



EXPERIENCE | SUCCESS
An Experiential Learning QEP

On-Site Reaffirmation Visit

April 13 – 15, 2021

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Executive Summary

Based on a review of the diverse and passionate feedback from all university stakeholders and a review of annual assessment and student achievement data, the University's next QEP will focus on increasing and strengthening **Experiential Learning (EL)** opportunities for students.

The goals of the institution's next Quality Enhancement Plan are to increase the number of experiential learning opportunities in each program, connect these EL activities directly to the student's program of study and career path, and to strengthen students' ability to transfer the knowledge, skills and abilities from the EL activities into those chosen career paths. The "**Experience | Success**" initiative will provide a vehicle for broad-based involvement in the design and implementation of a university-wide effort to ensure that graduates are equipped with a strong set of competencies for their chosen careers. The focus of this project directly supports the University's first Institutional Goal to "emphasize a student-centered approach to teaching, learning, and University life by *expanding educational opportunities and social mobility* through high quality instructional and student support services that are both accessible and affordable". The **Experience | Success** project will enhance our graduates' workplace readiness skills and improve their career mobility.

Over the life of the project, significant resources will be committed to accomplish the primary objectives of the **Experience | Success** initiative to include the following.

1. Athens State University will establish a central location/office to be able to connect faculty members with community sponsors and other experiential learning activities.
2. At least 90% of programs offered at the bachelor's degree level will include at least one experiential learning activity at the end of the five year (this will be completed through a roll-out time frame).
3. Experiential learning activities will connect specific learning objectives to the associated activity.
4. At least 80% of undergraduate students will demonstrate knowledge, skills and dispositions in the areas of problem solving and inquiry, communication, professionalism, career understanding, collaboration and reflection.
5. Students will strongly identify as being anchored through active involvement with diverse communities and real-world challenges through personal and social responsibilities. These may include civic knowledge and engagement, both at a local and global level, intercultural knowledge and competence, ethical reasoning and action, and foundations and skills of lifelong learning.

Assessment will include direct and indirect measures. The Integrative and Applied Learning VALUE Rubric developed by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) will be used to assess the connection between specific student learning outcomes and identified experiential learning activities. Developing student capacities for integrative and applied learning is central to personal success, social responsibility, and civic engagement in today's global society. Students face a rapidly changing and increasingly connected world where integrative and applied learning becomes not just a benefit... but a necessity. Students will also self-reflect on their

experience to assess their personal growth. Faculty will use the QEP Comprehensive Student Scoring Rubric to assess student learning on predetermined activities and skills. Not all areas of the rubric will pertain to every activity. However, this will allow for the assessment of the impact of experiential learning activities on the student's knowledge, skills and abilities in the areas of (1) problem solving and inquiry, (2) communication, (3) collaboration, (4) professionalism, (5) career understanding, (6) reflection, and (7) professional development.

Each year, faculty members will have the opportunity to learn more about the benefits of experiential learning, which could impact every one of our almost 3,000 students. Through the **Experience | Success** project, Athens State University is well poised to prepare graduates to meet the challenges of the region's growing and changing workforce.

The founding pillars of the QEP – a shift in the university's culture as well as the collection and dissemination of evidence of student learning and success—are designed to be mutually reinforcing. The more faculty who participate in the roll-out of the implementation and integration of experiential learning in the classroom, the more evidence there will be of a positive impact on student success providing faculty with even more reason to incorporate experiential learning techniques in their classroom. **Experience | Success** is designed to have a lasting, positive impact on the students and the community it serves.

Establishing a Topic

Athens State University is a public, co-educational institution of higher learning offering programs leading to a baccalaureate or master's degree. The University is an upper-division institution that only offers coursework at the junior/senior and graduate levels. The overriding mission of the institution is to serve the upper-division needs of transfer students, and to offer strategic graduate programs approved by the Alabama Commission on Higher Education. The University is located in the fastest growing workforce region in the state of Alabama.

The institution serves a unique student demographic in that almost sixty (60) percent of students attend on a part-time basis – more than at any other institution in the state. Most are already employed (90%) and raising families. They are place-bound and over 90% of take at least one distance learning course each semester as they balance work, family, and education responsibilities. Athens State provides students the opportunity to further their education and improve their employability skills by offering flexible, relevant program offerings at the most affordable tuition rate in the state. By meeting the students where they are, Athens State University is able to provide an efficient pathway to increased career mobility while contributing to the growing workforce demands in the north Alabama region.

Throughout the topic identification process a number of ideas were submitted by students, faculty, alumni, Board of Trustee members, staff, and area employers. One of the recurring themes was active learning. Upon further research, it became apparent that pockets of experiential learning activities were already occurring across the institution through internships, field experiences, practicums, co-op experiences, project-based learning, and consulting projects. While a number of faculty had experimented with experiential learning concepts, there was no systematic approach to supporting or strengthening these activities for faculty or students

During the topic identification and early development stage, faculty identified barriers that limit a fully immersive implementation of EL activities. Since faculty only have students for their junior/senior coursework it is challenging to find ways in which meaningful, career-focused EL opportunities can be provided to students. In addition to the amount of time that faculty have with students, additional barriers identified by faculty include a lack of support, guidance, and time to implement EL strategies that have been shown to directly benefit students.

In order to eliminate these barriers, the successful multi-year implementation of the **Experience | Success** project at Athens State University will ensure resources and support for faculty members to integrate Experiential Learning opportunities into their curriculum. Implementation will also facilitate a more comprehensive and systematic method for identifying and developing EL activities with external sponsors/stakeholders.

Athens State University began having conversations about the institution's next Quality Enhancement Plan in the Fall of 2018. These conversations were the result of different initiatives occurring across the University and included a wide range of stakeholders. The topic identification and early project development timeline is represented here.

QEP Topic Identification Timeline

<p>September 2018</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Planning Committee begins information gathering for next 10-year plan • Solicits feedback on potential and ongoing initiatives from area Vice Presidents and College Deans • Committee recognizes several items that may be appropriate QEP topics • A subset of committee members volunteer to lead the QEP topic identification phase
<p>October 2018</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QEP Topic Identification Team is formed and led by Dr. Quanda Stevenson • Team is convened from a group of faculty and staff who expressed interest in identifying the next QEP topic. Reviewed SACSCOC guidelines for QEP context and background
<p>November 2018</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QEP Topic Identification Team continued to meet and share input from across the campus regarding possible QEP topics. The Team requested a full University Faculty/Staff Meeting in early 2019 to kick-off the topic identification process.
<p>January 2019</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team developed plan for Faculty/Staff Meeting to include a review of first QEP, hands-on activity/competition, and brief presentation by Writing Center team.
<p>February 2019</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QEP Topic Identification Official Kick-Off event: University Faculty/Staff Meeting
<p>Spring Semester 2019</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing small group discussions and surveys of faculty, staff, students, alumni and Board of Trustee members
<p>Summer Semester 2019</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QEP Topic Identification Team reviews all input and makes a recommendation of 3-5 topics to President
<p>August 2019</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QEP Topic identified and shared widely at Fall In-service: <i>Experiential Learning</i> • Identify QEP Leadership Team for purpose of developing and implementing project
<p>January 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QEP Director selected: Katia Maxwell, Assistant Professor Computer Science
<p>Spring and Summer Semester 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus Group and Literature Review activities with all University stakeholders
<p>August 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin formal development of QEP Report

As outlined in the table, the University's Strategic Planning Committee began discussions in the Fall 2018 regarding the institution's next 10-year strategic plan. The existing plan expired in 2020. This discussion resulted in several initiatives identified for inclusion in the next plan. The Committee also recognized that the institution would soon need to identify the next Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). The institution's first QEP, *Building Success through Writing* (BStW), was launched in January 2010 and resulted in important changes on campus. The University celebrated the successful implementation of BStW in April 2015 with an institution-wide presentation that included a look back at some of the highlights of the project. This five-year recap

of events provided an encouraging conclusion; the University’s culture had indeed embraced and validated the importance of writing skills for both students and faculty. One of the first outcomes of that QEP resulted in the establishment of the University Writing Center and the development of a College-Level Writing Rubric that is still in use.

FORMING AN EXPLORATORY COMMITTEE

The process to identify the institution’s next Quality Enhancement Plan began in late 2018 as detailed here. As a result of the Strategic Planning Committee’s conversations, a number of committee members volunteered to lead a QEP Topic Identification Team for the purpose of gathering input from across campus regarding possible topics. This Team sent out a request for volunteers and the first interest meeting was conducted in October 2018. Members of this Team are listed here.

QEP Topic Identification Team

First Name	Last Name	Institutional Role
Mary	Aquila	Faculty Librarian
Chet	Breaux	Writing Center Director
Carolyn	Carthen	Veteran’s Assistance Advisor
Dakota	Cotton	Faculty Librarian/Archives
Mark	Gale	Faculty, Instructional Design
Jeffrey	Guenther	Director, Institutional Research & Assessment
Lauren	Reynolds	Student, Writing Center Tutor
Derrek	Smith	Student Success Center Director
Jackie	Smith	Accreditation Liaison
Quanda	Stevenson	Faculty, Criminal Justice
Darlene	Turner-White	Faculty, Early Childhood Education
Debra	Vaughn	Faculty, Management (Faculty Senate Presiding Officer)

The Topic Identification Team met a number of times over the Fall 2018 and Spring 2019 semesters for the purpose of soliciting and reviewing feedback from all University stakeholders as well as reviewing annual assessment and student achievement data provided by the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment.

In February 2019, the QEP Topic Identification Team kicked off the formal topic identification process at a [university-wide meeting](#). Attendees participated in a brief trivia game to help remind them of the impact of the institution’s last QEP (BStW) while also setting the parameters for the next project. At the conclusion, attendees were provided with notecards and asked for open-ended feedback on what the focus should be of institution’s next Quality Enhancement Plan. The Team collected this data as attendees exited the meeting and used it to develop a framework for moving forward.

In April 2019, a three-question survey was distributed to faculty, students, staff, employers, and members of the University’s Board of Trustees. The survey remained open throughout the Summer semester and was advertised using the weekly *Athens Insider* newsletter. An example of the call for responses is provided below as well as a link to the survey instrument.



Every ten years, Athens State University identifies a new Quality Enhancement Plan, or *QEP*, for our campus. The QEP topic makes the University better by improving student learning.

Input from all is crucial to identify the best QEP. Please take a moment to complete this very short **Three Question Survey** to help identify critical topics.

During the same time frame, the institution was also conducting internal research for submission of the school's first Title III Strengthening Institutions Program grant proposal related to improving student success. This research provided valuable data about work-based learning activities that support graduation and student success rates. While many of our students are currently in the workplace while completing their degree, many need additional skills to advance in their careers. According to a study done by the National Association of Colleges and Employers in 2018, employers cited a significant gap between employer and graduate perception of career readiness. The Title III Development Team recognized this gap as an opportunity for Athens State University to address a critical need. There was crossover membership between the two committees (QEP Topic Identification and Title III Development). As conversations continued, data was shared between the groups and this data informed future conversations.

Meanwhile, during the Summer 2019 semester, the QEP Topic Identification Team was reviewing survey response data from the Spring. Over 450 survey responses were collected from students, faculty, staff, alumni, board members, and employers. The survey was used to determine possible categories for the QEP. There were a total of five categories:

1. **Academic Quality** – All aspects of course delivery and faculty-student interactions
2. **Curriculum** – All inputs that help students to achieve course and program learning outcomes (i.e. course materials, course sequencing)
3. **Student Resources** – All non-curricular support (i.e. ADA features in Blackboard, funding for student activities, additional support for adult learners)
4. **Student Success** – All curricular support (i.e. academic advising, mentoring, tutoring)

5. **Communication** – Preparing students to be better communicators in the workforce (i.e. participative conversation skills, professional communication etiquette).

Table 1 provides a breakdown of responses by topic category.

Table 1
QEP Topic Identification Survey Results

Topic	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Academic Quality	174	16.9%
Curriculum	98	9.5%
Student Resources	87	8.5%
Student Success	67	6.5%
Communication	53	5.2%

SELECTING A TOPIC

The results were shared with the Strategic Planning Committee, the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the President. In August 2019, these results were presented during the Fall 2019 Faculty Convocation. The information was also made available for further review and comment through a dedicated QEP organization created in Blackboard, the institution’s Learning Management System. In September 2019, the President met with the QEP Topic Identification Team to discuss all feedback including student achievement data, survey responses, and proposed initiatives for the University’s next Strategic Plan. The QEP Topic Identification Team recommended 3-5 topics for consideration. After a second round review of the data collected from discussions and surveys to faculty, staff, students, alumni, and Board members, the final topic of **Experiential Learning** was selected and announced to all University stakeholders.

As a follow-up note, in late September 2019, the institution received notification that the Title III grant proposal was successful. Athens State University received its first-ever Title III grant for the project entitled *Pathways to Success – Improving Campus to Career Success through a three-pronged approach including Mandatory Advising, increased Diversity and Inclusion, and Career Readiness*. The five-year award totaled over \$2.1 million dollars. One of the strategies involved in the implementation of the project includes increasing student participation in work-based learning opportunities to strengthen their career readiness/career advancement skills.

NEXT STEPS: DEFINING EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING AT ATHENS STATE UNIVERSITY

Once the institution identified the focus of the next QEP, a Leadership Team was developed with membership including faculty, students, and staff as represented here.

QEP Leadership Team

First Name	Last Name	Institutional Role
Nick	Agrawal	Faculty, Computer Science
Mary	Aquila	Faculty Librarian
Kim	Bell	Faculty, Management & Statistics
Lauren	Blacklidge	Public Relations Manager
Chet	Breaux	Writing Center Director
Carolyn	Carthen	Veteran's Assistance Advisor
Tim	Crafton	IT/Computer Support Services Coordinator
Helen	Crider	Hanceville Off-Campus Manager/Communications Plan Manager
Hannah	Devine	Career Development Center Assistant
Barbara	Ferguson	Coordinator for Fiscal Affairs and Risk Management
Mark	Gale	Faculty, Instructional Design
Jeffrey	Guenther	Director of Institutional Research and Assessment Services
Diann	Hammon	Faculty, Accounting
Juliana	Hunt	Accessibility Specialist
Laura Lynn	Kerner	Faculty, Marketing (retired)
Chelsea	Love	Advancement Operations & Alumni Relations Officer
Katia	Maxwell	Faculty, Computer Science
Elizabeth	Mead	Student
Aron	Moss	Student
Shannon	Pittman	Faculty, Biology
Michael	Radden	Career Development Center Director
Kim	Roberts	Faculty, Management
Jackie	Smith	Accreditation Liaison
Derrek	Smith	Student Success Center Director
Brittany	Stanley	Student
Quanda	Stevenson	Faculty, Criminal Justice
Savannah	Tankersley	Testing Center Assistant
Darlene	Turner-White	Faculty, Early Childhood Education
Bridgette	Walker	Faculty, Career & Technical Education
Debbie	Wilson	College of Education Clinical Experiences Director

This group began work in October 2019 and quickly identified four main stakeholder groups to collect data regarding existing Experiential Learning activities across the institution. This would provide important baseline information and help the Team identify opportunities to improve student learning and success. Faculty, students, staff, and the Board of Trustees were all included in specific surveys. A brief description of findings from each group is provided here.

FACULTY

All full-time faculty were provided with an opportunity to complete a survey and provide feedback regarding existing Experiential Learning activities. Forty-eight faculty members participated, which is about 50% of the faculty at Athens State University. Faculty were asked if they already included some form of EL at the course level. **Figure 1** shows percentages of faculty who responded that they already incorporate EL activities into courses.

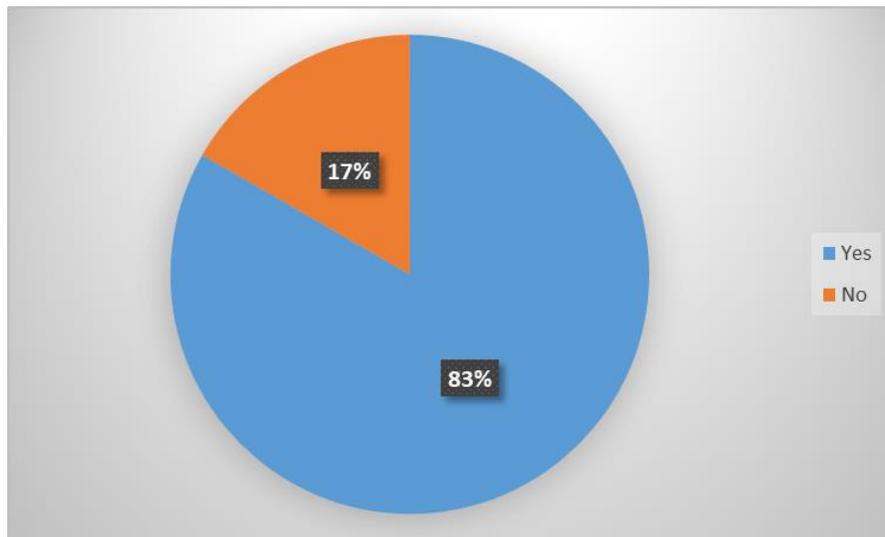


Figure 1. Percentage of classes with Experiential Learning integrated into curriculum

Faculty who responded that they use Experiential Learning in at least one of their classes were then asked three follow up questions. The first was to specify the different types of categories that they incorporate into their classes. Multiple faculty members use more than one type of experiential learning opportunity in their classes. These are identified in **Figure 2**.

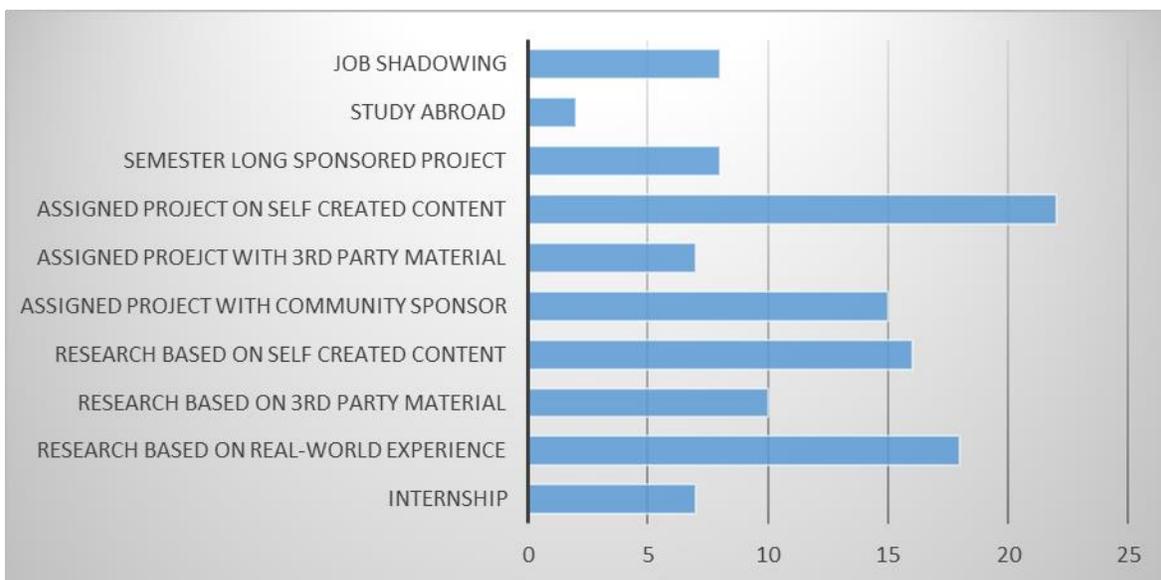


Figure 2. Faculty identified categories of experiential learning activities offered.

Figure 3 displays the different types of assessments that faculty use to assess students during and after they completed their experiential learning activity.

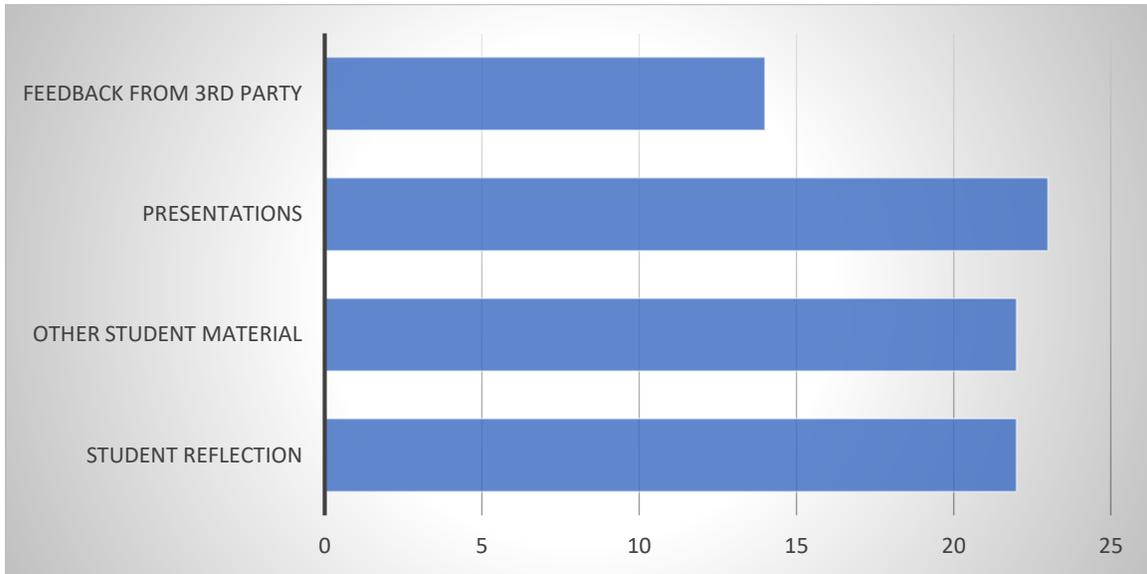


Figure 3. Assessment methods in place to assess experiential learning.

All faculty were then asked if there was a class in which they would like to incorporate some type of experiential learning opportunity. Respondents that indicated they were interested in EL were then surveyed on the types of EL activities they would like to include in courses. Figure 4 represents this feedback.

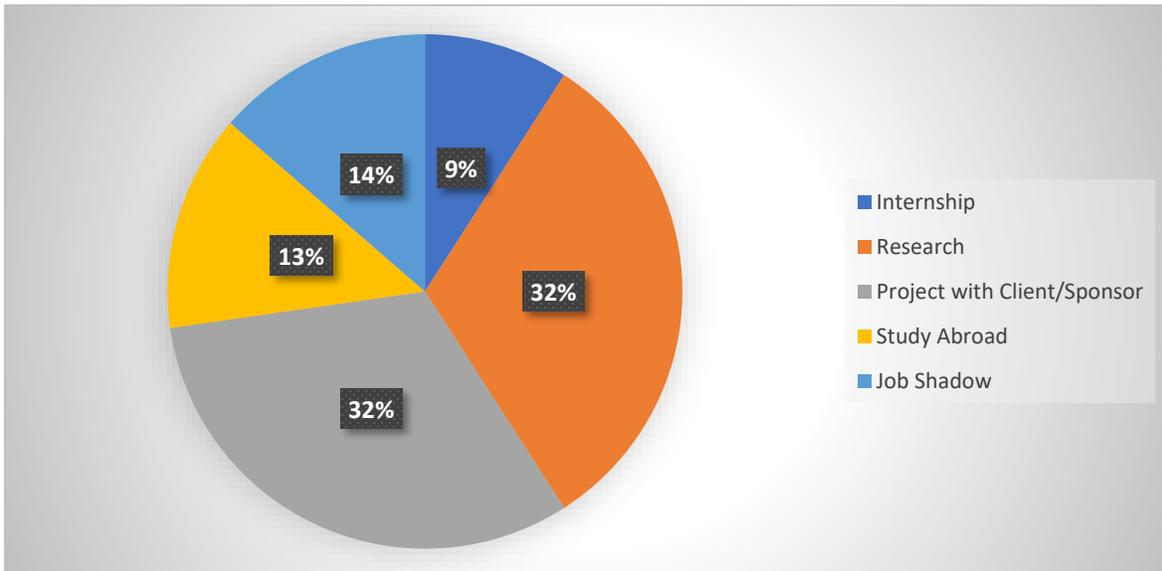


Figure 4. Types of experiential learning activities faculty would like to incorporate.

Finally, faculty were asked to provide feedback as to what keeps them from incorporating EL into their classes. Those results are found in Figure 5.

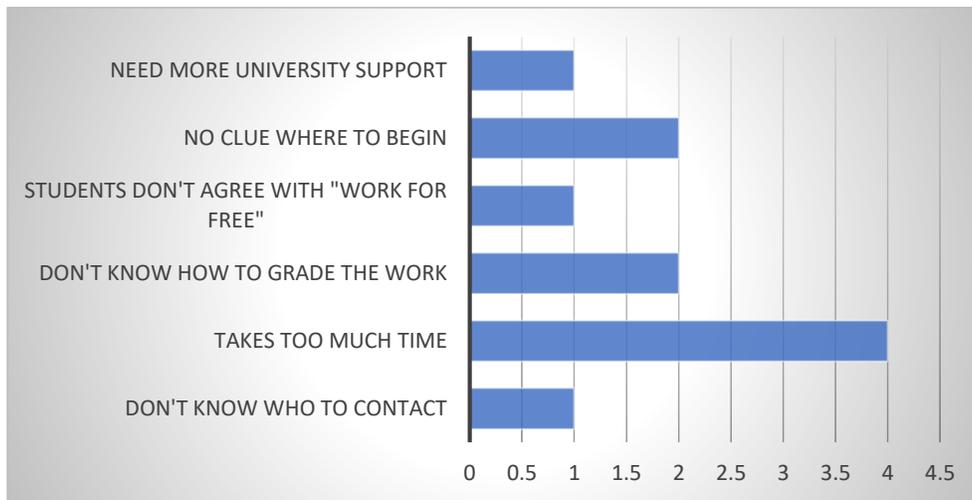


Figure 5. Reasons faculty don't integrate experiential learning into the classroom.

This feedback was critical in the continued development of the **Experience | Success** implementation plan.

STUDENTS

Experience | Success has the potential to significantly impact curriculum and student learning. Students were surveyed in order to better understand their needs. A total of 229 students participated in the survey. Out of those, 139 were aware that an experiential learning activity was offered within their major. This group also indicated that they had participated in an experiential learning activity within their major. The remaining students indicated they were not aware of experiential learning activities within their major. **Figure 6** provides information on the percentage of student participation by College. Participation was split evenly among Colleges.

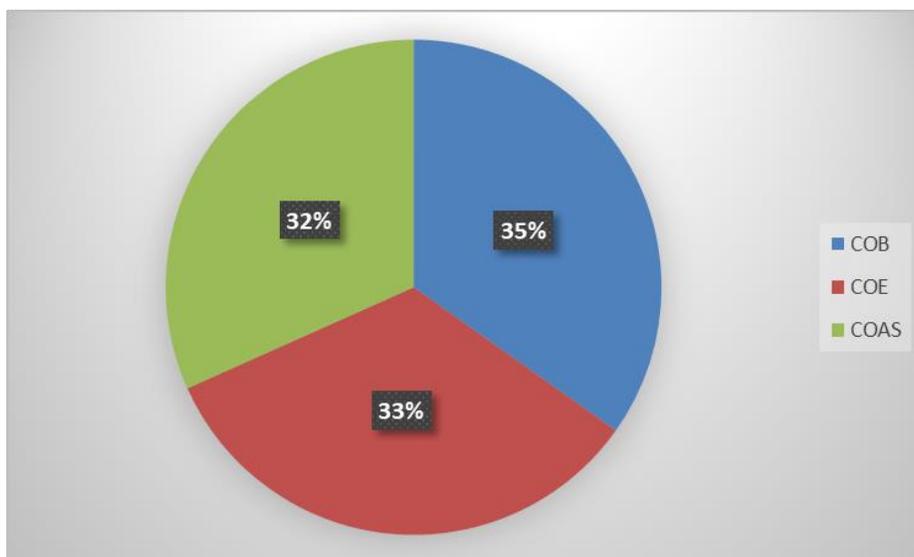


Figure 6. Student Participation by College.

Students were asked about the experiential learning opportunities currently available in their major. Students could select more than one category. **Figure 7** displays the percentage by category.

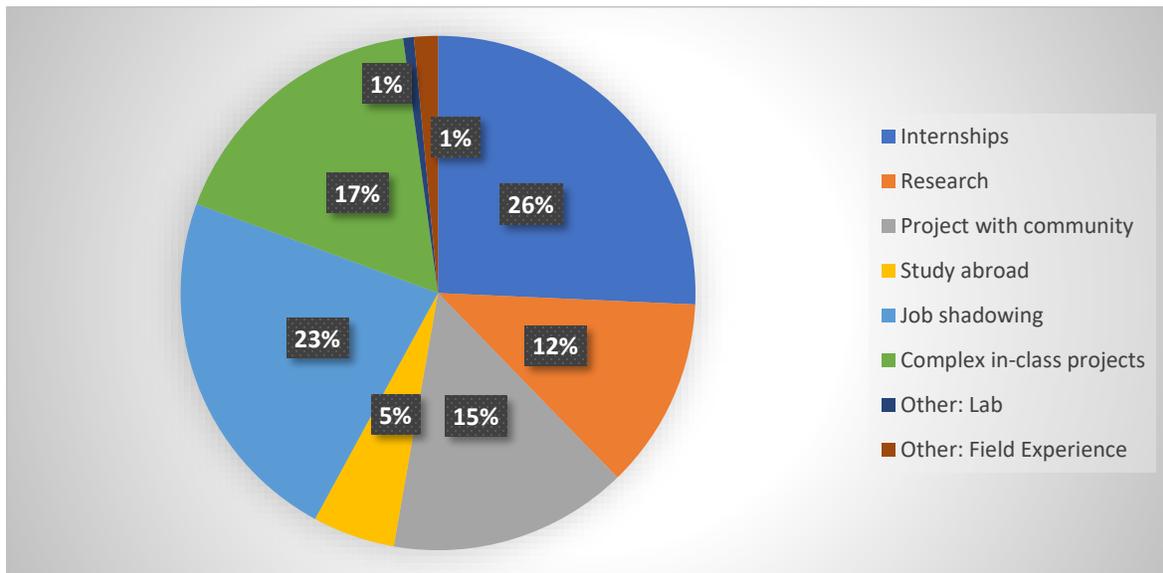


Figure 7 Student responses on existing experiential learning opportunities.

STAFF

While the QEP will mainly impact faculty and students, it is important to get feedback from those that are on the front line of the University. Staff members who work within Enrollment and Student Services often have the first contact with prospective and current students. Their ideas were an important component for how to best move forward. A different survey was created and administered to all Staff.

A total of thirty-six (36) Staff members participated in the survey. They were asked two main questions. The first was whether or not they were aware that Experiential Learning took place in the classroom, and, if so, which categories they were familiar with. The second question was based on whether or not they believed their department could partner with faculty members to provide experiential learning opportunities to students.

Of the respondents, sixty-nine (69.4%) percent indicated that their departments could offer some type of Experiential Learning opportunity. All the Staff members that completed the survey were aware that students have the opportunity to participate in experiential learning, and identified the categories that they are aware of as documented in **Figure 8**.

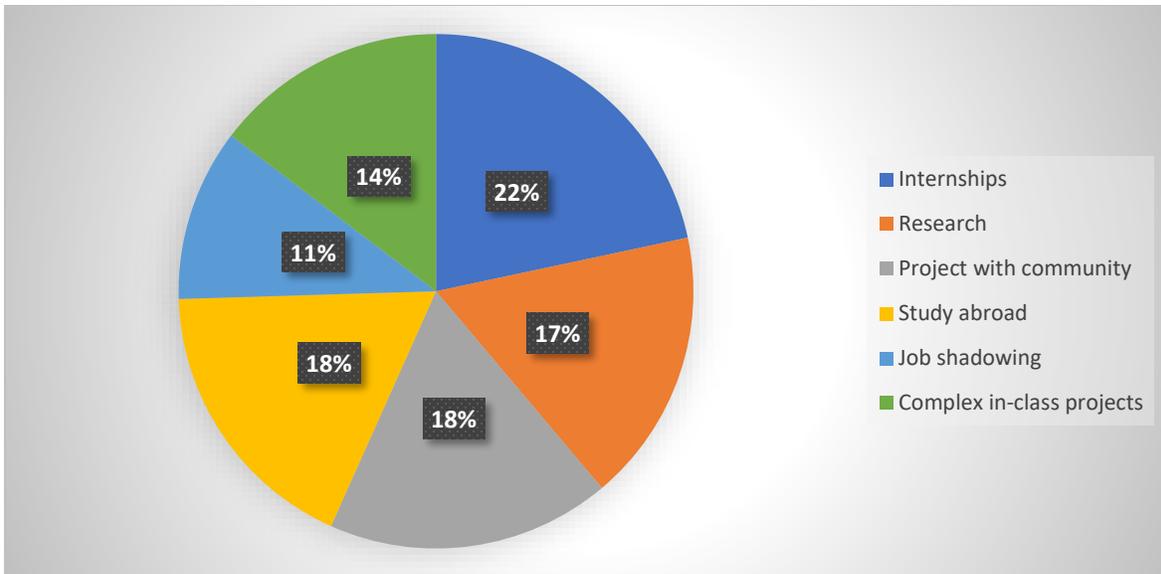


Figure 8. Staff awareness of experiential learning opportunities for students.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The QEP Leadership Team also solicited feedback from the University’s Board of Trustees. A specific survey was developed to gather feedback from this stakeholder group. Members were asked about different activities that they would consider to be Experiential Learning. Results are shown in **Figure 9**.

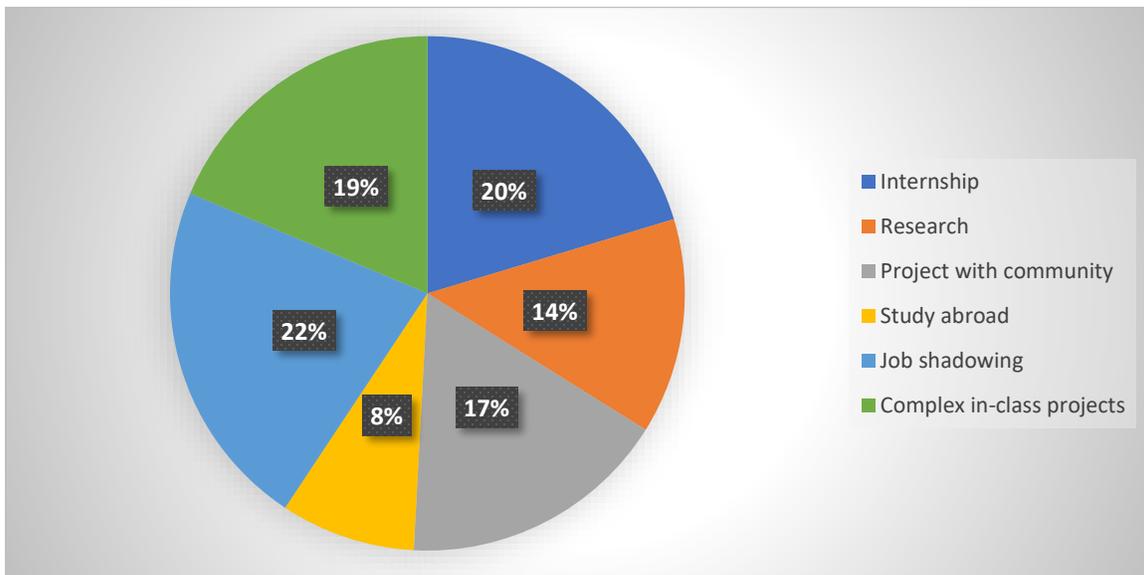


Figure 9. Board of Trustees feedback regarding experiential learning activities.

Figure 10 reflects the percentage of trustees that were interested in partnering with the institution to provide students with an experiential learning opportunity.

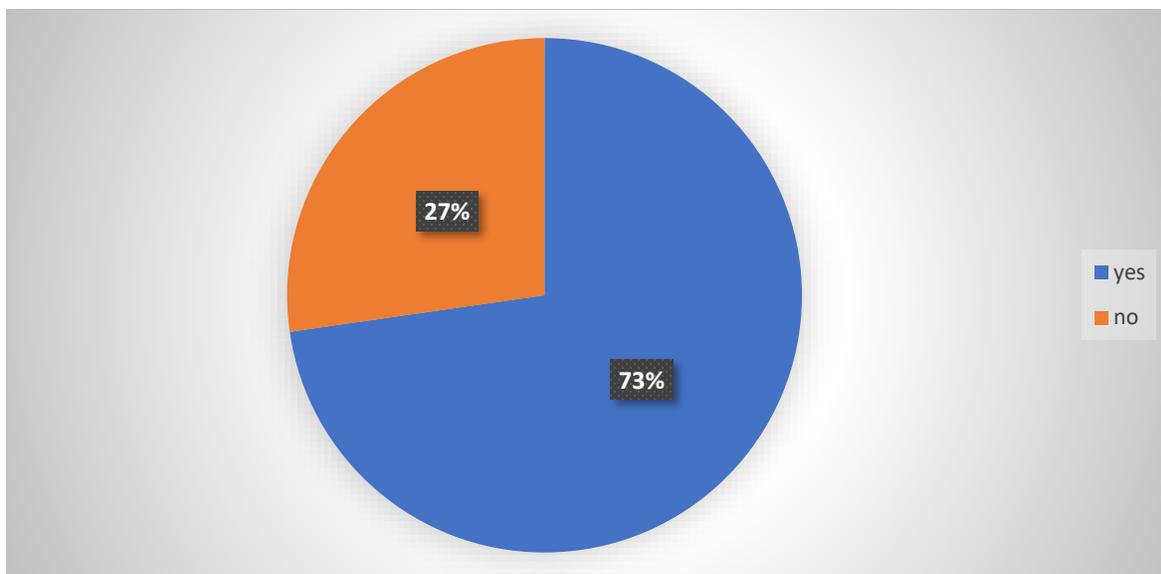


Figure 10. Board of Trustees interested in sponsoring EL activities.

IDENTIFYING TYPES OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

In early 2020, a QEP Director was selected to lead the institution through the multi-year process of implementation. Katia Maxwell, Assistant Professor of Computer Science, was an original member of the QEP Topic Identification Team and accepted the leadership role of QEP Director.

The next task for the QEP Leadership Team was to determine what Experiential Learning meant to the constituents of Athens State University. To determine this, surveys were provided to the four groups. The surveys are provided in **Appendix A** and Experiential Learning is referenced as a “hands-on” activity within the surveys.

The QEP Director worked with University stakeholders and identified perceptions related to experiential learning through the analysis of the surveys. The result of these conversations pointed to two concepts; Active Learning and Hands-On Learning. This culminated in the identification of five different types of EL.

1. **Workplace Learning** – this includes students participating in internships or shadowing someone in a potential career. Other examples might include a student partnered with a community sponsor to work closely with them on a project and deliver the required results as if they had been hired to perform the tasks at hand.
2. **Learning through Research** – this includes students partnering with faculty members to conduct research in topics that are relevant to the community and/or discipline. These opportunities allow the learner to attain similar skills as those in the workplace environment. These opportunities are more focused on theoretical aspects of a profession as well as research methods.
3. **Hands-On Learning** – hands-on projects come in many different forms. Students from our accounting department create and analyze financial statements, while management students run an electronic sensor manufacturing company through a simulator. Students in Drama and Theatre Arts act or learn production. Others design and create costumes, sets,

and other technical elements. These opportunities are completed in a controlled environment, such as a classroom, where faculty are present to be active facilitators in the student's learning experience.

4. **Learning through Expeditions** – this includes students applying their skills and knowledge through activities during trips, which can be local, national, or international. Students in the biology-focused programs often have these experiences through a partnership program located at the Dauphin Island Sea Lab in South Alabama. Students in other programs may have these types of experiences through Study Abroad courses.
5. **Community-Based Learning** – learning that occurs outside of the classroom through special groups, such as the Student Government Association. These activities focus on civic engagement as a key college outcome, and that working with community partners is good preparation for engaged citizens.

ATHENS STATE UNIVERSITY QEP DEFINITION

It was time to adopt a formal definition of Experiential Learning specific to Athens State University. The QEP Leadership Team reviewed all stakeholder feedback and discussed the possibilities involved. As a result of these discussions, the following definition was developed and presented to the Faculty Senate and then to the President's Cabinet for approval and adoption. The following definition was affirmed.

At Athens State University, Experiential Learning is a process through which students develop knowledge, skills and values by applying theory and academic content to real-world experiences within the classroom, community, or workplace. Experiential Learning encompasses internships, undergraduate research, expeditions, community engagement, and other creative and professional work experiences.

Broad-based Support

As the campus moved forward with its definition of Experiential Learning, the QEP Leadership Team led efforts to conduct a campus-wide review of best practices and literature to inform the development of an implementation plan. Between February and September 2020, the Leadership Team led campus-wide focus groups through multiple literary reviews. The literature was grouped into ten (10) categories. (A complete list of the literature reviewed is available in **Appendix B**).

1. Assessment
2. Behavioral, Social, and Lab Sciences
3. Business
4. Communication
5. Design
6. Education
7. E-learning
8. Field Experience
9. Multidisciplinary
10. Workforce

Members of the QEP Leadership Team led these ten Focus Groups from across the University through small group conversations to review the literature. (These were conducted virtually based on the COVID-19 precautions). Faculty, staff and students were involved in different aspects of the review and feedback was gathered through Discussion Board postings in the QEP Bb Organization. A summary of the reviews for each focus group is provided here. Input was provided by students, faculty and staff.

ASSESSMENT FOCUS GROUP

A review of experiential learning assessment literature allowed a group of faculty and staff to come together and reflect on their own experiences and how it impacted them. These experiences provided guidance in determining the outcomes the Athens State University developed. Some of the main points shared by faculty and staff were associated to students' increased ability to apply theory to practice. Students were shown to be strong advocates for their institutions due to the unique opportunities that were provided. The literature reflected an increase in the understanding of cultural and human diversity along with social skills and community involvement. Those that participated in these opportunities were able to form stronger relationships with their faculty mentors, and they also allowed the students to build strong relationships with their classmates especially in experiences that required them to work as a team [5, 20, 22, 23].

BEHAVIORAL, SOCIAL, AND LAB SCIENCES FOCUS GROUP

In the area of behavioral and social sciences, the focus of the literature review was on study abroad programs. The main takeaway from the literature review noted that the shorter the time frame for the experience, the less students will gain from it. Several programs only last for a two-week session, and this time frame does not allow the students enough time to transition from a monoculture mindset to an intercultural and global mindset. A study abroad experience should provide students an opportunity for personal development and self-reflection. It should also allow students to become more culturally aware, competent and sensitive/compassionate towards others.

If the experience cannot last longer than two weeks, then it is advised that a course be designed to address polarized mindsets prior to students participating in a short term study abroad program [4, 32, 45, 51].

BUSINESS FOCUS GROUP

The literature review by this group was done in the form of an experiential learning activity where students had to create a mobile business. Students who participated in this literature review provided feedback that an opportunity such as this, where it was completed as a University project, gives the opportunity for students to work under the supervision of faculty, receive feedback, and gain a long-term perspective of how their work impacts the real world [3, 10, 12, 35, 46, 48, 49].

COMMUNICATION FOCUS GROUP

The review conducted by this group focused on the role that conversations provided as an experiential learning opportunity in itself. Students who participated in this review agreed that an important part of experiential learning is learning from others. One of the ways to be able to do this is through conversations that provide students with the experience in relation to respecting ideas, place and people who are different from them. This type of experiential learning activity provides new voices, marginalized voices, and previously unheard voices to be heard [2, 41, 42, 55, 56].

INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN FOCUS GROUP

This focus group reviewed the literature in this category and found a five phase model that documents results in working towards the design of experiential learning experiences for students. The models consist of the following:

1. Initiation – design the experience to course objectives, make sure that it serves a legitimate purpose.
2. Planning – make sure you have taught all of the required material to prepare students to be successful in their experience
3. Execution – launch the experience
4. Control – manage the experience to make sure students have autonomy and decision making power, but are never overwhelmed. This required formative and summative assessment to determine their progress.
5. Close – final evaluations, presentations and reflections are shared between students.

While the design for EL activities is not limited to any one area or time frame, it has been documented that the experience seems to be more impactful for students when it is done at a higher grade level. Students in lower level classes do not seem to gain as much from the experience provided to them because they do not yet have a sufficient amount of knowledge about the field. In the higher level courses, students are probably within reaching their goals and have a better idea of what they want to do once they graduate. This allows them to gain more from the experience as it further prepares them for their careers, and they will be at a point to realize this and grasp the opportunity [28, 52].

EDUCATION FOCUS GROUP

This focus group included a group of students from the College of Education. Their perspective of experiential learning was from an education perspective. Not only because it applied to them in

their learning experiences in the classroom but also because they can take this experience into their own classroom someday. One student quoted “As a future educator, getting to do these types of learning experiences are most beneficial to us.” Some general observations that were made based on the role of faculty and student were:

- Faculty choose to give up a percentage of course content to include experiential learning.
- Students need structure, guidance, and direction from faculty in experiential learning.
- Training sessions must be provided for faculty development.
- Experiential learning programs should be presented in a developmental or state-oriented manner.
- It is helpful to use learning style instruments at the beginning of the undergraduate process.

This group concluded that the “process” of experiential learning opportunity should include Experience, Reflection, Thinking and Acting. The experience should focus on the “how” rather than the “what” of learning [8].

E-LEARNING FOCUS GROUP

Within this focus group the discussion was focused around the implementation of virtual teams. This was something that many of the students who participated in the discussion were able to relate to because the literature review took place during a time that we were being asked to quarantine and use distance learning as the instructional method. Students and staff who participated in this review made two important points about E-Learning and EL opportunities. First, there will be challenges that will have to be worked because not everyone will have the same experience with technology. Second, this will be an on-going issue because technology will continue to advance and students must be able to adapt. The findings of the article were specific to virtual teams, and the take away for participants was that the advantage of technology enriches and enhances learning and professional experiences, especially since there are several organizations which work in teams and have remote employees [13, 29, 40].

FIELD EXPERIENCE FOCUS GROUP

Faculty and students both weighed in on the review of experiential learning when it came to field experiences. Faculty agree that emotions go hand in hand with visual and physical experiences, therefore allowing students to learn in the “field” increases their ability to recall and positively impacts their learning. The experience also provides students with the opportunity to better comprehend material and make associations between what is being taught in the classroom and what takes place out in the real world. Through the guidance of faculty, the reading shows that there is an increased ability to understand and retain knowledge gained during the experience as opposed to if the students were just listening to a lecture on the topic [9, 11, 13, 44].

MULTIDISCIPLINARY FOCUS GROUP

The review of this literature revealed that the student’s experience is enhanced if they are involved in a multidisciplinary experiential learning opportunity. There are two different ways in which this could be accomplished. First, the student takes a class that could count as an elective from a different program to gain the experience associated through the focus of that field of study. The other is for faculty to find ways to develop experiential learning opportunities where students from different fields of study come together to work on the same project. An example here would be if the University was to partner with a startup company, students from CS/IT/Art could partner

together to create a website and maybe a mobile app where the CS/IT students provide the development and the Art student provides the design. Art students could also partner with marketing students and either English majors or technical writers to come up with marketing materials. Students from the College of Education could create training materials and/or videos for new employees the company will hire. A multidisciplinary project of this sort would allow students to experience working with people from different areas who also think differently. It provides students the opportunity to diversify their interactions and demonstrate to future employers that they have experiences working with people from different backgrounds. It also allows them to promote their communication and teamwork abilities through that experience [36, 43].

WORKFORCE FOCUS GROUP

Through the literature review focused on workforce development, the focus group concluded the importance that the University form solid working relationships with potential experiential learning internship sites. While some programs already offer internships it would be good to have additional established partnerships. However, at the same time this should not be an “open” opportunity. The University would need to make sure that the students are matched with the most appropriate organizations through a guided application process. One outcome from this review was that faculty should allow students to have the majority of control over a project. This will provide them a sense of ownership and help them develop skills that will follow them throughout their chosen career. While this would be beneficial to students, not all internship opportunities will allow for this type of flexibility or decision making opportunity for the student. This makes the process of creating partnerships with internship sites even more critical to the opportunities provided to students.

Another option is to explore areas within the university itself where students may be able to obtain student work positions. This type of arrangement benefits both the student and institution. Students are able to strengthen their sense of connection and embeddedness within the campus. In a student worker role, since the student is supervised by a faculty or staff member, there is the opportunity to have multiple projects available and allow for the student to select the project that he or she would like to work on, therefore providing them with that “power” over their learning but at the same time being sure that they also gain an experience from their field of study [6, 21].

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

There are many different ways to integrate experiential learning into the curriculum and Athens State University faculty will continue to train and learn to be able to provide the best opportunities for students. With the commitment of the institution and the support that has already been given to this initiative, Athens State University will be able to provide its students with a one of kind educational experience that will allow students to stand out from other applicants in their career fields.

OTHER QEP’S CONSULTED

In addition to current literature, the QEP Leadership Team sought out related Quality Enhancement Plans from peer institutions. While active learning techniques are used in the university setting far less than current studies encourage, the Team found several colleges and universities who have had success in promoting the use of these techniques on their campuses. In fact, while researching

the topic, the Team found several other SACSCOC institutions with QEPs that featured experiential learning. When determining both the scale and scope of the interventions proposed in this QEP, the planning committee found it useful to examine the following similar programs across the country [14, 37, 47, 54].

Tennessee Tech University

EDGE: Enhanced Discovery through Guided Exploration (2016)

Summary: establishes an undergraduate curriculum that encourages student success in creative inquiry

Similarities: faculty development component; recognition of both students and faculty

Differences: enhances co-curricular opportunities such as research opportunities

University of Tampa

Learning by Doing: Inquiry-Based Experiential Education (2015)

Summary: a focus on using inquiry-based approaches and outcomes to problem-solving through focused experiences and activities to educate students in first-year courses and enhanced discipline-skill based courses

Similarities: enhanced courses, faculty development, uses undergraduate research and internships

Differences: emphasis on first-year courses

University of North Carolina Wilmington

ETEAL: Experiencing Transformative Education through Applied Learning (2013)

Summary: employs enhanced applied learning experiences to reinforce student learning in three of eight learning goals: critical thinking, thoughtful expression, and inquiry; an auxiliary aim is to enrich the environment that supports student applied learning

Similarities: uses faculty development to enrich the learning environment and has an emphasis on undergraduate research

Differences: uses an Applied Learning Summer Institute, teaching communities, mini-grants

Lenoir Rhyne University

Rise Up! Dig Deep! Nurturing a Culture of Inquiry at LRU (2012)

Summary: increases higher-level thinking (as defined in Bloom's taxonomy) by challenging students to actively and creatively engage in guided and increasingly independent investigations of complex questions and problems under appropriately supportive conditions created by faculty and peers

Similarities: uses course redesign, faculty development

Differences: professional learning communities, and a faculty fellow program

Northern Kentucky University

SEAL: Student Engagement in Active Learning (2009)

Summary: embeds discipline-appropriate active learning strategies in 12 general education courses

Similarities: integrates active learning into courses

Differences: uses only specific courses, all in the general education core

EXAMINING EXISTING EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING ACTIVITIES

In addition to traditional and online academic programming, Athens State prides itself on its work-based learning opportunities. The institution works closely with business, community, school districts, and other partners to offer our students real life settings to learn career skills. Over 1,000 students participate annually in internships, co-ops, field experience, practicum, project-based learning, and consulting projects. Several program capstones across the institution include work-based opportunities for students in consulting projects for businesses and nonprofits. In marketing and computer science, for example, teams of students work with real companies and organizations to brand, strategize, and develop web and social media resources while earning credit for coursework in their program of study. A summary of these activities is provided here.

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES: COMPUTER SCIENCE & ART COLLABORATIVE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT EXPERIENCE

Starting in Fall 2016, the Computer Science department worked with the Athens community to bring real-world projects into the classroom. During the semester, a community sponsor requested a website for hosting information about their Relay for Life Team. This presented a new opportunity for the CS program as students had never created a web presence from scratch.

“The CS faculty realize that our students are very good developers. We don’t have a class where we focus on color schemes and similar concepts. They are not taught how to create the designs or what it is that they are developing, but they do a great job in putting a design together when needed.” – Prof. Maxwell

To create the website, Prof. Maxwell collaborated with Prof. Keller from the Art Department. The two departments collaborated in bringing in an Art student to work with the CS capstone team. The art student had the full responsibility of selecting color schemes, images, and creating wireframes for the website. This student was also involved in creating the required technical documents at the end of the semester. The CS students had the responsibility of developing the front-end of the webpage, and the backend database that would store data and images. The art student was also responsible for determining how the information that was pulled from the database would be displayed on the website and the CS students had to make it happen. The result was a successful web application design.

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES: PSYCHOLOGY FIELD EXPEDITION EXPERIENCE

The Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program facilitates dialogue and education across profound social differences. Inside-Out courses bring traditional college students and incarcerated students together in a prison setting for semester-long learning. These courses ignite enthusiasm for learning, help students find their voices, and challenge students to consider what good citizenship requires.

Many Athens State students seek employment in the area of corrections and criminal justice. Many of the topics covered in this course create more responsive, empathetic students, that are better prepared to enter into the criminal justice system. This program is an important component of the

student's academic, civic, and professional education. **Figure 11** shows one of the groups that has participated in this program.



Figure 11. Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program Participants

“I will take a new appreciation for what knowledge I can gain from others with different backgrounds if I will only take the time to step back and listen. Inside/Out has helped me become more accepting and less judgmental of others. I am more apt to see past what someone has done in the past and appreciate where they are and where they are going.”

- Brittany, Outside student

Students build and strengthen the following areas shown to be both lacking and vital to the restorative justice ideals: a) Therapeutic forgiveness, b) Positive mental attitude, c) Opportunities for self-improvement, d) Social interaction, and e) Psychological and moral deterioration in prison. Students can use the skills from this experiential learning activity when applying for jobs after completing their degree.

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES: BIOLOGY RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Students engage in a project for a full academic year, spanning two courses: *BI 301 Cell Structure and Function* and *BI 302 Genetics*. The research encompasses Inquiry Based Learning (IBL), where the students create and investigate their own hypotheses. They conduct pre-planned experiments that contribute to the forward motion of the overall research. Students across these courses examine mutations in plants. They are tasked with understanding these mutations and testing possible explanations as to why the plants are mutating. Students write up their results, formally in BI 301 and informally in BI 302 Genetics, so they learn two types of job-related writing

skills. **Figure 12** shows students participating in conducting experiments and presenting their results.

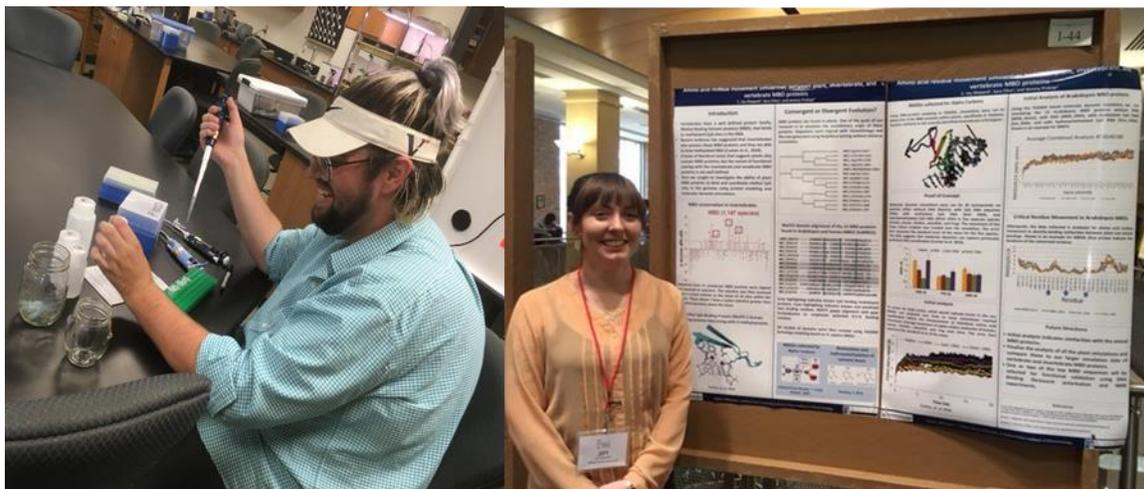


Figure 12. Biology students conducting and presenting their research.

“Through these experiences, the students are exposed to a breadth of real-world molecular techniques and a depth of knowledge on one specific topic. They are also exposed the reality of research: just because you want a specific result, doesn’t mean you’ll get it! Sometimes you get no change, or something you weren’t expecting, and both of these answers are good.”
- Dr. Sara Cline

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS: MARKETING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT EXPERIENCE

A recent College of Business graduate contacted Mrs. Kerner, Associate Professor of Marketing, to propose a student project. The alumnus was seeking funding to bring a speaker to campus that would focus on dyslexia and education. Mrs. Kerner and the former student pitched this idea to a marketing class as an EL project. The students created a social media presence and solicited funding for publicity and marketing materials to host a charitable color run. Even after the semester ended, students continued to facilitate the fundraising and raised the funding needed to host the guest speaker. Once the speaker was contracted, students created marketing materials for the event, even connecting the speaker with local news for an interview. The event attracted over 100 participants, and publicity surrounding the event connected the former student with legislative representatives interested in increasing funding for students with dyslexia. **Figure 13**, on the right, shows a group of students that worked together in fundraising efforts, and the left shows Governor Kay Ivey signing a bill into law to provide funding for resources to support students with dyslexia.



Figure 13. Students fundraising for dyslexia awareness (left); Governor Ivey signs bill into law (right)

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS: OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE

Students in *MG 390 Operations Management* are introduced to Six Sigma – a set of techniques and tools for process improvement. Rather than just reading about Six Sigma, students complete each phase of a Six Sigma project as the Operations Manager of an M&M candy production facility. Students begin by creating a flow chart of the M&M production process. Bags of M&Ms are brought in and students identify and count defects, analyze the data, brainstorm causes of defects, and come up with improvements to implement.

In Fall 2021, Operations Management students will be utilizing a simulator through McGraw-Hill Connect called Practice Operations. Practice Operations puts players in the role of an operations decision maker for a clothing manufacturing company. Play begins with an overview of the heart of that engine – managing the production process. Players review the contract specifications as well as the production process by walking through the production floor and shipping area. Players then analyze the receiving department functions of managing the supply chain and material inventories to ensure client needs can be met. Students are assessed on their ability to complete contracts on time, while also managing their quality reputation and net worth. Game-based learning is a way to engage students with the material, let them make critical decisions, and then see the consequences of those decisions.

“Best of all, we get to eat the M&Ms product when we’re done!” -Dr. Roberts

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION: PRESERVICE TEACHER WORKPLACE EXPERIENCE

In the College of Education, preservice teachers participate in experiential learning through field experiences in real-world classrooms. During Instructor-Led Field Experiences, preservice teachers are placed in classrooms and tasked with creating lesson plans, teaching P-12 students, recording those lessons, and then reflecting upon the process. This experience occurs before student teaching, and provides preservice teachers with opportunities to implement best practices, develop classroom management skills, and collaborate with stakeholders. Observations are conducted by the faculty supervisor with follow-up debrief sessions for feedback and reflection.

Collaboration with select Professional Development Sites (PDS) during the summer semesters provides preservice teachers with further opportunities to design lessons in public schools. These are hands-on and interdisciplinary in nature and include music, art, math, science, social studies, physical education, language arts, reading, and technology. During the summer term, certified teachers model effective instructional strategies the first day of the program. For the remainder of the field experience, Athens State University preservice teachers lead the class while the cooperating teacher assumes the role of consultant. University professors are placed at the PDS sites for the 2-week time period to supervise preservice teachers, observe lessons taught by Athens State University candidates, and provide daily feedback for further growth.

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION SECONDARY TEACHERS HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE

In their *SC 362 Assessment and Evaluation* course, secondary education teacher candidates have the opportunity to participate in a hands-on learning experience. This EL experience involves secondary teacher candidates tutoring students in either middle school or high school that need help in a content area such as math, science, history, or English. **Figure 14** shows two Athens State students tutoring a high school student. The project begins with teacher candidates reviewing the Quad-A tutoring method (LaFountaine, 2007) which focuses on the four stages of Assess, Assist, Allow autonomy, and Approach again. Teacher candidates then work with area classroom teachers and/or administrators to identify the secondary students that can participate in tutoring.



Figure 14. Two Athens State University students tutoring a high school student

After the teacher candidates have identified their “tutees,” they first must obtain written permission from the parents/guardians to work with the student(s). Teacher candidates initially meet with the student(s) to find out background and demographic information on both the student(s) and the

school to develop the context of learning. This begins the first step of the Quad-A method, Assess. During these first sessions, teacher candidates also assess the student(s) area of need by having them complete a pre-test which the teacher candidates develop. The results of the pre-test will allow the teacher candidates to determine what the student already knows about the specific learning focus as well as identify the areas in which to concentrate during subsequent tutoring sessions. The teacher candidate is responsible for determining the best strategies and approaches to use with the students as they progress through the tutoring sessions.

This hands-on learning experience is directly correlated to what teacher candidates must do during their student teaching internship as they complete the national edTPA portfolio assessment which is required for teacher certification in Alabama. Additionally, this experience is representative of what these teacher candidates will do daily once they become a classroom teacher.

STUDENT SERVICES: WRITING CENTER INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE

When the current QEP topic was selected, the University's Writing Center Director reached out to the University Art faculty to investigate a student project. After discussions about the needs of the Writing Center, both entities agreed on housing a graphic design student in the Writing Center for an internship opportunity. Setting up the internship process was straightforward due in part to an existing internship course offered in the Art Department. In collaboration with the intern, the Writing Center discussed needs, workflow, and timeframes. Within a few meetings, the partnership was established and running. Over the course of the semester, the student intern radically re-designed a variety of documents around the needs of students.

The QEP Director reached out to the faculty involved in this experience to gather information. Faculty shared course information and assessment artifacts to assist in the development of student and program learning outcomes for the QEP. The outcomes identified will either directly or indirectly impact student success at Athens State University. **Experience | Success** will build on these existing activities to increase the number of EL opportunities for students.

BUILDING NEW CAMPUS SUPPORT

The QEP Director and the Leadership Team utilize a variety of methods to communicate and engage the campus community in the **Experience | Success** initiative. These are detailed here.

UNIVERSITY-WIDE BLACKBOARD QEP ORGANIZATION PAGE

The primary method for promoting and discussing the initiative across campus is through a dedicated organization in the University's learning management system (Blackboard). This organization is maintained by the QEP Director and provides resources for faculty, staff, and students. The Bb organization includes access to all survey information, Discussion Board conversations, professional literature and other resources. Faculty, staff, and students all have access to this group.

MONTHLY NEWSLETTERS

The *QEP Monthly Newsletter* was established in February 2020 by the QEP Director and is distributed to all faculty, staff, and students via the institution’s Office of Public Relations. The purpose of the newsletter is to inform stakeholders of QEP updates and to highlight Experiential Learning activities that are taking place at Athens State University. A link to each newsletter is available below.

QEP Monthly Newsletters

February 2020	<u>Coming Together – CS & Art Students</u>
March 2020	<u>From a Color Run to the Governor’s Office</u>
April 2020	<u>Prison Education; Michael Haney: A Student’s Perspective</u>
May 2020	<u>Research-Based Learning Projects in Molecular Biology</u>
June 2020	<u>Challenging Times: Personal Thoughts on EL Experiences for our Students</u>
July 2020	<u>Internship and Experiential Learning: A Case Study from the Writing Center</u>
August 2020	<u>Looking for Your Creativity – Searching for Our Logo</u>
September 2020	<u>Sweet Treats, Games, and Operations Management</u>
October 2020	<u>Experiential Learning: Teacher Field Experience</u>
November 2020	<u>Secondary Teacher Candidates Tutor At-Risk Students in Area Schools</u>
December 2020	<u>What has Been Done, Where are We Now, and Where are We Going? The Current State of the QEP</u>
February 2021	<u>Experiential Learning: From a Campus Registered Student Organization Perspective</u>

LOGO COMPETITION AND MARKETING SUB-COMMITTEE

To continue to engage faculty, staff, and students in the **Experience | Success** initiative, the Leadership Team launched a competition for a logo design that could be used to represent the QEP. Several entries were submitted and the finalists were provided to the Office of Public Relations. Once the logo competition was completed, a Marketing Sub-Committee made of volunteers from the Leadership Team was formed. This smaller group was tasked with reviewing the top three logos and discussing a direction for the official QEP logo. The group worked with the Office of Public Relations to combine the best of each of the entries and develop a comprehensive design that was enthusiastically adopted by the Leadership Team. **Figure 15** displays the final logo which will be used moving forward to institutionalize the **Experience | Success** project over the next several years.



Figure 15. Logo for Experiential Learning at Athens State University

WEB PRESENCE SUB-COMMITTEE

During its initial phases, QEP business, announcements, and resources were all housed in a Blackboard course shell. During the Fall 2020 semester, the Leadership Team agreed that it was time for the QEP to have a web presence. A subcommittee was created from volunteers of the Leadership Team and they were tasked with reviewing websites from other institutions with similar QEP topics. Through their review process the committee suggested that the following components for the website:

- Clear definition and how Experiential Learning will impact the campus
- Strong focus on student work
- Provide examples of EL assignments/projects
- Have links for different groups on campus to connect
- Provide an easy way for community members to contact the university if interested in partnering on experiential learning opportunities.

Focus on Student Learning

Results of the Faculty Experiential Learning surveys led the Leadership Team to through the next phase of implementation. The Team determined that the successful implementation of the project should include both student learning outcomes and institutional outcomes. The Team worked with faculty who already included an EL component in their courses to gather data on student learning. The Team identified the following outcomes.

University Focused Outcomes

1. The University will establish a central location/office to connect faculty members with community sponsors and other experiential learning activities.
2. At least 90% of programs offered at the bachelor's degree level will include at least one experiential learning activity at the end of the five-year implementation (this will be completed through a roll-out time frame).

Classroom Focused Outcomes

3. Each Experiential learning activities will connect specific learning objectives to the associated activity.

Student Focused Learning Outcomes

4. At least 80% of undergraduate students will demonstrate knowledge, skills and dispositions in the areas of problem solving and inquiry, communication, professionalism, career understanding, collaboration and reflection.
5. Students will strongly identify as being anchored through active involvement with diverse communities and real-world challenges through personal and social responsibilities. These may include civic knowledge and engagement, both at a local and global level, intercultural knowledge and competence, ethical reasoning and action, and foundations and skills of lifelong learning.

IMPLEMENTATION: DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSFORMATION

The **Experience | Success** initiative will provide faculty with the resources and guidance to identify and adopt best practices for experiential learning. The faculty at Athens State University are as diverse as the institution's student population and come from a variety of educational backgrounds. This complicates the task of training faculty to incorporate EL activities in their courses. To facilitate this process, several interventions have been carefully designed to address these constituencies.

From professional development, micro-credentialing, to a two-year faculty fellowship program designed to certify experts and transform entire courses, curricula or programs, these interventions will impact several faculty members each year. Planned interventions include:

- Establishing a central location to track opportunities for partnerships with community members, thereby allowing faculty to more easily locate such opportunities.
- Establishing an honors program which will focus on experiential learning opportunities
- Creating clear guidance for departments, deans, and the Provost's Office for recognizing faculty development and the implementation of EL
- Obtaining the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification

Athens State University is in the process of establishing three opportunities for any full-time instructor (regardless of rank or position) to become an expert in experiential learning. Faculty can request participation in any of the activities when they are offered. Limited spaces may be available per training cohort, however, all faculty will have the same opportunities. These opportunities are described further in the Resources for Implementation section.

INSTITUTIONAL TRANSFORMATION

COMMUNITY AND EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS

In concert with the selection of Experiential Learning for the institution's next QEP, the institution created an Office of Corporate and Community Relations. This office will connect University faculty and students with businesses, schools, agencies, and the wider community through innovative and collaborative partnerships, programs, and services. The office will fulfill the diverse and common outreach commitments of the University by connecting and coordinating with corporate and community partners in economic development, P-12 educational delivery, lifelong learning, arts and cultural offerings, quality of life, sustainability, and community engagement opportunities. Corporate and Community Relations will add value to the University, its departments, and constituencies by accomplishing the following:

1. Serve as the focal point for external stakeholders to become aware of academic programs and relevant reciprocal opportunities and to contact the university about mutually beneficial relationships.
2. Develop, structure, and implement partnerships with corporate and business leaders, the non-profit sector, P-12 education, community colleges, and community organizations to strengthen the University's academic and leadership role in the North Alabama area.
3. Partner with faculty, staff, and students engaged in outreach activities to form connections, lend support, and bring recognition to their accomplishments.
4. Realize cross-campus efficiencies in and capitalize on relationships that include a variety of external stakeholders.
5. Oversee and coordinate the University's outreach activities through awareness, classification, communication, and stewardship of contributions, across all of their forms, levels, and capacities.

COLLABORATORY® TOOL

At Athens State, the classroom extends into the community through education, organization, and business partnerships. The University joined Collaboratory® in 2020. This online tool provides a platform to better understand, highlight, and document our footprint of community-engaged learning. It tells whom, what, where, and how we engage in order to:

- ❖ Tell our story
- ❖ Increase engaged learning
- ❖ Celebrate hard work
- ❖ Publicize community-engaged learning
- ❖ Address social issues, and
- ❖ Leverage data to attain recognition as a Carnegie Community-engaged Campus and acquire additional resources

The University website is available here: <https://he.cecollaboratory.com/athens>. The QEP Director has administrator rights to the University's license and maintains the Experiential Learning component.

IMPROVED TEACHING MODALITIES

Teaching modalities refers to the time and place in which course instruction takes place. At Athens State University, faculty want to be able to offer students the best possible teaching environments that will work best with their busy lives, especially since the majority of the student population are non-traditional students. Faculty aim to provide a variety of scheduling for traditional courses, along with a variety of synchronicity for classes that are online and/or blended. In Fall 2020, the Athens Teaching and Learning Innovation Services (ATLIS) office began providing faculty training and upgraded classrooms to support a Hyflex course delivery format. A Hyflex course provides students with a variety of possibilities to choose from. Students can choose to attend class in person during identified class times. Or, they can sign on to an online broadcast of the class and be present synchronously so they can engage with the other students who are also attending class in person. Or, if the time does not work for them, they can participate in class through an asynchronous format to allow them flexibility that works with their lives.

HONORS PROGRAM

The University is investigating the implementation of an Honors Program. The QEP Director has met with the Honors Steering Committee to discuss the possibility of linking honors content with experiential learning. Students would enroll in a traditional course and complete an additional experiential learning project. This project would then trigger an Honors Certification in the course.

CARNEGIE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CLASSIFICATION

The institution's next strategic plan, Horizon 2030, includes a goal to gain the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement. The Carnegie Foundation's Elective Classification for Community Engagement provides a special purpose classification for higher education institutions with commitments in the area of community engagement. The classification is by application only.

It is intended to assist in a process of institutional change to improve the educational effectiveness of the campus through the institutionalization of community engagement. In this way, it is similar to an accreditation process of self-study. The classification framework represents best practices in the field and encourages continuous improvement through periodic re-classification. The institution plans to submit an application for this classification in 2024. The **Experience | Success** project clearly supports the community engagement component.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING CLASS DESIGNATION

The **Experience | Success** initiative will result in the designation of specific courses as Experiential Learning courses. A faculty member who has had extensive experience in offering experiential learning activities or who has been awarded the Experiential Learning Teaching Fellowship may apply to have a class designated as an Experiential Learning course. This designation will allow the class to be advertised as an Experiential Learning course for students who are seeking active learning opportunities.

Faculty will need to specify the semester in which the class will be held along with the duration of the course and if the project will be repeated in future semesters. Based on the nature of the experiential learning activity faculty will also be able to specify if there is a “special” cap that needs to be associated to the course (i.e. one sponsored project may have 3 – 5 students involved but more than 5 students will impact the learning process). Along with this information the questions that faculty will be asked to answer are:

1. How will the activity engage students in problem solving and/or inquiry?
2. How will the activity improve the student’s ability to communicate within the context of the work environment?
3. How will the activity allow for collaboration within the environment between students, community, and/or both?
4. What professional behaviors and/or competencies are expected from the students that participate in the activity?
5. How will the activity increase the student’s knowledge of the career field associated to their major?
6. What artifacts will the student submit to the faculty or project sponsor?
 - a. Portfolio
 - b. Research paper
 - c. Journal
 - d. Oral presentation
 - e. Report
 - f. Other (please specify)

The application will be submitted to the Experiential Learning Office for approval.

UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION SUPPORT

In addition to University support for **Experience | Success**, the QEP Leadership Team created six Cases for Support at the request of the Office of University Advancement. These Cases were

designed to be included in the institution's Capital Campaign and will be used as appropriate during the campaign to request donations from stakeholders to assist in the support of experiential learning. The six cases for support are summarized below.

- **Experiential Learning Symposium** – funding to allow Athens State to hold its first Experiential Learning Symposium. The symposium will include sessions to allow professors to discuss experiential learning opportunities. The Symposium will also feature panel discussions led by alumni and community members to elaborate on the importance of experiential learning.
- **Conference Participation Scholarship** - this funding opportunity will secure funds for students to attend conferences by paying registration and travel expenses. Current students as well as recent graduates will have access to the funds.
- **Scientific Take Home Labs** – these will allow Athens State University to expand the delivery methods of Biology and Chemistry courses by providing the same opportunity to traditional face to face or online students. Students will have the opportunity to show family members and friends practical hands-on experiences, expanding their own technical understanding of science.
- **Undergraduate Research Stipend** – At Athens State University, several faculty members already involve their students in research. With strong support from the research community, faculty have reshaped their courses to connect key concepts and questions with student-led investigation. However, a single class may not be enough time for the completion of a full research project. The goal of the Undergraduate Research Stipend is to support students beyond the time frame of a single course in their research endeavors.
- **Amphibian & Reptile Habitat** – Amphibians and reptiles have been used University faculty for the purposes of outreach at fairs such as Earth Day and Arbor Day hosted by Athens State University, education events (museums), and at recruiting and student orientation fairs. On campus, there is room to convert a room into an Amphibian and Reptile Habitat. Current Science faculty are qualified to care for those animals. This will benefit students who are interested in veterinary science, medicine, conservation, and/or wildlife biology.
- **Biosafety Level 2 Laboratory Updates** - updates to the current labs will allow Athens State to provide employers with students trained to handle Biosafety Level 2 conditions. This upgrade will support student lab activity and will allow Athens State to train students in today's most current techniques for lab positions as well as graduate school.

Organizational Structure

In late 2019, a QEP Leadership Team was formed to develop the structure of the QEP, establish a timeline for its implementation, and determine an effective management plan and budget. The primary charge of the committee was to produce the QEP proposal for submission to the Provost and the President of Athens State University. Because the success of the QEP is dependent upon the involvement of all stakeholders, the Leadership Team is made up of faculty, staff, administrators and student representatives. A number of sub-committees have been formed to address specific project implementation activities. These are discussed below.

The Director of the QEP, a full-time faculty member, will implement the roll-out with the assistance of the QEP Leadership Team. The Director, with support from the QEP Leadership Team and the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, will initially be responsible for conducting formative and summative program evaluations to ensure the program is meeting the expectations of all stakeholders and continues to support the University's mission and strategic goals. The QEP Director reports to the Associate Vice President/SACSCOC Liaison and will be supported by the Experiential Learning Office. A complete Organizational Chart is provided as **Figure 16**.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING OFFICE

The Office of Experiential Learning will be developed within the Academic Affairs Office and will work closely with the Corporate and Community Relations Office and the Center for Lifelong Learning to identify ongoing external experiential learning collaborations. The staff of the Experiential Learning Office will manage the opportunities and partnerships with external entities. The Experiential Learning Office staff will not only work with faculty and external entities to identify possible partnerships. This Office will also develop guidelines and standardized sponsorship agreements to address any risk management concerns. The Office will manage and maintain documents (such as non-disclosure agreements, insurance requirements, etc.) and serve as the point of contact for Collaboratory®.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING COUNCIL

An Experiential Learning Council will be appointed by the Provost. The Council will consist of the Coordinator for the Office of Experiential Learning, the Director of Institutional Research and Assessment, a faculty representative from each college and the library, the Director of the Career Development Center, the College of Education Field Experience and Internship Coordinator, the Vice President of Community and Corporate Relations, the Center for Lifelong Learning Outreach Coordinator, a student representative from each college, and at least one community representative. Faculty members will serve two year terms. The Council will be in place to discuss issues related to the management, assessment, and improvement of the Experiential Learning process developed through the QEP. The Council will meet at minimum once a semester and will review newly approved courses for Experiential Learning designation, analyze the yearly assessment data and report, and plan program improvements based on the data assessed.

MARKETING SUB-COMMITTEE

The Marketing Sub-Committee was created to manage the ongoing communication and awareness campaign for the **Experience | Success** project to include innovative ways to market the QEP to all stakeholders. Recently, the group was tasked with reviewing the top three logos from the logo competition and managing the selection of the official QEP logo. Through the QEP budget for 2020-2021, the institution has already purchased a number of promotional items for all employees. At the Fall 2020 Faculty Convocation, attendees were presented with a bag of QEP items including a notebook, an ink pen, and a lanyard, all featuring the project's tagline (**Experience | Success**).

WEB PRESENCE SUB-COMMITTEE

This team was tasked with reviewing websites from other institutions that have similar programs and create a prototype for the **Experience | Success** initiative. This group will work with QEP Director and the University's Web Master to create a website to host all activities related to the project to keep both internal and external stakeholders informed.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SUB-COMMITTEE

The members of this committee will be responsible for the recruitment and review of applications to the Experiential Learning Teaching Fellowship. Members will also manage monthly events for cohort members and will make suggestions for additional Professional Development opportunities.

TRAVEL SUB-COMMITTEE

The members of this committee will review all applications for travel associated to Experiential Learning conferences, workshops, and/or trainings. The proposed budget includes funding for eight (8) requests each academic year. This team will work with the QEP Director and the Provost on these awards.

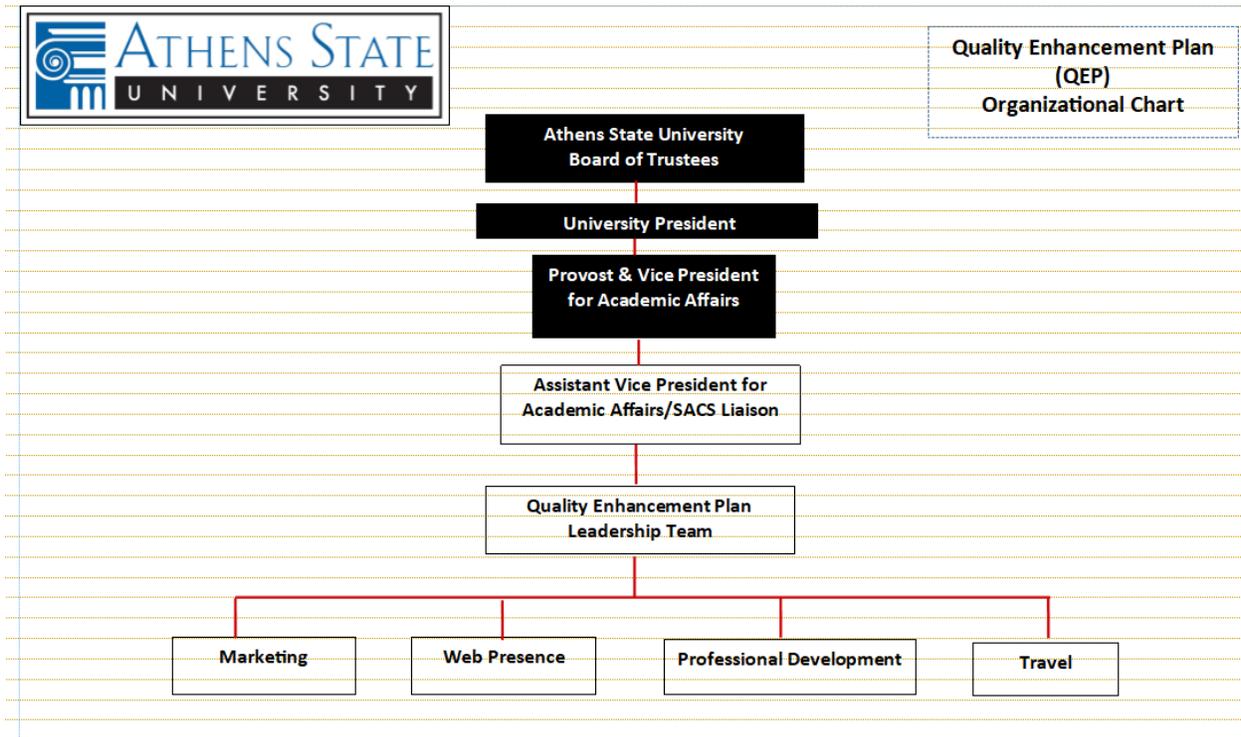


Figure 16. Organizational Chart – Quality Enhancement Plan

Implementation Timeline

Official implementation of the **Experience | Success** initiative began in Fall 2020. Full details of the entire implementation are provided here.

AY 2020-2021	
Fall 2020	Pilot: EL Assessment artifacts in 3 courses
	ACUE Training Modules provided to faculty
Spring 2021	Assessment Implementation: Expand to 5 courses
	Provide ACUE Training Modules to faculty
	Develop & Charge QEP Sub-Committees
Summer 2021	Complete Search Process for Coordinator, Experiential Learning Office
AY 2021-2022	
Fall 2021	Grand Opening: Experiential Learning Office in Academic Affairs
	Establish Experiential Learning Council
	Add at least 1 faculty member from each College to the Experience Success initiative
	Implement Experiential Learning Fellowship program with up to 6 faculty participants
	Review EL course designation to CS/ITE 452 Computer Science and Information Technology Capstone, MG 390 Operations Management, and CE 465 Instructional Design Capstone, ITE 450 Human Computer Interaction, ITE 327/L Database Systems, CS 380 Programming for the Web, ED 404 Methods and Materials for Teaching ELL courses
AY 2022-2023	
	Provide ACUE Training Modules to faculty (every other year)
	Add at least 1 faculty member from each College to the Experience Success initiative
	Identify 6 new Experiential Learning Fellowships
	Number of courses with EL designation will increase to at least 10
AY 2023-2024	
	Add at least 1 faculty member from each College to the Experience Success initiative
	Identify 6 new Experiential Learning Fellowships
	Number of courses with EL designation will increase to at least 13
AY 2024-2025	
	Provide ACUE Training Modules to faculty (every other year)
	Add at least 1 faculty member from each College to the Experience Success initiative
	Identify 6 new Experiential Learning Fellowships
	Number of courses with EL designation will increase to at least 16

Resources for Implementation

The **Experience | Success** initiative was provided with a dedicated budget beginning with the 2020-2021 Academic year. A detailed budget for the next five years is provided below. The budget information is followed by a description of some of the activities.

2020-2021 Budget

Account	Amount	Notes
In-State Travel	1000	Faculty attendance at Alabama Works Conference
Out-of-State Travel	5000	NSEE conference for 3 faculty
Memberships	450	NSEE Institutional Membership
Printing & Binding	300	Internal
Other Contractual Services	2500	Professional Development Speakers
Materials & Supplies	3000	Promotional Items
Total	\$12,500	

2021-2022 Budget

Account	Amount	Notes
Coordinator, Office of Experiential Learning	24,000	
In State Travel	1000	Faculty attendance at Alabama Works Conference
Out of State Travel (NSEE)	5000	NSEE conference for 3 faculty
Additional workshop travel	20,000	Faculty attendance at Workshops (up to 8)
Memberships	450	NSEE Institutional Membership
Printing & Binding	300	
Other Contractual Services	2500	Professional Development Speakers
Materials & Supplies	3000	Promotional Items
Experiential Learning Teaching Fellowship	12,600	2 faculty per college, 3 credit hour course release
Total	\$44,850	

2022-2023 Budget

Account	Amount	Notes
Experiential Learning Activity Organizer	24,000	Salary for staff person to work with CLL and Community & Corporate Relations to track, document and partner Athens State with EL activities
In State Travel	1000	Faculty attendance at Alabama Works Conference
Out of State Travel	5000	NSEE conference for 3 faculty
Additional workshop travel	20,000	Faculty attendance at Workshops (up to 8)
Memberships	450	NSEE Institutional Membership
Printing & Binding	300	
Other Contractual Services	2500	Professional Development Speakers
Materials & Supplies	3000	Promotional Supplies

ACUE Training	42,000	Up to 30 faculty participate in ACUE training with compensation?
Experiential Learning Teaching Fellowship	12,600	2 faculty per college, 3 credit hour course release (\$2,100 each)
Total	\$86,850	

2023-2024 Budget

Account	Amount	Notes
Experiential Learning Activity Organizer	24,000	Salary for staff person to work with CLL and Community & Corporate Relations to track, document and partner Athens State with EL activities
In State Travel	1000	Faculty attendance at Alabama Works Conference
Out of State Travel	5000	NSEE conference for 3 faculty
Additional workshop travel	20,000	Faculty attendance at Workshops (up to 8)
Memberships	450	NSEE Institutional Membership
Printing & Binding	300	
Other Contractual Services	2500	Professional Development Speakers
Materials & Supplies	3000	
Experiential Learning Teaching Fellowship	12,600	2 faculty per college, 3 credit hour course release (\$2,100 each)
Total	\$68,850	

2024-2025 Budget

Account	Amount	Notes
Experiential Learning Activity Organizer	24,000	Salary for staff person to work with CLL and Community & Corporate Relations to track, document and partner Athens State with EL activities
In State Travel	1000	Faculty attendance at Alabama Works Conference
Out of State Travel	5000	NSEE conference for 3 faculty
Additional workshop travel	20,000	Provide 8 approved workshop attendance at maximum of 2,500.
Memberships	450	NSEE Institutional Membership
Printing & Binding	300	
Other Contractual Services	2500	Professional Development Speakers
Materials & Supplies	3000	
ACUE Training	42,000	Allow up to 20-30 faculty to participate in ACUE training with compensation
Experiential Learning Teaching Fellowship	12,600	2 faculty per college, 3 credit hour course release
Total	\$110,850	

FACULTY TRAINING: ACUE COURSES

The University contracted with the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE) to provide a variety of training for faculty, with special focus on supporting the QEP project. In Fall 2020, faculty were offered the opportunity to voluntarily participate in four micro-credential trainings. Faculty response was enthusiastically positive and the first cohort included forty-one (41) faculty members. The initial cohort completed the following courses:

- ❖ Promoting Active Learning Online
- ❖ Inspiring Inquiry
- ❖ Designing Student Centered Courses
- ❖ Creating an Inclusive and Lifelong Learning Environment.

Scale: Because of the significant cost of participation (both in terms of funds and time commitment) each annual cohort after the first year will be relatively small. Participation will be limited to no more than 30 faculty members. Pre-tenured and first-year faculty will be encouraged to apply.

Selection: Applications for admission into each ACUE cohort will be available the preceding February and accepted through April. Ideal candidates for the ACUE cohorts are faculty who offer Experiential Learning courses or components within their courses, or have some prior experience with Experiential Learning activities. While tenured and tenure-track faculty are expected to make up the majority of the cohort, instructors and adjunct faculty with continued positions at Athens State University will be encouraged to apply.

Compensation: Faculty compensation will be provided to those who complete all courses offered during the specified cohort time. Completing the ACUE training will also allow faculty to apply for the Experiential Learning Teaching Fellowship, described in the next section.

Management: Recruitment and selection of ACUE cohort members will be managed by the QEP Professional Development Committee.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING TEACHING FELLOWSHIP

As a part of the **Experience | Success** project, an Experiential Learning Teaching Fellowship (ELTF) will be created to provide a 3-semester hour course release to be used in either a Fall or Spring semester. The fellowship will be available to faculty who are interested in a long-term examination of one of the specific categories of Experiential Learning as identified and defined by the University. Any faculty member who has already implemented an experiential learning in a course or who has completed the ACUE trainings is eligible to apply for the Fellowship.

The QEP Professional Development Committee will evaluate applications through a blind review and provide feedback to appropriate Deans and Department Chairs. Two faculty members from each college will be selected each academic year to receive the Fellowship.

The application process will include a proposal outlining a “deeper dive” into one of the categories of experiential learning. The proposal must identify a specific course for implementation. A

successful application will include a thorough implementation plan to include a reflection on effectiveness. Additional requirements will include a formal status report. Upon successful completion of the Fellowship, the faculty member can then apply for the Experiential Learning designation for the course.

Teaching Fellows will be invited to join a monthly lunch meeting hosted by the QEP Director to share their research with the broader faculty community. They will also provide a presentation during one of the First-Year Faculty Experience meetings to introduce new faculty to the **Experience | Success** initiative.

Scale: Each year (beginning in Fall 2022) up to 6 faculty members will be selected for the ELTF.

Selection: Applications for ELTF cohort will be available in early spring and accepted through April. Ideal candidates for the cohort will be either faculty members who either recently completed the ACUE training or have considerable experience with experiential learning. Because of the long-term scope of these fellowships, tenured and tenure-track faculty are expected to represent the majority of the applicant pool.

Compensation: ELTFs will receive compensation in the form of one course release for the academic year. Fellows will be provided lunch during monthly meetings.

Management: The Office of Experiential Learning will work with the Academic Affairs Office to schedule and support the monthly Fellow meetings.

NSEE WORKSHOPS

The University joined the National Society for Experiential Education (NSEE) organization in 2020. This investment covered four faculty participants. Faculty who are interested in further mentoring other faculty members beyond the Experiential Learning Teaching Fellowship will have the opportunity to apply to the Experiential Education Academy (EEA) provided by NSEE. Faculty members will be encouraged to follow the recommended order of training sessions by the NSEE which is:

- Fundamentals of Experiential Education
- Principles of Ethical Practice
- Reflection
- Assessment
- Legal Issues

Faculty can also attend optional training sessions in the areas of:

- Teaching and Learning Experientially
- Developing a Quality Internship Program
- Service-Learning
- Strengthening Experiential Education at Your Institution
- Strategic Planning for Experiential Program Design
- Online Learning and Experiential Education

One faculty member from each of the three colleges at Athens State University will be selected to attend the Academy. The goal is that when each faculty returns, multiple training sessions may be held on campus to introduce other faculty members to the Academy.

Faculty members who graduate from the academy can also apply to become an EEA Instructor. If there is a high demand from the faculty body to receive the academy training, the QEP Director will develop plans to host the academy on campus. The QEP Development Committee may consider this option depending on faculty interest.

Those faculty members who have completed the two-year fellowship will be formally recognized along with those who complete the ACUE training during a late Spring semester dinner reception. The reception will honor this recognition with invitations extended to the Provost and President, as well as the College Deans and Department Chairs of each Fellow.

TRAVEL FUNDS FOR EEA & OTHER WORKSHOPS

Beginning in 2021-2022, the University will support the **Experience | Success** initiative through funds allocated for faculty who wish to take advantage of training and/or share their EL instructional innovations via conference or professional meeting presentations. An application process will be developed by the Professional Development Sub-Committee for faculty interested in applying for support via this fund.

Scale: up to 8 trips will be funded per year at an anticipated average cost of \$2,500 per trip.

Selection: The Travel Sub-Committee will evaluate all submitted proposals for travel to workshops and conferences. An attempt will be made to allocate all annual funds before the middle of each Fall semester, with the realization that not all travel funds are completely spent as planned, and not all travel arrangements can be made so early in the academic year. Specific consideration will also be given to faculty groups that will be attending the same event to be able to share driving associated costs.

Compensation: other than the allocation of up to \$2,500 per workshop or conference, no additional compensation will be provided to faculty whose applications are accepted.

Management: The Office of Experiential Learning will advertise the availability of these travel funds, solicit and collect applications from faculty, and work with the faculty participant and the Office of Financial Affairs for reimbursement of travel costs once each is completed.

Assessment

As already described, the primary outcomes of **Experience | Success** project include the following:

1. Athens State University will establish a central location/office to be able to connect faculty members with community sponsors and other experiential learning activities.
2. At least 90% of programs offered at the bachelor's degree level will include at least one experiential learning activity at the end of the five year (this will be completed through a roll-out time frame).
3. Experiential learning activities will connect specific learning objectives to the associated activity.
4. At least 80% of undergraduate students will demonstrate knowledge, skills and dispositions in the areas of problem solving and inquiry, communication, professionalism, career understanding, collaboration and reflection.
5. Students will strongly identify as being anchored through active involvement with diverse communities and real-world challenges through personal and social responsibilities. These may include civic knowledge and engagement, both at a local and global level, intercultural knowledge and competence, ethical reasoning and action, and foundations and skills of lifelong learning.

These outcomes are further defined by several performance indicators. Outcomes 3 and 5 will be measured by indirect artifacts while Outcome 4 will be measured based on a modified comprehensive student scoring rubric.

OUTCOME 1

The University will establish a central location/office to connect faculty members with community sponsors and other experiential learning activities.

Each year, faculty members have the opportunity to incorporate Experiential Learning into their classrooms. However, as indicated on an early survey provided to faculty, several faculty members do not integrate these opportunities into their classroom because of the time that it takes to be able to find sponsors, partners, and appropriate opportunities.

In 2020-2021, the University established the Office of Corporate and Community Relations led by a member of the President's Cabinet. To support this office and the **Experience | Success** project, the University secured a software package called Collaboratory®. This software provides a platform to track information on experiential learning opportunities associated to community engagement.

OUTCOME 2

At least 90% of programs offered at the bachelor's degree level will include at least one experiential learning activity.

Initial surveys conducted by the QEP Leadership Team reflected that a number of undergraduate degree programs at Athens State University already include some form of experiential learning activity. To better understand the kinds of experiential learning activities offered, the QEP Leadership Team will implement a process for documenting EL activities in courses. This information can then be used to assign designations to courses that utilize EL activities. The designations will correspond to the amount and kind of EL activities within a given course. Faculty across campus can then apply for these designations. This system has several advantages:

1. The Office of Experiential Learning could more easily assess EL courses each semester.
2. Faculty labor in experiential learning could be formally recognized.
3. The Professional Development Sub-Committee can use this information in the review and decision-making process for the Experiential Learning Teaching Fellowship and for travel funding requests.
4. Classes holding the Experiential Learning designation will be shared with the Office of Public Relations for the purposes of marketing this unique learning format.

OUTCOME 3

Experiential Learning Activities will connect specific learning objectives to the associated activity.

This outcome will be evaluated in an indirect format. Athens State University is gathering input from students who have participated in Experiential Learning activities within their classes. These students are providing feedback on the connection between their classes and the activities that they were asked to participate in.

The benchmark will be that 80% of students strongly agree that their experiential learning experience ties together with their area of study.

Once students have completed the activity, faculty will provide a link to the survey that will prompt students to rate (1) the classroom instruction, (2) connections to the discipline, and (3) their ability to apply the skills, abilities, and theories that they have learned.

The Integrative Learning VALUE Rubric designed by the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AACU) was transformed into a survey to be administered to students. Integrative learning is an understanding and a disposition that students build across the curriculum and co-curriculum. Students evolve from making simple connections among ideas and experiences to synthesizing and transferring learning to new, complex situations within and beyond the campus. This is the information that will be captured to assess the connection that students are making between the classroom and the experiential learning activity. This rubric was transformed into a survey that could be administered electronically to students [38, 39].

A copy of the survey provided to students can be found in **Appendix C**.

OUTCOME 4

At least 80% of undergraduate students will demonstrate knowledge, skills and dispositions in the areas of problem solving and inquiry, communication, professionalism, career understanding, collaboration (when working in a team environment) and reflection.

Students have a wide range of opportunities on our campus to participate in experiential learning. Athens State University is designing a rubric and piloting it to assess student performance and demonstration of learning that corresponds to the activity being conducted during the Spring 2021 semester. Not all activities will incorporate every area of professional knowledge, skill and disposition that the rubric provides performance indicators for.

This direct assessment will be based on a benchmark that 80% of students meeting an “at standard” level of demonstration for the areas that correspond to the activity that they participated in. The areas to be assessed will be at the discretion of the faculty member.

A copy of the survey provided to students can be found in **Appendix D**.

OUTCOME 5

Students will strongly identify as being anchored through active involvement with diverse communities and real-world challenges through personal and social responsibilities.

The assessment for this outcome will be an indirect assessment. Students will be asked to perform self-assessment through two different surveys.

In the first survey, students will be asked to assess themselves pre-experience and post-experience:

- Generate original ideas
- Apply theoretical knowledge to practical situations
- Learn on their own
- Appreciate different opinions and points of view
- Ability to obtain a position in a career field related to the discipline of study
- Overall ability to perform effectively in a discipline specific career
- Ability to advance to a better position within their chosen career field

In the second survey, students will be asked to assess themselves pre-experience and post-experience:

- Solve problems
- Understand and appreciate societal, cultural, and global differences
- Understand and appreciate ethical standards
- Exert leadership
- Manage time effectively to accomplish work

A copy of these two surveys can be found in **Appendix E**.

ASSESSMENT SUPPORT: INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH OFFICE

The Office of Institutional Research and Assessment manages the administration of all surveys using the institution's internally developed Assessment Management Online System (AMOS). Any course using EL will receive the survey through the AMOS. The indirect and direct results will be collected and analyzed for trends both within and across Colleges. It is expected that students who enroll in a course using experiential learning will report 5% increase in "very good" responses from pre-experience to post-experience on specific questions. It is also expected that students will have a better understanding of themselves and their skills to be able to perform a "true" self-assessment based on participating in an activity.

Pilot and Preliminary Assessments

In the Fall 2020 semester, four faculty members from across the institution volunteered to pilot surveys for **Outcomes 3 and 5**. In addition, they assessed student performance related to **Outcome 4**. Results of this pilot are discussed here.

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

During the Fall 2020 semester, *MG 390 Operations Management* students utilized a simulator offered through McGraw-Hill Connect called Practice Operations. Practice Operations puts players in the role of an operations decision maker for a clothing manufacturing company. Play begins with an overview of the heart of that engine – managing the production process. Players review the contract specifications as well as the production process by walking through the production floor and shipping area. Players then analyze the receiving department functions of managing the supply chain and material inventories to ensure client needs can be met. Students are assessed on their ability to complete contracts on time, while also managing their quality reputation and net worth.

Students were provided access to a condensed version of the Practice Operations Simulation manual. While there are five modules offered for this simulation, the class completed Module 1 only – the Production Process.

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

During the Fall 2020 semester, Professor Maxwell conducted multiple experiential learning activities in her courses. The *CS/ITE 452 Senior Capstone* course partnered with *Keep Athens Limestone Beautiful* (KALB) throughout the semester for a community engagement Experiential Learning activity. The partnership focused on four different areas: (1) redesigning the KALB website to the specifications of the KALB Director, (2) conducting a security analysis based on the Open Web Application Security Project (OWASP) to make sure that the redesign of the website would not leave KALB easily vulnerable to cyberattacks; (3) conducting an accessibility analysis of the website through the user of the WAVE tool provided by WebAim (this tool evaluates the site for any issues that could possibly hinder someone from properly viewing it); and (4) creating marketing flyers for events that KALB holds throughout the year.

The *CS 443 Special Topics: Machine Learning* class conducted Research throughout the semester. Students were tasked in researching how machine learning was used in different areas of everyday life. On a biweekly basis, students turned in a summary of a scientific conference or journal publication and they would present their summaries to the class. There were a total of six presentations and summaries submitted and at the end of the semester students were required to write their own Observation and Challenges research paper.

In the *ITE 327/L Database Management* course students were given a hands-on Experiential Learning activity where they worked on a semester-long project in three different phases. Students were provided an overview of a fictitious Employment Agency that needed a database along with an application to be able to interact with that database. The first phase of the project required

students to document the requirements of the agency and the design of the database. The second phase of the project required students to be able to optimize their initial design. The third phase of the project required students to create the database, load it with data, run queries against it, and create the graphical user interface for interaction with the database as a bonus opportunity. Students were provided with the basic operations of the agency which allowed for their initial and optimized designs. Then they were given reports that the agency required, which would impact the queries that students have to run. Finally, they were given details on forms that the agency used which assisted with the design and development of the graphical user interface.

In the *ITE 450 Human Computer Interaction* course students were also assigned a hands-on Experiential Learning activity where they were required to design, develop, and evaluate a 2 in 1 numbers game. This was a semester-long project that split into five phases. During the first phase of the project, students were required to figure out the design aspects in association to user interaction. Here they had to follow the PACT Framework where they identify the People, Activities, Context and Technology of what they are designing. In addition to this the students had to develop five personalities and provide scenarios in which each person would play the game. Students also had to provide an initial hand drawn sketch of what their user interface would look like. In Phase 2 students were required to document the functionality of their game program and also document how the user would interact with the game. To achieve the documentation for user interaction, students had to design a Hierarchical Task Analysis diagram and provide the steps in which the user would play the game. Phase 3 of the project was where the students had to develop the game based on their documentation in Phases 1 and 2. Phase 4 required students to create questionnaires and host focus groups consisting of 6 individuals who then played and evaluated their game. Phase 5 of the project involved students evaluating the results provided from their focus groups and developing plans for improvements, both to their game and to the questionnaires for future implementations.

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

In the *CE 465 Instructional Design Capstone* students had the opportunity to be part of Experiential Learning through a Workplace Learning activity. One student worked with a local pharmacy while another worked with the Athens State University Office of Financial Affairs. The students worked as freelance instructional designers and had to build a training module for their clients.

In the *ED 404 Methods and Materials for Teaching* course students had the opportunity to be part of an Experiential Learning opportunity through a community engagement activity. The activity was to support the distance learning of immigrant bilingual children during the COVID-19 pandemic.

OUTCOME 3 AGGREGATED ASSESSMENT

To assess **Outcome 3** (Experiential learning activities will connect specific learning objectives to the associated activity), the above-mentioned courses piloted the Integrative Learning VALUE Rubric designed by American Association of Colleges and Universities (AACU), which was transformed into a survey to have been administered to students.

Figure 17 displays the five categories of Experiential Learning as identified by the institution and the percentage of students who participated by category as part of the Pilot during Fall 2020.

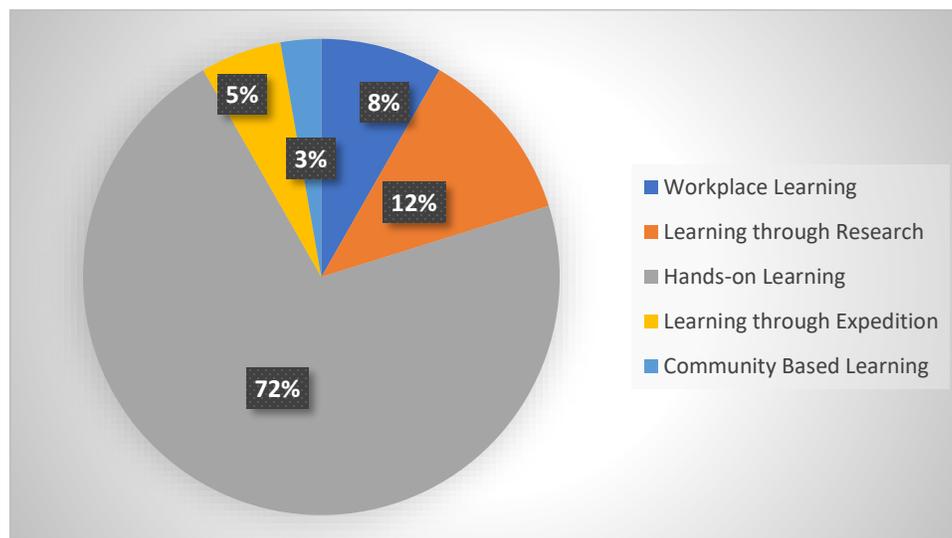


Figure 17 Pilot Assessment - Experiential Learning Activities - Fall 2020

The survey assesses four areas. These include:

1. Connection to Experience – connects relevant experience and academic knowledge
2. Connections to Discipline – Sees (makes) connections across disciplines, perspectives
3. Transfer – adapts and applies skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation to new situations
4. Reflection and Self-Assessment – demonstrates a developing sense of self as a learner, building on prior experiences to respond to new and challenging contexts

For each of these four areas the goal is to have students respond at a Capstone (4) or High Milestone (3) level. However, an answer based on a low Milestone or a Benchmark does not negate the positive impact of the activity. Results from the Fall 2020 pilot were used to establish a baseline. Throughout the roll-out process of the QEP, it is expected that the results of the combination of responses for Capstone or High Milestone will increase to a goal of 80%.

During the pilot of this survey, 110 students provided responses. The following are the results for each area:

	Capstone	High Milestone	Total:	Low Milestone	Baseline	Goal Benchmark
Connection to Experience	36.4%	37.3%	73.7%	13.6%	70%	80%
Connection to discipline	38.2%	35.5%	73.7%	8.2%	70%	80%
Transfer	24.5%	34.5%	59%	16.4%	70%	80%
Reflection and Self-Assessment	25.5%	27.3%	52.8%	8.2%	70%	80%

OUTCOME 4 INDIVIDUALIZED ASSESSMENT

Outcome 4 will be assessed differently depending on the specific activity used by the faculty member. Even within each of the activities there may be differences in the assessment. One of the objectives for this outcome is to generate a cohesive narrative between different departments that will allow for the assessment of different activities in a comparable way.

While other outcomes had initial assessment from the Fall 2020 semester, **Outcome 4** will have initial data beginning in Spring 2021.

OUTCOME 5 AGGREGATED ASSESSMENT

For **Outcome 5**, two surveys were administered to students. Both surveys used a Pre/Post approach and asked the students to self-assess their level of knowledge, skills, and abilities before and after going through the experiential learning activity. The first survey focused on the following areas:

- Generate original ideas
- Apply theoretical knowledge to practical situations
- Learn on my own
- Appreciate different opinions and points of view
- Ability to obtain a position in a career field related to the discipline of study
- Overall ability to perform effectively in a discipline specific career
- Ability to advance to a better position within my chosen career field

Figure 18 displays student responses before and after participating in the EL experience. The population for this survey was 102 students.

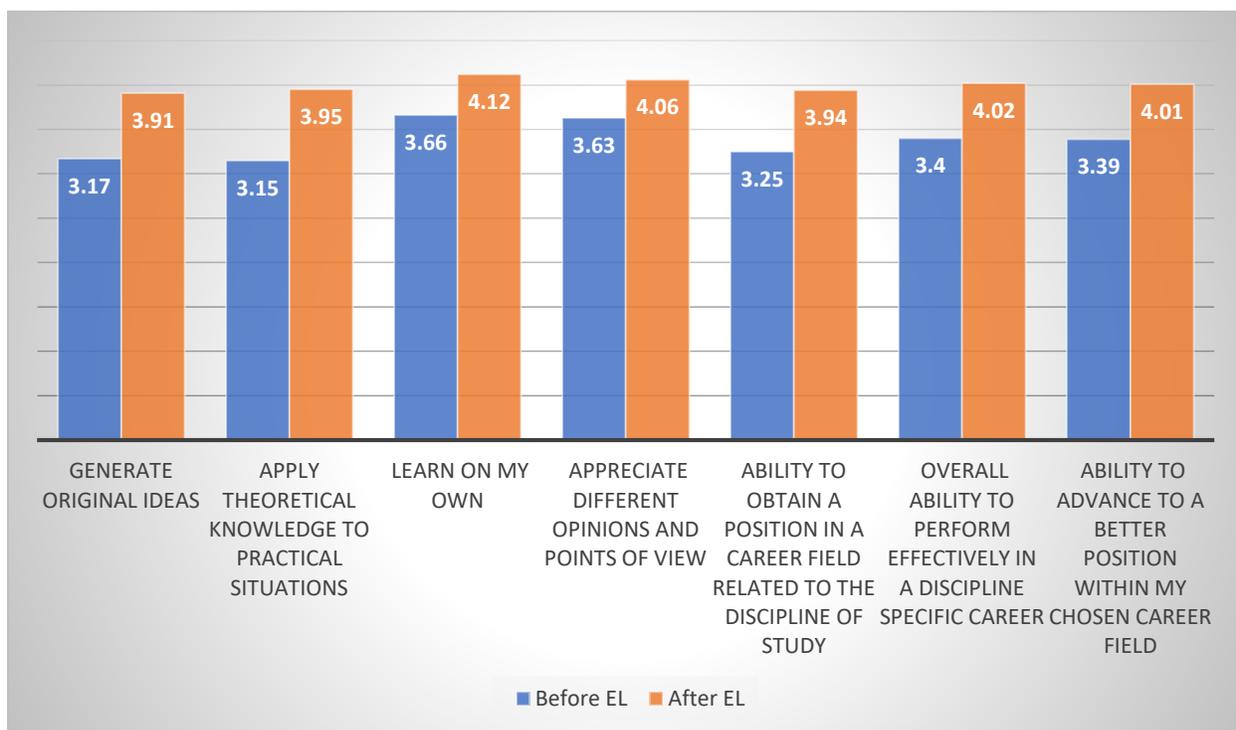


Figure 18. Results (partial) of Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities Before and After EL activity

The second survey focused on the following areas:

- Solving problems
- Understanding and appreciating societal, cultural, and global differences
- Understanding an appreciating ethical standards
- Exerting leadership
- Managing time effectively to accomplish work

Figure 19 displays the student responses before participating in the experience and after based on the mean score. This survey had 26 participants.

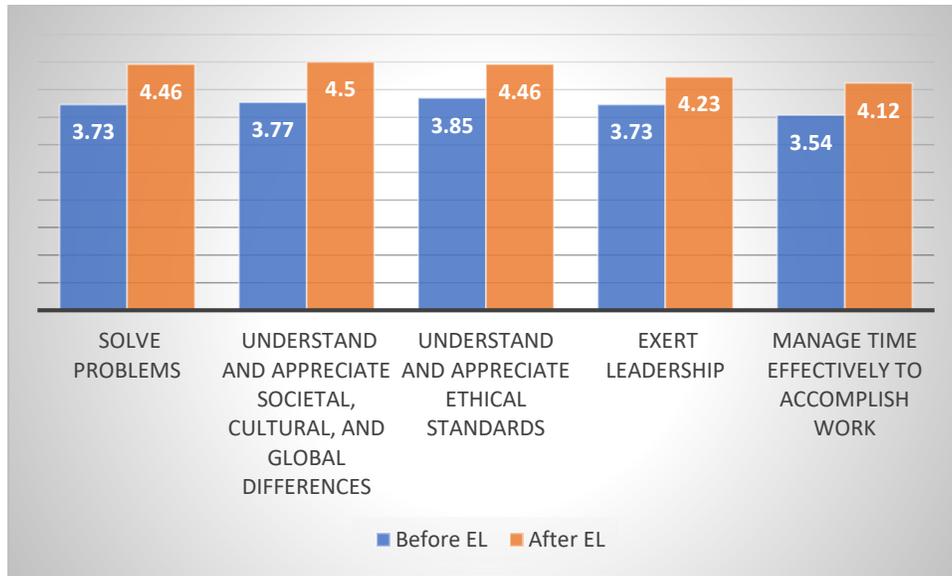


Figure 19. Results (partial) of Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities Before and After EL activity

As can be seen with both self-assessments, the EL activity students participated in provided them the confidence to feel better equipped in their knowledge, skills and abilities.

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Appendix A: Experiential Learning Discovery Surveys

Student Discovery Survey



NOTE: This assessment does not allow for a restart. Once you select the "Finish" button, any questions that have not been answered are no longer accessible.

Assessment: Experiential Learning QEP: Initial STUDENT Survey / 1626-0312

Term:

Questions

This survey is being used to determine the level of awareness on campus of what happens in the classrooms.

1. Have you experienced "hands-on" learning in a class within your major field of study?

Yes No

2. Are you aware if your field of study offers a class that provides you a "hands-on" experience?

Yes No

3. What do you consider to be "hands-on" learning within your field of study that you have experienced through a class? (Select all that apply)

- Internships
- Research
- Project with the community
- Study abroad
- Job shadowing
- Complex in-class projects
- Other

3a. If you selected "other" above, please describe.

4. What is your major?

5. Rank the following class experiences/requirements from most important to least important based on how you feel you learn best.

5a. Assigned homework

Highly important Important Least important No value - I do not learn from this type of experience

5b. Discussions with other students

Highly important Important Least important No value - I do not learn from this type of experience

5c. Required presentations

Highly important Important Least important No value - I do not learn from this type of experience

5d. Classroom projects

Highly important Important Least important No value - I do not learn from this type of experience

5e. Exams

Highly important Important Least important No value - I do not learn from this type of experience

5f. Working in teams

Highly important Important Least important No value - I do not learn from this type of experience

5g. Sponsored projects with a third party not associated to Athens State

Highly important Important Least important No value - I do not learn from this type of experience

6. Please provide your level of agreement on how the following terms may be used to refer to Experiential Learning.

6a. Active Learning

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

6b. Adventure Learning

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

6c. Free-Choice Learning

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

6d. Cooperative Learning

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

6e. Service Learning

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

6f. Situation Learning

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

6g. Hands-On Learning

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

Please provide your name, email address and phone number if you want to be entered for the drawing.

Thank you for your participation.

_Finish j

Faculty Discovery Survey

NOTE: This assessment does not allow for a restart. Once you select the "Finish" button, any questions that have not been answered are no longer accessible.

Assessment: **Experiential Learning QEP: Initial FACULTY Survey / 1626-0310**

Term:

Questions

This survey is being used to determine the types of experiential learning that different faculty members are conducting or are interested in conducting. It will also allow for faculty members to be able to express their thoughts on agreement in elements that are associated to experiential learning.

1. Do you teach a class where students have "hands-on" experience in their respective field of study?

- Yes No

2. Please list the classes that you currently teach that provide students a "hands-on" experience.

3. What category of "hands-on" experience do you offer? (Select all that apply)

- Internship
 Research based on real-world experience
 Research based on third party provided material (i.e. publisher case study)
 Research based on self-created content
 Assigned project based on needs of a community/client sponsor
 Assigned project based on third party provided material (i.e. publisher case study)
 Assigned project based on self-created content
 Semester long community/client sponsored project (students interact directly with client/sponsor to fulfill agreed upon task)
 Study abroad
 Job shadowing
 Other

3a. If you selected "other" above, please describe.

4. How do you assess the "hands-on" experiences? (Select all that apply)

- Student reflection essay
 Other student submitted material
 Student presents work
 Feedback form from third party
 Other

4a. If you selected "other" above please describe.

5. Are you willing to share your assessment artifacts with the QEP Director?

- Yes No

Future Experiential Learning - Please complete this section if there are classes in which you would like to have a "hands-on" component to it.

6. Do you teach a class where you would like to incorporate "hands-on" experience for your students in their respective field?

- Yes No

7. Please list the classes that you would like to add "hands-on" experience to.

8. What category of "hands-on" experience would you like to offer? (Select all that apply)

- Internship
- Research
- Project with Client/Sponsor
- Study Abroad
- Job Shadow
- Other

8a. If you selected "other" above please describe.

9. What keeps you from adding a "hands-on" component to your classes? (Select all that apply)

- I don't know whom to contact about creating a partnership/sponsorship.
- It takes too much time for me to go out and try to find someone that will collaborate with my classes.
- I am not sure how I would properly grade the work.
- I don't think the students will agree to "work for free."
- No clue where to begin.
- Other

9a. If you selected "other" above please describe.

What does Experiential Learning mean to you? This section will provide information to allow for Athens State University to come up with what Experiential Learning means at our institution and for our students.

10. Please provide your level of agreement on how the following terms may be used to refer to Experiential Learning.

10a. Active Learning

- Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

10b. Adventure Learning

- Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

10c. Free-Choice Learning

- Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

10d. Cooperative Learning

- Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

10e. Service Learning

- Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

10f. Situation Learning

- Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

10g. Hands-On Learning

- Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

11. Please provide your level of agreement with the following statements.

11a. Experiential learning can exist without a teacher.

- Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

11b. Experiential learning relates solely to the meaning-making process of the individual's direct experience.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

11c. The learner must be willing to be actively involved in the experience.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

11d. The learner must possess and use analytical skills to conceptualize the experience.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

11e. The learner must possess decision making and problem solving skills in order to use new ideas gained from the experience.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

11f. The learner must be treated as if employed by a company during the duration of the experience.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

11g. The learner must be able to find solutions and fill in "learning gaps" on their own without assistance from the professor during the experience.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

11h. There is value in providing students the opportunity for a "real-world" experience within a class.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

11i. Experiential learning can occur through the process of shadowing and reflecting.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

Please provide your name if you want to be entered for the drawing.

Thank you for your participation!

Finish

Staff Discovery Survey

NOTE: This assessment does not allow for a restart. Once you select the "Finish" button, any questions that have not been answered are no longer accessible.

Assessment: **Experiential Learning QEP: Initial STAFF Survey / 1626-0311**

Term:

Questions

This survey is being used to determine the level of awareness on campus of what happens in the classrooms.

1. What are categories of "hands-on" learning that you are aware students experience in their classrooms? (Select all that apply)

- Internships
- Research
- Project with the community
- Study abroad
- Job shadowing
- Complex in-class projects
- I am not aware of student experiences in the classroom
- Other

1a. If you selected "other" above, please describe:

2. Do you think your department could partner with a class or multiple classes to offer students a "hands-on" experience? (Example: A new event is to be held on campus. Partner with marketing students to come up with the marketing strategy, Art students to design a website and images for marketing materials, CS/IT students to develop a website or a mobile app to be used alongside the event, Education students to make instruction videos on how to use the app developed or instructional type materials associated to the event.)

- Yes No

3. If yes to the previous, do you currently have project ideas?

4. What department do you work for? This information will not be shared.

5. Please provide your level of agreement on how the following terms may be used to refer to Experiential Learning.

5a. Active Learning

- Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

5b. Adventure Learning

- Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

5c. Free-Choice Learning

- Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

5d. Cooperative Learning

- Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

5e. Service Learning

- Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

5f. Situation Learning

1/2

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

5g. Hands-On Learning

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

6. Please provide your level of agreement to the following statements.

6a. Experiential learning can exist without a teacher.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

6b. Experiential learning relates solely to the meaning-making process of the individual's direct experience.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

6c. The learner must be willing to be actively involved in the experience.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

6d. The learner must possess and use analytical skills to conceptualize the experience.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

6e. The learner must possess decision making and problem solving skills in order to use new ideas gained from the experience.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

6f. The learner must be treated as if employed by a company during the duration of the experience.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

6g. The learner must be able to find solutions and fill in "learning gaps" on their own without assistance from the professor during the experience.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

6h. There is value in providing students the opportunity for a "real-world" experience within a class.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

Please provide your name if you want to be entered for the drawing.

Thank you for your participation.

„Finish“

Board of Trustees Discovery Survey



ASSESSMENT MANAGEMENT EVALUATION ENTRY

NOTE: This assessment does not allow for a restart. Once you select the "Finish" button, any questions that have not been answered are no longer accessible.

Assessment: **Experiential Learning QEP: Initial TRUSTEES Survey / 1626-0313**

Term:

Questions

This section will provide information to allow for Athens State University to come up with what Experiential Learning means at our institutions and for our students.

1. What do you consider to be "hands-on" learning that should be included as part of a classroom experience? (Select all that apply)

- Internships
- Research
- Project with the community
- Study abroad
- Job shadowing
- Complex in-class projects
- Other

1a. If you selected "other" above, please describe:

2. Would your organization be interested in partnering with Athens State University to offer students hands-on experience? (Example: Your organization might be planning a special event. Partnerships could occur with marketing students to come up with the marketing strategy, Art students to design a website and images for marketing materials, CS/IT students to develop a website or mobile app to be used alongside the event, Education students to make instruction videos on how to use the app developed or instruction type materials associated to the event.)

- Yes No

3. Please provide your level of agreement on how the following terms may be used to refer to Experiential Learning.

3a. Active Learning

- Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

3b. Adventure Learning

- Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

3c. Free-Choice Learning

- Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

3d. Cooperative Learning

- Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

3e. Service Learning

- Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

3f. Situation Learning

- Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

3g. Hand-On Learning

- Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

4. Please provide your level of agreement to the following statements.

4a. Experiential learning can exist without a teacher.

- Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

4b. Experiential learning relates solely to the meaning-making process of the individual's direct experience.

- Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

4c. The learner must be willing to be actively involved in the experience.

- Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

4d. The learner must possess and use analytical skills to conceptualize the experience.

- Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

4e. The learner must possess decision making and problem solving skills in order to use new ideas gained from the experience.

- Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

4f. The learner must be able to find solutions and fill in "learning gaps" on their own without assistance from the professor during the experience.

- Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

4g. There is value in providing students the opportunity for a "real-world" experience within a class.

- Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree No Comment

5. If you have additional comments that were not associated to the above questions, please provide them here.

Thank you for your participation.

Finish J

Appendix B: Literature Review

Assessment

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Appendix C: Student Activity Survey

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Assessment Questions



ASSESSMENT MANAGEMENT EVALUATION ENTRY

[Logout](#)

NOTE: This assessment does not allow for a restart. Once you select the "Finish" button, any questions that have not been answered are no longer accessible.

Assessment: Exp. Learning QEP: Class Activity Outcome 1 / 1626-0314

Term:

Questions

Experiential learning activities conducted as part of a class/extracurricular event are making a connection between what the student is learning in the classroom with the experience that the student has had the opportunity to participate in.

1. Student Name:

2. Instructor Name:

3. Class for which you are completing this survey (e.g., CS 380):

4. Which of the following categories best describes your experiential learning activity (your professor may have provided you with this information)?

a. Workplace learning: This includes students participating in internships or having the opportunity to job shadow someone in a position that they have interest in making their own career.

b. Learning through research: This includes students partnering with faculty members to conduct research in topics that are relevant to the community and/or discipline.

c. Hands-on learning: These opportunities are completed in a controlled environment, such as a classroom, where faculty are present to be facilitators and active within the student's learning experience.

d. Learning through expeditions: This includes students being able to get out of the classroom and being able to apply their skills and knowledge through activities that may occur during trips that are taken, whether locally, nationally, or internationally.

e. Community-based learning: This includes classes that partner to work in collaboration with a non-profit community sponsor.

For the items below, please choose the statement that you believe best describes the activity that you have participated in.

5. Connections to experience: The activity connects relevant experience and academic knowledge. The activity allowed me to _____

a. meaningfully synthesize connections among experiences outside of the formal classroom (including life experiences and academic experiments) to deepen understanding of my field of study and broaden my own points of view.

b. effectively select and develop examples of life experiences, drawn from a variety of contexts, to illuminate concepts/theories/frameworks within my field of study.

c. compare life experiences and academic knowledge to inform differences, as well as similarities, and acknowledge perspectives other than my own.

d. identify connections between life experiences and those academic texts and ideas perceived as similar and related to my own interests.

6. Connections to discipline: The activity makes connections across disciplines, perspectives. The activity allowed me to _____

a. independently create wholes out of multiple parts (synthesis) or draw conclusions by combining examples, facts, or theories from more than one field of study or perspective.

b. independently connect examples, facts, or theories from more than one field of study or perspective.

c. when prompted, connect examples, facts, or theories from more than one field of study or perspective.

d. when prompted, present examples, facts, or theories from more than one field of study or perspective.

7. Transfer: The activity allows for adaptation and application of skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation to new situations. The activity allowed me to _____

a. independently adapt and apply skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation to new situations to solve difficult problems or explore complex issues in original ways.

b. adapt and apply skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation to new situations to solve problems or explore issues.

c. use skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation in a new situation to contribute to understanding of problems or issues.

d. use, in a basic way, skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation in a new situation.

8. Reflection and self-assessment: The activity allowed for me to develop a sense of self as a learner, building on prior experiences to respond to new and challenging contexts. The activity allowed for me to _____

a. envision my future self and make plans that build on past

b. evaluate changes in my own learning over time, recognizing complex contextual factors

c. articulate strengths and challenges (within specific performances or

d. describe my own

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Assessment Questions

experiences) that have occurred across multiple and diverse contexts.

(e.g. working with ambiguity and risk, dealing with frustration, considering ethical frameworks).

events) to increase effectiveness in different contexts (through increased self-awareness).

performance with general descriptors of success and failure.

Thank you for your participation. Please click on the "finish" button to submit.

Finish

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This survey was created using the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) Integrative and Applied Learning VALUE Rubric. Retrieved from <https://www.aacu.org/value-rubrics>

Appendix D: Direct Assessment Rubric

QEP Comprehensive Student Scoring Rubric

Class: _____

Semester: _____

Professor: _____

Check the category of the Experiential Learning activity performed.

- Learning through Research Hands-on Learning Workplace Learning
 Learning through Expeditions Community-based Learning

How many students were involved in the activity? _____

Instructions to complete rubric: Please select “Not applicable” for any part of the rubric that the students would not be demonstrating knowledge, skills and dispositions. For outcomes in which you are able to assess please place the number of students that fall under each of the indicators provided. Once completed, each row should add up to the number of students that were involved in the activity. Only one rubric is required to be submitted.

Student Outcomes	Not Applicable	Unacceptable	Emerging Competence	At Standard	Exceeds Standard
Score		1	2	3	4
Problem Solving/Inquiry (I)	Activity did not give student the opportunity to be evaluated for this particular outcome.	Student does not engage in problem solving/inquiry activities or engages in problem solving activities without demonstrating the application of knowledge and skills appropriate for the situation.	Student engages in problem solving/inquiry activities. There is evidence of limited application of knowledge and skills appropriate for the situation.	Student engages in problem solving/inquiry activities through the application of knowledge and skills appropriate for the situation. The student can articulate how he or she applied knowledge and skills to address a significant work setting problem.	Student engages in problem solving/inquiry activities through the application of knowledge and skills appropriate for the situation. The student can articulate how he or she was the driving force in developing a solution to a significant work setting problem.
Communication (II)	Activity did not give student the opportunity to be evaluated for this particular outcome.	Oral communication contains errors in grammar or syntax. Vocabulary may be incorrect or inappropriate. Written communication contains errors in content, spelling, mechanics, or is not legible.	Oral communication is free of errors in grammar or syntax. Vocabulary is correct, but is limited. Written communication is free from errors in content, spelling, mechanics, and is legible.	Oral communication is correct and reflects accurate content. Written communication is correct, reflects accurate content, and is legible.	Oral communication is correct, reflects accurate content, and expressive with well chosen vocabulary. Written communication is correct, reflects accurate content, and is legible.
Collaboration (III)	Activity did not give student the opportunity to be evaluated for this particular outcome.	Student fails to establish interaction with colleagues or relationships are unprofessional.	Student maintains professional, cordial relationships with work site colleagues.	Student works collaboratively with work site colleagues to solve problems, learn, and grow professionally.	Student routinely shares materials, resources, and ideas with colleagues and other professionals. Student may volunteer to organize tasks or take a lead role in problem solving activities.

<p>Professionalism (IV)</p>	<p>Activity did not give student the opportunity to be evaluated for this particular outcome.</p>	<p>The student routinely demonstrates an unprofessional appearance or behaves in an unprofessional manner (tardy, unprepared, dishonest, unethical).</p>	<p>The student occasionally demonstrates an unprofessional appearance. The Student behaves in a professional manner.</p>	<p>The student consistently demonstrates professional appearance and behavior.</p>	<p>The student consistently demonstrates professional appearance and behavior characteristic of a model employee.</p>
<p>Career Understandings (V)</p>	<p>Activity did not give student the opportunity to be evaluated for this particular outcome.</p>	<p>The student displays little understanding of career options and requirements related to the work site placement.</p>	<p>The student can articulate career options related to the work site placement.</p>	<p>The student can articulate career options and requirements related to the work site placement.</p>	<p>The student can articulate career options and requirements related to the work site placement. In addition, the student can relate career goals to his or her education and personal strengths.</p>
<p>Reflection (VI)</p>	<p>Activity did not give student the opportunity to be evaluated for this particular outcome.</p>	<p>The student misjudges his or Her performance and success. The student is not open to constructive criticism. Reflections are not evident.</p>	<p>The student recognizes his or her level of effectiveness. Offers vague, general suggestions for professional improvement or is dependent on supervisors for ideas. The student is open to suggestions and demonstrates limited reflection.</p>	<p>The student recognizes his or her level of effectiveness and notes his or her strengths and weaknesses. Student is committed to reflection, self-assessment, and learning as an ongoing process. Constructive criticism is welcomed.</p>	<p>The student is able to critically, analyze his or her strengths and weaknesses and offers suggestions for improvement. Student reflects on his or her role in fulfilling professional responsibilities.</p>
<p>Professional Development (VII)</p>	<p>Activity did not give student the opportunity to be evaluated for this particular outcome.</p>	<p>The student makes no attempt to participate in professional growth opportunities.</p>	<p>The student occasionally participates in required professional growth activities.</p>	<p>The student is involved in professional opportunities and uses knowledge from professional literature and colleagues to improve his or her performance.</p>	<p>The student shares new knowledge and skills, conducts action research, makes presentations, or coordinates professional development events.</p>

Appendix E: Indirect Student Outcome Surveys

Student Outcome Survey 1

9/25/2020

Assessment Questions



ASSESSMENT MANAGEMENT EVALUATION ENTRY

[Logout](#)



NOTE: This assessment does not allow for a restart. Once you select the "Finish" button, any questions that have not been answered are no longer accessible.

Assessment: Exp. Learning QEP: Student Outcome 1 / 1626-0316

Term:

Questions

Students are satisfactorily completing activity specific performance indicators. These may be associated to intellectual and practical skills, including but not limited to inquiry and analysis, critical and creative thinking, written and oral communication, quantitative literacy, information literacy, teamwork, and problem solving to name a few.

1. Student Name:

2. Instructor Name:

3. Class in which you are completing this survey (e.g., CS 380):

4. Which of the following categories best describes your experiential learning activity (your professor may have provided you with this information)?

- | | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|--|
| <p><input type="radio"/> a. Workplace learning: This includes students participating in internships or having the opportunity to job shadow someone in a position that they have interest in making their own career.</p> | <p><input type="radio"/> b. Learning through research: This includes students partnering with faculty members to conduct research in topics that are relevant to the community and/or discipline.</p> | <p><input type="radio"/> c. Hands-on learning: These opportunities are completed in a controlled environment, such as a classroom, where faculty are present to be facilitators and active within the student's learning experience.</p> | <p><input type="radio"/> d. Learning through expeditions: This includes students being able to get out of the classroom and being able to apply their skills and knowledge through activities that may occur during trips that are taken, whether locally, national, or international.</p> | <p><input type="radio"/> e. Community-based learning: This includes classes that partner to work in collaboration with a non-profit community sponsor.</p> |
|---|---|--|--|--|

This section asks for a candid assessment of your level of knowledge, skills, and abilities before and after you went through the experiential learning activity. Your honest response to this section is essential in helping your professor and the University to improve the experiential learning opportunities that students have within their chosen field of study.

1. Generate original ideas

1a. Before participating in experiential learning activity
 Weak Somewhat weak Average Somewhat strong Strong

1b. After participating in experiential learning activity
 Weak Somewhat weak Average Somewhat strong Strong

2. Apply theoretical knowledge to practical situations

2a. Before participating in experiential learning activity
 Weak Somewhat weak Average Somewhat strong Strong

2b. After participating in experiential learning activity
 Weak Somewhat weak Average Somewhat strong Strong

3. Learn on my own

3a. Before participating in experiential learning activity
 Weak Somewhat weak Average Somewhat strong Strong

3b. After participating in experiential learning activity

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Assessment Questions

Weak Somewhat weak Average Somewhat strong Strong

4. Appreciate different opinions and points of view

4a. Before participating in experiential learning activity

Weak Somewhat weak Average Somewhat strong Strong

4b. After participating in experiential learning activity

Weak Somewhat weak Average Somewhat strong Strong

5. Ability to obtain a position in a career field related to the discipline of study

5a. Before participating in experiential learning activity

Weak Somewhat weak Average Somewhat strong Strong

5b. After participating in experiential learning activity

Weak Somewhat weak Average Somewhat strong Strong

6. Overall ability to perform effectively in a discipline specific career

6a. Before participating in experiential learning activity

Weak Somewhat weak Average Somewhat strong Strong

6b. After participating in experiential learning activity

Weak Somewhat weak Average Somewhat strong Strong

7. Ability to advance to a better position within their chosen career field

7a. Before participating in experiential learning activity

Weak Somewhat weak Average Somewhat strong Strong

7b. After participating in experiential learning activity

Weak Somewhat weak Average Somewhat strong Strong

Thank you for your participation. Please click on the "finish" button to submit.

Finish

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Student Outcome Survey 2



ASSESSMENT MANAGEMENT EVALUATION ENTRY

NOTE: This assessment does not allow for a restart. Once you select the "Finish" button, any questions that have not been answered are no longer accessible.

Assessment: EL QEP: Student Outcome 2 for Class Activity / 1626-0318

Term:

Questions

Students will strongly identify as being anchored through active involvement with diverse communities and real-world challenges through personal and social responsibilities. These include civic knowledge and engagement both at a local and global level, intercultural knowledge and competence, ethical reasoning and action, and foundations and skills of lifelong learning.

1. Student Name:

2. Instructor Name:

3. Class in which you are completing this survey for (e.g. CS 380):

4. Which of the following categories best describes your experiential learning activity (your professor may have provided you with this information)?

a. Workplace learning: This includes students participating in internships or having the opportunity to job shadow someone in a position that they have interest in making their own career.

b. Learning through research: This includes students partnering with faculty members to conduct research in topics that are relevant to the community and/or discipline.

c. Hands-on learning: These opportunities are completed in a controlled environment, such as a classroom, where faculty are present to be facilitators and active within the student's learning experience.

d. Learning through expeditions: This includes students being able to get out of the classroom and being able to apply their skills and knowledge through activities that may occur during trips that are taken, whether locally, nationally or internationally.

e. Community-based learning: This includes classes that partner to work in collaboration with a non-profit community sponsor.

This section asks for a candid assessment of your level of active involvement with diverse communities and real-world challenges through personal and social responsibilities through the experiential learning activity. Your honest response to this section is essential in helping your professor and the University to improve the experiential learning opportunities that students have within their chosen field of study.

5. Solve Problems

5a. Before participating in experiential learning activity
Weak Somewhat weak Average Somewhat strong Strong

5b. After participating in experiential learning activity
Weak Somewhat weak Average Somewhat strong Strong

6. Understand and appreciate societal, cultural, and global differences

6a. Before participating in experiential learning activity
Weak Somewhat weak Average Somewhat strong Strong

6b. After participating in experiential learning activity
Weak Somewhat weak Average Somewhat strong Strong

7. Understand and appreciate ethical standards

7a. Before participating in experiential learning activity
Weak Somewhat weak Average Somewhat strong Strong

7b. After participating in experiential learning activity

Weak Somewhat weak Average Somewhat strong Strong

8. Exert leadership

8a. Before participating in experiential learning activity

Weak Somewhat weak Average Somewhat strong Strong

8b. After participating in experiential learning activity

Weak Somewhat weak Average Somewhat strong Strong

9. Manage time effectively to accomplish work

9a. Before participating in experiential learning activity

Weak Somewhat weak Average Somewhat strong Strong

9b. After participating in experiential learning activity

Weak Somewhat weak Average Somewhat strong Strong

Thank you for your participation. Please click on the "finish" button to submit.

Finish