

## **Proposal for an Experience to Satisfy the CFANS Experiential Learning Requirement**

In order to meet the CFANS requirement for experiential learning, the experience must meet the following criteria.

- There must be a specific academic or professional goal for the activity, e.g. “to see if a career with a non-profit is a good fit by taking a volunteer position.”
- The student must spend a minimum of 100 hours involved in the activity.
- The student must complete a minimum of 3 reflection papers: one before the experience, one during the experience, and one after the experience.

*Why do we require these reflections?* We know that, for learning to have the greatest impact, students should:<sup>1</sup>

- have specific goals for the learning activity,
- recall prior learning,
- apply the learning,
- process the new information throughout the experience, and
- consciously consider what has been learned from the experience when it is over and think about how it will be used in the future.

By doing these reflections, students will learn more from the experience and remember it longer. Also, students will learn a pattern for high impact learning that can be applied for the rest of his or her life.

*What’s usually included in these reflections?*

Before the experience, reflections usually include thinking about one or more of the questions listed here.

- What are your preconceptions related to the experience, e.g., “how do you expect farming in Italy to be different from farming in the U.S. and why?”
- What do you already know related to this experience?
- What do you most hope to learn from this experience?

During the experience you might reflect on questions like these.

- What is surprising to you?
- What could you do to make this a better learning experience?

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<sup>1</sup> One source for information about experiential learning is a book by David Kolb entitled *Experiential Learning: Experience as a Source of Learning and Development*, published in 2015 by Pearson.

After the experience, reflections are meant to pull together the learning and help you apply the learning to future situations. Example questions are below.

- Did you meet your learning goals from the experience? Why or why not?
- What did you learn that you didn't expect to learn?
- What is the most important take-away from this experience?
- How will you use this in the future?

**Complete the following questions and submit to the Major Coordinator before engaging in the proposed experience.**

1. Describe the activity and explain how it will relate to your academic goals.
2. What specific goals will you have for this activity?
3. How many hours will you spend on this activity? Include when you plan to start this activity and an anticipated completion date.
4. The "before experience reflection paper" must be submitted to the Major Coordinator at the time you submit the petition. The "during" and "after" reflections must be submitted at the end of the experience.

The form on the next page is to be submitted to the College office upon completion of the experience. This form requires the signatures of the student and the Major Coordinator.

