



Defining your Role: Facilitating Experiential Education



Andrew L. Hauser, Juliana Markham, Graciela Barajas, Audrey L. Hawk, Tara E. Rojas, Hunter-Anne Julian, Caleb Hickman, Daniel Prince, Austin Leake, Dr. Bryan Hains

Examples

INTRODUCTION

- Experiential learning is an experience for the individual, the influence of a teacher is not always necessary. When the focus of the learning is no longer individualized and the influence of a teacher is added, it becomes experiential education.
- The facilitator creates an opportunity for experiential learning but should not restrict the learner from having their own experience. Facilitators often want to help learners "overcome fear", but the learner may want to learn to experience fear and learn to manage it.
- Students learn to guide a learning experience rather than provide direct instruction.

HOW IT WORKS

Graduate students in the experiential education class, are required to research experiential education and provide a critique of their profession. Within the critique, students are encouraged to:

- 1) Develop a working definition aligning to their philosophy,
- 2) Ascribe to or develop a conceptual model of experiential education,
- 3) Examine an area of their profession, and
- 4) Provide 20 articles of literature to support their philosophy.
- 5) Students later present their findings to the class to enhance the knowledge base of the class.

As a capstone project for the class, students develop a 45-minute experience for the rest of the class. The guidelines for the experience were as follows:

- 1) Incorporate a conceptual model for experiential education,
- 2) Have a working definition,
- 3) Use methodologies to allow participants to interpret their own learning,
- 4) Develop objectives for the project, and
- 5) Facilitate reflection from the experience.
- 6) Students write a written reflection on the experience.

REFERENCES

- Bell, M. (1993). What constitutes experience? Rethinking theoretical assumptions. *Journal of Experiential Education*, 16(1), 19-24.
- Dewey, J. (1938). *Education and experience*. Simon and Schuster.
- Ilin, C. M. (1999). Reasserting the philosophy of experiential education as a vehicle for change in the 21st century. *Journal of Experiential Education*, 22(2), 91-98.
- Kolb, D. A. (1984). *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development*. Prentice Hall.
- Wurdinger, S., & Paxton, T. (2003). Using multiple levels of experience to promote autonomy in adventure education students. *Journal of Adventure Education & Outdoor Learning*, 3(1), 41-48.



Students facilitated an experience to dressing in Drag to learn about gender fluidity, acceptance, and critical race theory.

Students carved pumpkins to share their emotional response to the year 2020.



Students designed intricate memories on cookies to embrace a positive memory to increase their emotional resilience.

RESULTS

- The experiential education project has been successful in providing a deeper understanding for experiential education.
- “The class pushed me outside of my comfort zone, and it allowed me to take a step back and analyze my current teaching strategies to help me enhance my future agricultural classroom”.
 - “Being able to put what we were learning into action and then reflecting upon that, was the ultimate way to connect the content in class to real world application”
 - “This true understanding of experiential education will help me explain the significance and ‘So what?’ factor of learning concepts for my future students.”
 - “Reflecting on objectives has made me think deeper on the importance of evaluating learning objectives to improve critical thinking as student’s response to an experience.”

FUTURE PLANS

Teacher educators plan to continue implementing the experiential education project into the experiential education class. Future plans include:

- Inviting others to participate in lessons
- Individual's critique and question lessons to provide ideas for future implementation
- A pre and post assessment is implemented into each lesson to better understand student growth
- Lessons will be videoed in the future to allow for deeper reflection.

COST/RESOURCES

The cost and resources needed for the experiential education project are decided by the students. Resources needed vary by lesson. Students are responsible for obtaining the materials needed to conduct their lesson. It is recommended a classroom with a computer, internet access, and a projector be present for students. The design of the lesson determines the materials and costs associated with the lesson.