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*HUMN 3190 & HUMN 4190 EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING*

This experiential course is intended to provide advanced undergraduate learners with direct experience working (1) with other learners within the context of our university setting; & (2) within an academic research context working as professionals in related research fields to learners' interests, including information management and creative production. Learners are expected to develop applied skills; to implement and evaluate an effective program; to assess personal interests and strengths in working with others; and to develop an appreciation of the diverse roles and responsibilities learners experience in these settings.

Learners propose academic, artistic, experimental, athletic, or entrepreneurial pursuits, which may contribute to community and cultural community organizations. Simply participating in these pursuits is not necessarily indicative of strong leadership skills. The ways in which learners apply their skills and competencies may take many forms. For example, past learners demonstrated exceptional skills by educating youth or community groups (like teaching art, music, or drama), coaching or leading an athletic team, initiating and advocating awareness for a particular cause, developing and executing a fundraising campaign, founding a new campus or community organization, starting a business, learning and creating with new software or hardware, or by working closely and directly with supervising faculty.

*Learning Outcomes*

Learning Outcomes, designed as such, indicates that on successful completion of this course students will be able to…

(1) Identify, differentiate, and explain multiple issues, theories, methods, vocabulary, and other challenges associated with media today by meeting and interacting with other students, keeping a thoughtful, self-directed journal, writing threshold concepts, and meeting with course directors.

(2) Differentiate among multiple related resources by accessing materials form across campus community as demonstrated in reflective writing and interpersonal meetings.

(3) Create writing works that apply outstanding communication skills in weekly journal entries, writing threshold concepts, and final writing. All writing demonstrates skill in reflective practice focusing on the relationship between theoretical and applied knowledge and on personal interactions and self-knowledge.

(4) Apply professional and ethical standards by attending to social justice issues, intercultural competencies, designing meaningful interventions, and following professional and programmatic standard practices.

(5) Demonstrate initiative in student agency and active leadership through regular interactions with other students, other faculty, and course director.

(6) Recognize interpersonal strengths and areas for improvement, including intercultural competence by interacting with others, collaboration practices, and professional performance.

(7) Appreciate uncertainty, ambiguity, and the limits of knowledge by creating unique, reflective, and responsible writing in journals, final letters, weekly meetings, and threshold concepts.

(8) Evaluate individual beliefs, truth claims, and credibility from sources by researching multiple points of view for all writing, especially threshold concepts, and final letter.

(9) Appreciate themselves as autonomous learners by designing independent learning and reading plans outlined in journal reflections.

*Required Texts*

Note: readings will be announced and provided (through library) throughout the semester.

*Diversity Statement*

Professor Lipton designed this experiential learning opportunity as an intentional commitment to extending and sustaining the diversity of our community, promoting an environment of equity, inclusion, and respect for difference. This course recognizes all identities and expressions of identity are a normal and healthy part of an intersectional spectrum. This course prioritizes

inclusion as an ongoing collaborative process of growth that we continually address within all aspects of course content, course requirements, and our language habits. These language habits directly impact our thinking and behaviour, and we keep our judgments and evaluations in check. WE all deserve to be treated with dignity and respect. WE all want to promote safer and inclusive learning environments free from discrimination and harassment.

Canadians may embrace a national imaginary that holds diversity and equity under the umbrella of multiculturalism. The harsh reality, however, recognizes Canada as a settler-colonial society, defined and structured by an eradicating & silencing whiteness. Despite my best intentions, the course’s capitalist critiques (via open design) and a curriculum that pays close attention to power dynamics and intersectional relations among identities, work/labour, and civil rights – I DO NOT DENY my PRIVILEGE and my dominant whiteness. It behooves me to foster an environment of inclusivity in this course (and in life). 

To create a safe learning environment, students are required to show tolerance for the viewpoints of others. Any abuse, attacks, acts of ridicule, profane language, harassment, etc., online or in the classroom, will not be tolerated.

*Major activities and deliverables*

Experiential learning activities are typically composed of a combination of activities and deliverables. One way to think about the activities and deliverables is how learning outcomes are pursued and demonstrated.

1. Student time and performance (as described in journal) | value 30%
2. A Reflective Journal or Logbook | Curating, Collecting, Reflecting, Drawing, Responding, Making, Thinking Portfolio | value 20% | please bring journals to team meetings.
3. Naming What We Know | Threshold Concepts in our independent learning and thinking| value 25% | Approximately 3000 words total + bibliography: DUE: last week of scheduled classes.
4. The Last Word | Final Letter/Assessment | value 25% | DUE: first day of scheduled final exams.

*Assignments/Assessments*

*1. Student time and performance* (as described in journal) | value 30%

2. *Reflective* *Journal or Logbook* | *Curating, Collecting, Reflecting, Drawing, Responding, Making, Thinking Portfolio* | *20%*

Learners carefully note hours of work, tasks accomplished, challenges faced, solutions identified to meet challenges and summaries of meetings. This course requires learners to dedicate approximately 25-30 minutes each week to journal writing. Learners are encouraged to identify questions to focus writing or to direct critical reflections. Journal writing is personal writing.

In personal writing there are TWO modes to be mindful of: 1) DESCRIPTIVE writing and 2) CONTEMPLATIVE writing. The former asks for details about sensory experiences, that is, what learners see, hear and other visceral sensations; the latter invites learners to contemplate ideas, thoughts, values, and other meanings. In some cases, writing is exposition (expository writing without five paragraph structure) where learners provide an account of their experiences and beliefs in response to the topic, issue, or question. Following promising practices, given your previous training, this confidential journal belongs to you. Journals show evidence of:

* weekly, scholarly reflections/responses of activities, readings, & presentations.
* frequent reading and analysis of key ideas and information.
* your assessment of interactions with others.
* sharing and review of discovered resources.
* thoughtful, critical reflection of the use of embodied practices.
* demonstrated understanding of the differences among descriptive, analytic, & reflective writing.

Structured occasions for reflection allow learners to explore their experiences and develop abstractions that may help transfer knowledge to new situations. Awareness and reflection are not merely symptoms of developments in learners, they bring about the developments.  It is through this process of reflection that learners articulate outcomes of their work.

Learners require a variety of learning situations and opportunities to be able to make fine distinctions about the significant aspects of new contexts.  By identifying the differences between similar situations, learners are better able to respond appropriately. Such learning experiences are an important preparation for the unpredictable nature of the workplace. This kind of learning transfer always involves reflective thought; learners practice abstracting ideas from one context and seeking connections with others.

Learners must prepare for activities not limited to listening; they must read, write, discuss, or be engaged in solving problems. Most important, to be actively involved, learners engage in higher-order thinking tasks such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Without taking away from the important role played by Professor Lipton, it is helpful to remember that what learners do are more important in determining what is learned than any actions of the professor.

3. *Naming What We Know* | *Threshold Concepts in Experiential Learning* | *25%*

DUE: last week of scheduled classes.

To fully participate with the academic and theoretical elements of this experiential learning course, students are asked to identify and discuss key threshold concepts. Broadly defined, threshold concepts are conceptually challenging and resist prior knowledge that may be inert, unused, or unchallenged. Threshold concepts require learners to take on new identities that are uncomfortable – outside the box.

Threshold concepts are liminal—but the movement toward and through thresholds are never clear, straightforward, or easy. However, once a threshold concept is identified and embodied, learners can recognize new patterns of meaning related to the concept. The ability to see through and with that concept transforms learners’ understanding of phenomena, people, performance, and/or other events. Threshold concepts are probably irreversible; once you see with and through a threshold concept, it may be impossible to return to nascent perceptions; one cannot unlearn or un-see the lens made available through threshold concepts. Please identify two-to-four threshold concepts (important ideas) and relate to existing academic literature in your analysis. Approximately 3000 words total + bibliography.

*4. The Last Word | Final Letter/Assessment | 25%*

DUE: first day of scheduled final exams.

Learners are invited to write a letter to function as an integrative paper where they reflect on the experiential learning in a theoretically informed way and summarize the significant learning outcomes resulting from the experience. Given that multiple choice evaluation forms are not as useful as we would hope, please take the time to write a letter about your response to the experience. Tell us what you liked and what you hated. Your honest feedback will be most appreciated.

This assignment gives you a chance to express your *intellectual assessment* of the work *you undertook* in this experiential learning. Learners address *learning outcomes* in a theoretically informed way, citing bibliographic literature. To complete this assignment, write a letter that identifies key points of learning, shifts in your knowledge, and a discussion of key theoretical terms that impacted your practice. Reflect on your participation, on your learning process and style, and on your understanding of new concepts. Demonstrate what you have learned.

In sum, outline your contributions in the form of a letter:

* Reflect on the experiential learning.
* Express your intellectual assessment of your work.
* Address learning outcomes in a theoretically informed way.
* Discuss the training content.
* Be sure to include a bibliography.

Self-assessment is a process that invites learners to reflect on the quality of their work and judge the degree to which it reflects explicitly stated goals and criteria; you are also asked to consider your chosen path-that is, the materials you examined and those passed over; did your sense of academic autonomy help you identify and select an appropriate program of study?

This kind of self-assessment is a tool for reconsidering how you managed your own learning in changing circumstances. As an element of self-regulation, this task involves awareness of the goals of a task and checking one’s progress against the criteria. An intended outcome of self-assessment is enhanced self-regulation and increased achievement.

*Extent & Nature of Experiential Learning*

Students are involved in every aspect of this experiential learning initiative, and may receive training in the following: (1) negotiation with areas of student life; (2) planning of time and commitments; (3) participating in workshops; (4) managing the challenges of student wellness through self-awareness; (5) maintaining relationships with peers and course instructor; (6) intercultural competence and sensitivity; (7) active and deep listing; (8) patience and understanding; (9) resiliency; (10) awareness of important health and wellness issues, including anxiety, depression, sexual violence, gender identity and expression, substance misuse, harm reduction, and anti-oppression.

*Additional Practitioner & Professional Skills*

In addition, learners apply, demonstrate, and consider selected practitioner and professional skills: (1)ability to select appropriate approach(es) to problem solution; (2) ability to diagnose relevant issues when encountering complex and/or ill-defined problems; (3) ability to address complex and/or ill-defined problems; (4) project management skills; (5) group facilitation and leadership skills; (6) interviewing skills; (7) survey design and implementation skills (e.g., client satisfaction survey); intervention design skills; intervention implementation skills; (8) program evaluation skills; (9) awareness of ethical concerns and ability to handle them; (10) planning and organizational skills; (11) verbal communications skills; (12) written communications skills; (13) interpersonal relations/teamwork (effectiveness in working with peers and supervisors); (14) adaptability (ability to alter activities to accommodate change); (15) problem solving/critical thinking skills; (16) punctuality, attendance, reliability, dependability.

All students will apply to be in course and will be signed in individually. I hereby declare that the materials presented herein represent advanced undergraduate degree requirements in experiential learning.

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