **Outcome 2 Increased Enrollment**
- **Outcome 3 Increased Retention**
- **Outcome 4 Faculty has increased capacity – training & support**
- **Outcome 5 WOU has a definition for Experiential Learning**
- **Outcome 6 EL Practices are socially just**
- **Outcome 7 EL fte implements plan and initiatives**

TIMELINE: Suggested by NSEE Faculty

- Exploratory Phase (Winter '17 - Fall '19)
- Input Phase (Spring '19 - Spring '21)
- Training and Capacity Building (Fall '19 - Spring '21)
- Formulate a task force or institutional structure tasked with establishing an EL program - White paper (Fall '20 - Fall '21)
- Program is established within three years (Winter '22)

TIMELINE: This Year

- Up to now:
 - Exploration - researching models, current practices, interest, need
 - Training Fall 2018 - NSEE faculty
 - EL WOU CiP intern, surveying and interviewing students, website
- Coming up Spring 2019
 - Showcase
 - Website with resources and updates

TIMELINE: Future

- Conferences - first for a designated team, NSEE fall '19, ELLI Spring '20.
- Seminars/development workshops, NSEE, '19 - '21
- Showcases and input gathering - first in Spring '19, approx. 2 per year next two years.
- Authorize a task force to write white paper and create a program, '21
- Program operating in time for Integrative Learning ULO Capstone '22

CONTINGENCY PLAN and JUSTIFICATION

Funding area	If funded	If not funded	Funding amount and contingency options
Affordability	75 high need students participate	High need students unable to participate	\$40,000 No contingency
Training and Pilot Programs	High quality EL capacity and expertise can be developed	No change in capacity and expertise	\$18,000 Faculty professional development funds Provost/Deans
Student Employment and FTE	Faculty/staff have support, initiatives are implemented	Faculty/staff lack support, initiatives may not be implemented	\$25-73,000 No contingency

Defining EL at WOU

No one definition of experiential learning - WOU needs to come up with its own definition

What we will create as a community will be unique to WOU and our population.

- It will be informed by best practice
- It will be equitable and affordable
- It will be sustainable

This takes time and fortitude to design and manage

“

“WOU is approaching a large scale experiential learning initiative the right way, with administrative support matched by authentic rigorous debate coming from faculty and student affairs, who will be on the forefront of implementation.

One of the most important things a university can do with high impact practices and pedagogies is to ensure equity. It is easy for boutique programs to overlook the students who benefit from them the most.”

Todd Petersen, NSEE Faculty, Executive Director of Experiential Learning,
School of Engaged and Integrative Learning, Southern Utah University

What type of Proposal is this? New

Will it require one-time funds? Or on-going funds? Both

1. Requestor: Adry Clark
Service Learning & Career Development
503-838-8648 clarka@wou.edu

Additional Sponsors:

- Rob Winningham, Interim Provost, 503-838-8297, winnir@wou.edu
- Experiential Learning Strategic Action Team members:
 - o Adry Clark, Service Learning & Career Development, 503-838-8648, clarka@wou.edu
 - o David Foster, Psychological Sciences, 503-838-8805, fosterd@wou.edu
 - o Ava Howard, Biology, 503-838-8702, howarda@wou.edu
 - o Lars Soderlund, English, 503-838-8325, soderlundl@wou.edu
 - o Maureen Dolan, Sociology, 503-838-8292, dolanm@wou.edu
 - o Kathryn Plummer, Service Learning & Career Development, 503-838-8041, plummerk@wou.edu
 - o Ernie Buncal, International Education and Development, 503-838-8508, buncale@wou.edu
- Erin Baumgartner, Interim Associate Provost, Academic Programs/Professor, Biology, 503-838-8348 | baumgare@wou.edu
- Becka Morgan, Computer Science, Chair, Integrative Learning PLC, 503-838-8964, morganb@wou.edu
- Gregory Zobel, Education & Leadership, Executive Director, Program for Undergraduate Research Experiences, (PURE), 503-838-8728, zobelg@wou.edu
- Rob Findtner, Admissions, 503-838-8601, findtnr@wou.edu
- Tina Fuchs, Associate Dean Student Affairs Division, Dean of Students, Housing, 503-838-8220, fuchst@wou.edu

Add Emily Lilo and other ExS faculty who worked with Todd Petersen

2. Identify and justify the primary institutional priority that your initiative addresses:

Community Engagement

Justification:

While the greatest impact will be student success, this requests most directly addresses priority III. Community Engagement. This proposal seeks funding to lay a foundation for accomplishing the following initiatives:

1. Enhance access to and support for experiential learning and cocurricular activities.
 - 1.1 Adopt experiential learning guidelines and align high-impact practices with these guidelines.

- 1.2 Articulate internship or service learning opportunities for all academic programs.
- 1.3 Develop experiential and co-curricular activities that provide appropriate accommodations for faculty, staff and students.
- 2. Increase institutional engagement with local, regional and global communities.
 - 2.1 Increase support for student engagement in community service.
 - 2.2 Provide professional development for faculty and staff to promote engagement in community service.

WOU's mission is clear in its commitment to personalized and transformative learning; experiential learning epitomizes this mission. Experiential Learning also takes advantage of one of WOU's key advantages: low student-faculty ratios.

All pillars in the strategic plan support the creation of an EL program, but outside of Community Engagement, the most prominent are

- o Student Success (1.1 – 1.3, 3.1 – 3.3, 4.4)
- o Academic Excellence (1.2, 2.2, 2.4, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 5.1-5.4)

3. What are you proposing?

We are proposing initiatives that support President Fuller's goals for increased enrollment and retention, and will make transformative educational experiences more affordable to students. High Impact Practices (HIP) and Experiential Learning (EL) are highly correlated with retention according to NSSE, and evidence shows prospective students are attracted to universities that offer hands-on learning. At the same time, the cost of participation in EL can be prohibitive to students and for programs to be effective, they require capacity and institutional support. EL is defined as learning from experience or learning by doing. Learners are immersed in an experience and then encouraged to reflect about the experience to develop new skills, new attitudes, or new ways of thinking. Service learning, internships, research, independent study, creative projects and study abroad are examples. Offering effective EL requires capacity building and thoughtful design. WOU is currently at the beginning stages of forming an accessible experiential learning program, but lack of capacity, institutional and financial barriers to students, and lack of staffing prohibits progress. The Strategic Plan's Values section commits WOU to "Connecting students with communities through engagement in service, experiential learning, creative problem-solving opportunities and co-curricular collaborations." We propose investing in initiatives that build on current programs, such as PURE and Alternative Break, develops faculty and staff capacity to design an experiential learning environment at WOU, and minimize barriers to student participation.

In summer of 2018, Interim Provost, Rob Winningham, approved requests to fund bringing EL experts on campus, who would help provide a framework for designing an EL environment at WOU. He also agreed to fund subsequent showcases and workshops. These efforts need to be complemented by sending faculty and staff for more in depth training and for building incentives for EL pilot programs. Finally, WOU needs to start to build infrastructure to support EL efforts more systemically.

(If at all possible, I'd include some header here like) 3 Phase Funding Request

Proposed one-time initiatives for funding - total \$18,000:

1. Send a small group of faculty and staff to an Experiential Learning Leadership Institute in Utah in June, 2019 (registration and travel \$8,000)
2. Create pilot EL programs for Fall, 2019 (\$10,000 for seed grants in 2019-20 AY budget)

To make EL at WOU more affordable and increase access to EL, we propose the following annual funding - total \$40,000:

1. Increase access to community engagement by providing \$10,000 annually to run three regional Alternative Spring Breaks
2. Increase access to external internships: Provide \$10,000 annually to augment Internship Fund, which provides competitive grants for internship
3. Increase access to undergraduate research – Provide \$20,000 annually for research related travel, for Sophomores and Juniors to increase their engagement and investment in working with WOU faculty.

In order to facilitate EL efforts we request ongoing investment in labor and operation cost - \$73,000

- a. \$8,000 for student labor to support Academic Excellence Showcase operations as well as expanding PURE's outreach to students through the year. Student work is more affordable than the 80-120 hours of labor current professional staff and librarians invest in helping make AES happen.
- b. \$2,000 administrative and outreach costs
- c. \$63,000 for 1.0 fte Experiential Learning Program coordinator

Total request \$131,000.00

4. Who will benefit from your initiative?

WOU Students will be the primary beneficiaries of our initiative. EL/HIP is highly correlated with retention (NSSE) and graduation, and our students will be enriched by the transformative experiences they will gain.

WOU as an institution, will benefit from increase in enrollment as prospective students will be attracted to the hands-on opportunities, such as undergraduate research, internships, and service. Students on Alternative Breaks or internships are often prominently featured in outreach materials, in order to showcase WOU as a school with exciting opportunities to grow and excel. Students participating in AES develop their professional knowledge, communication, and presentation skills. They also hone their scholarship. A strong EL program will make WOU stand out from other universities in Oregon and position it well, particularly with our target first generation population, that might be attracted to applied experience that prepares them for

careers and civic life post graduation.

Faculty and staff will also benefit from building their capacity for rewarding, innovative and interdisciplinary teaching and student development methods.

The local and Oregon community will benefit from a well prepared workforce and engaged citizenry of our interns, volunteers and graduates.

*** 5. LIST OUTCOMES AND DESCRIBE YOUR ASSESSMENT PLAN (link to directions):**

(i.e., how will you know if it worked? and how will you know if it didn't work?)

3900 characters remaining.

To support the strategic plan, the President's priorities of affordability, enrollment and retention, and the General Education Program's goal of Integrated learning, the following measurable outcomes guide this work:

Outcome 1, Affordability

Outcome 1.1 As a result of financial support for students to participate in EL, upwards of 75 students will participate in high impact learning experiences

Assessment

Number of new funding streams to support student EL participation and number of students participating in opportunities will increase:

- \$10,000 for AB would allow three teams of ten students = 30, or funds would provide scholarship for students in need
- \$10,000 competitive internship grant would allow 3-5 students to participate in meaningful and high-profile internships in sectors that typically only offer unpaid internships, such as art, science, entertainment and government/legislative
- \$20,000 for research experiences and research related travel and conferences - upwards of 40 students supported

As a baseline, currently the only EL related funding stream available to students, is WOU Community Internship Program's on-campus internships.

Outcome 1.2 As a result of Integrating EL into required courses that count towards graduation, students have an accessible and affordable way to participate in EL

The number of courses that incorporate EL into curriculum increases

Stipends for pilot programs will stimulate the development of more EL courses

Assessment

Surveying faculty participating in pilot programs and gathering further information in interviews with faculty will help assess increase in number of opportunities and quality of pedagogy.

(As a background, based on survey of faculty in 2017, EL integrated into courses is rare at WOU. Those who reported EL in courses used a definition of EL that was closer to active learning than the definition provided).

Outcome 1.3 A coordinated/interdivisional approach will create a systemic approach to enrolling more students in EL opportunities currently available, making EL affordable and accessible to students.

Assessment

Departments and programs will track participation rate between current and future practice.

Outcome 2, Increased Enrollment

Hands-on and career readiness focus will appeal to first generation and low income students (and their parents), who also are interested in enrolling in a liberal arts institution, increasing enrollment.

Assessment

Increased enrollment due to EL efforts might be hard to assess at this stage, but with pilot programs and increased presence of curricular and co-curricular EL programs, some surveying can be conducted to gauge interest and impact on decision-making of students and their parents.

Outcome 3, Increased Retention

High impact experiences like EL is highly correlated with retention, as students find experience meaningful and develop greater sense of belonging at the institution.

Assessment

While it may be hard to isolate EL as a cause for retention, statistical analysis of participation in AB and WOU CiP show significantly higher retention and graduation rates of students who participate in these programs compared to the average WOU population.

Qualitative assessment of participants shows many students decided to continue their WOU education because of their engagement with these programs.

Similar studies can be conducted of participants in programs like PURE and study abroad. During the funded period, pilot programs can be similarly assessed.

Differential effects of internships include gains in GPA, a predictor of retention. This could be easily assessed if EL participation is tracked.

Outcome 4, Faculty Capacity Will Increase

Outcome 4.1 Faculty will have EL expertise, training in best practice and support
Participation in current EL offerings will increase

Assessment

Departments and programs will track increase in participation in the next three years.

Outcome 4.2 Faculty gain EL capacity through training on and off campus

Assessment

Surveys administered to faculty in 2017 and 2018 demonstrated lack of understanding, know-how, and confidence in applying EL pedagogy. It also showed faculty has interest in training and in using EL as part of their courses.

Faculty and staff who attended trainings by National Society for Experiential Education Faculty, last November, were surveyed to assess learning and interest. (see attached results)

To assess the effectiveness of future trainings, follow up surveys, interviews and sharing of learning will be facilitated.

Outcome 4.3 Faculty have access to institutional support

Assessment

Surveys administered to faculty and staff in 2017 and 2018 demonstrated faculty need support to effectively employ EL in their classrooms and programs, especially with community connections and logistics.

Pilot program participants who receive experimental support will be interviewed to learn what support was provided and what benefits and learning they gained from participating.

Fte, such as EL Coordinator and student employees will provide administrative, logistical, and community engagement assistance to facilitate EL activities and programs.

Outcome 4.4 FYS and GenEd courses will incorporate best practice EL pedagogy

Assessment

Courses will be assessed through interviews, assignment review, and learning communities on adherence to NSEE 8 Principles of EL and the EL initiatives in the strategic plan

Outcome 4.5 Integrative Learning courses are aligned with EL best practice

Assessment

Courses will be assessed through interviews, assignment review, and learning communities

Outcome 4.6 Faculty reports greater satisfaction with more impactful pedagogy of EL

Assessment

Faculty EL follow up survey

Outcome 5, WOU has a definition for Experiential Learning

WOU currently does not have an official definition for EL, making conversations and goal setting problematic.

Assessment

WOU creates a definition of EL that is uniquely its own. An official recognition by the President and a published statement would qualify as accomplishment of outcome.

Outcome 6, Socially Just EL Practices

Current EL practices at WOU disadvantage students who lack social and financial capital.

Assessment

To assess for social justice, practices are assessed for accessibility, affordability, transparency of process, and faculty/staff support

Outcome 7, Experiential Learning Coordinator will implement Task Force plan and initiatives

Assessment

Taskforce will outline specific plans, initiatives and outcomes that are tracked and monitored

*** 6. PROVIDE YOUR IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AND TIMELINE:**

The proposed timeline is informed by suggested steps from EEA faculty Patrick Clarke and Todd Petersen, who visited WOU and provided consultation and training in November, 2018. The timeline also draws on expressed need of faculty for capacity building. Some timeline events overlap.

General Timeline

1. Exploratory phase - Spring 2017 - Fall 2019 - surveys of current practices, interest and capacity, learning about models at other institutions
2. Input by faculty, staff, students and community - Spring 2019 - Fall 2020 - showcases, focus groups, surveys
3. Provide opportunities for training and capacity building on and off campus, including showcases, conferences, learning communities, pilot programs Spring 2019 - Fall 2021
 - a. Off-campus trainings lead to on-campus training, showcases and more opportunity for input.
4. Formulate a task force tasked with establishing an EL program (We're 2-3 squares ahead because of EL being so prominent in Strategic Plan). Task force hires EL Coordinator to implement plan and accomplish goals.
 - a. Task force writes White Paper on creating an EL program at WOU
5. Program is established
6. Fortitude, fortitude, fortitude

*** 7. IF YOUR INITIATIVE IS NOT FUNDED, DESCRIBE YOUR CONTINGENCY PLAN:**

The EL Strategic Action Team has discussed a variety of possible scenarios for accomplishing the EL initiatives of the Strategic Plan. While our ideal is listed above the following options will some of the initiative.

Focus on holistic approach

Option 1

\$83,000,

\$40,000	EL Student Affordability
\$18,000	Faculty Capacity building (one time)
\$8,000	Student Employment for implementing initiatives and current programs
\$2,000	Administrative and outreach costs
\$15,000	.20 faculty fte (replaces EL Coordinator)

Option 2

\$68,000

option 1, excluding .25 faculty fte. Process will be managed by EL SAT, then task force.

Focus on faculty training/capacity building

Option 3

\$25,000.00 a year for the next three years.

Funds trainings, program development stipends, and a .25 faculty fte to coordinate development of academic EL program(s). Funds are overseen by Director of General Education program.

This option does not address affordability for students and is focused solely on Academic Affairs.

Focus on Exploration and Capacity Building

Option 4

\$10,000 seed money to be overseen by the GenEd Committee to foster and support study of EL on campus.

Focus on Affordability

Focus on Staffing

Other Sources of Funding

Service Learning & Career Development staff has on numerous occasions pitched to WOU Foundation Board and Gift Officers to generate funding for EL efforts, such as Alternative Break and internships. That effort has not been successful, thus far. This approach will still be pursued, but it is not a reliable source of funding. Efforts to find funding for an Americorps position to assist with EL have met with rejection.

*** 8. WHAT EXTERNAL AGENCY OR ORGANIZATION IS DOING SOMETHING SIMILAR? DESCRIBE WHAT THEY ARE DOING AND HOW YOUR PROPOSAL IS SIMILAR AND/OR DIFFERENT AND WHY:**

Not Applicable

*** 9. PROJECT ADVERSE IMPACTS, IF ANY (e.g., training required, extra workload, resource reallocation): (1) WHAT PRIMARY POPULATIONS AND/OR UNITS MAY BE UNFAVORABLY IMPACTED? (2) WHAT SECONDARY POPULATIONS AND/OR UNITS MAY BE UNFAVORABLY IMPACTED? AND (3) HAVE THE POPULATIONS/UNITS BEEN CONSULTED?:**

Creating an EL program at WOU is something that will take fortitude to overcome several challenges. The greatest challenges are the following:

1. Institutional resistance to holistic and systemic approaches and changes. The adverse impact is temporary, especially if enough time and effort is spent on gathering input and giving voice.
 - a. A program that is division and program agnostic would be a new approach at WOU. We have a successful example of a systemic approach in the the General Education Program. That program, however, is strictly a Academic Affairs program.
2. Initial workload on faculty and staff to learn about EL and design assignments, programs and assessments
 - a. Some of this might be mitigated with training, stipends and course release. Perspectives might change after benefits of job satisfaction and strong outcomes are evident.
3. Students perceiving EL as extra load.
 - a. Students may lack awareness of EL as beneficial to their learning and career readiness, and therefore resist this effort. All depends on framing of concept and availability of resources to assist.

Over the next year, every stakeholder will be consulted using multiple methods, such as focus groups, surveys, showcases, and division and senate meetings. For this program to be successful in the long run, it needs to reflect WOU's unique culture, needs and resources.

*** 10. WHAT IS YOUR BUDGET JUSTIFICATION FOR THE RESOURCES REQUIRED?:**

(i.e., argue for the need of each component in the financial request/e.g., workforce, equipment, travel.)

Affordability for Students

To make EL at WOU more affordable and increase access to EL, we propose the following annual funding - total \$40,000:

1. Increase access to community engagement by providing \$10,000 annually to run three regional Alternative Spring Breaks
2. Increase access to external internships: Provide \$10,000 annually to augment Internship Fund, which provides competitive grants for internship
3. Increase access to undergraduate research – Provide \$20,000 annually for research related travel, for Sophomores and Juniors to increase their engagement and investment in working with WOU faculty.

Training and staffing to develop capacity to deliver quality EL

Training - Proposed one-time initiatives for funding - total \$18,000:

1. Send a small group of faculty and staff to an Experiential Learning Leadership Institute in Utah in June, 2019 (registration and travel \$8,000)
2. Create pilot EL programs for Fall, 2019 (\$10,000 for seed grants in 2019-20 AY budget) these grants would go to faculty to develop new EL courses or new EL activities in their courses... or did you intend something else?

Staffing - Implementation - In order to facilitate EL efforts we request ongoing investment in labor and operation cost - \$73,000

- a. \$8,000 for student labor to support Academic Excellence Showcase operations as well as expanding PURE's outreach to students through the year. Student work is more affordable than the 80-120 hours of labor current professional staff and librarians invest in helping make AES happen.
- b. \$2,000 administrative and outreach costs
- c. \$63,000 for 1.0 fte Experiential Learning Program coordinator

Total request \$131,000.00

You will upload your Budget Spreadsheet on the next page.

