

Disrupted Internships, Experiential Learning Courses and Self-Directed Pursuits

Resources and strategies offered through the UB Experiential Learning Network

<http://www.buffalo.edu/eln.html>

With widespread transitions to online instruction, many students are struggling to complete experiential learning courses with the goals of receiving credit and the benefits associated with these high impact experiences. While certain courses require specialized equipment and supervision, there is much students can do to leverage the experiences they have already obtained, building on specific activities, connecting them with academic and professional goals. And as students find themselves with more time for individualized learning, research, hobbies and other self-directed pursuits, it is helpful to have frameworks and tools to connect these experiences with other types of learning and preparation.

Through the [UB Experiential Learning Network](#), we have created a digital platform for students to activate the potential of experiential learning and mentored projects. In our model, the true of power of experiences lies in the student's ability to "activate" their potential. We have created PEARL as a framework for guiding students through the various facets of engagement (Prepare; Engage and Add Value; Reflect an, Leverage). Please view this brief [PEARL](#) video.

Through our [Project Portal](#), students work through a series of online modules, earning [digital badges](#), and engaging in reflective exercises and assignments, culminating in compelling stories about their experiences and achievements.

As educational programs and students around the world are working to leverage technology-supported engagement and learning, I invite you to explore the various facets of our model and utilize components that align with your own needs and context. I am happy to share specific resources and entertain questions related to leveraging the benefits of experiential learning, independent exploration or other self-initiated pursuits mbhuber@buffalo.edu

- **Course Completion Project**

This general project can apply to all types of experiential learning "[Complete Your Experiential Learning Course](#)". While it is only open to UB students, and is delivered in the form of a digital badge, you are invited to use the framework and related assignments

- Research the broader context of your experiential learning activity, such as how your experience relates to your career field in a regional, national and global perspective. Then describe what you did and its significance to your own goals and career aspirations as well as broader contexts and systems as relevant (a 3-5 page essay) or [narrated powerpoint](#) presentation

- Self-evaluation and reflection using [NACE's career competencies](#)
 - Watch and respond to a video workshop entitled "Telling Compelling Stories about Our Experiences and Achievements." (see link below- feel free to share with your students)
 - Create a video narrative that describes your project experience and how it connects with your academic learning and career goals.
- **Telling Compelling Stories about our Experiences and Achievements”**
<https://youtu.be/wzOhLEgb3Vs>
 15 minute video workshop that shares a process for helping students synthesize and connect experiences with academic and professional goals. We ask students to respond to the video and then practice talking about their own experiences through a connected narrative video (following the same process)
- **[PEARL Framework](#)**
 Our PEARL framework serves as the foundation for both our Project Profiles and our Digital Badges that guide student engagement. **PEARL stands for Prepare, Engage and Add Value, Reflect, and Leverage**—all critical steps toward activating the potential of high-impact experiential learning to support students' academic and career goals. Please watch (and feel free to share) a brief [video](#) on PEARL. You might also consider the related assignments that can be used in conjunction with experiential learning offerings
- Prepare: Explore the context of your internship
 - Assess your own strengths, skills and competencies as they relate to your internship (consider [NACE competencies](#) or [VALUE rubrics](#))
 - Explore the context of your internship with regard to broader systems and impacts
 - Develop an annotated bibliography
 - Engage and Add Value: Synthesize your experience and explore career opportunities
 - Develop structured essay sharing experience and connecting with academic and professional goals
 - Explore related fields and identify aspirant job postings
 - Prepare resume and cover letter incorporating experiences
 - Reflect
 - Develop compelling narratives connecting experience with academic and professional goals
 - Leverage
 - Explore how you could build upon experience toward greater goals and impacts
- **Digital Badges**
 We use [digital badges](#) to facilitate and assess student engagement through our PEARL process.

Contact me with any questions about these resources: Mara Huber mbhuber@buffalo.edu