

Creation of Student Engagement Policies and Guidelines

Approved by the Faculty Senate, 5/11/15

Approved Student Engagement Policies & Guidelines (new pages in the 2015-16 Catalog):

Undergraduate Engagement Experiences

Engagement occurs when students translate and apply their classroom learning into practices and experiences beyond the classroom that impact their professional and personal lives. Student Engagement occurs in the following learning experiences:

- *Students' original and collaborative advanced laboratory and field research;*
- *Students' creative performances, artistic endeavors, and productions;*
- *Internships and externships;*
- *Practicums and preceptorships;*
- *Study abroad experiences;*
- *Service learning projects—community-based activities to address critical needs; and,*
- *A wide range of student-centered co-curricular activities that build on classroom learning.*

Students may complete more than one engagement experience by registering for a course or non-credit experience that has a different activity and competency. There is no limit on the number of student engagement courses or non-credit experiences that a student may complete.

Core Outcomes of an Engaged Learning Experience

Student engagement courses or non-credit experiences are distinguished from other learning experiences by the fact that they focus on the following:

1) *Engagement Activities* [\[link\]](#)

Engagement Activities develop professional and personal skills. Each engagement experience must focus on one of the following: community partnership, creative expression, discovery, entrepreneurship, intercultural exploration, leadership and professional development.

2) *Engagement Competencies* [\[link\]](#)

Engagement Competencies are the lenses through which students focus their activity to develop an appreciation for and an understanding of that area. Each engagement experience must focus on one of the following: civic and community responsibility, diversity and identity, global and intercultural comprehension, innovation and creativity, inter-disciplinarity, professionalism, and sustainability.

3) *Engagement Professional and Personal Skills* [\[link\]](#)

The following are some recommended skills that can be assessed in relation to any engaged learning activity and competency, although others may be identified by colleges and departments: reflection and application (required of all engagement experiences), communication, collaboration/teamwork, problem solving/critical thinking, project management, academic and non-academic career preparedness.

A credit-based or non-credit curricular engaged learning experience must focus on one engagement activity and one competency. In addition, it is recommended that each experience contributes to the development of specific professional and personal skills.

Graduating with an Engaged Learning Experience

To graduate with an “Engaged Learning Experience” notation on the academic transcript, students must successfully complete (1) at least one credit-based engagement course at the 300- or 400-level, or (2) a non-credit engagement experience that has been approved by the University Office of Student Engagement. **Note:** If the upper division course is assigned a regular grade, the student must achieve a C or higher to graduate with “Engaged Learning.”

Guidelines for Credit-Based Engagement Courses:

1. Credit-based engagement courses may be offered by an academic college or department.
2. The “engaged learning experience” attribute may be assigned at the course or section level.
3. All student engagement courses must have a syllabus detailing: (1) an engagement activity, (2) an engagement competency, (3) student learning outcomes, (4) grading policy, (5) expected work products and reflection activities, and (6) references to policies such as those on threatening behavior, academic integrity, and accessibility and accommodations. The syllabus must comply with the [Undergraduate Course Syllabus Policy](#).
4. The home department and college must approve the engagement course syllabus. No course will be identified in the Course Catalog or Schedule of Classes as meeting the University’s criteria for an “Engaged Learning Experience” without college approval.
5. Grading System: Per the course category (e.g., Individual Studies, Small Group Courses) engagement courses may be offered for the [S,P,F,I](#) alternative grading system, [Pass/Fail](#) system, or [Regular Grades](#), as long as the system is identified in the syllabus. The grading system is determined by the offering instructor and applied consistently at the section level of that course. **Note:** For upper division courses with regular grades, students must earn a C grade or higher to graduate with an “Engaged Learning Experience” on their transcript. Colleges may require a grade higher than C-level to earn the notation.
6. Courses may be offered online, in person, or in hybrid formats.

Guidelines for Non-Credit Engagement Experiences:

Students may also meet the criteria for graduating with an “Engaged Learning Experience” by registering for one of the University’s approved non-credit experiences. The Office of Student Engagement maintains a list of approved non-credit learning experiences. These engagement experiences must:

1. Be approved by the Office of Student Engagement’s committee of faculty and staff that reviews all non-credit experiences;
2. Identify the engagement activity and engagement competency related to the experience; and
3. Include information on (1) expected supervision by faculty or staff, (2) required hours of engagement, (3) a reflection component that helps students find meaning in the experience, and (4) the way in which the supervisor will verify that the required minimum 45 hours of work and the reflection piece have been completed by the student.

Rationale for the new Policies/Guidelines:

- The Student Engagement Initiative supports the UA’s *Never Settle Strategic Plan*, which states: *through a learning experience tailored to individual students’ needs, the UA will graduate future leaders who have the skills to apply their knowledge and solve the world’s grand challenges.*
- Students who are engaged in university-approved activities beyond the classroom are more likely to complete degree programs than students who simply attend classes.

- By recognizing one or more engaged learning experiences on the academic transcript, the UA will acknowledge that these hands-on experiences are as credible and valuable in a college education as classroom learning experiences.
- The engagement activities and competencies identified on a student's academic transcript will be helpful to future employers, as well as graduate/professional school admissions officers.

Effective Term:

Summer/Fall 2015 for all new and continuing undergraduates, regardless of Catalog year