

Fall 1993

Vocational Education 5100 - Experiential Learning and Youth Development

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Robert Shumer
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Fall 1993

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION 5100 -- EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING
AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

COURSE SYLLABUS

1. Course objectives:

- . analyze the processes by which we learn
- . analyze the relationship between experience and learning
- . understand the differences between traditional and progressive education
- . understand the barriers/problems with experiential learning
- . analyze how youth apply experience in the learning process
- . understand role community-based organizations play in youth development
- . learn how to create a portfolio to demonstrate learning
- . learn how to use journals to reflect on life experiences
- . develop observation skills
- . explain the relationship between experience and motivation
- . understand essential elements of the experiential learning process
- . evaluate the role of experience in the learning process

2. Conceptual Outline/Topics and Student Assignments

SESSION 1: Overview of program/enrollment process

Introduction of students

Discuss goals of the course and format of instruction

Small group work: What to you do/what do you want to learn?

Reading Assignment: Experience and Education to P.91 (whole book).

Journal Assignment: Describe a typical learning activity at your field site.

SESSION 2: Discuss Experience and Education -- what is relationship of experience to learning? How does progressive education differ from traditional education? What is the meaning of "purpose?"

How do you evaluate experiential learning? Portfolios -- one way to demonstrate what people learn: a method for the program. Describe the portfolio process (Assessing Learning). Complete Portfolio worksheet.

Critique of Dewey: Explain why you think Dewey is right or wrong.
(Written assignment)

Small group work: Explain how you evaluate learning at your field placement. Also, come prepared to present a problem encountered at your site for the group to analyze.

Select three (3) topics for guest speakers for class. Suggest possible names and reasons why you think they might be suitable for the class.

Reading Assignment: The Theory of Experiential Education. Read Historical Foundations (pp. 5-62); Psychological Foundations (pp.131-180); The Future of Experiential Education (pp.259-270).

Journal Assignment: Describe what you want to learn and how you can demonstrate your knowledge through a portfolio format.

SESSION 3: Discuss Theory of Experiential Education. What are the historical foundations of experiential learning? What are the different perspectives on experiences presented in the book? What is the difference between learning from experience and learning from other modes of instruction?

Simulation: Come prepared to present a simulation of effective learning activities at your field site. Also prepare a simulation demonstrating a typical instructional problem.

Small group work: Discuss criticisms of the theories presented in terms of your own programs -- what theory doesn't fit or seems inadequate?

Small group work: Developing a peer teaching network -- prepare a 10-15 minute presentation about your agency/site placement. Explain the underlying educational philosophy, what you do, and how you teach.

Reading Assignment: A Matter of Time. Read Pages 9 - 119.

No Journal Assignment

Paper Assignment: Write a 2-3 page paper describing how youth spend their time at your field site. Discuss how this compares with the patterns/trends portrayed in the book, A Matter of Time.

SESSION 4: Discuss A Matter of Time. How do youth spend their out of school time? What motivates youth to get involved in out of

school activities? What differences exist in participation patterns between rich and poor, urban and rural youth?

Small group work: Select a topic which focuses on a major educational problem at your field site. Be prepared to discuss how you plan to overcome the problem. Explain how you are applying any of the concepts covered in the readings.

Small group work: Strategy session -- how do we respond to the recommendations made from A Matter of Time? What are the implications for community-based organizations interested in supporting healthy youth development?

Guest speaker: on topic selected by class

Reading Assignment: Optimal Experience. Read Theoretical Model of Optimal Experience (pp. 3-84; one chapter from sections II and III). Read last section on Measurement of Flow in Everyday Life (pp. 251-383). Prepare to discuss the chapters through teams (to be determined in class).

Journal Assignment: Open topic

SESSION 5: Discuss Optimal Experience. What is flow? What are the implications of flow for learning in any environment? What are the characteristics of an experience which makes it "optimal?"

Prepare to teach a lesson to two others which will demonstrate a "flow" experience. One other student will evaluate the activity and report on the level of engagement of the participants in the activity.

Small group work: Discuss Section 5, Optimal Experience. Explain in everyday language what this section means! What is the optimal experience in the family context? in relation to self-esteem? in terms of daily experiences?

Select topic of interest from your field site and find one journal/article which covers the topic. Prepare a one (1) page outline of the article and discuss it with the class.

Journal Assignment: Describe how you learn to do things this week. Be specific...explain what you did to learn a new task.

Session 6: Open Topic: This class will have an open forum. Students, in groups, are expected to present topics and formats for the session. We should decide on issues by Session 4.

Review four major readings: What is your perspective on the readings now that we are near the end of the quarter? How the three books converge?

Small group work: Discuss the value of experience in the development of youth. What role should experiential programs play?

Paper Assignment: Write a final paper describing the role of experience in the learning process. Specifically discuss how theories and practices of experiential learning are applied.

Session 7: Discuss individual articles for each participant. Explain how your article exemplifies one of the theories or topics presented in the course.

Discuss the final papers, explaining how your understanding of experiential learning has/has not been changed.

Present portfolios -- explain and display what you learned this quarter. Develop plan for next quarter's portfolio development

Course evaluation: discuss the value of the course in terms of effective learning--what worked and what needs to be improved?

Bibliography

- (1) Dewey, John (1938). Experience and Education.
- (2) Csikszentmihalyi, M. and I. Csikszentmihalyi (1988). Optimal Experience.
- (3) Kraft, Richard and Sakofs, Mitchell (1984). The Theory of Experiential Education.
- (4) Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development (1992). Task Force on Youth Development and Community Programs. A Matter of Time: Risk and Opportunity in the Nonschool Hours.
- (5) Whitaker, Urban (1991). Assessing Learning (OPTIONAL)

Name:
Quarter:

PORTFOLIO

Youth Development Leadership Program

What do you plan to learn this quarter?

How best can you demonstrate accomplishment of your goals?

What kind of portfolio entries would be most appropriate to demonstrate your acquired knowledge?

PORTFOLIO ENTRIES

List your entries in numerical order. Identify the entry and describe briefly what learning objective or knowledge acquisition is being demonstrated.

ITEM

KNOWLEDGE ACQUIRED

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.