

Curricular Frameworks for High-Impact Practices

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Introduction to this Document

In Winter 2021, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) began a strategic planning process. Grounded in appreciative inquiry and focused on iterative design, the mechanism through which CLAS will enact much of its strategic plan is the CLAS Voyage. The Voyage is a curricular arc that ensures students will participate in high-impact practices¹, and is a commitment to elevating and communicating the value of a career-connected liberal arts and sciences education that students receive at GVSU. Collectively we are committing to ensuring that all students engage in at least five high-impact practices, beginning with a first-year academic seminar and ending with a capstone, experience at least two HIPs embedded into each major, and continuously reflect on their pathway and competencies throughout their Voyage. A subset of all identified HIPs has been narrowed based on current CLAS practices, resources available at GVSU, and clarity of definitions. We believe this list includes nearly all HIPs-like courses in CLAS but continue to revise and work with faculty to ensure inclusion of excellent pedagogies.

The high-impact practices (HIPs) listed here are key to advancing initiatives around equity and student success, especially for historically marginalized and minoritized students (Finley & McNair, 2013). Characteristics of HIPs that make an experience engaging includes:

- Performance expectations set at appropriately high levels;
- Significant investment of time and effort by students over an extended period of time;
- Interactions with faculty and peers about substantive matters;
- Experiences with diversity, wherein students are exposed to and must contend with people and circumstances that differ from those with which students are familiar;
- Frequent, timely, and constructive feedback;
- Periodic, structured opportunities to reflect and integrate learning;
- Opportunities to discover relevance of learning through real-world applications;
- Public demonstration of competence.

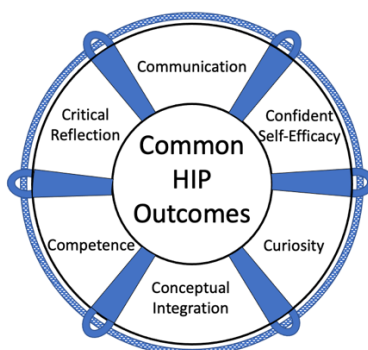
(Kuh & O'Donnell, 2013)

We know that currently in CLAS, some students in some majors and programs engage in the beneficial characteristics above. Through the Voyage, we commit to ensuring this experience is embedded for all students in all major and programs. The College is also committing resources to supporting this endeavor through the CLAS Center for Experiential Learning (CCEL). The CCEL will support faculty integration and implementation of HIPs, address equity gaps for student participation, and support sustainability in efforts for faculty and staff who are critical to HIPs. The CCEL is committed to learning from faculty how to best support scaled implementation of HIPs.

In the 2022-2023 AY, six faculty fellows have been selected to support the building out of the Voyage. As a start, the fellows broke into teams surrounding key HIPs areas, including the HIPs categories in the proceeding pages. Through careful review of existing models, literature, and CLAS' practices, the fellows have crafted the draft Curricular Frameworks for High-Impact Practices you see below. These frameworks are the beginning of a set of resources to support the implementation and widespread adoption of the high-impact practices throughout CLAS. Included in this document are common SLOs defined across all HIPs, assessment resources for which will be collaboratively developed by CCEL.

¹ High-Impact Practices, or HIPs, are engaging educational experiences that have been linked to an increase in desired outcomes for students such as retention, sense of belonging, civic mindedness, and post-college success. For more, and our suggested taxonomy for determining if an experience is high impact, see Lee, Wilkum, Immel and Fischer (2021).

Common High Impact Practices (HIP) Student Learning Outcomes (SLO)



Six Cs of the CLAS Voyage: student learning outcomes and strategies common to HIPs:

Curiosity

Cultivation of curiosity and the courage to ask audacious questions.

Confident Self-efficacy

Development of self-efficacy as students move from being receivers of knowledge to producers or critics with the skill sets to explore questions.

Conceptual Integration

Students' creation of meaning and relevance in their learning. Students apply knowledge from experiences and multiple disciplines to new, complex situations. Systematic and regular in-class and out-of-class opportunities to apply concepts to real-world applications with student- and/or client-provided parameters. Students see the connections between different courses, out-of class experiences, and life beyond the institution.

Competence

Development of competence as deep disciplinary understanding and skills grow. Multiple explicit opportunities for students to share knowledge in and outside HIP experience. Opportunity to demonstrate competence publicly as appropriate to the level of the course.

Communication

Extended development of communication skills (oral, written, or performative) that support meaningful sharing/dissemination of work. Ability to employ multiple forms of communication in translating and disseminating experiential learning (campus, public, or personal).

Critical Reflection

Metacognitive reflection that integrates learning experiences. Reflection offers opportunities to process, adapt, and integrate learning from the classroom and community settings into one's life. Reflection is a vehicle for learning, critical thinking, and assessment.

Scholarly/Creative Practice (SCP) courses

Description:

Scholarly/Creative Practice courses are designed to engage the common HIP outcomes through mentored inquiry² or creative exploration that is original to the student, at a level and with a skill set appropriate to the course.

These courses can operate at all levels – beginning, intermediate, and advanced – and can engage scaffolding strategies in the major. Within the common framework, these courses can take many forms. Many extant courses are likely to function in this way, and new courses could be developed.

Student learning outcomes common to HIPs are achieved through focus on:

Characteristic 1: The *process* of inquiry and creation, not solely on the end product.

Characteristic 2: *Scaffolded* learning within the course, including:

- Identification of questions or issues for exploration;
- Development of skill sets needed to identify and implement appropriate methodologies;
- Development of self-efficacy in exploration and inquiry;
- Recognition of scholarly/creative activity as a public good – students learn skills needed to communicate results (e.g., speaking, writing, exhibiting, performing, or producing) and share results in settings appropriate to the course

Characteristic 3: Sustained time on task, supported by substantive, meaningful feedback from both peers and instructor(s).

Characteristic 4: *Asset-based* course design: The course is designed so that all students have equitable access to experiences and opportunities.

Characteristic 5: Structured, formative reflection and integration.

² In the STEM fields, these are often characterized as “Course-Based Undergraduate Research Experiences” or CUREs.

Internships, Co-Ops or Practica

Description:

Internships provide hands-on, supervised experience in the field students are studying. Students apply the concepts from the classroom to a work environment. Internships are an increasingly common form of experiential learning providing students with direct experience in a work setting—usually related to their career interests—and to give them the benefit of supervision and coaching from professionals.

Student learning outcomes common to HIPs are achieved through focus on:

Characteristic 1: An experience which is an extension of the classroom, a learning experience that provides knowledge gained in the classroom.

The Internship opportunity integrates responsibilities and tasks that are directly related to the student's academic discipline. Concepts, theories, and practices learned in the classroom are applied and further knowledge is gained through the work.

Characteristic 2: Skills or knowledge learned which must be transferable to other employment settings.

Student reflects and can articulate a minimum of 3 transferrable skills related to GVSU's Career evaluation standards:

1. Oral/Written Communication
2. Teamwork/Collaboration
3. Technology Literacy
4. Leadership and/or initiative
5. Professional and Work Ethic
6. Career Management, Global and Intercultural Fluency

Characteristic 3: A defined beginning and end to the experience.

Characteristic 4: Clearly defined learning objectives/goals related to the professional goals of the coursework, and internship experience expectations as outlined within the course.

The employer/supervisor and faculty or internship coordinator has identified at least 3 learning objectives/goals related to the professional goals and internship experience expectations as outlined within the course.

Characteristic 5: Routine feedback by the employer.

The immediate supervisor provides at least one formal feedback at the end of the internship, and ongoing informal feedback on the student's skills:

1. Oral/Written Communication
2. Teamwork/Collaboration
3. Technology Literacy
4. Leadership and/or initiative
5. Professional and Work Ethic

Study Abroad³

Description:

This category consists of programs of study conducted away from the University, usually in another country⁴. These programs are sometimes led by members of the GVSU Faculty in conjunction with a partner university, while others are administered by third-party providers. Students complete coursework for credit through a university outside of GVSU, working in concert with their major program here at home to ensure that courses fulfill graduation requirements.

Student learning outcomes common to HIPs are achieved through focus on:

Characteristic 1: Direct interaction with other cultures.

This is usually accomplished by the immersion of the student within the culture outside of the United States.

Characteristic 2: Encountering the complexity of the global context and issues.

Students have the opportunity to engage in academic inquiry in a manner afforded by the specific off-campus setting.

Characteristic 3: Applying disciplinary knowledge in a global context.

This is accomplished by communicating knowledge in the language of the setting, by interacting with local people, and participating in relevant cultural activities.

Characteristic 4: Developing cultural and linguistic competence as appropriate.

Not all study abroad programs are conducted in English. In these cases students are expected to be able to converse in the language of the host country.

³ This category was formerly called “Study Abroad/Away and Global Learning.” Global learning a component of General Education and so we are considering the ways in which global learning is included in all experiences, not just as a HIP.

⁴ The current framework is focused on “abroad” experiences, Voyage team continues to consider ways in which “Study Away” experiences, and other experiences outside of the classroom community, may be a high-impact practice. Certainly, for instance, a week-long experience away from GVSU is more likely to be high-impact than a one-hour field trip, but other distinguishing factors may be involved.

Student Learning Communities

Description:

Student Learning Communities (SLC) connect students with each other and one or more faculty members to collaborate together around shared learning goals. SLCs intentionally plan the curriculum to engage students in problem-based or integrated learning which is built on trust, accountability, and active participation.

Student learning outcomes common to HIPs are achieved through focus on:

Characteristic 1: Engagement in authentic problem-based learning in one course or deliberate integrated learning through two courses or two sections.

Key to building a learning community is for students to work together in one of the following models:

- Students learn by finding solutions in a problem-based learning environment within one course, working with one or more faculty members.
- Students learn through building a community in set of linked courses or sections where the curriculum is thoughtfully integrated or intentionally coordinated by two faculty members.

Characteristic 2: Collaboration and work in robust teams.

Key to student success in these learning environments is the deliberate integration of collaborative teamwork. This can be done through specific assignments, daily teaching practices, small projects, or culminating projects.

Characteristic 3: Participation in co- or extra-curricular activities connected to the curricular content.

Another key feature of such learning communities is the intentional use of co- or extra-curricular activities that tie directly to the curriculum within one course, two courses, or two sections. Examples might include events on campus, brief field trips, conference participation, and the like.

Community-Based Learning

Description:

Community Based Learning⁵ (CBL) is a pedagogical strategy used in coursework that requires students to engage with community partners as part of their required academic work in a specific course section. By working with members of the community, students are better prepared for both careers and civic participation in a democratic society.

Student learning outcomes common to HIPs are achieved through focus on:

Characteristic 1: Direct experiences in community settings.

Students have 25% of course work linked to direct contact with community partner and/or beneficiary. This includes at least two of the following:

1. Formal and informal meetings with community partners and/or beneficiaries that the faculty has established ahead of time
2. Training sessions where students reflect on best practices for ethical engagement with community partners and beneficiaries
3. Immersion and interactions with community partners and beneficiaries
4. Pre- and/or post-experience gatherings
5. Written communication with community partner and/or beneficiary that outlines documentation or work, communication, next steps, and other artifacts of engagement.

Characteristic 2: Integration of theory and practice.

The course provides opportunities for students by meeting each of the following criteria:

1. Establish a connection between course concepts/reading material and engaged learning with a community partner
2. Think critically articulating problems and possible solutions through reflective practice: students define a situation as problematic, identify the problem, explore the root causes of that problem, envision solutions.

Characteristic 3: Participation in mutually beneficial partnerships with community organizations.

The following steps are in place and there is evidence of each to create mutually beneficial partnerships:

1. Build relationships with potential community partners
2. Establish goals with community partners
3. Co-create projects with mutual benefit in mind
4. Communicate consistently and adjust as needed

Characteristic 4: Critical reflection on their community-based experiences.

There is an intentional and clearly defined structure in place for critical reflection of the experience that includes the following:

⁵ We include "Service Learning" in this category as the definition included here includes mutual beneficence, typically a distinguishing factor between community-based and service learning.

1. A minimum of pre, during, and post experience reflection. Students should be assessed based on their depth of learning as demonstrated through a more nuanced level of reflection that can only be achieved through a truly engaged experience.
2. A variety of methods for the delivery of the reflection (written - journals, essays; oral - small group discussions, presentations; or visual - art)
3. A mix of intentional prompts for reflection as well as an openness to unexpected outcomes
4. Reflection that focuses on both the experience as well as the transferable skills and application of the experience to the students
5. Includes community members in the reflection that takes place during the experience (at minimum)

Resources for implementation⁶:

Community Engagement:

- **Build relationships with potential community partners** – use the [Laker Effect Map](#) to recognize where colleagues hold relationships, Seek introductions from colleagues, never cold call if it can be avoided and do not bombard any current or potential community partners with students who need something from them.
- **Training for engaging in the community-** [ACTIVATE](#) modules offer Training sessions in ethical community work, modules can be modified for specific classes or projects.

⁶ We include these resources here as an example of what will be included in the handbook used to support implementation and adoption of HIPs. We understand and appreciate that faculty and staff are at varied levels of expertise and comfort with HIPs, and we anticipate continuously generating and supporting lists of resources for each HIP category.

Capstones

Description:

“Each undergraduate major curriculum must include a Capstone experience (generally a senior-level course of three credits) with four general criteria: *breadth* (students must draw on several courses within their major), *integration/synthesis* (students combine different skills and areas of knowledge into a single experience), *application* (e.g., students use their knowledge and skills to examine an issue and produce a substantial outcome), and *transition* (e.g., students reflect on and gain knowledge and skills that prepare them to move from college to the world beyond).”

Source: <https://www.gvsu.edu/facultygov/capstone-definition-from-gvsu-catalog-209.htm>

Within this common framework Capstones take many different forms, as appropriate to the discipline.

Student learning outcomes common to HIPs are achieved through focus on:

Characteristic 1: *Breadth and integration:*

- Students complete a project or projects that build(s) on breadth of prior learning from courses and other experiences in the major.
- Students integrate ideas, experiences, and skills from multiple courses and experiences and transfer learning to new situations appropriate to the discipline.

Characteristic 2: *Application:*

- Students apply deep disciplinary knowledge and skills to examine an issue or problem and produce a substantial product that extends their capacities or fills a gap.
- Students demonstrate confident self-efficacy as producers in the process of exploration and inquiry, as appropriate to the discipline.

Characteristic 3: *Reflection:*

- Students engage in structured metacognitive reflection, with a focus on consideration of the knowledge and skills that are preparing them to move from college to the world beyond.

Characteristic 4: *Dissemination:*

- Recognition of scholarly/creative activity as a public good: The instructor identifies and facilitates opportunities for students to disseminate their work, either in the classroom, elsewhere on campus, or in professional settings related to the field of study (such as conferences, exhibits, performances, client meetings, community engagement, posters, or publications).
- Students apply disciplinary skills needed to communicate results effectively (e.g., speaking, writing, exhibiting, performing, or producing) in settings appropriate to the discipline.

Framework References

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https://www.tamtu.edu/adminis/iep/documents/Kuh_Plenary_Presentation_and_Handouts.pdf
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