



Experiential Learning

Glossary of Terms

Internship, Co-Op & Work Based Learning

A paraprofessional work experience in the appropriate field for a student's major, field of study, or occupational interest. Internships require a time commitment from host sites, student supervision by a qualified professional, and student learning outcomes. Internships can be for-credit or not-for-credit, paid or unpaid.

Clinical Placement – a credit bearing educational arrangement where students actively participate in real-world settings, adhering to and demonstrating standards of professionalism and competency set forth by their discipline. They interact with diverse clients in various settings, connecting theoretical knowledge to workplace contexts. The experience involves practicing and performing professional responsibilities under appropriate supervision, with professional role modeling.

Cooperative Education (Co-op) – a structured method of combining classroom-based education with practical work experience. A cooperative education experience, commonly known as a “co-op”, provides academic credit for structured job experience. Co-op experiences are either full-time (40 hours per week) alternating periods (semester, quarter) of work and school or part-time (20 hours per week) combining work and school during the same time period. Co-op experiences are paid, supervised by a professional who has followed the same career path as the student and students complete more than one assignment (2 or more) with progressive levels of responsibility.

Internship - a form of experiential learning that integrates knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with practical application and skills development in a professional setting. Internships give students the opportunity to gain valuable applied experience and make connections in professional fields they are considering for career paths; and give employers the opportunity to guide and evaluate talent.

Practicum – a credit-bearing experience enabling students to gain work experiences in their major or related field where they actively contribute to site activities, and projects, emphasizing observation and documentation. The learning experience is guided by a concurrent practicum course outlining goals and expectations for academic credit.

Apprenticeship – industry-driven, high-quality career pathways where employers combine paid on-the-job training with classroom instruction, mentorship, and a portable credential to prepare workers for highly-skilled careers. Apprenticeships are paid experiences that include a structured training plan, focusing on mastering specific skills an employer needs to fill an occupation within their organization.

Student Teaching – a full-time experience in a cooperating teacher's classroom during which a teacher candidate either experiences all of the responsibilities of a classroom teacher, including responsibility for the instruction of the whole class for a week or more or has significant co-teaching responsibilities.

Fieldwork - allows students to explore and apply content learned in the classroom away from the institution and in direct contact with the people, natural phenomena, or other entities being studied. Fieldwork experiences bridge



educational experiences with an outside community ranging from neighborhoods and schools to anthropological dig sites and laboratory settings.

Undergraduate Research-based Work Experience - involves gaining practical, hands-on experience with an external research institute, program, government, or industry partner in a laboratory setting. These partners directly utilize or benefit from the research output. The focus is on hands-on training, mentorship, and experiential learning in a research setting. These experiences typically involve working under the mentorship of a distinguished principal investigator, providing invaluable preparation for advanced studies.

Professional Exploration & Development

Career and professional activities that allow students to develop competency attainment that occurs as an extension of the classroom.

Alternative Credentials – a focused learning experience that qualifies individuals for a specific title, providing formal recognition of their competence by a relevant third-party authority. These programs offer a structured path for acquiring knowledge, and skills, and meeting professional goals. Credentials encompass badges, certifications, micro-credentials, and government licenses. Industry-recognized credentials are acknowledged or required by employers within the sector, and when applicable, endorsed by nationally recognized trade associations or organizations representing a significant part of the industry.

Professional Development Case Study – provides students with a rich narrative of a real-world problem for students to analyze and solve, individually or in teams. Their use ranges from simpler assignments (class activity or homework) to larger assignments (multiple weeks or even serving as the foundation of an entire course).

Student Employment – part-time work opportunities that occur while the student is enrolled in school. It typically requires fewer hours than full-time work, falling around 10-20 hours per week, and is usually flexible so as not to interfere with student's educational goals. These paid experiences do not have to be directly related to a student's career objectives, but these opportunities have the potential to help them develop essential transferable skills that are essential to succeeding in today's work force. Some types of student employment positions include:

- Federal Work Study
- Fellowships
- Graduate Assistantships
- On-campus Jobs
- Off Campus jobs with Local businesses or organizations

Micro-Internship - are short-term, project-based, paid professional assignments, many of which can be completed remotely. Unlike traditional internships, Micro-Internships can take place year-round, typically ranging from 10 to 40 hours of work.

Job Shadow and Externship – a career exploration experience involving students observing a professional during their typical workday or workweek, allowing them to gain insights into the characteristics, competencies, skills, and behaviors of a specific job. This hands-on learning experience includes direct observation without active participation in the tasks or assignments of the observed role.



Mentoring – an opportunity to gain valuable knowledge from an individual with more experience, knowledge, and connections. These reciprocal, and collaborative interactions aim to support the student’s personal and professional development. Mentorship occurs in a positive, confidential, and low-risk environment that creates opportunities for learning and feedback.

First Year Experience – small groups of students brought together with faculty or staff on a regular basis and are designed to assist first-year students in making a successful transition to college. The highest-quality first-year experiences place a strong emphasis on critical inquiry, frequent writing, information literacy, collaborative learning, and other skills that develop students’ intellectual and practical competencies. First-year experiences can also involve students with cutting-edge questions in scholarship and with faculty members’ own research.

Seminars, Conferences & Showcases – events consisting of an interactive discussion led by experts, a formal meeting where professionals gather to discuss topics and share knowledge, or an opportunity to display talents, products, or projects to an audience. These events involve presentations and discussions, fostering learning, networking, and demonstrating skills and achievements.

Professional Immersion Activity - refers to practical and applied experiences or projects designed to enhance knowledge, skills, or abilities through exposure to work contexts. This professional exploration and development experience goes beyond mere observation but instead involves active learning methodologies to enhance students' ability to explore and make career decisions. Examples include but are not limited to industry site visits, skills labs, and networking events.

Scholar or Achievement Program – a unique and selective educational opportunity, designed for students who demonstrate outstanding academic achievements, intellectual curiosity, and a commitment to scholarly pursuits. This program offers a distinctive educational experience, and comprehensive wrap-around support such as mentorship, resources, educational enhancements, and financial assistance to ensure a positive and successful student experience.

Leadership & Involvement

Engaging in a substantial, immersive leadership experience or participating in leadership training activities outside the traditional classroom. These can be curricular, co-curricular, or extracurricular. The goal of these activities is to learn how to leverage the strengths of others to achieve common goals or to use interpersonal skills to coach and develop others.

Event Planning and Execution –involves students managing a project such as a meeting, convention, tradeshow, ceremony, team building activity, party, or convention. Event planning includes budgeting, establishing timelines, selecting, and reserving the event sites, acquiring permits, planning food, coordinating transportation, developing a theme, arranging for activities, selecting speakers and keynotes, arranging for equipment and facilities, managing risk, and developing contingency plans.

Student Leadership - refers to the active and influential role students play in shaping the campus community, encompassing responsibilities such as influencing decisions related to education and the learning environment. It involves leveraging personal and team strengths to achieve organizational objectives, fostering positive change, and advocating for the interests of peers and the institution both within and outside the classroom. Student leaders can be found on campus in various roles, including student government, club, or organization leadership.



Examples include but are not limited to Student Government, Student Organization Executive Board Members, Council or Committee membership.

Leadership Training, Summits, or Retreats - refers to a structured and often intensive program, event, or workshop designed to enhance the leadership skills, knowledge, and capabilities of individuals, typically in professional, academic, or organizational contexts. These experiences provide participants with opportunities for skill development, personal growth, and networking.

Resident Assistant - a hands-on experiential learning opportunity within the on-campus living community. Open to both undergraduate and graduate students, Resident Assistants enhance and maintain a sense of shared community in the designated residential area by facilitating intentional interactions, social activities, and other opportunities for residents to interact with each other. This experiential role not only supports academic success and personal growth but also hones leadership skills and imparts transferable competencies essential for future careers.

Peer Leadership Program - a formalized experience in which students are intentionally recruited, selected, and trained to be informed representatives of student support and educational programs (e.g., courses, advising, academic support), and the college or university overall. They operate within institutional structures and supervision and are intentionally designed to assist student leaders in supporting their peers in adjusting, satisfying, and attaining their educational goals. (Newton (2010); International Encyclopedia of Higher Education Systems and Institutions).

University Sponsored Involvement – on or off-campus experiences that allow students to represent the university, department, or unit while actively and intentionally engaging in co-curricular activities that align with their interests, passions, and academic goals, promoting personal development, leadership skills, and a sense of belonging within the UF community. Examples include but are not limited to active membership in community groups, athletics, cultural and affinity groups and professional associations.

Community Based Learning

Intentionally designed, coordinated, and executed learning experiences in community-based settings that enhance participants' academic learning, contribute to their personal growth, and increase their civic engagement while concurrently benefiting the community or communities in which these activities are embedded.

Service-learning – a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities. It involves structured course activities, where students collaborate with community partners to apply classroom knowledge and address identified needs within a community, fostering mutual benefits for both students and the community. During this experience students enhance their understanding of course concepts, develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills, and cultivate a sense of civic responsibility, while the community gains valuable support and resources.

Volunteering - an unpaid experience where students voluntarily contribute their time and skills to better their communities, fostering a sense of social responsibility and gaining a deeper understanding of societal challenges and solutions. These experiences afford students the opportunity to make valuable contributions to the community and its members while also developing insight into their Values, Interests, Personalities, Skills, and Strengths.



Immersion Activities or Field Trip - a structured and intensive educational experience which aims to enhance students' understanding of community dynamics of which they are initially unfamiliar. This type of experience fosters cultural competence, allowing students to spend a significant amount of time within a community, actively participating in real-world projects, conducting research, or providing services to address community needs.

Civic Engagement - involves making a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes and requires the active involvement of students in their communities and society at large, with the aim of fostering positive social change and promote democratic values, social responsibility, and a sense of belonging.

Alternative Spring Break – experiences designed to promote community engagement and encourage UF students to live a life of a community collaborator by exposing them to complex social and cultural issues through community partnerships, direct service, education, and reflection. They are organized service trips or community engagement activities that students participate in during their spring break. Unlike traditional spring break activities, which often involve leisure and recreation, this experience provides students with the opportunity to engage in meaningful community service, volunteer work, or social justice initiatives while fostering civic responsibility, and raise awareness about social issues.

Learning Communities - integration of learning across courses and to involve students with “big questions” that matter beyond the classroom. Students take two or more linked courses as a group and work closely with one another and with their professors. Many learning communities explore a common topic and/or common readings through the lenses of different disciplines. A subset of these communities are defined as Living Learning Communities (LLCs) where students that live together in the residence halls and have shared interests in either academics or social circles. These communities have corresponding courses that help to further the growth of participating students. These communities are a great way for students to meet new people, build a support system, and network with faculty at the university.

Creative & Entrepreneurial Works

Substantive application of academic preparation in real-world settings outside & inside the classroom through creative projects not captured through academic research. Experience must include dissemination or sharing of the creative, innovative, or entrepreneurial project.

Creative Immersion Activity – involves dynamic, team-based problem-solving in limited-time events. Participants cultivate real-world solutions to simulated authentic scenarios that closely mirror, real-world challenges. These experiences allow hands-on skill development and practice and require the presentation of a learning product. Immersive activities in the Creative & Entrepreneurial Works category utilize methods like simulations, gamification, hackathons, and case competitions.

Applied Case Study – provides students with a rich narrative of a real-world problem for students to analyze and solve, individually or in teams. Their use ranges from simpler assignments (class activity or homework) to larger assignments (multiple weeks or even serving as the foundation of an entire course).



Design Competitions – student-directed interdisciplinary projects where students develop valuable teamwork, technical, leadership, and problem-solving skills to address a challenge. Students are typically involved for more than one year under the guidance and mentorship of faculty.

Applied Capstone - culminating experiences that require students nearing the end of their college years to create a project of some sort that integrates and applies what they've learned. The project might be a research paper, a performance, a portfolio of "best work," or an exhibit of artwork. Capstones are offered both in departmental programs and, increasingly, in general education as well.

Curated Art and Creative Shows - encompasses both the process of selecting, organizing, and presenting objects or artworks for public display and the resulting exhibitions featuring collections of artworks, often by one or multiple artists, with shared themes or elements. These exhibitions are meticulously crafted to encourage thoughtful interpretation by specific audiences.

Project Based Learning - an experience in which students gain knowledge and skills by working for an extended period of time to investigate and respond to an authentic, engaging, and complex question, problem, or challenge.

Entrepreneurship or Innovation Project - a dynamic initiative that fosters innovation, collaboration, and research commercialization, benefiting the university and the broader community.

Recital or Exhibition – any display, concert, lecture, or performance held that allows students to showcase their skills and talents, fostering personal and artistic growth within a public setting. These events can be a culmination of their entire educational journey or a specific moment in time, highlighting their individual talents and dedication to their craft. These performances are typically individual endeavors, allowing students to present their own repertoire and skills, underlining their artistic and educational progress.

Research

Collaborative research opportunities between a student and faculty, staff, or a professional. This collaboration involves a four-step learning process. Identification of and acquisition of a disciplinary or interdisciplinary methodology Setting out of a concrete investigative problem Carrying out of the actual research Dissemination of research finding.

Undergraduate Research Program - a mentored investigation or creative inquiry conducted by undergraduates that seeks to make a scholarly or artistic contribution to knowledge.

Graduate and Professional Research Programs - involves students completing major research projects under academic supervision. These research-focused degrees, such as master's and PhD programs, provide valuable experience that enhances career prospects. Students may participate in graduate classes, seminars, and presentations and receive mentoring to develop research skills and advance in their chosen fields.

First Year Research Experience - a program designed for incoming first-year students that encompasses several key components. Participants are paired with a faculty research mentor for an academic year, selected from their major department or a closely aligned discipline, known for their expertise in guiding early program researchers.

Research Assistantships - paid positions in which a student assists faculty in a teaching or research capacity. Research assistants are selected for excellence in scholarship and promise as researchers. They do part-time research as a portion of their training under the direct supervision of regular faculty members.



Theses- a written report of a creative, scholarly project dealing with teaching, research, or outreach. It has clear objectives and conclusions and involves original, independent work of the student.

Independent Study - An elective, self-directed course available for both undergraduate and graduate students, subject to faculty approval. This definition encompasses a range of academic pursuits, including but not limited to dissertations. An independent study provides students with the opportunity to explore a specific area of interest. The primary objective of the course is to engage students in in-depth research on a chosen topic, guided by an instructor who will oversee, advise, and evaluate the student's progress.

Community-Based Research – Research experiences conducted with—rather than on—communities on a topic relevant and important to the community. The purpose is to enlist those who are most affected by a community issue – typically in collaboration or partnership with others who have research skills – to conduct research and analyze that issue, with the goal of combining knowledge and action for social change and devising strategies to resolve it.

Research Capstone - These culminating experiences require students nearing the end of their college years to create a project of some sort that integrates and applies what they've learned. The project might be a research paper, a performance, a portfolio of "best work," or an exhibit of artwork. Capstones are offered both in departmental programs and, increasingly, in general education as well.

Research Based Scholar Program - engages students in one-on-one collaboration with UF faculty on selected research projects, fostering an understanding and appreciation for scholarly methods. This educational initiative is tailored to support and recognize outstanding students in their academic pursuits, providing them with essential resources, mentorship, and financial backing to enhance their education.

Global & Sociocultural Learning

Sustained engagement with and study of cultures other than one's own. This experiential learning can take place inside as well as outside the traditional classroom.

Virtual Global Exchange – provides students with affordable opportunities to gain global competencies within their coursework wherever they are. It links together students and classrooms around the world through co-taught multicultural and blended online coursework, bridging the physical distance between students through technological means.

Study Abroad Experience – a structured educational program that allows students to live and study in a foreign country for a defined period, typically ranging from a few weeks to a full academic year. This specialized form of Education Abroad is characterized by academic activities contributing to progress in a student's home institution degree.

Global Industry Immersion – Intensive, hands-on programs that engage students in global industries, markets, and sociocultural contexts. Through interaction with industry experts, students explore the interconnections between global business practices and sociocultural environments.

Domestic Study Away – programs that allow students to explore regions, communities, or cultural groups within different areas of the United States, Canada, and the U.S. Territories. It provides opportunities for cultural immersion, cross-cultural understanding, and learning about diverse sociocultural contexts.



Sociocultural Gap Year Fellow – students take a deliberate break, from formal education to engage in immersive, hands-on experiences with a focus on global understanding and sociocultural learning for the purposes of increasing self-awareness, learning from different cultures, and experimenting with possible careers and fields of study.

Global Scholar Program – provides a distinctive opportunity for students to foster an in-depth understanding of global issues, cultures, and sociocultural contexts. The experience aims to cultivate cross-cultural understanding, intercultural communication, and a profound appreciation for diverse perspectives, fostering global competence and critical thinking skills.