

Experiential education

Challenge and Experience followed by Reflection leading to Learning and Growth.

That is experiential education expressed most simply as it is utilized and performed by individuals across disciplines, settings and geographies. AEE members are transforming lives in so many different ways.

Experiential education is a philosophy that informs many methodologies in which educators purposefully engage with learners in direct experience and focused reflection in order to increase knowledge, develop skills, clarify values, and develop people's capacity to contribute to their communities.

How is experiential education used?

Experiential educators include teachers, camp counselors, corporate team builders, therapists, challenge course practitioners, environmental educators, guides, instructors, coaches, mental health professionals . . . and the list goes on.

It is often utilized in many disciplines and settings: Non-formal education, Place-based education, Project-based education, Global education, Environmental education, Student-centered education, Informal education, Active learning, Service learning, Cooperative learning and Expeditionary learning.

Principles of experiential education

1. Experiential learning occurs when carefully chosen experiences are supported by reflection, critical analysis and synthesis.
2. Experiences are structured to require the learner to take initiative, make decisions and be accountable for results.
3. Throughout the experiential learning process, the learner is actively engaged in posing questions, investigating, experimenting, being curious, solving problems, assuming responsibility, being creative, and constructing meaning.
4. Learners are engaged intellectually, emotionally, socially, soulfully and/or physically. This involvement produces a perception that the learning task is authentic.
5. The results of the learning are personal and form the basis for future experience and learning.

Principles of experiential education

6. The educator and learner may experience success, failure, adventure, risk-taking and uncertainty, because the outcomes of experience cannot totally be predicted.
7. Opportunities are nurtured for learners and educators to explore and examine their own values.
8. The educator's primary roles include setting suitable experiences, posing problems, setting boundaries, supporting learners, insuring physical and emotional safety, and facilitating the learning process.
9. Educators strive to be aware of their biases, judgments and pre-conceptions, and how these influence the learner.
10. The design of the learning experience includes the possibility to learn from natural consequences, mistakes and successes.

(All this from the Association for Experiential Education)

Managing experiential education

How do our institutions think about “experiential education?”

How do we credit this, if we do?

How do we support initiatives of this kind?

How are they financed?

Are they part of our strategic planning?

Summer Term as a Space for Innovation

OPPORTUNITIES:

- Longer class periods, which allow field work
- Students' focus on only one course or topic
- Access to campus resources during slower time

CHALLENGES:

- Shorter term
- Institutional culture

Case History: YAL1 2016

YALE'S INSTITUTIONAL GOALS:

- PRESIDENT SALOVEY'S GOALS:

- Bring together schools to enrich new areas of teaching and scholarship
- Cultivate innovators, leaders, pioneers, creators, and entrepreneurs in all fields and for all sectors of society
- Be the research university most committed to teaching and learning
- Share Yale's intellectual assets with the world

Case History: YAL1 The Sustainable Preservation of Cultural Heritage

- Taught by Stefan Simon, Ph.D., Director of Yale's Institute for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage



Case Study: YAL1

- Guest faculty from Yale Law School, the Yale School of Management, the Yale School of Architecture, and the Faculty of Arts and Sciences



Case Study: YAL1

- Lecturers from The Smithsonian Institute, the Museum of Natural History and Centre de Recherche sur la Conservation in Paris, the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, and the International Council of Monuments and Sites



Case Study: YAL1

- Demonstrations in the Institute's six conservation labs



Case Study: YAL1

- Meetings with curators and experts at the Yale University Gallery of Art, the Yale Center for British Art, the Peabody Museum of Natural History, the Collection of Musical Instruments



Case Study: YAL1

- Opportunities for Field Work



Case History: YAL1

- Visit to the United Nations to meet with UNESCO officials



Case Study: YAL1

REFLECTIONS ON YAL1:

- Shaped by and met many of Yale's institutional priorities
- Integrated the Institute for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage into Yale's undergraduate curriculum
- Combined traditional and experiential pedagogy: Combined classroom teaching, lectures, field trips, with lab and field work
- Basis for possible new undergraduate course and may lead to graduate program in Museum Studies