Module 5: Experiential Learning

**Interactive Online and
Virtual Teaching Environments**

Department of Educational and Human Sciences
College of Education and Human Performance

Objectives

You will be able to:

1. Discuss experiential learning strategies.
2. Identify theoretical foundations of experiential learning.
3. Discuss methods for incorporating experiential learning in an online course.

This is Important Because...

According to Kolb & Kolb (2005), "Learning is a holistic process of adaptation to the world. Not just the result of cognition, learning involves the integrated functioning of the total person— thinking, feeling, perceiving, and behaving" (p.194).

As educators and instructional designers, one of our main goals is to help facilitate learning that goes beyond the classroom. Once the learners have left the online course, they should be able to apply the concepts they learned in authentic settings and real-world environments. Experiential learning requires learners to think critically, assess feelings and perceptions, and modify behaviors as they would in authentic settings. By incorporating experiential learning activities in an online course, educators provide students with the opportunity to practice these important skills before they leave the confines of the learning management system. Experiential learning includes various types of learning activities that occur in real-world contexts, thus providing opportunities for learners to transfer knowledge from the learning context to the performance context.

Experiential Learning Strategies

A common usage of this theory defines it as learning from life experiences. Experiential learning is often contrasted with lecture and classroom learning, but that does not preclude us from using experiential learning in the physical classroom or online setting. It is often described as learning in which the learner is directly in touch with the realities being studied in contrast to abstract concepts. Emphasis is placed on direct sensory experience as the primary source of learning. Many institutions offer experiential learning in the form of internships, service learning, problem-based learning, and/or team learning.

Review the following websites for additional examples of experiential learning strategies:

UCF Experiential Learning Division of Teaching and Learning (https://explearning.ucf.edu/) - UCF offers students multiple opportunities to participate in experiential learning.

Types of Experiential Learning (http://experiencelearning.utk.edu/types/) - The University of Tennessee Knoxville summarizes common experiential learning strategies.

Example of Of Experiential Learning (http://www.teachthought.com/learning/example-experiential-learning/) - Educator Grant Wiggins shares his reflections on an experiential learning project in K-12 education on the TeachThought website.

Students Tackle Real-World Business Challenges (http://www.kellogg.northwestern.edu/news_articles/2017/06302017-experiential-learning-data-analytics.aspx) - The Kellogg School at Northwestern University simulates corporate interactions to provide experiential learning for business students.

7 Things You Should Know About MakerSpaces (https://net.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/eli7095.pdf) - Educause discusses the current and future state of Makerspaces, which are collaborative environments that promote experiential learning.

Project Explores How Virtual Reality Can Help Students Learn (http://www.geog.psu.edu/news/project-explores-how-virtual-reality-can-help-students-learn) - Read about Penn State's push to use virtual reality to promote experiential learning.
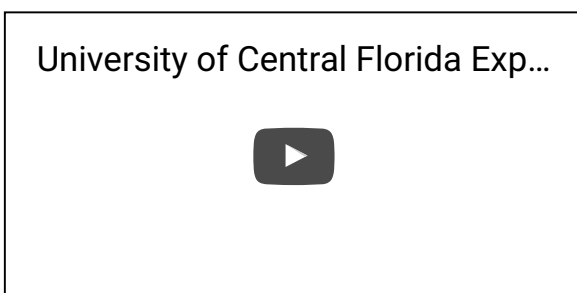
Watch student reactions to an experiential learning project from Wilfrid Laurier University.

Experiential learning: Designing ...
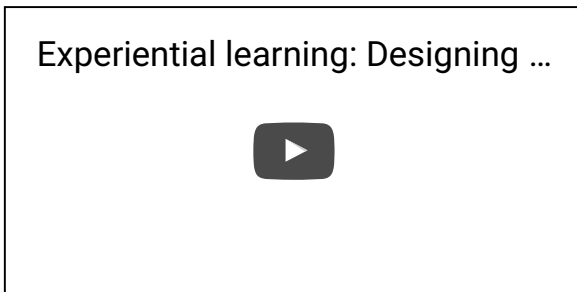
Watch to learn about a University of Cincinnati student's co-op experiential learning experience.

UC ProPEL - Chelsie's Story of E...

Watch this video from UCF's Office of Experiential Learning.

University of Central Florida Exp...

Theoretical Foundations of Experiential Learning - Kolb and Other Theorists
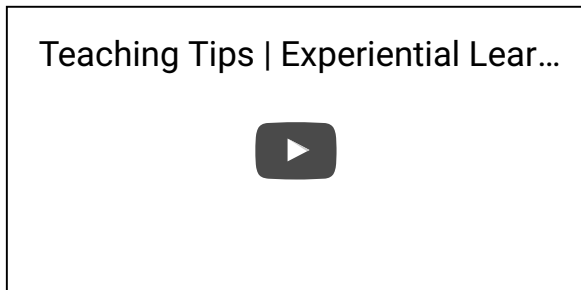
In Module 4, you learned about several learning theories and how they are used to inform instructional design choices. One of the significant theoretical frameworks we will review in this module is Kolb's ideas on experiential learning. Kolb believed it was impossible to separate education from work or personal development, making his ideas about experiential learning an ideal framework for lifelong learning and particularly relevant to adult education. As you review the following resources on Kolb's theoretical framework and module of experiential learning, you may notice his ideas reflect theories of learning styles discussed in the previous module.

David Kolb   **(http://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/gradschool/training/eresources/teaching/theories/kolb)**

Kolb's Learning Cycles and Experiential Learning   **(http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/styles/kolb.html)**

Kolb - Leanring Styles   **(https://www.simplypsychology.org/learning-kolb.html)**

Watch the video to see how Kolb's cycle can be applied.

Teaching Tips | Experiential Lear…

According to Kolb and Kolb (2005), "Experiential learning theory draws on the work of prominent 20th century scholars who gave experience a central role in their theories of human learning and development" (p.194). Important contributors include Bruner, Lewin, Piaget, and Dewey.

- Experiential learning theory ties to Bruner's constructivist ideas on **cognitive development theory (http://www.simplypsychology.org/bruner.html)** .
- **Kurt Lewin**   **(http://infed.org/mobi/kurt-lewin-groups-experiential-learning-and-action-research/)** tied experiential learning to organizational behavior, which gave rise to the concept of action research and planned change interventions in small groups that are a part of large organizations. Lewin later focused on action research in which learning, methods, change, and growth all seen to be facilitated best by an integrated process that begins with here-and-now experience followed by collections of data and observations.
- Lewin drew on **Piaget's   (http://www.instructionaldesign.org/theories/genetic-epistemology.html)** ideas about the interaction between the learner and the learning environment, which you may remember from Module 4.
- In comparison with other theories, Lewin shared some ideas with **Dewey   (http://www.thepositiveencourager.global/john-deweys-approach-to-doing-positive-work/)** , but Dewey added the concept of feedback and iterative learning, which brings up to the importance of reflective practice. Reflection is the primary source of the transformation that leads to learning and development. In experiential learning, reflection is not the sole determinant, but one facet of a holistic process of learning that includes experiencing, reflecting, thinking, and acting.

Experiential Learning in Online Settings

As you've learned, experiential learning stresses the importance of sensory experience, so its application in the online setting may not be immediately clear; however, there are numerous ways to incorporate Experiential Learning to encourage hands-on learning experiences in the online classroom. The strategy selected will depend upon the instructional goals. As experiential learning is especially relevant to late bloomers and career changers, who demand relevance and application to the real world, and who also happen to be consumers of online education, experiential learning plays a key role in that setting.

Review the following resources to learn about various benefits, issues, and strategies surrounding the use of experiential learning in the online setting, including examples of how educators incorporate technology to simulate face-to-face experiences.

Online Experiential Learning: Engaging Students through Real and Virtual Activities (http://www.siue.edu/facultycenter/news/blog/2016/05/Blog_Online_Experiential_Learning.shtml) - Wayne A. Nelson, Ed. D. discusses the use of experiential learning in the online setting.

The Power of Experiential eLearning   (http://cdn2.hubspot.net/hubfs/403016/white_papers/The_Power_Of_Experiential_e-Learning.pdf? t=1454994858681) - Workstar presents a summary of the benefits and applications of experiential learning in the online setting.

Create Lifelong Learners with Experiential eLearning   (http://info.shiftelearning.com/blog/create-life-long-learners-elearning) - Author Karla Gutierrez offers suggestions for incorporating experiential learning in an article for Shift - Disruptive eLearning.

Incorporating the Experiential Learning Cycle into Online Classes   (http://jolt.merlot.org/vol9no4/baasanjav_1213.pdf) - In this study, Undrahbuyan Baasanjav discusses the use of various collaboration tools to boost experiential learning.

Teaching and Learning Social Justice through Online Service-Learning Courses (http://www.irrodl.org/index.php/irrodl/article/view/894/1628) - In this study, Kathy L. Guthrie and Holly McCracken surveyed students about the use of technology to facilitate service learning in online courses.

Gamification: Adding to the Learning Experience   (https://www.td.org/Publications/Blogs/Learning-Technologies-Blog/2013/04/Gamification-Adding-to-the-Learning-Experience) - Vanessa Bailey discusses the role of gamification in experiential learning.

Maker Share   (https://makershare.com/) - This online community shows that Makerspaces don't have to be confined to physical locations.

Now What? Using the ASSURE Model to Plan Instruction

So, how can you make use of all of this information about learner characteristics and learning theory from Modules 4 and 5? How can you apply this to the online classroom? One of the best strategies for ensuring the effective planning, implementation, and evaluation of a learning experience is to use an instructional design tool such as the ASSURE Model. ASSURE is an acronym for Analyze learners; State objectives; Select instructional methods, media, and materials; Utilize media and materials; Require learner participation; and Evaluate and revise. Good educators typically work through these steps, often unconsciously. Using this model helps teachers and corporate trainers be intentional about assessing the needs of their students / learners and then planning appropriate learning experiences. You will use this model as a part of your Apply Your Knowledge assignments as you continue through this course.

Explore the following Web sites to learn more about using the ASSURE model:

- **ASSURE Model: Discovering Instructional Design 18   (http://elearningcurve.edublogs.org/2009/06/24/assure-model-discovering-instructional-design-18/)** – This Web site outlines each step in the ASSURE model. It is an excellent reference.
- **Lesson Plan Models: ASSURE Model   (http://www.slideshare.net/jkeremius/assure-model-lesson-plan-3879545)** – This resource is an example of a Wiki and presents some good resources for teachers using the ASSURE model to plan lessons. Also available is a video presentation on using the ASSURE model to plan instruction in the online classroom.
- **ASSURE Model   (http://www.instructionaldesign.org/models/assure.html)** – This site explores the steps in the ASSURE Model and applies them to planning instructional activities to meet the various learning styles of students.

References:

Kolb, A. Y., & Kolb, D. A. (2005). Learning Styles and Learning Spaces: Enhancing Experiential Learning in Higher Education. *Academy Of Management Learning & Education*, *4*(2), 193-212. doi:10.5465/AMLE.2005.17268566

Assignments

1. **Readings**

- Module 5 and provided Web resources
- Chapter 3, "Course Design and Development" in *Teaching Online: A Practical Guide*

2. **Discussion: Collaboration - Experiential Learning**

Work with your assigned group to create an initial discussion post on the following topic.

The purpose of this discussion is to get you thinking about how you can use Experiential Learning in an online course. As a group, discuss the applications and benefits of Experiential Learning. In the first paragraph, explain how Experiential Learning experiences benefit students. In the second paragraph, discuss how you might incorporate an Experiential Learning strategy in an online course. In the second paragraph, discuss how technology can be used to foster Experiential Learning situations in online courses.

Post your group response (3 paragraphs) to the **Module 5: Discussion: Collaboration - Experiential Learning** discussion thread. **Your initial posting is due on or before 11:55 pm EST on Module 5 Monday.**

Reply individually to at least two other group postings. Be sure to follow the Discussion Protocols. Remember that replies such as "great idea" or "I agree" do not count for credit. Your replies should add to the depth of the conversation.

In order to receive full credit for your Discussion, be sure to **respond** to classmates who reply to your posting **on or before 11:55 pm EST on Module 5 Tuesday**. See the Schedule for specific due dates. Your Discussion will be evaluated using the **Discussion Rubric (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1258035/files/61442454/download?wrap=1)**
(https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1258035/files/61442454/download?wrap=1)
(https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1258035/files/61442454/download?wrap=1) .

3. **Applying Your Knowledge: Analyzing Learners.**

Select a unit or topic you might teach in an online course or training. Write a 2- to 3-page paper that includes a summary of the unit or training topic, as well as an explanation of which learning theory will support the unit. Then, implement the first step of the ASSURE Model and Analyze your learners. Include your analysis in your paper. (Note: In future modules, you will continue to develop your unit / topic using the steps of the ASSURE Model.)

Your paper should have the following headings:

- Unit Summary
- Learning Theory
- Analysis of Learners

Submit this assignment using the **Module 5: Learning Assessment** Assignment tool. Your file MUST be saved using this format: YourNameModule5. (The file name should be your Last Name and First Name and then the Module number without spaces.) This assignment is due on or before 11:55 pm EST on the module's due date. See the Schedule for specific due dates.

Looking Ahead: Final Project

In this module, you selected a unit or topic to teach in an online course or training and implemented the first step of the ASSURE Model. Throughout the remainder of this course, you will continue to develop your unit/topic using the steps of the ASSURE Model. Then, for your Final Project, you will create one complete content module, or lesson, for a unit of online instruction. You will also develop an assessment rubric, course syllabus, and course storyboard. The remaining modules of this course will help guide you through this process.