

# ELAC Meeting Minutes

April 24, 2026

Time: 1:30pm to 3:30 pm

Location: Council Chambers/Teams

**In attendance:** Elizabeth Yeo, Nancy Forestell, Jacqueline De Leebeeck, Mark Fuller, Greg Hadley, Angie Kolen, Megan Turner, Alessandro D'Aquino, Martin Chiasson, Jane MacDonald

**Regrets:** Cathy MacDonald, Wojciech Tokarz, Jonathan Hood, Jacob Cruchet, Sam Read, Shandra MacMaster, Eileen Alma

## **Purpose of Meeting**

The Committee met to review and provide feedback on the draft Experiential Learning Strategy, assess whether the proposed direction reflects institutional priorities, identify key risks and opportunities, and discuss future implementation and consultation considerations.

## **Overall Direction and Committee Response**

The Committee expressed strong support for the overall direction of the strategy and recognized experiential learning as a significant institutional opportunity. Members agreed that StFX has a strong foundation upon which to build and that experiential learning has the potential to further strengthen student success, community engagement, career readiness, and institutional distinctiveness.

Discussion emphasized the importance of building upon existing strengths, including Service Learning, Co-operative Education, and faculty-led experiential learning initiatives, while creating a more coordinated, visible, and accessible student experience.

## **Key Discussion Themes**

### **Defining Experiential Learning**

Members emphasized the importance of establishing a clear and accessible institutional definition of experiential learning. The Committee noted that shared definitions would help support consistency across academic units, reduce ambiguity, and distinguish experiential learning from broader active learning approaches.

The Committee also discussed the importance of clearly differentiating curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular experiences within future planning and communications.

## **Scope, Growth, and Feasibility**

Members discussed the overall scope of the strategy and emphasized the importance of balancing ambition with implementation capacity. Concerns were raised regarding

perceptions that experiential learning may become an expectation for all students, faculty, or programs.

The Committee emphasized the value of phased and incremental growth that builds upon existing strengths while remaining responsive to institutional capacity and available resources.

### **Faculty Capacity and Engagement**

Faculty capacity emerged as a significant theme throughout the discussion. Members noted that experiential learning often requires substantial investments of time and effort related to partnership development, student support, supervision, curriculum design, and coordination activities.

The Committee emphasized that future success will depend upon appropriate institutional support, recognition, resources, and opportunities for faculty engagement. Members also stressed the importance of maintaining flexibility and respecting disciplinary differences in how experiential learning is implemented.

### **Student Experience and Access**

Members expressed support for creating more visible and connected pathways that help students discover opportunities earlier in their academic journey. Discussion highlighted the importance of mentorship, developmental progression, and helping students connect experiential learning with future career, educational, and community pathways.

The Committee also emphasized the importance of maintaining a focus on access, equity, and inclusion as experiential learning opportunities continue to expand.

### **Systems, Tracking, and Validation**

The Committee discussed opportunities to strengthen institutional systems for tracking participation, documenting experiences, and supporting reporting requirements. Members emphasized that meaningful reflection, validation, and quality assurance processes should remain central components of experiential learning.

Discussion highlighted the importance of ensuring that systems support meaningful learning and development rather than simply documenting participation.

### **Governance and Implementation Considerations**

Members discussed the importance of ongoing consultation and engagement with Deans, Chairs, faculty, staff, students, and external partners. The Committee emphasized that implementation planning should be phased and supported through appropriate governance processes.

Discussion also highlighted the importance of clearly communicating the value proposition of experiential learning for both students and faculty.

## Key Themes Emerging

The Committee identified several recurring themes throughout the discussion:

- Strong support exists for the overall direction of the strategy.
- A clear institutional definition of experiential learning is needed.
- Growth should build upon existing strengths and occur incrementally.
- Faculty support, recognition, and capacity remain important considerations.
- Access, visibility, and student engagement should remain central priorities.
- Systems, standards, and quality assurance should support meaningful learning and institutional accountability.
- Ongoing consultation and governance processes will be important to future development.

## Recommendations

The Committee recommended:

- Including a clear and accessible definition of experiential learning within the strategy.
- Clarifying the distinction between curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular experiences.
- Strengthening articulation of the student and faculty value proposition.
- Continuing to refine language and messaging for broader audiences.
- Developing realistic implementation priorities and measures of progress.
- Continuing consultation with academic and administrative units as the work evolves.

## Action Item

## Lead

|                                                                                    |              |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Revise the Experiential Learning Strategy based on Committee feedback              | Project Team |
| Integrate experiential learning definitions into strategy and supporting materials | Project Team |
| Continue consultation with Deans, Chairs, faculty, staff, and external partners    | Project Team |
| Develop phased implementation planning recommendations                             | Project Team |
| Return revised strategy materials to ELAC for further discussion                   | Project Team |

The meeting concluded at approximately 3:30 p.m.