

## Experiential Education Notation (EXP) Guidelines

These guidelines will assist in determining which courses qualify for the Experiential Education Notation (**EXP**) to be included in the University of Toronto Mississauga (UTM) Academic Calendar. The approach to experiential learning at UTM has been, and continues to be, that we offer a wide array of different experiential opportunities to students and this notation is part of making those opportunities clear to our students.

### **Defining Experiential Learning for Calendar Inclusion:**

Experiential learning is about learning by doing through carefully chosen experiences that are supported by reflection, critical analysis and synthesis<sup>1</sup>.

Experiential education can take place both within and outside of the classroom and will typically involve a relationship beyond that between an individual instructor and a student. In the classroom, lab and tutorial, experiential learning goes beyond situations in which students participate in a prescribed set of learning experiences and imitate the examples provided to them; rather it is an opportunity for students to play a part in managing their own learning and reflecting upon their experiences. Experiential learning can occur in field trips, a field course, an internship or practicum, and in laboratory experiences that involve student initiated projects and experiments. Other experiential learning opportunities that take place within the classroom include students participating in case studies, role-playing, simulations, and debates, and then reflecting on what they have learned in these experiences.<sup>2</sup> Outside of the classroom, experiential learning includes a student who creatively interacts with a business, government or community group or the physical environment, and then reflects on what has been learned. Experiential learning often promotes strong relationships between academic studies and either career exploration or community involvement.

In experiential learning in higher education, the primary focus should be on engaging students in a process that best enhances their learning – a process that includes feedback on the effectiveness of their learning efforts<sup>3</sup>.

### **Addition of EXP Notation to UTM Calendar Courses:**

In order to easily identify undergraduate courses within the UTM Academic Calendar that include a significant experiential learning component, the **EXP** notation has been added as an option to select in the Course Distribution field through the Academic Calendar Database. Including the **EXP** notation with courses will enable students to readily identify those courses that involve experiential learning, as well

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://uwaterloo.ca/centre-for-teaching-excellence/resources/integrative-learning/experiential-learning>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.ryerson.ca/content/dam/lt/resources/handouts/ExperientialLearningReport.pdf>

<sup>3</sup>

[http://www.hear.ac.uk/assets/documents/subjects/medev/178\\_Learning\\_styles\\_and\\_learning\\_spaces\\_Kolb\\_himself.pdf](http://www.hear.ac.uk/assets/documents/subjects/medev/178_Learning_styles_and_learning_spaces_Kolb_himself.pdf)

## Experiential Education Notation (EXP) Guidelines

as assisting the Experiential Education Unit in making sure these courses are accounted for in various reporting mechanisms, and identifying instructors who might wish to share their experiments in experiential learning with one another and other interested colleagues.

### **Criteria for selection:**

In order to select the **EXP** option for a given course it must contain learning and reflection criteria that have been described earlier, and it must include a minimum of 10 hours per semester of experiential education. Some likely types of courses that may be suitable for EXP designation include:

- An internship or practicum with an external organization
- A course with a community-engaged learning component
- Courses with substantial hands on productive activities where students engage with their environment and reflect upon those activities
  - For example: devising and conducting their own experiments, performing in a play as part of the course, doing studio work, working in teams on case studies.
- Courses that involve field trips where students gather data and conduct experiments
- Research Opportunity Program (ROP) courses
- Independent Research Courses that have students engaging in hands on research
- Courses that have students work in teams to produce blogs/podcasts/social media campaigns

If your Department engages in assessing students for an experiential and/or independent learning requirement for program completion you may wish to include language in your course descriptions whether a course designated as EXP fulfils the requirement.