Northeastern University
College of Professional Studies
Capstone & Experiential Learning at NEU’s College of Professional Studies

Academic Quality Assurance

Director, Assessment: Mamta Saxena
Associate Director, Assessment: Melanie Kasparian
Capstone & Experiential Learning at NEU’s College of Professional Studies

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Education that moves as fast as the workforce.

Learn more about our degree programs tailored for working professionals.

See Programs
Workshop Outcomes:

• Develop a capstone framework that integrates experiential learning
  • Activity # 1

• Create authentic assignments that emulate real world experiences
  • Activity # 2

• Identify measures of experiential learning
  • Activity # 3
Academic Quality Assurance

- Collect data about **program outcomes** to inform the teaching and learning at the program level
- Promote a **culture of assessment** and inquiry to achieve college and program goals and mission
- Provide a shared understanding of **good assessment practices**
Annual Assessment Cycle

I: Define
- Mission
- SLOs
- Course map
- Measures
- Benchmarks
- Data collection strategy

II: Collect
- Collect data from multiple sources
- Aggregate data

III: Analyze
- Direct measures
- Indirect measures
- Previous year’s PRP
- Write-up Results & new PRP goals to align outcomes

IV: Act
- Plan for implementing PRP goals
- Implement goals

Annual Report Stages
Overarching Vision: 2020

- An Extraordinary, Personal, Omnichannel Learner Experience
- Relational Approach To Corporate Partnerships
- Evolved Approach to Next Generation Offerings
- Platform to Fully Harness the Power of Place – Locally & Globally
- Structuring for Strategic Action
Northeastern and Change

• Known for Co-op program
• Experiential learning focused on co-op for undergraduates
• In 2013 CPS took on the challenge to offer experiential learning to adult online learners
• Challenges we face
Definition of Experiential Learning

“process where knowledge is created through the transformation of experience”

Kolb (1984)
Curricular, co-curricular, and pedagogical experiences that provide students with opportunities to develop the kinds of learning they need ... High impact practices are cumulative experiences that increase rates of student retention and student engagement

Kuh (2008)
High Impact Practices

- First Year Experience
- Common Intellectual Experiences
- Learning Communities
- Writing-Intensive Courses
- Collaborative Work
- Research
- Internships (also co-op)
- Community-Based Learning
- Diversity/GLOBAL Learning
- Capstone
Shared Understanding of “Experiential”

Integration of classroom learning and the real-world experiences.
Target population: Students in the second half of their degree with core theoretical knowledge and possibly some work experience who will take a co-op (35-40 hours/week) to apply significant theoretical knowledge, expand professional network.

Part-time professional training experiences for students seeking entry into a new field. Students will do an internship to gain exposure to new skills, a new network and workplace culture.

Project-based work done at a student’s company with approval of an employer sponsor. Target population: Students who are also working professionals and can negotiate to do a project outside the scope of their regular duties at the organization where they work or volunteer.

Integrate classroom and community goals through service partnerships that enrich the academic experience, inspire lifelong community engagement, and strengthen our local and global communities.

Short-term flexible, accessible, all virtual low threshold experiential projects delivered as standalone projects with real-world sponsors; projects can be embedded in capstones, practicums, consultancies, internships, current workplace, and more, and supported within the framework of an academic course. Opportunities are recruited/seeded by XN team with sponsors and academic teams to align with programmatic outcomes and meet the unique needs of students and programs. Opportunities are local, regional and national.

Co-op
Internship
Experiential Learning at Work
Service Learning
Experiential Network (XN)

Experiential Spectrum

Northeastern University

Curriculum & Signature Assignments
Pedagogically driven course design that leverages real-world, scenario-based problems based on authentic job and life-relevant situations. Extensive reflection and feedback to allow students to reflect and engage in critical thinking.

Field / Clinical Work
Programs that offer field and clinical work as part of the program. This could include global opportunities and study abroad.

Capstone
A final signature project where students take the cumulative knowledge and skills learned and apply it to a new project that can be authentic in nature.

Practicum
Authentic experience designed to give students supervised practical application of a previously or concurrently studied theory.

Consulting
Customized, individual or team-based consultation approach where students research and analyze company data, patterns and trends to provide a report or set of recommendations directly to the organization for feedback and/or implementation. Consulting projects allow students to serve as subject matter experts and implement concepts they learn in their programs.
Making Experiential More Explicit: Levels of Incorporation

- Institutional
- Program
- Curriculum
Institutional: Strategic Partnerships

NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY AND IBM PARTNERSHIP FIRST TO TURN DIGITAL BADGES INTO ACADEMIC CREDENTIALS FOR LEARNERS WORLDWIDE

U.S. Department of Education

FACT SHEET: ED Launches Initiative for Low-Income Students to Access New Generation Of Higher Education Providers

AUGUST 16, 2016

Contact: Press Office, (202) 401-1576, press@ed.gov
Program: Outcomes Framework

Framework Selected in 2012:

- Specialized Knowledge
- Broad and Integrative Knowledge
- Applied and Collaborative Knowledge
- Civic, Global, Intercultural Learning
- Intellectual Learning
Program: Updated Outcomes Framework

In 2016, added category

- Specialized Knowledge
- Broad and Integrative Knowledge
- Applied and Collaborative Knowledge
- Civic, Global, Intercultural Learning
- Experiential Learning
Every program culminates in a capstone:

- Undergraduate: XXX4850 Capstone Seminar
- Graduate: XXX7980 Capstone Project
Program: Updated Capstone Framework

**Capstone**
Thesis, research report, essay, exhibit, composition, portfolio, oral presentation, performance show or recital, ePortfolio review and revision, case studies, conference presentations

**Summative**
Signature Assignments and Projects:
Final exams, artifacts such as report, presentation, action plan, research paper, art work, recital, speech, proposals

**Formative**
Quizzes, Discussion forums, wikis, blogs, or group work/activities, journals, oral exams, milestones
Activity

Draft a program outcome pertaining to real-world experiences

• What’s the guiding framework?
• How would you define experiential?
Examples: SLOS Related to Experiential Learning

Broad:
• Connect theory to practice via experiential opportunities including integrative co-op, research, or simulated activities.
• Synthesize and transfer learning to new, complex situations within course work or beyond the classroom.

Specific:
• BS Biotechnology: Integrate acquired biotechnology skills, principles, best practices, techniques, and tools into a hands-on, real-world project in a local biotech company.
• MPS Analytics: Apply the principles and tools of analytics to a project within a sponsoring organization to assist with the delivery, development, and successful implementation of data analysis for strategic decision making in organizations.
Curriculum: A Model For Experiential Course Design

- Concrete Experience
- Reflective Observation
- Abstract Conceptualization
- Active Experimentation
- Experiential Learning
How many of the high impact strategies and experiential learning concepts are at play in the following examples?
The bases of DNA can be compared to a four-letter alphabet that conveys biological messages that exist in chemical form. Due to complementary pairing of partner strands, each can act as a template for a new complementary strand. This method is used to replicate the entire genome before passing to progeny cells.

Figure 3

In this video, James Watson explains the structure of DNA and its complementary base pairing characteristics.
Reflect: Negotiation Type

In your opinion, which type of negotiation works best in the workplace? Adversarial or cooperative?

Select the correct answer, and then click Submit.

INCORRECT

It depends on the context and goals. Read to find out a perspective that proposes win-win: In Praise of Win-Win Negotiating.

CONTINUE
Video: Law Scenario

Always read every single word of every contract you sign.
This portfolio was archived Dec 6, 2014 10:14am EST

My Program

EDU 6054 Emerging Trends in Education
EDU 6055 Sociocultural Context of Learning and Development
EDU 6211 New Directions for Adult Learning
EDU 6436 Best Practices for the Twenty-First-Century Education
GST 6410 Global Focus: Education and Information Technology
EDU 6050 Education as an Advanced Field of Study
EDU 6319 How People Learn
EDU 6588 Issues in Education-College Readiness
EDU 6321 Models for Learning Design
EDU6332 Open Learning
EDU 6324 Competencies, Assessment, and Learning Analytics
EDU6225 Capstone

Fall 2014

At work, our department has a negative stance on evaluation and we have no LMS in which to store assessment data. We rely on archaic tools to manually assess data in small quantities and then summarize the data in prose allowing the reviewer’s personality and beliefs to creep into the raw data.

As I think about assessment and analytics now, I see that our education department has a need for assessment of our assets and our learners as well as an ongoing analysis of that data. Today, we have a limited amount of assessment data due to our department’s stance on evaluation, but we have enormous chunks of data from our social media outlets. As we begin to reassess our entire department, much of the data we need already exists; we just haven’t gone after it.
Activity

Create a list of authentic assignments

• Consider the Experiential Learning Spectrum, High Impact Practices, or examples of models of design.

• What are you already doing that is experiential?
## Examples: A Model For Experiential Course Design

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Online Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Concrete Experience</strong></td>
<td>• Virtual labs or field trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Simulations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Games</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Role-playing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reflective Observation</strong></td>
<td>• Online blogs and journals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• E-portfolio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Concept-checks interactive lessons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Abstract Conceptualization</strong></td>
<td>• Interactive lectures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Multimodal Content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Active Experimentation</strong></td>
<td>• Simulations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Games</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Role-playing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Wikis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All Levels of Incorporation: “XN Projects”

XN – The Experiential Network:

Students work virtually with a sponsoring business or nonprofit organization on a short-term project (six-week period.)

Companion course within Capstone INT6943
How XN Works

Companies sponsor a project

Students enroll in course and are matched to a project

Students complete projects with sponsor

Students receive sponsor and faculty feedback

Project Characteristics
- Projects completed remotely
- 25-30 hours over 6 weeks
- Projects scoped by sponsors with assistance from NU staff
- Crafted to be completed alongside full course load

Program Characteristics
- Non-credit and For-credit formats
- Work on real project directly with sponsor
- Course materials along the way
- Get feedback & support from sponsor, NU faculty and staff
Where does XN fit?

**Co-curricular**
- 0 Credit
- Project recruitment
- Facilitated COP5003 course
- Student Success Manager
- Generic XN projects

**Curricular**
- For-credit
- XN as a service
- Custom build to meet academic program needs

**Categories**
- Independent Study
- Electives
- Capstones
Where does XN fit?

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Practicum
Authentic experience designed to give students supervised practical application of a previously or concurrently studied theory.

Personalized Learning
A variety of pedagogical approaches that offer students a tailored path at the program level for learning based on his or her own goals and needs. Experience is achieved through a variety of tools and technology that can target appropriate experiences and content.

Consulting
Customized, individual or team-based consultation approach where students research and analyze company data, patterns and trends to provide a report or set of recommendations directly to the organization for feedback and/or implementation. Consulting projects allow students to serve as subject matter experts and implement concepts they learn in their programs.
Measuring Experiential Learning- KPI

**Goal:** Ensure a full spectrum of experiential learning opportunities that best exercise students in real-world contexts and challenges.

**Initiative:** 100% Experiential Portfolio
Measures for Experiential Learning

Direct Measure: Student performance in capstones and/or XN projects (Rubrics)

Indirect Measure: Employer and Student Surveys
Consistent Use of Rubrics

**INTEGRATIVE LEARNING VALUE RUBRIC**

*for more information, please contact sales@aaau.org*

**Definition**

Integrative learning is an understanding and a disposition that a student builds across the curriculum and cocurriculum, from making simple connections among ideas and experiences to synthesizing and transferring learning to new, complex situations within and beyond the campus.

Evaluators are encouraged to assign a zero to any work sample or collection of work that does not meet benchmark (cell one) level performance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Connections to Experience</th>
<th>Capstone</th>
<th>Milestones</th>
<th>Benchmark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Connects relevant experience and academic knowledge</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meaningfully synthesizes connections among experiences outside of the formal classroom (including life experiences and academic experiences such as internships and travel abroad) to deepen understanding of fields of study and to broaden own points of view.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectively selects and develops examples of life experiences, drawn from a variety of contexts (e.g., family life, artistic participation, civic involvement, work experience), to illuminate concepts/theories/frameworks of fields of study.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compares life experiences and academic knowledge to infer differences, as well as similarities, and acknowledge perspectives other than one’s own.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifies connections between life experiences and those academic texts and ideas perceived as similar and related to one’s own interests.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Connections to Discipline | | |
|---------------------------| | |
| Sees (makes) connections across disciplines, perspectives | | | |
| Independently creates wholes out of multiple parts (synthesizes) or draws conclusions by combining examples, facts, or theories from more than one field of study or perspective. | | | |
| Independently connects examples, facts, or theories from more than one field of study or perspective. | | | |
| When prompted, connects examples, facts, or theories from more than one field of study or perspective. | | | |
| When prompted, presents examples, facts, or theories from more than one field of study or perspective. | | | |

| Transfer | | |
|----------| | |
| Adapts and applies skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation to new situations to solve difficult problems or explore complex issues in original ways. | | | |
| Adapts and applies skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation to new situations to solve problems or explore issues. | | | |
| Uses skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation in a new situation to contribute to understanding of problems or issues. | | | |
| Uses, in a basic way, skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation in a new situation. | | | |

| Integrated Communication | | |
|--------------------------| | |
| Fulfills the assignment(s) by choosing a format, language, or graph (or other visual representation) in ways that enhance meaning, making clear the interdependence of language and meaning, thought, and expression. | | | |
| Fulfills the assignment(s) by choosing a format, language, or graph (or other visual representation) to explicitly connect content and form, demonstrating awareness of purpose and audience. | | | |
| Fulfills the assignment(s) by choosing a format, language, or graph (or other visual representation) that connects in a basic way what is being communicated (content) with how it is said (form). | | | |
| Fulfills the assignment(s) (i.e. to produce an essay, a poster, a video, a PowerPoint presentation, etc.) in an appropriate form. | | | |

| Reflection and Self-Assessment | | |
|------------------------------| | |
| Demonstrates a developing sense of self as a learner, building on prior experiences to respond to new and challenging contexts (may be evident in self-assessment, reflective, or creative work) | | | |
| Envisions a future self (and possibly makes plans that build on past experiences) that have occurred across multiple and diverse contexts. | | | |
| Evaluates changes in own learning over time, recognizing complex contextual factors (e.g., works with ambiguity and risk, deals with frustration, considers ethical frameworks). | | | |
| Articulates strengths and challenges (within specific performances or events) to increase effectiveness in different contexts (through increased self-awareness). | | | |
| Describes own performances with general descriptors of success and failure. | | | |
Presenting the Data: Direct Measures

Results by Program and Student Learning Outcome

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Student Learning Outcome</th>
<th>% of Students that Met Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Master of Arts in Homeland Security</td>
<td>Experiential Learning</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Professional Studies in Digital ..</td>
<td>Experiential Learning</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Professional Studies in Informa..</td>
<td>Experiential Learning</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Science in Applied Nutrition</td>
<td>Experiential Learning</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Science in Commerce and Econo..</td>
<td>Experiential Learning</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% of Students that Met Goal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Experiential Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Master of Arts in Strategic Intelligence</td>
<td>Unable to determine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Arts in Teaching</td>
<td>Unable to determine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Education</td>
<td>Unable to determine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Professional Studies in A.</td>
<td>Unable to determine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Professional Studies in Di.</td>
<td>Met Goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Professional Studies in In.</td>
<td>Met Goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Science in Applied Nutrition</td>
<td>Met Goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Science in Commerce and Eco.</td>
<td>Met Goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Science in Commerce and Eco.</td>
<td>Did Not Meet Goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Science in Commerce and Eco.</td>
<td>Unable to determine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Science in Commerce and Eco.</td>
<td>Unable to determine</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Presenting the Data: Indirect Measures

**XN Survey Results-Year 2017**

How did the student perform for each skill?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Performance Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Analytical skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem solving</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionalism and work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activity

Draft a plan to measure experiential learning.

- What are you measuring?
- Is it direct/indirect?
- How do you define success—what is your Benchmark?
### Examples: Measuring Experiential Learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Direct/Indirect</th>
<th>Benchmark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business Plan</td>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>All students will achieve at least a 75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective Essay</td>
<td>Direct/Indirect</td>
<td>85% of students will meet the standards for “connections” and “integrative learning” in their rubric.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portfolio Presentation</td>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>All students will achieve at least a B.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XN Survey</td>
<td>Indirect</td>
<td>90% of supervisors will be satisfied with their student’s performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alumni survey</td>
<td>Indirect</td>
<td>75% of respondents will state they were able to transfer what they learned to their current job.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
thank you
Q & A
Discussion

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Melanie Kasparian
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References


