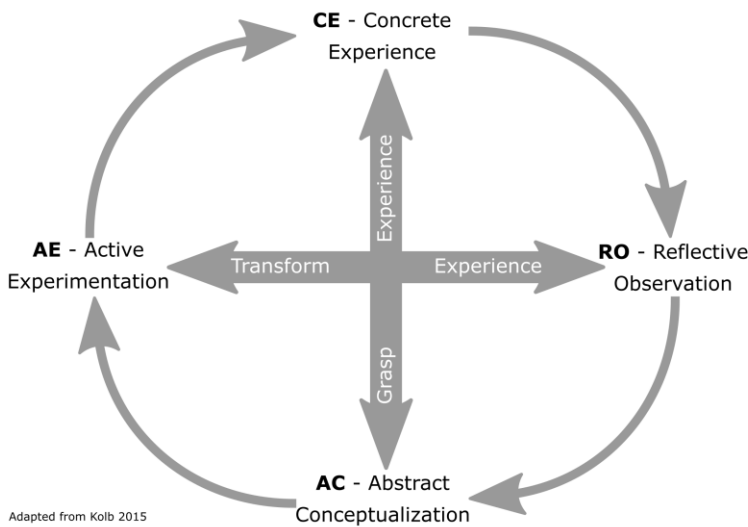


Describe an experience from your undergraduate days that you feel encompasses experiential learning:

What made this experience particularly experiential to you?



	Learner is actively experiencing an activity.
CE	<i>Group exercise; Field experience; Lab session; Internship or community experience.</i>
	Learner is consciously reflecting back on that experience.
RO	<i>Discuss what happened during CE phase; challenges; observations; behaviors; self-reflection; what you would change etc.</i>
	Learner is being presented with/or trying to conceptualize a theory or model to explain observations.
AC	<i>Find research that helps explain patterns in data or observations from CE phase.</i>
	Learner is trying to plan how to test a model or theory, or plan a forthcoming experience.
AE	<i>Test model under novel scenario. Apply what has been learned to new situation.</i>

The foundation for **Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle** is that knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming experience. **Grasping** experience (vertical axis) refers to the process of taking in information, and **transforming** experience (horizontal axis) is how individuals interpret and act on that information. This process can be illustrated by an idealized and simplified cycle (or spiral) where a learner “touches all the bases”—experiencing (CE), reflecting (RO), thinking (AC), and acting (AE)—which should be tailored to the context and content of the learning situation. **We often do “grasping” well in our classes, but tend to lack on the “transforming” of information.** Learning happens through the experience itself, AND the process of learning from that experience and applying to novel situations (Kolb 2015, p. 51).

Common practices where experiential learning can be infused in your classroom:

Experiential learning is not limited to the following overlapping methods. However, many of us may already be familiar with and/or do parts of one (or more) of these practices, and they are well developed and supported in the literature. Wurdinger and Carlson (2010) cover these extensively in their book, and provide research on their success and recommendations for their implementation. Here's a summary:

1. **Active learning** involves getting students to do things other than only listening and taking notes, and to think about what they are doing.
 - a. Examples: Problem-solving, group work, simulations, case studies, classroom polls, class discussion, think-pair-share etc. including all the following items.
 - b. Tip: To make active learning more experiential, be sure to include time for thinking about (reflecting) and conversations about what the students are doing.
2. **Problem-based and Inquiry-based learning** both involve having students find solutions to authentic problems through in-depth investigation, where instructors typically provide the problems for problem-based learning, and students identify problems on their own for inquiry-based learning.
 - a. Steps: (1) Students are given (or determine) a problem to be solved; (2) Students investigate, work on, or do research on their problem (independently or in groups). (3) Students share results with each other, the instructor, or an outside audience to further their understanding of concepts.
 - b. Examples: Math problems, chemistry problems, physics problems, genetics problems etc. Any problem that requires investigation beyond what is directly taught in class.
 - c. Tip: The use of authentic, real world and student-driven problems will maximize engagement. For problem-based, try to select "messy" problems. Remember to include opportunities for reflection to maximize learning.
3. **Project-based learning** involves learning by carrying out a project to completion. Project-based learning tends to focus more heavily on skill building (eg., problem solving, communication, collaboration, self-directed learning) rather than strictly on the broadening of discipline-based content knowledge.
 - a. Projects can range from highly "teacher controlled" (all students work on same thing that is part of curriculum, no choice; eg., students handed a protocol to follow) to completely "student-driven and authentic" (teachers provide facilitation of process, products and performants assessed, students present to outside audience; eg., independent research).
 - b. Examples: Hands on "lab" work, research, group projects.
 - c. Tip: Allowing students the opportunity to fail and correct course helps develop problem solving ability.
4. **Service-learning & Place-based learning** entails learning through service in the community or placement off campus. These types of learning most readily fit the experiential learning cycle.
 - a. Three requisite phases: (1) Planning to fill a need, (2) action, (3) reflection, and a recommended fourth phase of a (4) demonstration of accomplishments/what was learned.
 - b. Examples: Community service, community projects, volunteer work, internships.

Reflection is highly recommended for any experiential learning. Questions to consider can be found below in the 5-step experiential learning guide. Here are some commonly used reflection tools:

- Group discussion followed by a class share-out.
- Written pieces, video or audio recordings due at set time points throughout the semester.
- Regular blog or vlog posts.
- Self-evaluations.
- "Advice to future students" letters providing strategies for being successful.

Identify and describe an activity or experience in your course that you would like to make more experiential:

What is the learning objective(s) of this activity?

List some potential problem(s) that students would need to solve during this activity:

List some possible opportunities for primary experiences (“grasping” axis – CE and AC experiences):

List some possible opportunities for secondary experiences (“transforming” axis – RO and AE experiences):

Use Kolb’s experiential learning cycle and/or the following 5-step guide to help structure the primary and secondary experiences the students will receive.

5-Step Experiential Learning Guide

The following 5-step guide from can help think about and structure more reflection into your classroom experiential learning activities. Although it is recommended to include pieces from each category below, you could get away with having an “experience” followed by one of the middle three (“share”, “process” and “generalize”) followed by “applying” to a new situation. These steps do not necessarily need to be conducted in a single class, and can be spread out as appropriate for your classroom context.

EXPERIENCE: *“Do it!”*

Independently perform or do an activity. Instructor role is to support students as a “guide on the side”. Examples might include conducting an experiment, creating a product, trying to solve a problem.

- May be an individual or group experience.
- Provides an opportunity to try something new.
- Supports freedom to experiment and make mistakes.
- May spark new questions and interests.

SHARE: *“What happened?”*

Get the participants to talk about their experience. Share reactions and observations. Discuss feelings generated by the experience. Let the group (or individual) talk freely and acknowledge their ideas.

- What did you do/learn? What was the most difficult? Easiest?
- How would you describe that experience? How did it feel? What did you observe?
- What questions did this experience raise for you?

PROCESS: *“What is important?”*

Discuss, analyze, and reflect on the experience. Discuss how the experience was carried out. Identify themes, problems and issues that emerged during the experience. Discuss how specific problems or issues were addressed. Discuss personal experiences of members. Encourage group to look for recurring themes.

- What things helped this be a positive experience?
- What things got in the way or created challenges?
- What could or would you like to do differently next time?

GENERALIZE: *“So what?”*

Connect the experience with real world examples. Find general trends or common truths in the experience. Identify “real life” principles that surfaced. List key terms that capture the learning.

- What did you learn about yourself through this activity?
- How does what you learned relate to other parts of your life?
- How will what you learned be useful for you in the future?

APPLY: *“Now what?”*

Discuss how new learning from the experience can be applied to other situations. Discuss how more effective behaviors can develop from the new learnings.

- Who else can benefit from what you learned?
- How can this experience help address real world problems?
- How can you apply what you learned to a new situation?

Adapted from the Experiential Learning Center at Northern Illinois University

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