Literature Review

Experiential Learning Advisory Committee

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Literature Review

1. Experiential Learning Frameworks and Pedagogical Models

EL Frameworks

This section presents several high-level frameworks for the development of experiential learning programs at post-secondary institutions in a Canadian context. For background reading and for those wishing to understand the development of the EL programming landscape in this country since 2000, several resources have been identified. CERIC's website and the Universities Canada report from 2018 both promote EL and WIL to ensure successful future employment and workplace skills of Canada's student population. For an overview of the various types of WIL, Marshall's open-access book provides guidance to those looking to implement quality WIL programs in the context of the author's own post-secondary institution, Centennial College (n.d.). Emphasis is placed on the development of meaningful learning activities, as well as the structure and intentionality of the experience.

Further resources offering an overview of experiential learning have been included: *A quality framework*, an online video presentation outlines the ways that the University of Calgary is seeking to expand its WIL offerings without sacrificing the quality of the programs. WACE is the foremost professional organization committed to all aspects of WIL programming between industry and educational institutions; their *Global Quality WIL Framework* is their principal suggested plan for the integration of a variety of WIL programs. On a broader note, McRae & Johnston (2016) present their idea for a Global WIL Framework that allows for the comparison of WIL programs across institutions, on an international level. Building upon the WIL Matrix and the Co-Operative Education model most common in Canada, they present the key goals and outcomes of different types of WIL. For administrators of new WIL programs, this framework provides the vocabulary and ideas necessary to rationalize the many types of independently evolved WIL programs, by focusing on their shared values and other commonalities. This framework allows users to map WIL programs directly to the academic curriculum at their institution and is a highly useful resource.

Many guides were identified during the research: *A practical guide for work-integrated learning* (Stirling et al., 2024) provides a foundation for the development of quality student support in WIL, mutually beneficial partnerships with organizations outside the educational institution, and meaningful program evaluation. Being the 2nd edition of this guide, it builds upon what was presented previously to outline ways to integrate principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion into WIL programs. Next, *The practice of co-op and work-integrated learning in the Canadian context*, an edited collection of articles contains

sections which offer additional pedagogical models and frameworks within the sphere of WIL and EL, all in Canada.

Narrowing down to identify the specific elements that make a co-op placement successful for students and employers alike, Drewery & Pretti's research is relevant. In their 2021 article, they present the experiences of undergraduate co-operative education students to ascertain the main elements of a successful and relevant work experience: social integration, optimal challenge, congruence with field of work and acquisition of knowledge and skills. The authors then outline the ways that employers can incorporate such building blocks. On a related note, and in an additional publication by the same authors, *The Future Ready Talent Framework* (Pretti & Drewery, 2021) is a conceptual model that can be used to assess both stakeholder and student involvement in work-integrated learning programs. It also provides the groundwork for conversations about desired learning outcomes and achievable goals during the work placement.

The former director of the Canadian Alliance for Community Service-Learning, Briggs (2018), identifies three main principles for effective engagement in community service-learning programming between the university and the community. Namely, communities need to feel ownership of the partnership or a project involving students, and that post-secondary institutions can do more to support and make the pathway to ownership more feasible. Likewise, Chambers' article provides a conceptual framework for the construction, development and assessment of service-learning initiatives in Canadian post-secondary institutions. As this article was published in 2009, with research dating to 2006, it can provide a glimpse of the development of service-learning in Canada from the early 2000s. It outlines the benefits to strengthen community and university partnerships and tackle local issues and problems, as well as the potential to enhance student development and lifelong participation in community. It also highlights how service learning can enhance public perception of the role of the university and bolster support for investment in post-secondary education.

LaCroix (2024) examines the organizational complexity that often accompanies experiential learning programming in post-secondary institutions, as applied in Ontario. While the author identifies an expansion of outward-facing infrastructure to support the development of such programming, they also indicate that there is a lack of change on the ground. The author calls for more research into faculty and student experiences to provide context to a push for expansion from the provincial government. Readers of the Arney & Krygsman (2022) article could draw some parallels between the Government of Alberta's directives in 2020 to increase WIL capacity at the post-secondary level to today's environment in Nova Scotia. Arney & Krygsman present the viewpoints of government policy and re-conceptualize their priorities by focusing more than simply on the human

capital element of WIL. To see how Alberta's policies have been applied on the ground, in "Revisioning the UCalgary experiential learning framework", Stowe et al. (2024) provides an update to the University of Calgary's initial strategic plan for WIL implementation from 2020. It incorporates the ways that UofC has met its targeted goal to provide all students with the opportunity to participate in EL, and outlines some of the challenges it has met along the way.

Pedagogical models

The number of pedagogical models presented in this section are only a highlight, readers are encouraged to peruse the disciplinary-specific section for an expansion of such ideas.

One interdisciplinary model that appeared in the literature is the notion of Open Pedagogy encompasses the use of assignments and assessed work that endure and contribute to society beyond the life cycle of the course schedule. In this case the creation of an Open Educational Resource textbook is the example used. This pedagogical approach is attainable to educators wishing to incorporate WIL elements in their class. Furthermore, *Critical reflections* [...] is an example of a pedagogical model that could be adapted by any faculty member, that is, the creation of an open educational resource by students as an assessment tool. This example utilized the collaborative online international learning approach whereby Canadian students collaborated with students in similar courses both in Spain and Indonesia to reflect on the subject matter and write sections of the book. Burga et al. (2025) provides an accompanying article to the creation of this same OER and reflects on the learning experience/assignment development that accompanied the creation of the book.

Drawing on their background in entrepreneurship and management education, Dorland et al. presents their model for a universal WIL framework. They emphasize a need to widen the discussion of WIL programming away from simply a task for educators and administrators, but one for the workplace at large. This article could form the basis of the development of a strategy, allowing readers to take into consideration their five proposed pillars upon which to build a successful EL program.

Eggiman-Ketter et al. (2024) present a pedagogical model for interdisciplinary health students and faculty in a rehabilitation centre setting. It outlines program development goals, student learning outcomes and potential barriers to success, as well as providing additional recommendations for further development of such a program, as well as its potential applicability to other related health-care settings.

Ivkovic (2020) presents a potential pedagogical model for classes in the Faculty of Arts, specifically, for language learning applications. This example of applied "affirmative

pedagogy of multilingualism" combines documentary film making, creative production and performance with language learning and group work.

In their 2021 article, West & Stirling remind readers of an opportunity for a WIL model that integrates into the pre-existing conditions of students with part-time work. By allowing students to incorporate a WIL structure into an activity they are already engaged in, with the appropriate partnerships established with employers, WIL becomes increasingly accessible for many.

2. EL Tools and Technologies

This section points out some of the most-commonly used content management software in the realm of experiential learning at post-secondary institutions. In late 2021, the Canadian company Orbis, the leading platform for connecting students with prospective employers in a WIL program, was acquired by the US-based, internationally focused company, Symplicity. Since that time, Orbis has continued to operate its software as solutions to managing experiential learning programs, through their products *Outcome* and *Outcome Campus Connect* (their free version).

Riipen offers a similar approach to managing work-integrated learning at higher educational institutions. This platform emerged in 2013 out of a capstone entrepreneurship project at the University of Victoria, and remains a fully Canadian product, operating out of Vancouver, BC. It's partnerships include a variety of organizations offering remote internships and trainings related to specific industries in Canada.

Co-Curricular Record appears to be another often-used platform for universities in our region, such as Dalhousie University, Saint Mary's University, and Cape Breton University, amongst others. One benefit of this platform is that it appears to provide a tracking mechanism for students engaged in a variety of activities outside of the classroom. It allows students to present documentation of this involvement on their résumés and is a potential solution for encouraging participation in both WIL experiences as well as broader events organized by a whole realm of student services, such as learning opportunities at the library (ie. at Fanshawe Library Learning Commons). Like Co-Curricular Record, Modern Campus' *Involve* provides students with a technological tool to help them get involved in campus activities, skills development and learning outcomes tracking and student involvement analytics for administrators. Modern Campus has offices in Toronto and California.

In terms of simulation experiences, particularly for health care fields, *Virtu-WIL* offers virtual simulations to students while providing collaborative partnerships between post-secondaries, health care technology companies, and employers. Educators and students

in Canada can access over 200 simulations for free. This service is funded by Employment and Social Development Canada and is managed by Colleges & Institutes Canada, with headquarters in Ottawa. Verkuyal et. al.'s 2024 article, "Virtual simulation in healthcare education [...]" puts this type of learning into context by evaluating the impact of the simulations offered by Virtu-WIL in 18 institutions in Canada. Another evaluation of virtual field experiences in the realm of geology, presented by Dolphin et al. in their article from 2019, presents an alternative approach to simulations experiences in Earth Sciences.

On a broader note, CEWIL Canada collects data related to work-integrated learning to share pan-Canadian trends with its members and advocate federally. Individual institutions can use the data to compare postsecondary institutions and access relevant information for internal advocacy purposes. Their website provides links to a National WIL database and dashboard, a National WIL directory, and annual data reports.

Other sources in this section of the bibliography/Zotero library focus on the ways that institutions are communicating about available opportunities and making them widely known to students, such as the Course Catalogue of EL courses on the FASS Experiential Learning website at Dalhousie and the UNB Experience catalogue.

Please also see section 4.a – Canadian University Websites for a closer look at how individual universities are managing to blend their offerings in work-integrated learning with the latest technologies to allow for ease of access, tracking and use by administrators and students alike.

3. Research on Inclusive and Equitable Experiential Learning

Much of the research on experiential learning and higher education has, in the past five years, focused on various ways to enhance the organization and administration of related programs and services in a way that is more inclusive and equitable for all parties – from host families in international exchange situations (Pulsifer et al., 2020), to students, to prospective employers and community organizations, to post-secondary institutions themselves.

A few general guides exist on this subject, for example, Chatoor & Kaufman (2023)'s report on inclusion in WIL was sponsored by the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO), and provides evidence that after having received inclusion training, student participants in WIL report higher levels of satisfaction with their experience overall. This report also offers recommendations to improve these training courses, including clear communication and data collection. Business and Higher Education Roundtable's *Advancing work-integrated learning* [...] offers steps to foster more inclusive WIL experiences for all students.

Many studies (Oosman et. al., 2019; Pennanen & Guillet, 2020; Pirbhai-Illich & Martin, 2020; Poitras Pratt et al., 2019) point to inclusive WIL experiences to improve service provision, reconciliation, respect and cultural humility toward Indigenous populations amongst the non-Indigenous student population in Canada. Day (2023) promotes the inclusion of EL via land- and art-based learning, ceremony and relationship-building amongst the many ways that prospective teachers, especially school counselors, can improve the provision of mental health services in a school setting within an indigenous community. The article focuses on ways to improve programs such as teacher and psychologist education at the post-secondary level. In their 2024 article, Klassen & Chan take a similar approach when promoting the decolonization of dietetics training programs. Indigenous-specific learning outcomes can better allow students in the field to mitigate harmful colonial attitudes, eventually improving health equity. Mashford-Pringle & Stewart (2019) expand upon this conversation by highlighting the ways that transformative land-based learning can help graduate students learn about the factors contributing to a healthy lifestyle amongst Indigenous populations.

Nielsen, Livernoche, & Ramji (2022) and ("Transforming the Post-Secondary Experience for Indigenous Students in Canada," 2024) highlight the needs of Indigenous students themselves when it comes to WIL programs. Their paper offers 10 recommendations to best serve Indigenous students when it comes to EL programming in higher education. In terms of international WIL exchange programs and field courses or schools, Ramji et al. (2021) points out ways to

International students were also of particular focus in the literature. In Feng et al. (2021)'s study, emphasis is placed on the learning needs and preferred pedagogical practices of international students, particularly those of Asian origin. The BHER's *EDI in WIL* case study encourages employers in architecture & engineering on best practices when engaging with diverse student populations. Similarly, Zhang's 2021 Master's thesis highlights the positive experiences of Chinese students in a popular food systems course with a focus on EL at the University of Manitoba.

Barriers to successful participation in EL are frequently discussed in the literature (Stirling et al. 2021; Taylor et al. 2019). For example, Chatoor & Balata's 2023 report with the HEQCO points out that not all students have the same WIL experience, and that depending on their demographic (ie. women, folks living with disabilities and/or immigrants), some students may experience barriers. Such barriers could be overcome with better data collection on participant demographics could allow for university administrators to develop more inclusive WIL programs. The authors also promote the integration of WIL evaluation from a diversity lens to improve equity gaps. In a similar vein, Hossain-Khan et

al. (2024) also focus on the various non-structural and structural barriers experienced by a group of 30 co-operative education students from a social justice lens. Itano-Boase et al. (2021) also focus on the barriers experienced by equity-deserving students in WIL placements, from a government funding, employer and student perspectives. The video recording of a presentation by O'Connell & Chew (2022) presents viewers with possible solutions addressed in the previously-mentioned studies.

Certain barriers particular to women, were discussed. Bowen (2020) highlights the fact that during WIL placements, students learn workplace behaviours relevant to their profession. Within the STEM sector, gender bias may present itself during a WIL placement, attitudes that some students may not be accustomed to. The author advocates for education surrounding the social construct of gender bias, even within fields where this type of learning may not be the norm. Dean et al. (2019)'s book, *Feminist praxis revisited,* connects the dots between a Women's and Gender Studies program and community service learning. As social change and social justice are core values of these programs, this book encourages the use of critical reflection within the realm of community service learning.

Students living with disabilities are the focus of several studies in this collection. Gatto et al. (2021a) conducted an environmental scan of 55 Canadian post-secondary institutions and collected data via a survey of WIL practitioners to query whether students with disabilities are being adequately supported in the agenda to promote a wider uptake of WIL experiences. Overall, the authors identify that more work needs to be done in this domain, from practitioner training to public policy shifts. The same group of authors published a second study in 2021(b) which examines more closely the experiences in WIL amongst students with disabilities. This second study finds that students with disabilities are less likely to participate in WIL overall, citing a variety of barriers, many of which could be overcome if communication surrounding available accommodations (as well as a de-stigmatization of such accommodations) was clearer between administrators, potential employers and the students themselves. Mei's 2021 Master's thesis explores this same topic, concentrating on the conversations surrounding student disclosure of mental health problems and diagnoses as applied to the workplace or experiential learning environment. Readhead et al. (2019) continues this conversation, emphasizing that proper support through EL opportunities in a post-secondary setting can lead to greater success in the future workplace, later in life.

4. EL Resources for Faculty and Staff Support

As universities across Canada are seeing increasing pressure to incorporate EL into their program offerings in one form or another, LaCroix's 2022 article can provide guidance on the complex work required to institutionalize experiential education. Thomas Young's 2024

thesis further contributes to this conversation by suggesting ways in which institutions can best support faculty in their EL endeavors.

Many of the resources in this section of the bibliography have the intention of facilitating the potentially daunting process of integrating EL pedagogies into their teaching practice (Linkletter et al., 2024). LaCroix's 2025 article highlights the perspective of faculty from eight disciplines and six universities when it comes to making sense of the hype surrounding experiential education in Canada and abroad. Agogué & Robinson (2021) discuss their experiences of adapting a pre-existing set of EL exercises into a large, multi-section undergraduate course. Student-faculty partnerships via student co-op placements within the institution can be of assistance in a virtual learning environment, as demonstrated by Knapp et al. in 2024.

In terms of international experiences and exchanges, the Canadian Bureau for International Engagement's 2019 report identifies the institutional factors which best support faculty in their endeavor to become champions of learning abroad.

As virtual simulation becomes the norm in nursing education and other health care professions, Jadunandan's 2022 Doctoral dissertation on the topic contributes to the conversation by presenting research on the important role the nurse educator plays in debriefing students after completion of such simulations. Law & Finnigan's 2021 article further supports educators in the health sector in the supportive role they can provide to students who experience degrees of failure in their WIL experiences. On a practical level, Steen's 2023 open-access book provide further ground for those wishing to explore simulation as a type of EL in their classroom by providing scripts and scenarios to help guide students through potential workplace conflicts and situations.

Please also see the sub-folder in this section of the bibliography and Zotero library, section 4.a – Canadian University Websites, which includes several faculty and staff resources for EL and WIL at post-secondary institutions across the country.

5. Evaluating and Assessing Experiential Learning

Many studies identify that no matter the discipline, guided, in-depth critical reflection on experiential learning is essential to concretize the experience and contribute to overall learning within the chosen field (Bylica et al, 2021; Hébert & Hauf, 2015; Yates et al., 2015). Wilson et al. (2024) concentrates on the faculty perspective of assessment in EL, with a forthcoming article on the student perspective from the same authors, based on their experiences at the University of Saskatchewan. Hulton et al. (2023) focus on reflections as being quite necessary in the context of service-learning, especially in an international context. In their article on the use of reflections as evaluation techniques in sustainability

education, Whalen & Paez (2021) make the case for expanding beyond a traditional reflective assignment to incorporate the acquisition of cognitive and metacognitive skills, thereby contributing to the development of higher order thinking skills. Books and other resources such as Chan's 2023 publication attempt to guide faculty interested in assessment beyond just the core competencies of a course to include assessment of holistic and transferable skills that will be useful in the workplace.

Further articles provide readers with a case study for best practices in EL assessment (Whyte, 2022), such as the examples of formative and summative reflection examples used in entrepreneurship courses by Eisenstein et al. (2021) and an evaluation of multiple reflective assignments for students engaged in co-op work terms and community service-learning projects (Tiessen, 2018). As we have seen in other sections of this literature review, particular focus is paid to the role of assessing virtual or real-life simulation in nursing and health care-related fields of study (Gregory, 2022; Greidanus et al., 2013; Verkuyl et al., 2024). In terms of pre-service teacher placements, evaluation rubrics are assessed and compared on an international level by Rusznyak & Österling (2024). If faculty are interested in furthering assessment rubrics to include competencies that are the hallmark of lifelong learning, Sproule, Drewery & Pretti provide excellent discussion an examples in their 2019 article.

As with other forms of EL, international exchanges or work experiences benefit greatly from the inclusion of intentional structure and evaluation of skills and, in this case, cultural intelligence (McRae et al., 2016). Resources for employers to assess WIL students include the Business & Higher Education Roundtable's resource *Advancing work-integrated learning*.

Moving forward, Ashcroft et al. (2021) discuss the appeal that microcredentials can play towards recognizing student achievement in their WIL experience, to go beyond traditional student performance evaluations.

6. EL Partnerships

Community

In community-university (or town-gown) collaborations with work-integrated learning, it is common to see partnerships developed in the STEM fields (ie. Kabakova, 2019). Environmental sustainability is often a topic of focus (Ikovic & McRae, 2021), with the living labs network around Lake Superior serving as a highly successful axis of research, reconciliation and social justice work, community engagement and experiential learning (Levkoe et al., 2024). NSCC's two open-access books from 2023, the *Work-integrated learning employer guide* and the *Work-integrated learning: Service learning guide* serve as

models for building up and communicating with external stakeholders in the endeavor to establish positive town-gown relationships locally.

On the other hand, Asafo-Adjei (2020)'s thesis centres the development of such working relationships in the humanities, arts and social sciences, while also addressing the pros and cons of institutional management of such partnerships as being either centralized or de-centralized. The conversation on this same topic continues in a later publication by Buzzelli & Asafo-Adjei (2023). Other studies focus on the ways to ensure successful partnerships develop, as with Briggs' 2018 article that outlines the author's envisioning of a future for community service-learning in Canada. The particular resource restrictions and unique needs of community based non-profit organizations and partnerships with the university are described by Simmons in their 2021 Master's thesis. For a scoping review of the literature on the topic of the creation and maintenance of successful university-workplace partnerships published between 2000-2022, Lasrado et al.'s 2024 article will be an essential read.

Employer

Many of the resources identified in this report serve to guide employers in an inclusive and sustainable manner as they work with WIL students in paid or volunteer work (EDI in WIL, n.d.; Ikovic & McRae, 2021). The *Working in good ways* (n.d.) WIL framework at the University of Manitoba outlines effective and respectful strategies for those administering WIL initiatives to follow when working with Indigenous communities. Drewery et al. (2022) conducted a study on the most effective use of language use in job advertisements to attract talented students. As another example, Ademuyiwa et al. (2023) addresses the gender gap and time spent on tasks with supervisors. Chidwick et. al. (2024) approaches this same subject, but from a stakeholder (ie. Employer/supervisor) perspective, highlighting that the COVID-19 pandemic may have created more equitable options for access and impact for students.

The articles in this section may also provide a case study to interested employers and organizations, such as the partnership between a local Chamber of Commerce in Prince George, BC, and the role played by students in a Carbon and Energy Management course in the understanding and promotion of sustainable energy usage (Booth et al., 2020a & 2020b). Live Client Marketing and it's benefits to community partners are explored in Manuel's open-access book on the topic (2023). The Chamber of Commerce is again mentioned as a conduit for student-employer connection in a publication by the Business & Higher Education Roundtable (BHER) (Innovative WIL, n.d.). A second publication by the same institution encourages small and medium-sized enterprises to think outside the box when it comes to alternate forms of student engagement on projects, such as hackathons

and microplacements (Innovative Work-Integrated Learning, n.d.). Technology companies sponsoring degrees has been identified by the BHER as another innovative model for addressing the continuing need to remain competitive in today's technology-driven world (Sponsored Degrees, n.d.). Finally, their *Case study of social science, humanities and arts in the tech sector* report highlights successful strategies for employers in the tech sector wishing to implement industry projects with students in various disciplines (n.d.).

7. Experiential Learning Best Practices from Other Institutions

In order to capture data on pre-existing EL programs and their varying degrees of complexity, engagement and community partnerships, the University of Calgary can provide an example through the curriculum mapping exercises undertaken by their EL Working Group, which began in 2018 (Dyjur et al., 2020). In British Colombia, a report was released in 2017 to provide a snapshot of the state of EL in higher education across that province, with input from many educators and administrators. Their identified priorities for potential growth could serve institutions in Nova Scotia looking to expand EL offerings.

An applied research project involving knowledge translation in a first year writing/research class at the University of British Colombia to provide jargon-free research findings about the heavily-researched local community stood out to me as being an excellent case study for engaging both the local community and first-year students, and worth exploring in some capacity to the local context in Nova Scotia, which faces challenges related to poverty, food security, etc (Mauro et al., 2024).

A push for greater uptake in EL across Canada has resulted in the creation of at least one new certificate program which is worth noting. On the opposite end of the student experience in post-secondary education, Nowell et al. (2020) examine the introduction of EL certificate programs in teaching and learning for graduate and postgraduate students. Although StFX is a primarily undergraduate institution, these certificate programs may be of interest to those administering EL programs at the graduate level. Sowinski et al.'s 2023 Bachelor of Multidisciplinary Design - Experiential Learning

Given that this literature review covers the period immediately following a global pandemic, many of the identified articles address the need to transition in-person EL to a virtual environment (see, especially, section 10 on General Educational Trends). To mitigate the impact of the pandemic on students in 202, the BioExperience Research and Entrepreneurship Challenge was launched at the University of Ottawa for students to participate in a project-based challenge, of sorts, and Gill et al. capture the skills development which occurred amongst participants in this program in their 2022 article.

In addition to virtual learning, sustainability initiative and EL and simulations in health care education, another common theme in the literature is the use of CSL/EL to implement local food systems programs, such as community gardening, on post-secondary campuses as a means to instruct on issues like food security, nutrition and dietetics (Levkoe et al., 2019; Matthews et al., 2014).

While it can be challenging to compare EL programming across institutions, due to a myriad of local factors influencing both the challenges and opportunities within a given discipline or institution, Calvert & Montemayor (2018) attempt to compare community service-learning administration in all of Canada to that in Mexico in their article. Thanks to a robust national agenda to create engaged citizens and strong documentation standards and management from the federal government in Mexico, CSL is well-established in undergraduate institutions there.

8. Sustainability and Cost Recovery in Experiential Learning

Although there are scant articles discussing the topic of financial sustainability in EL programming across post-secondary institutions across the globe, a few stand out. Despite having been published 15 years ago, Monica Cowart's article addresses the elephant in the room when it comes to implementing EL programming: funding (2010). Cowart offers encouragement to those looking to initiate EL on campus despite uncertain economic times and large budget allocations for faculty professional development in the field. Financial challenges and strategies to overcome them are presented in the brief article, based on the experience of Merrimack College in Massachusetts.

The sustainability of EL programming goes beyond financial constraints, as it is necessary to have buy-in from both teaching faculty and external stakeholders. Chang & Huang strongly suggest in their 2022 article that engaging stakeholders, pedagogically, in the planning process for EL programming is part of the "recipe for success" first coined by Cowart, using their experience with the exercise in course development in Taiwan. Closer to home in Canada, BHER has provided small and medium-sized businesses seeking to participate in WIL with a *Financial supports catalogue* (n.d.), which identifies available supports provincially, nationally and by sector. To further guide the same stakeholders, the BHER has also developed a document, *How to calculate your ROI* (n.d.) which helps enterprises break down and measure their costs and benefits from participating in WIL. Lastly, the role of sustainable partnerships with stakeholders in maintaining WIL initiatives is addressed in *A practical guide for WIL* (Stirling et al., 2024).

Beyond external stakeholder engagement, Sidhu & Gage (2021) seek to identify the policies and institutional support necessary for the continued uptake of faculty members willing to innovate in experiential learning.

A third group of stakeholders in EL programming, of course, are students themselves. In 2020 the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance's budget submission report can be considered a call to action from those who will benefit the most from quality EL opportunities in post-secondary education. At least one article (May, 2017) identified that for students participating in international service learning projects, the personal and professional benefits of the experience outweigh the costs. Other students, for whom an international experience is out of reach financially, e-volunteering presents a alternative model to travel-based options, as discussed by Steckley & Steckley (2022).

9. Communication and Engagement Strategies for EL Programs

Many of the resources have been included in this section of the bibliography to serve as examples of good communication strategies for EL programming, from both the institutional and stakeholder point of view (*Experiential Learning External Resources*, n.d.; *Types of WIL*, n.d.; *Work-Integrated Learning Employer Guide*, 2023; UNB Newsroom, 2023; Wilson & Mackie, 2018). In terms of preparing students for their EL experience, eCampusOntario's suite of learning modules may easily be adaptable to a local context (Loney et al., 2022), as it is published under a CC BY-NC 4.0 license. As the workplace has changed recently and will only continue to do so at a rapid pace, Stevens et al. (2020) summarize 32 recent reports on the future of work and identify major future workplace trends which can help inform institutions to expand their offerings of WIL. Amarathunga (2024) can complement the previous article as the author has conducted a scoping review of 1,295 articles published worldwide on the same topic, and identifies both the most-cited research in WIL and future trends for research and program implementation in the field.

The University of Calgary's 5-year Experiential Learning Plan (n.d.) can be seen as a model to adapt to a local context, covering the justification and benefits of expanding the integration of EL into multiple academic programs, their chosen framework for EL and various other priorities. Another national leader in the realm of EL, the University of Toronto's Experiential Learning Hub, includes an EL Risk Management Matrix for prospective external employers and other partners (*Guidelines and Procedures*, n.d.). CEWIL Canada's 2024 report, *Navigating new ground* is another good example of a document which provides an overview of the state of EL programing in Canada and developments and challenges in the field over the past five years. Stirling & Pretti (2021) have also authored a book in association with CEWIL and WACE entitled *The practice of co-op and work-integrated learning in the Canadian context* which should also be

considered as an excellent general text to read, both for internal and external parties, to further research-based WIL programming in this country.

While many positive examples of proper communication exist in this section, LaCroix's 2024 article reminds readers that outward-facing discourse on the value of EL may not easily translate to individual pedagogical practices amongst faculty members, and that a degree of organizational complexity is often the norm.

When it comes to identifying the benefits of EL for students, thirteen resources have been included in a sub-collection under this section, 9a. *Student Outcomes/Successes*. In 2019 the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations co-wrote a report, *Shared perspectives,* which can be seen as representative of the student perspective on experiential learning opportunities, amongst other issues related to skills development and future employability. The entirety of this literature can be seen as evidence of the benefits of student participation in experiential learning as pointing to their future success in the workforce, all from a recent Canadian perspective.

10.   General Educational Trends

Many of the educational trends relate to EL and identified in this section of the bibliography elucidate recent technological developments that have affected many workplace environments or shed light on adaptation strategies of instructors in higher education following the COVID-19 pandemic. While early adopters of online experiential education do exist (Snow et al., 2019), much more work was needed at a rapid pace after the various lockdowns experienced across the country. The result of both of these societal shifts has resulted in new, virtual programming taking the place of traditionally in-person workplace environments, a transition which has presented a whole host of challenges and opportunities (Andrews & Ramji, 2020; Chatoor, 2023; Doran, 2022; Dyson, 2023; Knapp et al., 2023; *List of Resources for Online Experiential Learning*, n.d.; McCallum et al., 2024; Moreau et al., 2021; Suresh Kumar, 2023).

One technological trend that cannot be ignored is the use of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI). While McKeen (2025) points out that by creating real-world, transformative learning experiences, EL has a leg up on GenAI and that fact alone will be a selling point for higher education in the future. On the other hand, MacDowell et al. (2024) explains how pre-service teachers at their university are being taught to engage with GenAI creatively and responsibly, so as to be able to use it in their own pedagogical practices. The connections between EL and GenAI will certainly appear more often in the literature over the next few years.

During this same time period, micro-credentials and micro certificates have surfaced in Canadian post-secondary institutions as a means to document skills development and acquisition outside of the traditional degree programs, and experiential learning is no exception to this trend (Ashcroft et al., 2021).

For a faculty and practitioner perspective on future trends, Braun (2020) documents a brainstorming discussion held at the University of Calgary on this topic.

While EL has gained in popularity and offerings across the country, some scholars are proposing alternative terminology to reflect the simultaneous need to implement experiential learning while also promoting a more inclusive and accessible uptake in WIL across all disciplines and for all students. The critical service learning approach promoted by Cahuas & Levkoe (2017) in geography sheds light on the ways that EL can be leveraged to create opportunities for social change. International service learning is another emerging area of interest, as does the need to fully understand the experiences of all participants and the associated development in cultural competency, amongst other transferable skills (Deibert et al., 2023). Indeed, Paris & Biggs underscore the benefits of international study and WIL experiences in creating a global educational strategy to help Canadians succeed in a complex internationalized world (2018).

Another innovative approach promoted by Corbett & Rosen (2020) is an across-the-curriculum approach to undergraduate research, which is not limited to a laboratory or to a few supervisors, but to help students experience how the whole spectrum of activities involved in research can translate to future workplace settings. Further innovations are discussed by Krigstin et al. (2023), on the benefits of integrating nature-based learning for students of all disciplines, including engineering students. As mentioned elsewhere in this report, experiential learning has emerged as an effective means to promote reconciliation, connection to the land, and sustainability amongst the student population.

Of course, in some jurisdictions across Canada, an uptake in EL programming at the post-secondary level has resulted from a top-down policy approach from provincial governments, as is the case at present in Nova Scotia. Elias-Cartwright's 2021 doctoral dissertation for the University of Toronto should be required reading, therefore, as it concentrates on the experiences of 21university administrators in Ontario who are ranked below the President and Provost, and were tasked with translating the Ontario government's policies surrounding EL from 2016-2019 to their institutional context. This study contributes to others mentioned in various sections of this review which address the organizational complexities of undertaking such a task.

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