Assessment in Experiential Learning

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Assessment: Programs

- International Service Learning
- International Internships
- Study Abroad
Assessment Focus and Outcomes: Students

- Students
- University
- Community
Brazil’s innovation labs inspire Georgia leaders

Wednesday, June 17, 2015, Atlanta Journal

- Georgia officials, who visited the site as part of a weeklong trade mission to Brazil, said it was an encouraging sign to push forward on a strategy that focuses on “experiential” learning in college systems and closer collaboration with corporate leaders.”

- “UGA recently revamped its startup incubator to spur more business, and the school will soon require undergraduates to participate in an internship, research, study abroad or other “experiential” opportunities to graduate. And Georgia State University’s startup hub works to support new student businesses.”

- UCLA HERI Faculty Survey, 2013/14: “Faculty reliance upon cooperative learning as a pedagogy is at an all-time high (60.7%).
“Americans resolutely believe in the importance of experiential learning for long-term career success. Americans and business leaders agree that expanding professional work programs for college students is the single most important step the U.S. can take to better prepare students.”

“Nearly 9-in-10 Americans surveyed believe students with work experience from an internship or paid employment related to their field will have more successful careers in the long-term. In fact, among those that gained work experience during college, a large majority (82%) says it was valuable for their personal and professional development.”

(Northeastern University Survey, 2013, 1,000 adult participants)
Definitions: Education Abroad, Service Learning and Internships

- Education Abroad is a program combining academic and experiential learning modes in a foreign setting” (Hoffa, 2007, p. 70).

- Service Learning: Course based, credit bearing educational experience in which students, a) participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and, b) reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility. (Bringle and Hatcher, 1995, p.112)

- An internship is a form of experiential learning that integrates knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with practical application and skills development in a professional setting. (NACE)
Experiential Learning Theory Sets the Terms for International Program Course Content and Assessment

- Experiential learning principles and concepts provide theoretical grounding for service learning, internships, and study abroad
- Encompasses action, reflection, analysis, and application
Experiential Learning Theory

- John Dewey, Kurt Lewin, David Kolb, and Jean Piaget
- Combine experience, perception, cognition and behavior
- Begins with concrete experience followed by collection of data and observation and analysis of experience
- Students generate their own ideas and working through possible solutions to complex problems. This integration of concrete action and reflective thought makes possible the evaluation of learning through intentional, measurable learning goals and objectives.
Kolb Learning Cycle

Experiential Learning Cycles

Apply
Active Experimentation
Futures (What Will I Do?)
Implement Revised Theory

Act
Concrete Experience
Facts (What Happened?)
Theory of Action

Reflect
Reflective Observation
Feelings (What Did I Experience?)
Assess Behavior & Consequences

Conceptualize
Abstract Conceptualization
Findings (Why Did This Happen?)
Revise Theory

1. David Kolb
2. Roger Greenaway
3. Chris Argyris & Donald Schön

compiled by Andrea Corney
www.edbatista.com/2007/10/experiential.html
Core Principles of Experiential Learning

- Learning as a process
- Ideas formed and reformed through experience
- Jerome Bruner: Purpose of education is to stimulate inquiry and skill in the process of knowledge acquisition
- All learning is “relearning”—mind is not a blank slate---bring out learners’ beliefs and theories---examine, test and reformulate
Indirect Learning Assessment

- Actuarial: Enrollment, progression, GPA, completion, career placement—proxy signs that students are learning

- Student surveys, focus groups, graduate career and earnings follow-up

- Controls: Gender, ethnicity, parents’ educational level, major, GPA
Direct Learning Assessment

- Direct assessment: Demonstrates that learning has taken place as related to a specific skill or content—no evidence of why or how learning has taken place.

- Typical instruments—published tests, locally developed tests, portfolios, embedded assignments and course activities.
Why is Assessment Being Done? For Whom? Logic Model

- Articulate specific program goals, expected learning, types of evidence of learning, appropriate measurement of outcomes
- What evidence would measure the degree to which goals and objectives being met?
- What indirect evidence? Self report surveys, focus groups, interviews, etc.
- What direct evidence? Testing, observation, student writing, portfolios, etc.
- Types of evidence needed (purpose) and audience determine assessment tools and methods to be used
- Mixed methods advantageous
Types of reflective activity—service learning and internships

- Journal—establish connections, not just event log
- Experiential research paper
- Directed readings—how theory and knowledge apply to activity
- Class presentation or electronic reflection
- Rubrics required
Study Abroad and Experiential Learning Theory

- It is not the activity of leaving one’s homeland that creates learning, but the subsequent analysis of that activity. It is important to link study abroad to a learning paradigm to validate the learning that occurs. Many study abroad programs simply transfer academic credits from one traditional discipline-based educational institution to another without intentionally utilizing the international experience itself as the basis for learning.
Exemplar: Georgia Tech International Plan
Intended Student Learning Outcomes

- Second language proficiency
- Comparative global knowledge
- Intercultural assimilation
- Global disciplinary practice
- Intercultural sensitivity
Assessment Measures

- Actuarial measures: Enrollment, progression, completion and career placement of students
- Student demographic information (e.g. gender, ethnicity, major, GPA, etc.)
- Longitudinal survey research
- CIRP Freshman Survey
- Pre/post study and work abroad
- Alumni surveys
Specific Measures (cont.)

- Test of foreign language competence (ACTFL-Oral Proficiency Interview)
- Test of Intercultural Development (IDI)
- Test of Economic and International Relations Knowledge (Global Knowledge Inventory)
- Focus groups of IP and Study Abroad Participants
Pre-Departure and Post-Return Surveys

- General Knowledge, Abilities and Skills: self-rating of importance and preparation
- Self-Efficacy Ratings
- Career Plans
- Post surveys include program satisfaction and program information questions