

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Overall Learning Goals Addressed: Social Justice, Civic life, Perspective, Civic Engagement

Students will choose one course already required for their major or the Explorations section of the Core (designated with an “E” in the title) that involves experiential learning oriented toward questions of social justice.

To succeed as an experiential learning component of the Core, curricular and co-curricular offerings must satisfy three criteria: (1) Students are to enter into socially, economically, and/or politically marginalized, oppressed, and/or distressed communities, (2) for a period of time sufficient to meet expected learning objectives (outlined below), (3) achieved by means of personal and academic guided reflection.

The university provides a number of curricular and co-curricular offerings that may be adopted or adapted to the needs of this component of the Core. Specific current offerings can serve as models for experiential learning. These include domestic and international courses and/or programs that *require* an integrated, reflective, community-based learning component as part of the coursework, and certain immersion experiences that *include* structured pre- and post-experience reflection. Some examples of current offerings that would satisfy the experiential learning criteria (listed above) include Arrupe Partnerships for Community-based Learning placements (when *required* as part of a course), Kolvenbach Solidarity Program immersions, and praxis courses offered by Santa Clara’s El Salvador Program (*Casa de la Solidaridad*).

Other current curricular and co-curricular offerings including the Santa Clara Community Action Program, internships (such as those offered by DISCOVER and in some academic departments), selected study abroad programs (e.g., in London or the Baja alternative spring break), and the Local Religion Project would require some adaptation to satisfy the experiential learning criteria.

As to expected learning objectives, curricular and co-curricular offerings in experiential learning should aim to link analytical perspectives developed in the classroom with experience and reflective learning so that students will be able

- to recognize the benefits of life-long responsible citizenship and civic engagement in personal and professional activities (satisfying the learning goal of *civic life* within the category of *knowledge*);
- to interact appropriately, sensitively, and self-critically with people in the communities in which they work and to appreciate the formal and informal knowledge, wisdom, and skills that individuals in these communities possess (satisfying the learning goal of *perspective* within the category of *engagement with the world*);

- to recognize, analyze, and understand the social reality and injustices in contemporary society, including recognizing the relative privilege or marginalization of their own and other groups (satisfying the learning goal of *social justice* within the category of *engagement with the world*); and
- to advance their ability and confidence to make vocational choices in light of both their greatest gifts and the world's greatest needs (satisfying the learning goal of *civic engagement* within the category of *engagement with the world*).