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# Experiential Education at UBC-Vancouver: Summary of Research and Recommendations

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Centre for Teaching, Learning, and Technology (CTLT)



## Executive Summary

In 2018, the Centre for Community Engaged Learning (CCEL), the Centre for Student Involvement and Careers (CSI&C), and the Centre for Teaching, Learning & Technology (CTLT) launched a two-year project to explore ways that UBC Vancouver (UBCV) can enhance experiential education (EE). The project involved four phases. Phase 1, initial exploration, involved efforts to understand EE within the UBCV context by reviewing previously drafted studies and reports, and consulting with colleagues and students from across campus. Phase 2, primary research, focused on understanding the supports and challenges associated with experiential education, and resulted in a distillation of key themes. During phase 3, member check and dissemination, the findings from the earlier phases were circulated for review and validation with key informants and others across campus. The final phase, actionable recommendations, involved focus groups to surface recommendations stemming from the specific challenges identified. Through this combination of research, dialogue, consultation, and outreach, more than 200 UBC faculty members, staff, and students were engaged.

A high-level summary of the challenges and associated recommendations identified through this process is provided below. More detailed information is included in the document narrative.

**Challenge:** Lack of an Institutional Vision and Shared Understanding of EE at UBCV. **Recommended Response:** Build and lead a shared vision for EE through collaborative and committed high level leadership. Multiple participants called for a VP to visibly champion EE. Participants also pressed for a common language, specific enough to resonate at UBC, but also inclusive, accessible, and adaptive enough that it accounts for unique and innovative forms of EE. A starting point for the development of a common language may be to *collaboratively* develop and agree on a set of common principles for EE.

**Challenge:** Struggles with Communication & Connection. **Recommended Response:** Increase the visibility, knowledge, relationships, and pathways pertaining to EE. Concrete actions might include on-line tools to guide stakeholders to existing resources. It was also suggested that events focused on story-telling and resource sharing be planned so students are exposed to the variety of EE opportunities and administrative leaders might increase their understanding.

**Challenge:** Evaluation & Assessment. **Recommended Response:** Collaboratively build and resource a system for what counts and to whom. Provide a framework and vision for what will be measured and why, while also developing meaningful evaluation and assessment procedures that account for the labour, time, and impact of experiential education practices.

**Challenge:** Inequity and Exclusion. **Recommended Response:** Eliminate systemic barriers that inhibit equitable engagement. For students, build a needs-based fund designed to decrease financial barriers to participation. For faculty and staff, collect data to understand if EE labour is equitably distributed. For partners outside the university, invite them to be involved in EE decision making processes.

**Challenge:** Undervaluing of EE Labour & Associated Reward Structures. **Recommended Response:** Build systems that reward, rather than punish, the labour of EE. Remove obstacles for Faculties and Departments that would like to compensate EE labour, and formalize consideration of EE labour.

**Challenge:** Teaching and Learning Difficulties. **Recommended Response:** Increase resources for and support of experiential pedagogies. Develop online modules and toolkits relevant across disciplines.

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## Overview

In 2018, the Centre for Community Engaged Learning (CCEL), the Centre for Student Involvement and Careers (CSI&C), and the Centre for Teaching, Learning & Technology (CTLT) launched a two-year project to explore ways that UBC Vancouver (UBCV) can enhance experiential education (EE). As part of this project, a campus needs analysis and research study<sup>1</sup> looked at existing practices and challenges related to EE at the university. This report provides a brief overview of our process and findings to date, along with provisional themes which are being refined and developed into actionable recommendations as a next step.

## Introduction: Background and Process

Experiential education<sup>2</sup> is a philosophy and methodology in which “educators purposely engage learners in direct experience and focused reflection in order to increase knowledge, develop skills and clarify values” (AEE, n.d.) Experiential education, as it is often conceptualized in institutional contexts, draws heavily on the work of Kolb, Dewey, Kuh, and other White, Western, male scholars whose perspectives have been historically privileged. This normative framing of experiential education has excluded a rich profusion of scholarship from women, racialized authors, Indigenous peoples, and other groups that have been marginalized in institutional spaces<sup>3</sup>. For this reason and others, this project intentionally avoided the application of a definition of experiential education that is beholden to a single framework, and instead examined how UBC EE stakeholders understand it. Included in the project has been the facilitation of campus-wide conversations around EE and a research study involving faculty members, staff, students, community and workplace partner representatives.

UBC’s strategic plan emphasizes experiential education in two of its four core areas of focus: *Transformative Learning* and *Local and Global Engagement*. Multiple strategies are closely linked to experiential education including:

Strategy	Theme	Excerpt from Strategic Plan
13	Practical Learning	“Expand experiential, work-integrated, and extended learning opportunities”
14	Interdisciplinary Learning	“Facilitate the development of Integrative, problem-focused learning”
16	Public Relevance	Support “community-based and action research projects, and learning initiatives that place...students in community settings”
19	Global Networks	Support “opportunities for students to study abroad through GoGlobal and other initiatives”
20	Coordinated Engagement	“Increase support for students, faculty, and staff working with and in the community”

<sup>1</sup> The research study included two research certificates from the Behavioural Research Ethics Board (BREB): H18-01810 and H18-01827. Study #H18-01810 was conducted and analyzed by Dr. Kari Grain. Study # H18-01827 was conducted and analyzed collaboratively by Dr. Catherine Douglas, Dr. Kari Grain, Kyle Nelson, Gaele Simard-Duplain, Ryan Brown, and Vinicius Pecanha.

<sup>2</sup> *Experiential education* is used in this report (as opposed to experiential *learning*) to describe our broad campus practice. Experiential education can be distinguished from experiential learning because it is teleological and is carried out with a purpose, a learning outcome, or an end in mind (see Biesta, 2013). Experiential learning happens throughout one’s life, irrespective of an institution’s role. Additionally, at a provincial level, the British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT) use the language of EE, citing that that EE programs “have experience at their core, and are intentionally linked to the learner’s academic and professional goals, and are directed and monitored by the institutions so as to develop the learner’s knowledge, skills, and values” (Johnston & Sator, 2017, p. 1).

<sup>3</sup> For a deeper analysis of this issue, see Grain (2019) <https://blogs.ubc.ca/experiential/resistance-reconceptualization/>

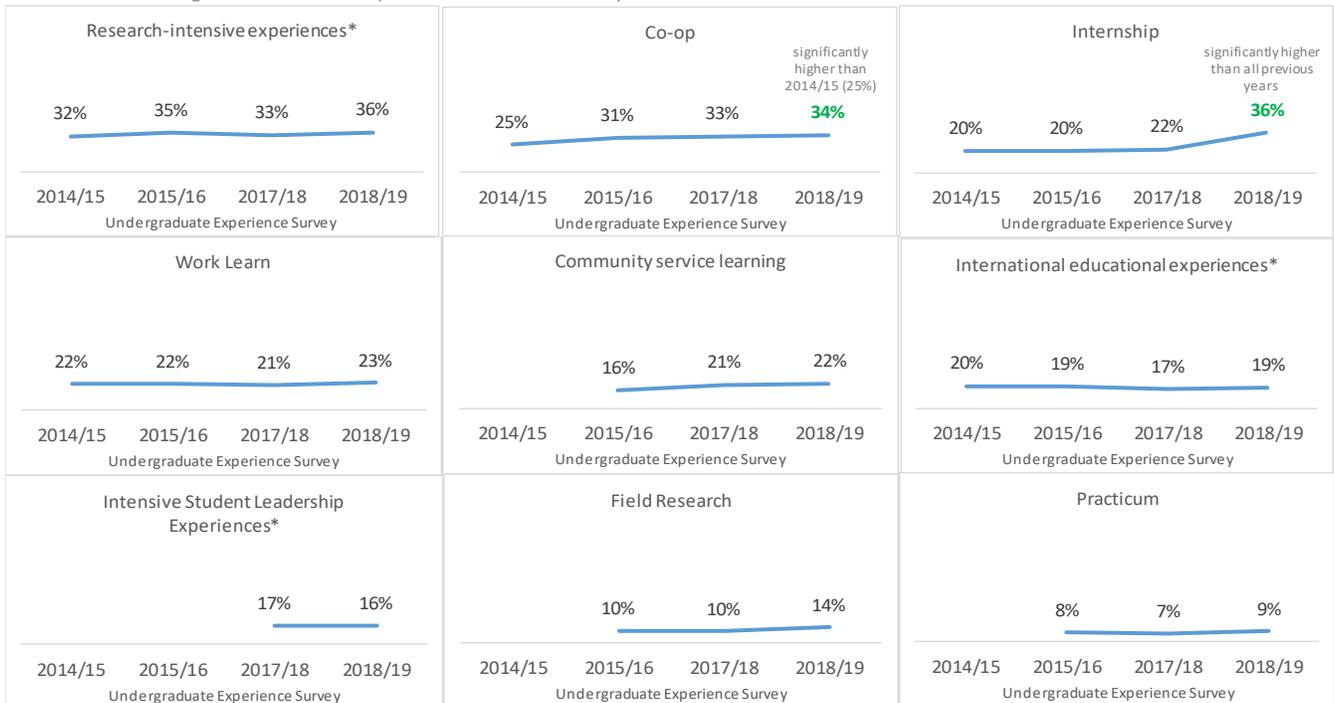


## Scope of EE at UBCV

UBCV participation in EE is active and growing. Figure 1 shows trends in student participation in various types of EE from 2015 to 2019, based on students' self-report in the Undergraduate Experience Survey (UES).

*Figure 1: Experiential Learning Opportunity Participation Trends at UBCV 2015-2019 as reported in the Undergraduate Experience Survey (UES)*

Based on students' self-report in the Undergraduate Experience Survey (UES)  
UBC Vancouver undergraduates in their 4th year at the time of the survey



\*Research-intensive experiences (senior research seminars, capstone seminars, honours seminars, advanced research projects)

\*International Educational Experiences (e.g., Go Global programs such as exchange, group study, service learning, study abroad courses, research placements, short-term programs)

\*Intensive Student Leadership Experiences (e.g. Elected student government role, Peer Program Leader, SLC Director, Collegia Advisor, Residence Advisor, etc.)

Sample size (4th year) 2014/15 1921 2015/16 1976 2017/18 1889 2018/19 1725

Response rate (4th year) 2014/15 20% 2015/16 21% 2017/18 18% 2018/19 16%

## Why EE: Benefits for Students, Community, and Workplace Partners

Experiential education has been shown to generate benefits for students. For example, George Kuh (2008) demonstrated that high impact practices (HIPs) such as service-learning, internships, and project-based learning (among others) are likely to positively impact students' overall performance in school. Moreover, higher levels of post-graduate success and salary range have been attributed to workplace-oriented experiential pedagogies (Gallup-Purdue Index Report, 2014; Kramer and Usher, 2011). Experiential learning has been shown to enhance student development through spiritual and moral growth, strengthened sense of personal identity, and interpersonal relationship skills (Astin et al., 2000; Eyler et al., 2001; Tee & Kalidas, 2016). Community-engaged forms of experiential education such as service-learning, in which the student's applied learning experience is a response to an identified community need, are cited as transformational pedagogies that serve community needs while also offering insights about diversity, social justice, responsibility, civic mindedness, global citizenship, and more (Grain & Lund, 2016). Moreover, experiential education provides opportunities for learners to have an emotional connection to their physical space (Schenck & Cruickshank, 2015). UBCV UES data shows that participating

in EE opportunities is associated with significantly higher self-rating by students on various employability skills and understanding of social issue compared to non-participants, commensurate with the type of EE opportunity reported (see Appendix 2 for more details.)

Given the many stakeholders and community or workplace partners who are involved in such pedagogies, there is also a growing research base that explores benefactors beyond the student. For example, the UBC Learning Exchange, which is a satellite campus in Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside (DTES), notes a number of ways that the local community can benefit from experiential learners. Despite the often time-limited projects, partner organizations gain an “injection of person power,” and a temporary addition of student knowledge and skills, which may mean they have greater capacity to run programs beyond their regular offerings. A recent study of the Faculty of Arts’ International Service Learning Program demonstrated a variety of benefits for one host community in rural Uganda, including enhanced literacy rates, greater capacity to host programs at the public library, and strengthened leadership skills in areas such as microfinance and nutrition (Grain et al., 2019).

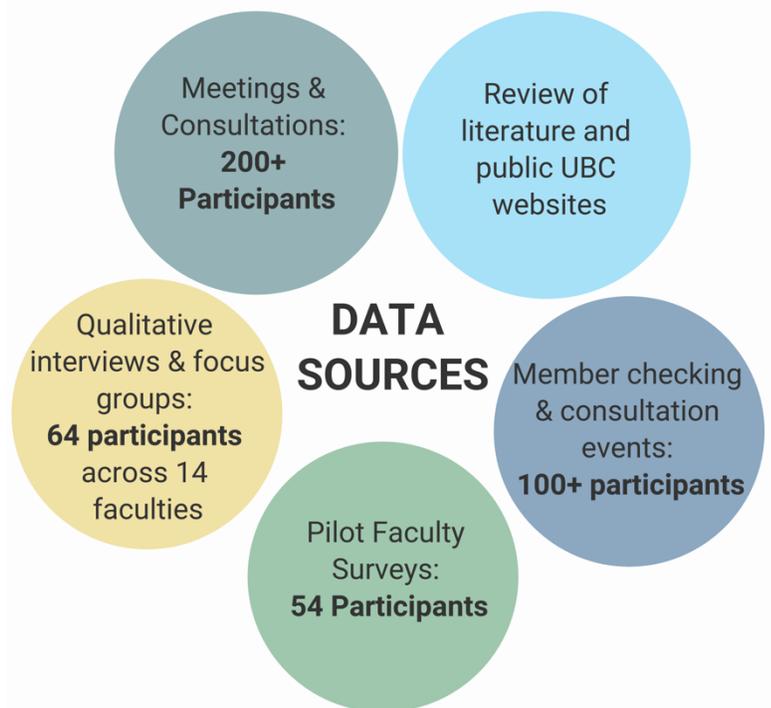
## Research Methods & Data Sources

In an effort to address the strategic plan’s goals related to experiential education, this project, through a combination of research, dialogue, consultation, and outreach, engaged with more than 200 UBC faculty members, staff, and students during the period of April 2018 – October 2019.

Figure 2 (right) shows the data sources that have been included in this project. Appendix 1 contains additional details on research methods and data sources.

Figure 3 (page 6) illustrates key points of research, consultation, and dissemination in the process of recommendation development.

Figure 2: Data Sources



*Data was derived from participants who identify as UBC faculty members, staff, and students. Further consultation is recommended with community and workplace partners, as well as undergraduate students.*

Figure 3: Project Stages and Process





## Findings

### 1. Existing Practices and Understandings

Experiential education is interpreted, defined, and carried out in diverse ways across disciplines, faculties, and contexts at UBCV<sup>4</sup>. Table 1 clusters the types of experiential education in practice<sup>5</sup>. The clusters or categories of experiential education are not mutually exclusive. Rather, they offer a way of organizing pedagogies and strategies around common characteristics, contexts, and central outcomes and goals. More often than not, a program or course has characteristics from multiple categories but is predominantly situated in one category. UBCV has myriad courses, programs, and opportunities in all seven categories.

**TABLE 1: EXISTING PRACTICES AT UBCV: CATEGORIES OF EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION**

Type of EE	Examples of Practice	Characteristics
WORK INTEGRATED	Internship, apprenticeship, co-operative education, Work Learn, entrepreneurship, clinical placement	Intentional integration of learning in a workplace or practice setting; Centrality of partnership with workplace/professional placement; focus on skill development in preparation for labour market.
COMMUNITY ENGAGED	Service-learning, community engaged experiential learning, community field experience	Intentional partnership with community organizations, individuals, or non-profits; Framing of community as co-educators and experts; programs/projects benefit community as well as student.
RESEARCH BASED	Undergraduate research, applied study, community based participatory research	Research and evaluation are central to learning experience in terms of planning, ethical considerations, methods, data collection, analysis, and/or dissemination; Learners build research skills, philosophical understandings, and/or sensibilities.
IMMERSION BASED	Study abroad, global seminars, Indigenous language study, exchange	Student learning experience is steeped in an immersive context that is (culturally, linguistically, or geographically) distinct from their typical university learning context; Can be local or international; usually long-term.
LAND- AND PLACE-BASED	Outdoor education, treaty education, adventure learning, fieldtrips	Considerations of land, location, and locality are of central importance to student learning; Learning context is often outdoors or in relation to the (lived, imagined, and/or political) conceptions of the 'natural world'.
ACTIVITY BASED	Lab, debate, role-play, simulation (e.g. Virtual Reality)	Student learning is premised on short-term, active teaching strategies; Can occur within a classroom, lab, or field setting.
STUDENT LED	Student design team, student-directed seminar, student entrepreneurship, student clubs, student government	Student learning is led by students who are positioned as peers, leaders, and mentors; The Institution supports and holds space for student learning but does not determine its direction or outcomes.

<sup>4</sup> UBC Okanagan (UBCO) has collaboratively developed the following operational understanding of experiential learning for their own institutional context: "Experiential learning opportunities have a practical or applied experience at their core, are intentionally linked to a learner's academic degree program, personal development and/or career goals, and integrate reflection. Reflection associated with EL prompts learners to analyze and think critically about their experiences, and express how the experiences help them make sense of their past or create a path for their future."

<sup>5</sup> For a visual diagram of the clusters of experiential education at UBCV, visit <https://blogs.ubc.ca/experiential/mapping-el/>



## 2. Challenges and Support Needs

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This project revealed a broad and significant desire for improvements to the support for experiential education at UBCV. Six themes emerged as areas of focus. These themes are closely intertwined and were confirmed through member checks, consultations, and dialogue events that engaged the UBC community. Some of the specific challenges outlined below align with those identified in a 2012 UBC report<sup>6</sup> on Enriched Educational Experiences (E3s), which bear similar characteristics to what we, today, term experiential education.

### 2.1 Lack of an Institutional Vision and Shared Understanding of EE at UBCV

EE is understood and practiced in diverse ways on campus. The strategic plan references a variety of terms in relation to experiential education (as noted on page 1), and there are multiple units on campus that hold different forms of EE as their primary focus. Nevertheless, there is a hunger for a clear vision and shared understanding of our institutional goal for EE and how we will enable and support people to reach that goal. In the absence of a shared goal and understanding, it can be difficult to address institution-level challenges like the undervaluing of EE labour and the inequitable distribution of resources<sup>7</sup>.

The data from this project indicated little agreement among participants about what a UBCV understanding of EE is or should be – a challenge that is echoed by many leading scholars in the field (Johnston & Sator, 2017; Moon, 2004; Roberts, 2012). Faculty and staff understandings of experiential education are imbued with tension: Despite (and due to) the array of conceptualizations of the term, there is a broad desire for institutional common language, but that language needs to be adaptable and nuanced enough to account for a diversity of approaches and disciplinary cultures.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, the process by which it is established needs to be collaborative and inclusive of diverse ways of knowing and being.

### 2.2 Struggles with Communication & Connection

Given the breadth of EE and the specialization of various supports and faculties, data showed dissatisfaction with the disconnected nature of UBCV's EE support and resources. Participants cited a lack of clarity around how or where stakeholders (e.g. students, faculty, staff, external partners) can go to learn about experiential education offerings and resources. People looking for resources often get "shuffled around". Although valuable information and resources are housed in a variety of offices, there is no landing place, cross-unit staff contact, or gateway for experiential education more broadly. Participants also expressed the need for semi-regular and/or annual opportunities and events to connect/share resources with a community of EE peers.

### 2.3 Evaluation & Assessment of EE

If UBCV has not agreed on a vision, goal, and shared language for EE, it can be difficult to assess its impact across campus. Several study participants cited concerns over the perception that the institution values "quantity over quality." Moreover, the long-term impacts of EE are unlikely to be captured in short-term assessments. Faculty participants also cited the

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<sup>6</sup> Authors Sens and Fryer (2012) outlined the following key challenges to E3s at UBC: E3s are time-intensive; E3 funding is inadequate, limited-term, and unsustainable; E3 teaching requires skills that educators may not have; Students are under increased pressure to meet institutional expectations.

<sup>7</sup> In Ontario, the Higher Education Quality Council (HEQCO) has suggested that the goal of Work Integrated Learning and EE is to foster job-related skills and competencies and recommended provincial funding be allotted to programs which meet this definition. Very recently in BC, the province used the CEWIL definition to allocate provincial funding for co-op and work integrated learning projects.

<sup>8</sup> For further discussion see Grain (2019) <https://blogs.ubc.ca/experiential/resistance-reconceptualization/>

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dangers of involving EE in their teaching practices when students may give less favourable teaching evaluations due to the discomfort and messiness that is intrinsic to EE.

#### **2.4 Inequity & Exclusion**

Many valued forms of experiential education at UBC are accessible only to a privileged few. Data in this study supports what other studies have shown, which is that some forms of experiential education can exclude students based on their socioeconomic status, nationality, visa status, race, religion, physical ability, or other identity markers. On the staff and faculty side, participants reported that the labour of experiential education is often gendered, meaning that women – and often racialized and Indigenous scholars – tend to take on the additional workload of EE. This has implications for the advancement of women and marginalized scholars in the academy. Community and workplace partners who serve as educators for UBCV students are often excluded from decision making processes (e.g. evaluations, recommendation development, funding adjudication committees). Finally, data suggests that some departments and faculties offer significant resources for experiential education, while others offer little or none.

#### **2.5 Undervaluing of EE Labour & Associated Reward Structures**

Data from this study (and the aforementioned 2012 E3 report) clearly articulate that experiential education takes more time than lecture-based pedagogies, for faculty, students, and community/workplace partners. For example, the high levels of time and effort that faculty members spend on EE can detract from their ability to achieve promotion and tenure because the labour of EE is not currently recognized in UBCV policies and practices on tenure and promotion. Furthermore, students involved in this project voiced the perception that their additional labour in EE courses and programs rarely gets credited on an official transcript. Finally, participants who work directly with community and workplace partners expressed concerns that UBCV is exploitative to community and workplace partners when their labour and expertise are not adequately rewarded, recognized, and/or materially compensated.

#### **2.6 Teaching and Learning Challenges**

Not all faculty feel prepared to teach and/or evaluate EE-related skills such as professional communication, teamwork, navigating ambiguity, and social justice in contexts where these skills are not part of the traditional disciplinary course content. Participants also expressed concerns that students are not adequately prepared for engaging ethically with community – a problem which can have consequences for host organizations, and UBCV's reputation. Finally, participants in this study regularly expressed the view that strong EE work is happening across UBCV and the solution is *not* to mandate EE or force students to do it, but rather to a) support the work of those who do it well/ethically/effectively and b) dismantle barriers for those who are currently disadvantaged or excluded due to institutional restrictions.

## **Recommendations**

The following are representative recommendations that have emerged from the research and consultation process aimed at addressing the challenges and needs identified above. Figure 4 (page 9) presents a high-level overview of the recommendations as they flow from one another. Detailed recommendations follow.

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Figure 4: High Level Recommendations



**Recommended  
Flow of Action**

# Experiential Education at UBCV

*This visual is premised on research data and consultations from 200+ participants and stakeholders at UBC in 2018/19. For detailed recommendations, please see the full report.*





## Detailed Recommendations

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### **Challenge: Lack of an Institutional Vision and Shared Understanding of EE at UBCV**

#### **Recommended Response: Build and lead a shared vision for EE through collaborative and committed high level leadership.**

- Push beyond the normative understanding of EE and collaboratively develop a UBCV-specific conceptualization and common language for EE that integrates multiple ways of knowing and being. This common language needs to be specific enough that it resonates with the drivers of EE at UBCV, but inclusive, accessible, and adaptive enough that it accounts for unique and innovative forms of EE as well as pedagogies that change over time. UBCV as a leading, international institution, and one that is on unceded Musqueam land, is in a unique position to build an explicitly inclusive vision and framework for EE. Such a framing would, for example, thoughtfully integrate Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action throughout its development. Moreover, an intentionally inclusive UBCV vision for experiential education would entail ongoing collaboration with community partners (locally and internationally) and Indigenous peoples.
- A starting point for the development of a common language may be to *collaboratively* develop and agree on a set of common principles for EE. One example of a set of principles for EE can be found through the *Association for Experiential Education*.<sup>9</sup> Consider also providing UBC-specific, practitioner-led definitions (or clear descriptions.)
- Multiple participants called for a VP-level leader to visibly champion EE and hold space, time and, resources for this difficult work.

### **Challenge: Struggles with Communication & Connection**

#### **Recommended Response: Increase the visibility, knowledge, relationships, and pathways pertaining to EE**

- Create an online hub for EE that guides stakeholders to existing resources, units, programs, and opportunities.
- Invest in EE liaison roles that work across units and faculties to address gaps in resource- and knowledge-sharing.
- Support ongoing events where people are invited to share their stories, distribute resources, and showcase their work; Include students, staff, faculty, and community/workplace partners (e.g. annual conference, monthly cluster-based meetings.)
- Expose students to the value, diversity, and opportunities of EE early (in first year).
- Educate department heads and associate deans about EE. (e.g. offer ADs a chance to go on an EE opportunity)

### **Challenge: Evaluation & Assessment**

#### **Recommended Response: Establish a collaborative and systematic approach to counting and reporting EE**

- Provide a framework and vision for what will be measured and why. Collaboratively identify desired outcomes and characteristics. Allow multiple ways of achieving them.
- Take measures to develop meaningful evaluation and assessment procedures that account for the labour, time, and impact of an entire spectrum of experiential education practices.
- Engage community/workplace partners in evaluation and training, where desired.
- Provide support for data collection and analysis.
- Assess impact on students and community/workplace partners.
- Engage in longitudinal research on the impact of EE on learners.

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<sup>9</sup> See <https://blogs.ubc.ca/experiential/mapping-el/> For a UBC adaptation of the *Association for Experiential Education's* 12 Principles of Practice.

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## Challenge: Inequity and Exclusion

### Recommended Response: Eliminate systemic barriers that inhibit equitable engagement

- For students:
  - Build a needs-based fund that is designed to decrease financial barriers to EE participation.
- For faculty/staff:
  - Collect data about equity in EE provision. Anecdotally, in some departments, those who include EE are women or are primarily untenured faculty. More data is needed to understand if EE labour equitably distributed and if not, why not.
- For community partners:
  - Invite more community and workplace partners to be involved in EE decision making processes (e.g. review boards for funding applications; recommendation development)
  - Establish a flexible funding pool that allows UBCV faculty/staff to fairly compensate community partners for their labour and expertise (e.g. through food, transport costs, and direct compensation.)
- Institutionally:
  - Consider how financial resources could address inequities in EE.

## Challenge: Undervaluing of EE Labour & Associated Reward Structures

### Recommended Response: Build systems that reward, rather than punish, the labour of EE

- For faculty:
  - Formalize the consideration of EE labour (e.g. relationship building, administration, coordination, interpersonal mentorship) in T&P and other promotional processes.
  - Reward and incentivize EE through recognition and awards.
  - Educate faculty members on how they can get EE work recognized in T&P.
  - Provide TA support to offset additional work of EE courses (base TA support on the amount of work a course takes and not simply on the number of students who take it.)
  - Provide teaching release/paid time/honorarium/stipend for faculty to work on relationships, logistics, and other non-teaching aspects of EE labour (e.g. School of Economics has determined that community based experiential courses involve 1/3 extra time and therefore faculty members receive 1/3 additional compensation.)
- Hire full-time staff members within faculties/departments or in central units who specialize in EE, relationship building and sustainment, admin, etc. who can support faculty and be a sustained point of contact/resource as course instructors change.
- For Students:
  - Ensure EE work is recognized and the effort and learning are appropriately credited.
- For Faculties / departments:
  - Remove obstacles for departments and faculties that would like to compensate and encourage EE (e.g. adjust the policy that sessional faculty cannot get a pay raise unless they change their position.)

## Challenge: Teaching and Learning Difficulties

### Recommended response: Increase resources for and support of experiential pedagogies

- Create online learning modules that teach EE-related skills that faculty could add to their courses.
  - Create toolkits for faculty addressing best practices in teaching EE-related skills across different disciplinary contexts.
  - Develop rubrics to support the evaluation of EE-skill development (e.g. teamwork, critical reflection).
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- Develop toolkits for faculty who are or will be developing experiential education opportunities. Example topics include: course development guides, evaluation rubrics, establishing and developing partnerships, budget templates.
- Develop a university-wide required course/tutorial/module that students must complete if they will be engaging in experiential education courses or programs that teaches EE-related skills such as ethics of community engagement, professional communication, teamwork, and working within ambiguity.

## Additional Challenges - Administrative

### Recommended responses: Reduce administrative barriers

- Finance: Provide faculty and finance staff with training on how to deal with EE-specific expenditures. For example, guidance on:
  - Drafting budgets for international or field programs.
  - Paying honoraria to community members (e.g. First Nations elders are not registered charities.)
  - Contingency fund planning.
  - Navigating international contexts where bribes are a cultural norm.
- Finance: Adjust expenditure guidelines to better enable EE.
  - Allow non-tenured faculty who are teaching EE courses to have UBCV credit cards so they don't have to incur field-based expenses on their personal cards.
  - Recognize the critical role of hospitality (snacks/food) in relationship building.
- Transportation: Transportation to distant sites can be a barrier to student participation. Provide easy ways for faculty to organize and book transportation for students to get from UBCV to off-campus sites.

## Acknowledgements & Contact Information

This project was carried out by Kari Grain and the report was authored by Kari Grain and Gillian Gerhard, supported by the Academic Excellence Fund, and overseen by a cross-unit advisory committee including Susan Grossman (CCEL), Kim Kiloh (CSI&C), and Jeff Miller (CTLT). Major contributors to the work of this project include Ryan Brown, Catherine Douglas, Robyn Leuty, Kyle Nelson, Shadi Mehrabi, Vinicius Pecanha, and Gaelle Simard-Duplain, along with the many faculty, staff, and students who gave generously of their expertise, experience, and ideas in surveys, focus groups, and workshops. Their contributions reflect a commitment to quality education, and most often, a deeply held belief in the power of learning through experiences - experiences that blur or altogether transcend the divisions between classroom and real world, university and community, inside and outside, self and other.

This report is not an exhaustive set of recommendations and research, but rather a themed summary document that points toward a series of actions that may begin to strengthen EE at UBC Vancouver. In many cases, specific recommendations will require pilots and smaller, directed research studies, which may provide further insights on the short- and long-term effects of systemic changes. Some components of the recommendations in this document have already been addressed through resource development, others are in progress, and others still require broader systemic transformation and high-level leadership. We anticipate sharing a summary of completed and in-progress actions late in 2020.

For more information about findings and recommendations contained in this report please contact Gillian Gerhard, [gillian.gerhard@ubc.ca](mailto:gillian.gerhard@ubc.ca), 604-822-9696.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Qualitative Research Study Methods and Analysis

In addition to a review of existing research in experiential education and analyses of publicly available reports and website information, this project involved a qualitative primary research study conducted between August and December, 2018.

The study included 18 semi-structured interviews with faculty members across 14 faculties and schools, seven focus groups with 46 staff members (many of whom are also graduate students and/or sessional faculty), and 54 complete surveys with faculty members heavily involved in experiential education. The survey component was part of a broader collaboration with other units who sought similar information for their own purposes.

Data from this study were analyzed for key themes in the areas of challenges and supports for experiential education at UBCV. In May 2019 a half-day *Spring Dialogue on Experiential Education* was held to share-back the findings and to member check the data with UBC faculty, staff, and students. The dialogue also included facilitated brainstorm sessions on specific challenge themes and the nascent construction of recommendations. Recommendations were further refined and specified through a series of twelve focus group conversations with faculty, staff and students in the summer and fall of 2019.

### Appendix 2: Undergraduate Experience Survey Experiential Education Impact Data 2019

#### Community Service Learning

\*Statistically significant

Employability Skills by Experiential Learning Participation in Community Service Learning among 4/5th year UBC Vancouver students

	Community Service Learning	Did not participate	
During my time at UBC, I've gained skills that help me apply my academic learning to a professional or work environment	<b>64%</b> (n= 366)	<b>56%</b> (n= 1,288)	*
Ability to apply theoretical learning to real-world problems	<b>62%</b> (n= 355)	<b>55%</b> (n= 1,257)	*
Ability to work in a team setting	<b>80%</b> (n= 362)	<b>68%</b> (n= 1,272)	*
Ability to act in a leadership role	<b>66%</b> (n= 362)	<b>52%</b> (n= 1,272)	*
Analytical and critical thinking skills	<b>82%</b> (n= 355)	<b>71%</b> (n= 1,255)	*
Understanding of social issues	<b>68%</b> (n= 355)	<b>58%</b> (n= 1,256)	*

% of 4/5th year UBC Vancouver students who selected one of the top 2 responses; Strongly agree or Agree, or Excellent or Very good.

6 pt agreement scale: Strongly Agree, Agree, Somewhat Agree, Somewhat Disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree. & 6 pt scale: Excellent, Very good, Good, Fair, Poor, Very poor.



Research-Intensive Experiences

\*Statistically significant

**Employability Skills by Experiential Learning Participation in Research-intensive experiences among 4/5th year UBC Vancouver students**

	Research-intensive experiences	Did not participate	
During my time at UBC, I've gained skills that help me apply my academic learning to a professional or work environment	<b>63%</b> (n= 603)	<b>55%</b> (n= 1,051)	*
UBC has prepared me for further study after graduation	<b>64%</b> (n= 597)	<b>49%</b> (n= 1,042)	*
Ability to be clear and effective when writing	<b>71%</b> (n= 592)	<b>61%</b> (n= 1,016)	*
Ability to locate, organize, and evaluate information from multiple sources	<b>79%</b> (n= 591)	<b>67%</b> (n= 1,016)	*
Analytical and critical thinking skills	<b>80%</b> (n= 591)	<b>70%</b> (n= 1,019)	*
Understanding of social issues	<b>64%</b> (n= 592)	<b>58%</b> (n= 1,019)	*

% of 4/5th year UBC Vancouver students who selected one of the top 2 responses; Strongly agree or Agree, or Excellent or Very good.

6 pt agreement scale: Strongly Agree, Agree, Somewhat Agree, Somewhat Disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree, Fair, Poor, Very poor.



UBC Work Learn Program

\*Statistically significant

**Employability Skills by Experiential Learning Participation in UBC Work Learn Program among 4/5th year UBC Vancouver students**

	UBC Work Learn Program	Did not participate	
During my time at UBC, I've gained skills that help me apply my academic learning to a professional or work environment	<b>63%</b> (n= 388)	<b>56%</b> (n= 1,266)	*
Ability to work in a team setting	<b>76%</b> (n= 388)	<b>69%</b> (n= 1,246)	*
Ability to act in a leadership role	<b>64%</b> (n= 388)	<b>52%</b> (n= 1,246)	*
Ability to locate, organize, and evaluate information from multiple sources	<b>76%</b> (n= 382)	<b>70%</b> (n= 1,225)	*
Ability to verbally express opinions or ideas clearly and concisely	<b>61%</b> (n= 383)	<b>55%</b> (n= 1,230)	*
Comfort working with people from other cultures or backgrounds from my own	<b>86%</b> (n= 386)	<b>80%</b> (n= 1,246)	*

% of 4/5th year UBC Vancouver students who selected one of the top 2 responses; Strongly agree or Agree, or Excellent or Very good.

6 pt agreement scale: Strongly Agree, Agree, Somewhat Agree, Somewhat Disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree. & 6 pt scale: Excellent, Very good, Good, Fair, Poor, Very poor.