



Experiential Learning (EL) at the University of Manitoba

Since the University's founding, in formal and informal learning spaces, experiential learning has served as an important pedagogical tool. It has not only provided opportunities for students to apply their learning in a range of diverse contexts, but to develop the knowledge, skills and dispositions critical to life, work and global citizenship. The University recognizes that experiential learning integrates principles drawn from Indigenous pedagogies, including respect, reciprocity and reflection, and that it is a form of learning that is inextricably linked to Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing (Battiste, 2002)¹. UM is committed to responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) Calls to Action² (CTA) and acknowledges that experiential learning can serve as a powerful vehicle for engaging students directly in this essential work (see cross-references within Table 1).

Definitions

Experiential Learning (EL) is a pedagogical strategy that advances learning, personal growth and competency development by engaging learners directly in the application of theoretical concepts in diverse contexts, and critical reflection on those experiences.

Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) is a model and process of experiential learning that intentionally integrates a student's academic studies within a workplace or practice setting. WIL experiences are a subset of EL that include an engaged partnership of at least an academic institution, a host organization, and a student³.

Critical Reflection is an integral component of experiential learning that intentionally engages learners, prior to and throughout their learning experience, in thinking critically about new knowledge and skill development outcomes, and both the potential and ultimate impact their experience had on their worldviews, feelings, behaviour, and ways of being. Reflection offers opportunities to gain new perspectives and understandings; to increase self-efficacy; to clarify assumptions, and develop a rationale

¹ Battiste, M. (2002). Indigenous Knowledge and Pedagogy in First Nations Education: A Literature Review with Recommendations. Prepared for the National Working Group on Education and the Minister of Indian Affairs. Ottawa: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC). Retrieved from https://www.afn.ca/uploads/files/education/24_2002_oct_marie_battiste_indigenousknowledgeandpedagogy_lit_review_for_min_working_group.pdf

² Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, United Nations, National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation. (2015). Truth & Reconciliation: Calls to Action. Retrieved from https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/british-columbians-our-governments/indigenous-people/aboriginal-peoples-documents/calls_to_action_english2.pdf

³ Adapted from the definition developed by Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning Canada – CEWIL. See: <https://www.cewilcanada.ca/CEWIL/About%20Us/Work-Integrated-Learning/CEWIL/About-Us/Work-Integrated-Learning.aspx?hkey=ed772be2-00d0-46cd-a5b8-873000a18b41>

for actions and approaches; to take informed action; and to focus on continuous growth and improvement.

Criteria

At the University of Manitoba, EL occurs within the curriculum and in co-curricular settings. **Institutionally recognized** EL must meet each of the following six criteria:

1. The learning experience is grounded in an **intentional** experiential learning approach that is **respectful** and **inclusive** of diverse worldviews and approaches to teaching and learning;
2. Institutionally recognized learning and/or competency development outcomes are embedded in the course curriculum or co-curricular program;
3. The experience takes place in a **formal learning space, workplace, practice, campus, digital, community or land-based setting**, with structured supervision;
4. Students engage in experiences that are **relevant** to their intellectual, personal and professional growth, promote **meaningful** relationships with others and the natural world, and include opportunities for self-directed learning, role-modelling, co-creation and transfer of knowledge;
5. The experience is either integrated within a **credit/credential-bearing** course or academic program, or formally recognized by the Institution as an official **co-curricular** EL offering; and
6. Students have opportunities to process what they have learned by engaging in **critical reflection**, and to demonstrate reflective practice.

Types of Experiential Learning

The 12 types of experiential learning identified in the table below are integrated within the curriculum, intentionally designed to address specific outcomes in co-curricular settings and/or situated within a workplace. They provide opportunities for students to respond directly to the TRC's Calls to Action, and reflect our commitment to the education of the whole student, the diversity of learning experiences at UM, and the dynamic, seamless nature of the experiential learning landscape.

Table 1

Experiential Learning Types	Curricular	Co-Curricular	Work-Integrated	Opportunity for TRC CTA impact
Applied Research	●	●	●	#53 & 53iii
Creative Works	●	●	●	#75-83
Community Engaged Learning (CEL)	●	●	●	#87 & #91
Campus Integrated Learning (CIL)		●		#63 & #62ii
Co-operative Education	●		●	#69i

Entrepreneurship	●	●	●	#91i, 92ii, 92iii
Industry Project	●	●	●	#93
Internship	●		●	#66
Laboratories and Studios	●			#83
Program-Based Experience	●		●	#84, ii, iii
Project-Based	●	●		#15
Work Experience	●	●	●	#57

EL Types Defined

Table 2

Applied Research	Systematic investigation and original research, including research that utilizes Indigenous methodologies, conducted by a student under faculty guidance and/or co-created through collaboration with a community partner and faculty researcher.
Community Engaged Learning (CEL)	Learning opportunities developed through collaborative and reciprocal partnerships between community, faculty/staff and students. The site of learning can be the classroom, the community or a land-based setting and the spectrum of engagement can vary from knowledge exchange and consultation to involvement, collaboration, and co-creation with community partners.
Campus Integrated Learning (CIL)	Intentionally designed and institutionally recognized experiences on campus with a strong focus on personal growth and competency development with clearly defined learning outcomes and regular coaching, mentorship and/or supervision. For example, Elder or ceremonial helpers, elected and appointed governance and student leadership roles, orientation leaders, peer helpers, student participation in Sweatlodges and other ceremonies.
Co-operative Education	A Senate-approved academic program that alternates academic study with paid, full-time, supervised work experience. It is linked to the student’s area of study in appropriate fields of business, industry, government, social services, academic research and the professions in accordance with minimum criteria.
Creative Works	Intensive creative effort that results in the production of fine artwork, dance, writing, filmmaking, musical compositions and other forms of creative expression. Examples include oral tradition and storytelling, design, self-organized paid performances, non-course-related rehearsals and music practices.
Entrepreneurship	Engagement in the early-stage development of business start-ups and/or the advancement of ideas that address real-world challenges, while leveraging resources, space, mentorship and/or funding to achieve the desired outcomes.

Industry Project	Students, individually or in teams apply discipline-specific knowledge to address an organizational challenge, explore a new idea, or start a new venture. Examples include business clinics, UMIDEA, and capstone projects.
Internship	Supervised, discipline-specific work experiences where learning is formally assessed and academic credit granted. Unlike Co-op, students do not alternate work experiences with academic terms.
Laboratories and Studios	A distinct component of a course that includes the self-directed application of course concepts in a controlled setting.
Program-Based Experience	Unpaid program- and field-based activities that engage students in exploring and practicing discipline-specific concepts and competencies in a purposeful way for academic credit or recognition. Examples include fieldwork, clinical and professional practice, dental clinics, field placements, law externships, practica, social action participation, field trips, and professional presentations.
Project-Based	Intentionally designed opportunities for students to engage in contextual experiences that require the application of disciplinary knowledge and critical analysis to demonstrate learning or to address a problem or unmet need. Examples include case studies, hackathons, simulations, incubators, problem-solving for industry/community, game-based learning, clients, moot court.
Work Experience	Paid work in an on-campus or off-campus setting that is designed to promote the development of clearly defined competencies, is supervised, is approved by the Institution, and engages students in concrete opportunities to reflect on their learning (e.g., work study, graduate and undergraduate research awards, Teaching Assistants, Mini U Leaders, Residence Advisors, tutors).