



# APPLIED LEARNING

A Framework for Camosun

# Contents

- Introduction to the Applied Learning Framework & Model ..... 2
- Definition ..... 3
- Background ..... 3
  - A Focus on Learning ..... 5

## Introduction to the Applied Learning Framework & Model

This framework document outlines Camosun's renewed approach to applied learning. The **Applied Learning Framework** is based on internal feedback from faculty focus groups, the Applied Learning Steering Committee (see Appendix A for membership list), the College's Educational Leadership Team and a literature review. It provides context for the college's focus on Applied Learning as an approach the college is known for. The framework proposes ways we can move forward so that the content and processes in our courses, programs and other learning opportunities continue to be relevant and meaningful as we prepare a new generation of students to live, learn and work in a dynamic, complex and technologically advanced world.

Central to our approach is a focus on solid, learning-centred teaching strategies grounded in the scholarship of experiential education, represented by the **Applied Learning Model** (see Figure 1). The model is a conceptualization of an approach to teaching based on Eight Principles of Experiential Learning by the National Society for Experiential Education. The Applied Learning Model emphasizes excellence in teaching reflection, application and practice.

Figure 1.

## Definition

Applied learning refers to the design of significant learning experiences linked directly with course and program content that intentionally develop students' academic, personal & professional skills. The hallmarks of applied learning at Camosun are systems & structures that are flexible and responsive to the unique teaching skills, learning spaces, communication and assessment strategies required to provide authentic, thought-p

The goal was to discuss the concepts and ideas underpinning applied learning and to explore the challenges faced by faculty seeking to engage learners with innovative teaching methods and experiential learning activities.

As a result of the forum a number of activities were identified as starting points for this relaunch. Conducted through the fall and winter, these activities included a review of the theory, principles, and practice of applied learning; completion of a survey of applied learning activities; and a series of interviews with faculty currently using applied learning activities within required and elected courses, and across a program. In addition, student focus groups have been identified and will be scheduled early in 2018 to seek input on their experiences with applied learning.

## Why Applied Learning?

Camosun College is where people come for applied learning experiences that lead to successful and meaningful careers. This is how many see us and it's why many students choose to come here. We are key to the region's economic, cultural and social growth and well-being. As a result, we have become a college that helps people build better lives, engages them with community and supports the launch of meaningful and fulfilling work or further education. We provide support for students to explore all of their options.

The challenge for us now is how to con

## A Focus on Learning

Camosun has a reputation for providing quality, relevant educational experiences for students to gain the skills and capabilities necessary to contribute to their communities in intelligent, meaningful, and creative ways.

Learning outcomes that intend to prepare students for engaged citizenship, further education, leadership and employment can be achieved through an applied learning experience. The eight principles of applied learning (National Society for Experiential Education, 2015) in the proposed **Applied Learning Mode** (See Figure 1) emphasize excellence in teaching practices. Kenny et al (2017) note that teaching expertise is reflected in a learning mindset focused on both the students' and one's own learning. Brookfield (1995) notes that expert t

engage in reconciliation are critical and are increasingly required in workplaces and post-secondary environments as the Indigenous population in Canada is the fastest growing demographic.

#### Interculturalcommunication

Applied skills in intercultural communication are important as we respond as a nation to record numbers of refugees and immigrants. Applied learning activities that focus on problem solving provide opportunities for faculty, domestic and international students to engage with one another in a respectful and constructive manner.

#### Enhancing community engagement & civic mindedness





# Camosun's Approach to the Applied Learning Model

## The Intention of the Model

The model (Figure 1.) is flexible, scalable and consistent and builds upon what the college already offers. It provides a common language for the college to talk about applied learning, and a sound guide for the development of curricular activities, courses and programs grounded in educational theory and current leading practices in applied learning. It incorporates the college's leading curricular practices, guiding principles, concepts and approaches. Measureable learning outcomes guide the development of quality programs and courses.

A key strength of the model is the incorporation of the critical curriculum design elements that meet learning outcomes and ensure faculty lead students through an authentic, thought-provoking learning experience. The model provides structure for design while being flexible enough to allow for discipline/interdisciplinary nuances and to include college values such as indigenization, diversity and inclusion, and sustainability.

The model places learning at the centre and is based on eight principles of applied learning as identified by the National Society for Experiential Education (2015). The eight principles are:

- x Intention;
- x curriculum preparation a



<p><b>Authenticity:</b> The experience must have a real world context and/or be useful and meaningful in reference to an applied setting or situation. This means that it should be designed in concert with those who will be affected by or use it, or in response to a real situation.</p>	<p><b>Assessment and Evaluation:</b> Outcomes and processes should be systematically documented with regard to initial intentions and quality outcomes. Assessment is a means to develop and refine the specific learning goals and quality objectives identified during the planning stages of the experience, while evaluation provides comprehensive data about the experiential process as a whole and whether it has met the intentions which suggested it.</p>
<p><b>Reflection:</b> Reflection is the element that transforms a simple experience to a learning experience. For knowledge to be discovered and internalized the learner must test assumptions and hypotheses about the outcomes of decisions and actions taken, then weigh the outcomes against past learning and future implications. This reflective process is integral to all phases of experiential learning, from identifying intention and choosing the experience, to considering preconceptions and observing how they change as the experience unfolds. Reflection is also an essential tool for adjusting the experience and measuring outcomes.</p>	<p><b>Acknowledgment:</b> Recognition of learning and impact occur throughout the experience by way of the reflective and monitoring processes and through reporting, documentation and sharing of accomplishments. All parties to the experience should be included in the recognition of progress and accomplishment. Culminating documentation and celebration of learning and impact help provide closure and sustainability to the experience.</p>

**Next steps:**

Consultation on the principles and definition

Consultation on the framework

Development of a two year plan based on the above

## Appendix A: Applied Learning Steering Committee

Joan Yates, VP Student Experience

John Boraas, VP Education

Nancy Sly, Director,

## Appendix B: Indigenization

Indigenization is a process we value at the college. The following diagram outlines how Martin Brokenleg's Circle of Courage fits into the **Intention** sector of the Applied Learning Model. Faculty can incorporate belonging, mastery, independence and generosity into any applied learning activity.

Belonging: The universal longing for human bonds is cultivated by relationships of trust...

Mastery: the inborn thirst for learning is cultivated; by learning to cope with the world we can succeed.

Independence: free will is cultivated by responsibility leading to empowerment to make decisions

Generosity: character is cultivated by concern for others

Lorna William's has generously shared the 6 principles of learning from the Lil'wat Nation. The Lil'wat Principles of Learning augment the 8 principles of applied learning by focusing attention on the relationship of the learner to: themselves and their learning process; the other learners in the course; the community of learners; and to the common group purpose. They can be incorporated to the applied learning experience under the **Orientation and Training** sector. This indigenizes the learning process and provides a philosophical structure to the activity that considers the needs of the individual learner as well as those of the group.

- x In the learning process and in the relationship between the learner and any facilitator(s) of learning, there is a mutual responsibility.

x



## References

- Association for Co-operative Education, BC/Yukon. (2017). Comparative matrix of co-operative education with other forms of work-integrated education and work-integrated learning. Retrieved from [http://co-op.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/ACCE\\_Matrix.pdf](http://co-op.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/ACCE_Matrix.pdf)
- Barr, R. B., & Tagg, J. (1995). From teaching to learning: A new paradigm for undergraduate education. *Change*, (6), 12. Retrieved from <https://libsecure.camosun.bc.ca:2443/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=edsjsr&AN=edsjsr.40165284&site=eds-live>
- Brendtro, L. K., Brokenleg, M., & Van Bockern, S. (2002). *Reclaiming youth at risk: Our hope for the future*. Bloomington, Ind.: Solution Tree. Retrieved from <https://libsecure.camosun.bc.ca:2443/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=cat00727a&AN=camo.159043&site=eds-live>
- Camosun College. (2012). *Leading practices in curriculum: Principles and standards for leading educational practices in curriculum at Camosun College*.
- Camosun College. (2016). *Strategic plan 2016 – 2021*.
- Camosun College. (2017). *Experiential learning literature review* Camosun Library.
- Camosun College. (2017). *Social innovation in higher education: A preliminary review of the research* Camosun Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning.
- Fullan, M., Langworthy, M., & Barber, M. (2014). *A rich seam: How new pedagogies find deep learning* Toronto, Ontario: MaRS Discovery District. Retrieved from



National Society for Experiential Education (2013). Eight Principles of Good Practice for All Experiential Learning Activities. Retrieved from <http://www.nsee.org/8-principles>

Reason, R. D. (2003). Student variables that predict retention: Recent research and new developments. *NASPA Journal*, 40(4), 172-191. doi:10.2202/1949-6605.1286

Rethinking higher education curricula: Increasing impact through experiential, work-integrated, and community-engaged learning. (2017). Toronto: University of Toronto.

Seaman, J., Brown, M., & Quay, J. (2017). The evolution of experiential learning theory: Tracing lines of research in the JEE. *Journal of Experiential Education*, 40(4), NP1. Retrieved from <https://libsecure.camosun.bc.ca:2443/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eft&AN=126234716&site=eds-live>

Stanchfield, J. (December 2013). The brain, learning, and reflection. Message posted to <http://blog.experientialtools.com/2013/12/18/the-brain-learning-and-reflection/>

Stirling, A., Kerr, G., MacPherson, E., Banwell, J., Bandy, A., & Battaglia, A. (2017). Do postsecondary internships address the four learning modes of experiential learning theory? an exploration through document analysis. *Canadian Journal of Higher Education*, 47(1), 27-