Project: Wright State designs a unique experiential learning initiative for their students

Description:
Every student will be provided with experiential learning opportunities that are relevant to their education, true to content delivery, and in line with their aspirations. This distinctive initiative will be flexible enough to accommodate the needs of the Wright State student body, which includes direct from high school students but also many transfer students, adult learners with family and work responsibilities, and first-generation students. Experiential learning opportunities will be available throughout a student’s Wright State career, including in the WSU Core. The details of a new Wright State definition of experiential learning are yet to be crafted, but experiential learning often includes internships, study abroad, research or creative projects, service learning, and leadership opportunities. Experiential learning programs also frequently emphasize problem solving, opportunities for formal student reflection, and ongoing assessment.

Actions:
1. Research best practices utilizing a variety of appropriate resources. Investigate institutions with successful required experiential learning programs, and student populations similar to Wright State
2. Inventory existing experiential learning opportunities across Wright State
3. Define experiential learning for WSU, including both curricular and co-curricular experiences
4. Charge faculty with integrating experiential learning into each program in a way that is meaningful, but does not impede progress to graduation, or create a further financial or time burdens for students – program faculty will define experiential learning for their students which may include on-campus employment, or related off-campus employment, to fulfill their experiential learning requirement
5. Provide support for faculty redesign of courses to include experiential learning – utilize resources and personnel from the WSU Career Network, community partners, and CTL
6. Create, develop, and add an experiential learning component to the Wright State Core
7. Phase in the initiative
8. Evaluate impact through the development of a strong assessment program based on the collection of appropriate data

Milestones:
1. 3-5 established experiential learning programs from peer institutions with similar student bodies located, and WSU appropriate aspects of those programs identified, and slated for incorporation
2. A. Spreadsheet for inventorying current experiential learning opportunities developed based on best practices – a potential spreadsheet that captures this information is currently under development
   
   B. Deans and VPs collect information on existing experiential learning initiatives, and determine if the experiential learning initiative is credit bearing, required for a major, part of a course, or co-curricular, etc.

3. Faculty Senate crafts a WSU-specific definition of experiential learning with input from across campus

4. Department chairs or deans oversee development of appropriate experiential learning for each program or college

5. CTL and WSU Career Network personnel provide critical support for faculty who wish to redesign their courses

6. Senate Wright State Core Oversight Committee facilitates creation of experiential learning options within the Core

7. Initiative implemented

8. Robust data collection and assessment implemented

**Metrics:**

1. Peer programs identified and evaluated
2. Menu of experiential learning opportunities increases
3. WSU-specific definition of experiential learning crafted
4. Experiential learning integrated across programs, and across campus
5. Faculty training becomes available, and reporting shows that faculty is taking advantage of it
6. Experiential learning is integrated into the WSU Core
7. Beginning in F20 experiential learning appears on student transcripts, and by 2024 all students entering F20 and after graduate with required experiential learning
8. Data collection reveals success of the initiative
   
   A. Community partner and student surveys reveal high percentages of satisfaction with the initiative
   
   B. Faculty surveys show an engaged and enthusiastic faculty
   
   C. Initiative administration surveys show a satisfaction with the program’s processes and procedures
   
   D. Student and employer outcome surveys and evaluations show students are participating in experiential learning in greater numbers, and are attaining gainful employment related to their majors at increasing rates
   
   E. The number of employer/community experiential learning partnerships increase
   
   F. Associated WSU personnel present regionally and nationally at appropriate conferences on the success of the program bringing visibility, and greater prominence to the university
   
   G. Wright State’s student enrollment increases as the new experiential learning program attracts growing numbers of students
H. Student retention increases as students discover the benefits of the program, and make powerful connections both inside and outside the university.

I. Distinguished faculty from around the globe are attracted to WSU, desiring to be a part of an innovative and successful new experiential learning program.

Timeline:
1. Completed by end of F18
2. Completed by Jan 2019
3. Completed by end of S19
4. Completed by end of F19
5. Beginning F19
6. Beginning F19
7. Begins as graduation requirement for freshmen starting F20
8. Beginning F20

Resources:
1. Funding for visits to successful peer programs
5. Resources to CTL and appropriate career network partners to facilitate faculty training
7. Resources needed to establish the experiential learning hub to manage the initiative (see project 3)

Success factors:
This initiative will require institutional buy-in, collaboration and a culture shift

A. Campus leaders will need to vigorously promote the new experiential learning program to all WSU employees, students, community partners, and other stakeholders; highlighting the many benefits to our key constituencies

B. Campus leaders will need to design and implement effective strategies to create a sense of urgency among the identified partners of the new experiential learning initiative in order to usher in a new culture of collaborative and communication excellence

Suggested project ownership: Faculty Senate and appropriate partners