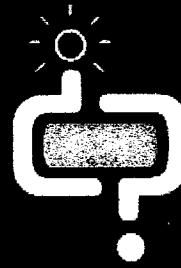


DISCERNINGMINDS

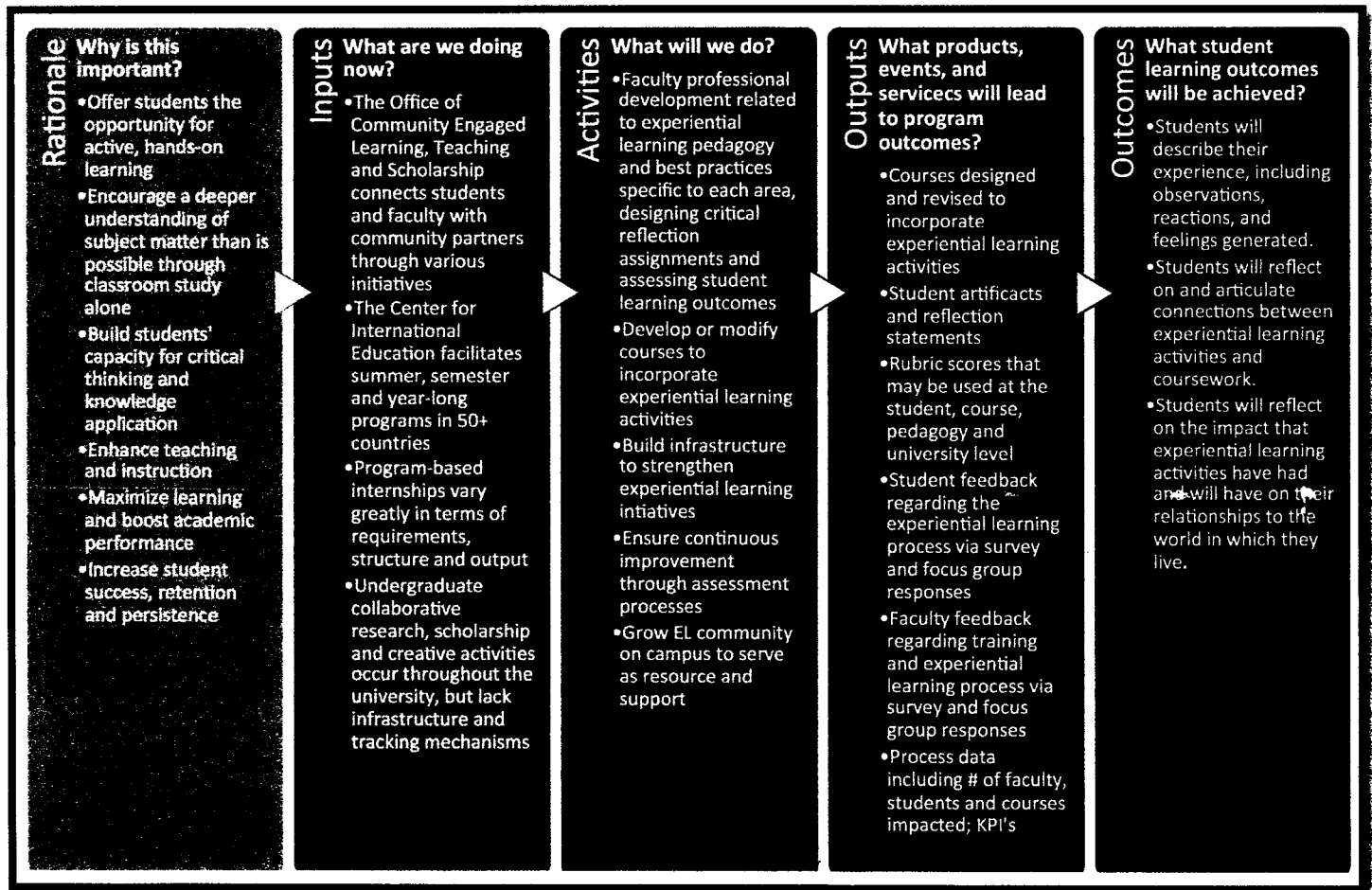
EXPERIENCE. REFLECT. TRANSFORM.



Abstract

The Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), *Discerning Minds: Experience. Reflect. Transform.*, is designed to improve student learning experiences within four high impact experiential learning activities to which large numbers of Loyola students have access: Collaborative Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities (CRSCA); Internships; Service Learning; and Study Abroad. *Discerning Minds: Experience. Reflect. Transform.*, will address Student Learning Outcomes designed to enhance students' abilities to connect course material to related experiences via structured, critical reflection. In other words: students will engage in experiential learning, reflect on what they've done, and integrate those reflections into their plans for the future. The topic of the QEP is connected to the Jesuit tradition of discernment, which is central to the pedagogical mission of Loyola. In the Jesuit tradition, to "discern" mean to apply wisdom of our intuition to discover what is essential and true. Implementation initiatives focus on faculty development related to experiential learning and reflection, best practices specific to each of the four pedagogies, curriculum revisions, evaluation of assessment data, identifying and implementing modifications needed, providing incentives for all stakeholders, as well as developing infrastructure and resources to ensure sustainability.

Logic Model



Student Learning Outcomes

1. **Experience.** Students will describe their experience, including observations, reactions, and feelings generated.
 - Examples include, but are not limited to: critiquing the assumptions and attitudes they and others bring to the experiential learning component; comparing and contrasting their expected learning with their actual learning derived from experiential learning activities.
2. **Reflect.** Students will reflect on and articulate connections between experiential learning activities and coursework.
 - Examples include, but are not limited to: connecting/integrating classroom theories with real-world experiences, critically examining academic knowledge in light of evidence and experience, and/or critically reflecting on the relationship between experiential learning and their academic experience.
3. **Transform.** Students will reflect on the impact that experiential learning activities have had and will have on their relationships to the world in which they live.
 - Examples include, but are not limited to: applying theories and ideas studied and/or skills developed at the university in new and different contexts; examining how this experience has broadened their understanding of the discipline and the world of themselves as learners; synthesizing the meaning of the experience with their current and future learning; integrating experience as a means to shape and frame vocational and career direction and life goals.

Operational Definitions

To ensure service learning, collaborative research, internship, and study abroad activities had the opportunity to follow the best practice principals outlined by the National Association of Experiential Education, each workgroup was asked to provide statements related to the role of experiential learning in their respective areas. These statements can ensure faculty understand the possibilities brought forth by experiential learning activities and form the beginnings of developing and/or enhancing specific coursework within each area. The results of this process are below.

Service Learning

- When a student engages with service learning as experiential learning, structured activities can include direct service placements or class projects in partnership with preapproved partner agencies.
- Intentional reflections on service learning will ask students to: (a) apply course concepts to real world situations or describe the relevance of their course of study to a social issue or problem; (b) explore or assess the root causes of a social problem; and/or (c) articulate similarities and differences between service, social change and social justice, and track their evolving understanding of these differences and similarities.
- In turn, these reflections should empower students to imagine a future where they embrace their social and moral agency and can identify concrete ways to contribute as active, informed citizens to the creation of a more just world.

Study Abroad

- When a student engages in study abroad as experiential learning, structured activities are those which actively engage the student directly in the host country/language and can include but are not limited to internships, volunteer activities, coursework that uses the country as a lab/resource, independent or collaborative research projects, and living with a host family or other host nationals.
- Intentional reflections on study abroad will allow students to understand that their culture is one of many diverse cultures and that alternate perceptions and behavior may be based in cultural differences; to interpret issues and situations from more than one cultural perspective; and to see how historical and current forces shape world systems.
- In turn, these reflections should empower students to imagine a future where they are actively engaged world citizens who can use diverse cultural frames of reference, and alternate perspectives to think critically and to work toward more just relationships within and between societies.

Internship

- When a student engages in an internship as experiential learning, structured activities should include supervised/mentored work experiences that provide substantial opportunities to apply academic course concepts to real-world settings. The internship will provide meaningful work assignments that allow students to gain greater understanding and development of their professional/vocational paths.
- Intentional reflections on the internship will ask students to do all or some of the

following: demonstrate their ability to tie academic learning to the work experience, present a body of work created as a result of the experience, and demonstrate how the experience has prepared them for future careers/vocations.

- In turn, these reflections should empower students to imagine a future where they are actively engaged world citizens who positively affect the communities around them.

Collaborative Research

- When a student engages in collaborative research as experiential learning, they first learn that, although we often tend to think of “collaborative research” as (a) something taking place in a lab, and (b) an independent project such as a thesis over which the student has primary ownership, both of these assumptions give short shrift to the broad range of experiential learning opportunities that fall under this umbrella.
- The term “collaborative research” should be thought of as research, scholarship and creative activities that reach beyond a capstone/thesis type of project to things that can be done either (a) independently by a class as a whole or small groups within a class (whether completely original or “discovery-based” learning), or (b) by individual students or small groups of students working with a faculty member and developing increasing competence and ownership of the outcome or product. In either case, structured activities can include collecting and analyzing data, texts or other materials in a field, laboratory, archive or lab setting, and drawing conclusions therefrom, independently, or in a small group or classroom setting. Students may also engage in the creation of artistic works (visual, musical or other genres), as author’s collaborators, interpreters and performers; dissemination is also a part of this work.
- Intentional reflections on collaborative research will allow students to understand how these activities might have helped them to develop their critical and creative thinking skills, collaborate with others, apply knowledge learned in class or through reading, research, etc. in a more broader context, as well as to explore future vocational paths. It can also help them to develop a greater sense of personal agency and of how they, as individuals and collaboratively, can help to heal the world by being with and for others.
- In turn, these reflections should empower students to imagine a future where they are productive members of society, contributing to their communities writ large and small.

Types of Reflection

Each instructor may develop and/or identify an appropriate assignment to evaluate the identified student learning outcomes. Following are examples:

- Paper
- Presentation
- Portfolio
- Performance
- Artwork
- Journal (freewrite, structured, or team)
- Focus group
- Interview
- Discussion

Implementation

The implementation of *Discerning Minds* is purposely designed for a step-wise rollout of course modifications across the core curriculum as well as upper level coursework associated with specific degree requirements.

Spring 2016: Using identified courses, workgroup members will invite selected faculty to participate in faculty academy.

Fall 2016: Selected faculty members will participate in a 3-4 day faculty academy providing training on best practices within experiential learning, reflection and developing course appropriate reflection experiences, training on using adopted assessment rubrics, and end of the semester evaluation of course revisions.

Spring 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020: Request for proposals to participate in faculty academies will be sent out by the leadership team

Fall 2017, 2018, 2019, 2010: Selected faculty members will participate in faculty academy on experiential learning, reflection, and developing reflection assignments.

Additional Questions

Visit the QEP website at: www.loyno.edu/qep

Contact a member of the leadership team:

Joy Allen, Faculty Director: joyallen@loyno.edu
Kathy Barnett, Internships: kbarnett@loyno.edu
Leslie Culver, Assessment: lmculver@loyno.edu
Debbie Danna, Study Abroad: danna@loyno.edu
Erin Dupuis, Faculty Senate: edupuis@loyno.edu
Jennifer Jeanfreau, Service Learning: jnjeanfr@loyno.edu
Brad Petitfils, Office of the Provost: bpetit@loyno.edu
Naomi Yavneh, CRCA: yavneh@loyno.edu

Workgroup Membership

Service Learning

Ms. Jennifer Jeanfreau, Chair

Dr. Liv Newman

Dr. Laura Hope

Prof. Valerie Andrews

Dr. Jean Meyer

Dr. Eileen Doll

Dr. Erin Dupuis

Liza Drennon

Interim Director, Community Engaged Learning,
Teaching and Scholarship

Instructor of Sociology

Associate Professor of Theatre Arts

Assistant Professor of Communications

Visiting Assistant Professor of Accounting

Chair, Language and Cultures

Chair, Psychological Sciences

Student Representative

Internship

Dr. Kathy Barnett, Chair

Dr. Cathy Rogers

Ms. Laura Betty

Ms. Tamara Baker

Ms. Kate Duncan

Internship Coordinator, Assistant Professor of
Management

Professor of Mass Communications

Student Service Coordinator, Mass Communications

Director, Career Development Center

CMFA Career Coach and Internship Coordinator

Study Abroad

Ms. Debbie Danna, Chair

Dr. Sanford Hinderlie

Dr. Uriel Quesada

Prof. Robert Bell

Dr. Laura Murphy

Dr. Terri Bednarz

Dr. Laura Hope

Director, Center for International Education

Professor of Music

Associate Dean, College of Humanities and Natural
Sciences

Director, Learning Resources and Writing Across the
Curriculum

Assistant Professor of English

Chair, Department of Religious Studies

Associate Professor of Theatre Arts

Collaborative Research

Dr. Naomi Yavneh, Chair

Dr. Maria Calzada

Dr. Rosalie Anderson

Dr. Armin Kargol

Dr. Mark Fernandez

Dr. Carol Ann MacGregor

Prof. Bill Kitchens

Dr. Jeff Albert

Dr. Lydia Voigt

Michael Pashkeirtch

Francesca Vaccaro

Director, University Honors Program

Dean, College of Humanities and Natural Sciences

Associate Professor of Biological Sciences

Distinguished Professor in Experimental Physics

Distinguished Professor of History

Assistant Professor of Sociology

Chair, Department of Art

Assistant Professor of Music Industry Technology

Distinguished Professor of Sociology

Student Representative

Student Representative