Outcomes Related to Experiential Education Programs
Experiential Education

- Comprehensive Experiential Education Centers or partially combined with Career Services
  - Expanded use of multiple forms of work-integrated learning
  - Measurement of student learning outcomes allows for comparative outcomes
  - Increased research on learning outcomes and educational efficacy of programs
Trend Toward Student Engagement and Learning

- Pew Institute Higher Education White Paper – Measure learning rather than teaching (Edgerton, R., 1997)
- Academic Learning compacts and VALUE Rubrics (AAC&U, 2010)
High-Impact Educational Practices (Kuh, G., 2008)

- First Year Seminars and Experiences
- Common Intellectual Experiences
- Writing-Intensive Courses
- Collaborative Assignments and Projects
- Undergraduate Research
- Diversity/Global Learning
- Service-Learning
- Internships (includes co-op)
- Capstone courses and projects
Workplace Competencies

Resources
- Allocates Time, Money, Human Resources, Materials and Facility Resources

Information
- Acquires and Evaluates Information
- Organizes and Maintains Information
- Interprets and Communicates Information
- Uses Computers to Process Information

Interpersonal
- Participates as a Member of a Team
- Teaches Others
- Serves Clients/Customer
- Exercises Leadership
- Negotiates to Arrive at a Decision
- Works with Cultural Diversity

Systems
- Understands Systems
- Monitors and Corrects Performance
- Improves and Designs Systems

Technology
- Selects Technology
- Applies Technology to Task
- Maintains and Troubleshoots Technology

Foundation Skills

Basic Skills
- Reading
- Writing
- Arithmetic
- Mathematics
- Listening
- Speaking

Thinking Skills
- Creative Thinking
- Decision Making
- Problem Solving
- Seeing Things in the Mind’s Eye
- Knowing How to Learn
- Reasoning

Personal Qualities
- Responsibility
- Self-Esteem
- Social
- Self-Management
- Integrity/Honesty
Essential Learning Outcomes (Liberal Education & America’s Promise, 2005)

- Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World
- Intellectual and Practical Skills, Including
  - Inquiry and analysis
  - Critical and creative thinking
  - Written and oral communication
  - Quantitative literacy
  - Information literacy
  - Teamwork and problem solving
- Personal and Social Responsibility, Including
  - Civic knowledge and engagement—local and global
  - Intercultural knowledge and competence
  - Ethical reasoning and action
  - Foundations and skills for lifelong learning
- Integrative and Applied Learning, Including

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Resulting Focus on Research

- Reviews of Research
A Model for Co-op Student Learning Outcomes

- Validated a four component model for Co-op learning outcomes (Parks et al, 2001)
  - Personal
  - Career
  - Work
  - Academic

- A review of co-op literature supported this model and the competencies used in Parks’ study (Dressler, S. & Keeling, A, 2001)
Overview of Service-Learning
Student Outcomes (Eyler et al, 2001)

- Study on SL Research reported the following categories of outcomes:
  - Personal Outcomes
  - Social Outcomes
  - Learning Outcomes
  - Career Development
  - Relationship with Institution
  - Structural Issues related to Outcomes

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Comparing Results

- Similarities in outcomes but differences in focus
  - Service-Learning - social outcomes in the form of reducing stereotypes and the development of commitment to service
  - Co-op - social outcomes in the ability to develop an interest in life-long learning and commitment to excellence in one’s field of study
Similarities and Differences

- Both use reflection but differ on which central topics of reflection.
- In both, students are more likely to graduate than those who do not participate at all and most academic outcomes are produced by both modalities.
Similarities and Differences

- More than half of the personal competencies are developed through both modalities.
- Personal and Academic outcomes are very similar reflecting Service-Learning’s clear academic orientation and Co-op’s mixed academic and career orientation.
- Reflects stated goals - Co-op has more work and career outcomes and Service-Learning the social outcomes.

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Similarities Related to Academics

- Researchers for both methods are more often faculty or administrators reporting to Academic Affairs which may produce a bias toward academic outcomes for both programs.

- There may be greater differences between academic outcomes in Co-op programs that report to Academic Affairs vs. Student Development than there are between Service-Learning programs and Co-op programs that retain their instructional focus.
Differences Related to Focus

- Program focus may effect outcomes because outcomes are dependent in part on what questions are asked by researchers.

- Outcomes for a Service-Learning student may be an “increase in self-confidence” or being “helped to gain employment after graduation”, but these questions are rarely asked. Similarly, “quality of reflection” would most likely have an impact on Co-op outcomes, but Co-op researchers have not focused on this issue.
Multiple Measures

- Matching student self-report responses with community partner/employer evaluation information can strengthen validity of results and uncovers ceiling effects.

- Using employer evaluations to assess learning outcomes for students can also be used to consider change over time. (Cedercreutz, K. & Cates, C, 2005)
Impact on Employer Partners

- Provided motivated and enthusiastic employees
- Brought new ideas and viewpoints to the workplace
- Provided productive employees who earned their way
- Assisted in completing one-time projects
- Proved valuable in evaluating students as potential regular full-time employees
- Reduced the cost of recruiting and hiring entry-level professionals
- Reduced the time spent in developing a selection pool of candidates
- Reduced the cost of training new hires
- Helped to hire people with special skills
- Assisted in recruiting and hiring culturally diverse employees
- Provided positive interactions with the university
- Proved helpful in making your organization better known on the university campus
- Created a source of inspiration for current employees to continue their education
- Provided a means to give back to the community
- Favorably impacted your production/service to your customers
- Benefits overall to your company

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# Impact reported by SL faculty on students and themselves

## Students
- This course helped students gain a clearer idea of their professional goals (for example, their careers).
- The service the students performed and the skills they developed helped make them more marketable in their chosen professions.
- During their service, students interacted with people from different social, economic, or ethnic backgrounds.

## Faculty
- The service experience complemented the learning objectives for the course.
- The time needed to plan and supervise this service-learning course was worthwhile.
- Service-learning enhanced my ability to communicate the core competencies of this course.
- Including service-learning in my course revitalized my teaching.
- Including service-learning in my course enriched classroom discussions.

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Considerations for future research

- Outcome similarities imply that each methodology can be informed and strengthened by information about other forms of experiential education.
- Further study on reporting structures as they impact instruction, level of research, and focus on particular outcomes would help educators and administrators assess how various forms of experiential education can best thrive and contribute to the educational agenda of their respective institutions.
References


Secretary’s Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS), Department of Labor, (1991 & 2000)

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