

# Using Service-Learning as Experiential-Learning: Strategies for Developing Successful Domestic and International Partnerships

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## Abstract

Experiential education is an emerging pedagogical strategy. An extensive review of the literature on thinking and learning in educational settings shows that if the focus of educational experiences is having learners actively engaged in the teaching-learning process then experiential-learning is “learning through reflection about what one is doing”. Experiential learning can look quite different in a variety of undergraduate and graduate curricula, across varying majors and among different educational and community institutions. Service learning is one type of experiential learning that combines community service (e.g., teaching in underserved communities) with academic objectives and includes a self-reflection component. Before experiential learning is embedded into courses faculty must develop and sustain domestic and international partnerships. The four distinct steps needed to establish these partnerships are identification, development of trust, implementation, and maintenance. It is also important that all members of these partnerships share a mutual respect, common principles, similar interests and goals, and are in agreement with the delegation of roles and responsibilities to ensure the success of the project. In this presentation, the authors describe how the integration of these four stages of development led to the successful creation of long-term experiential-learning partnerships and highlight what they have learned and how these lessons might help faculty peers develop these competencies.

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