A. Why Experiential Learning?
Experiential learning -- which includes service learning, global learning, internships, and undergraduate research, scholarship, and arts -- augments traditional classroom settings and activities by affording students the opportunity for activation of higher thinking processes, the integration of knowledge, deeper reflection, and further engagement with faculty and communities both regionally and abroad. When experiential education meets these standards, the literature is unambiguous about the positive effects on student success and learning, as well as higher retention and graduation rates for underrepresented populations.

Our vision is for all OSU undergraduates to have access to at least one experiential learning opportunity that aligns with their educational and career interests and their personal aspirations. The university should actively instill in students an understanding of the value of participation and the range opportunities in experiential education using multiple, coordinated communication avenues including advising, admissions, residential programming, and web and print publications at the program and university levels. Students should be self-select for participation rather than be universally mandated by formal requirements. Ideally, driven by emerging professional and personal interests, students will be motivated to complete more than one experiential learning experience in the course of their undergraduate studies. Students should be encouraged to present an overview of their experience in a public forum that promotes critical thinking and self-reflection, inspires future students, and develops a culture of participation.

National studies suggest that historically underserved students do not participate at rates equal to majority populations, particularly among African American and first-generation college students. These same studies indicate that students of color and students who begin college at lower achievement levels make the greatest gains in GPA and retention rates from experiential learning participation. Given the marked gap between majority and minority student success at OSU, it is imperative that OSU design programs and outreach that ensure inclusiveness and actively promote underserved students into these opportunities.

Experiential education activities must have clearly articulated learning outcomes and must include appropriate assessment. Experiential learning outcomes should complement and align with those of students’ academic programs, majors and the Baccalaureate Core, and the largest portion of opportunities should be developed within academic units to ensure curricular and co-curricular connections. OSU should develop centralized experiential learning facilitation to support departmental/college efforts and minimize duplication of effort where natural commonalities exist (such as outreach and information delivery, coordination of international opportunities, support for involvement in IRB protocols, symposia for student presentations, contracts and intake procedures for internships, community service partner relations). Experiential learning pedagogies and related faculty development should also be facilitated on the university level, creating cross-pollination of ideas and resources among academic and support units. Like the pilot initiative for undergraduate research, scholarship and arts, the university should continue to pursue ways to make these experiences transcript visible.
OSU has existing strengths in all areas of experiential education, but we must augment the current capacities with more directed and proactive advising (and other forms of messaging) to encourage more undergraduates to plan for experiential learning as integral components of their overall educational program. Faculty recognition and support for designing and leading experiential learning are limited, yet the depth of student learning depends largely on faculty engagement and leadership. It is critical that the university identify mechanisms for enabling faculty to engage in meaningful ways, and departments should play a central role in this process to ensure good alignment with major program goals and outcomes. Our current capacity to engage students in experiential learning will expand only minimally without dedicating new resources to support infrastructure, student financial aid, and staff and program costs. To support expansion of opportunities, OSU should define early what the rate-limiting steps are between current and desired future capacity in each experiential learning area.

B. Recommendation for Central Coordinating Structure for Experiential Learning

Further gains in experiential learning will depend upon creation of an overarching university framework for experiential education. We propose founding an **OSU Center for Experiential Learning** that will provide leadership, facilitation and coordination for the four main branches of experiential learning (service learning, global learning, internships, and undergraduate research, scholarship, and arts).

Campuses with thriving experiential learning programs that reach large numbers of diverse students consistently have centrally coordinated support offices such as offices of undergraduate research or service learning. Advantages of central coordination over a distributed, localized approach include:

- Continuity in the development of the programming to ensure high standards and outcomes achievement
- Efficiency through reduction of duplicate efforts across colleges/units
- Specialization of knowledge and skills for program design and support
- Ease of access and continuity of services for students, particularly in light of the high student major migration rates
- Assessment and data gathering for accreditation, Carnegie classification and internal improvement efforts
- Targeted, coordinated outreach to ensure diversity of student participation in ways that the current haphazard approach has not achieved
- Continuity and nurturing of community partnerships

Several universities have recently sought to merge the previously separate program offices into a single experiential learning office as a way to capitalize on natural cross-programmatic synergies and to streamline student access and faculty support. These campuses report substantial difficulties merging pre-existing offices and strongly recommend instituting a shared structure from the outset. OSU is early enough in the process of promoting experiential learning to capitalize on creating synergies between experiential learning branches at this founding moment.

Reporting to the Associate Provost for Academic Success and Engagement, the Center for Experiential Learning should include one faculty coordinator for each of the four branches and appropriate administrative support. The coordinators should oversee design and implementation of critical functions specific to enhancement and sustainability of student and faculty participation for each respective branch. Each branch would also have key connections with existing support or faculty development offices as reflected in Figure 1.
Key common functions of each branch would include:

- Faculty development, recruitment, support and recognition
- Development of community partnerships
- Development of curricular and co-curricular partnerships
- Assessment
- Data-based resources for program monitoring and improvement
- Student advising, outreach, and communication coordination
- Risk management and coordination of administrative functions
- Continuity of standards for student engagement in the four branches and attainment of high-impact learning outcomes
- Facilitation of campus-wide recruitment activities, student presentations, etc.

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<tr>
<th>Branch</th>
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<th>Internships</th>
<th>Global Learning/International Education</th>
<th>Undergraduate Research, Scholarship and Arts</th>
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Figure 1. Integration of activities under the Center for Experiential Learning

Rough Cost Estimate for Pilot Center for Experiential Learning:

- 2.0 FTE faculty coordinator salary and OPE (4 x .5 FTE per branch): $280,000
- 1.0 FTE classified staff (to be shared by the four branches): $56,000
- 2.0 FTE combined GTA support for faculty coordinators: $68,000
- Services and Supplies: $50,000

Total: $454,000
C. Draft Learning Outcomes for Experiential Learning

Undergraduate Research
By the end of the undergraduate research activity, the student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate and describe how he/she approached an ambiguous problem within an authentic context.
2. Describe the ways he/she has collaborated with lab mates, faculty advisors, etc. to achieve the research objectives.
3. Demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively through written and oral communication the value of the research objectives and the results of the study.
4. Describe specific methods from the field of study and the frontier knowledge and skills (state-of-the-art) that is foundational to make a research contribution.
5. Identify the connections between the experiential learning activities and the curriculum.

Internships
By the end of the internship activity, the student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate and describe how he/she approached the ambiguous elements of a project within an authentic context.
2. Describe the ways he/she has collaborated with (as appropriate) technicians, operators, peers, supervisors, management, vendors, customers to complete the project.
3. Demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively through written and oral communication the value of and results from the project.
4. Describe specific methods from their field of study and the core knowledge and skills (state-of-the-art) that is foundational to complete the project.
5. Identify the connections between the experiential learning activities and the curriculum.

Global Learning
By the end of the global learning activity, the student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate intercultural competency
2. Describe new perspectives on their host culture, and on their own
3. Demonstrate increased language proficiency
4. Demonstrate personal independence and the sense of achievement that comes with functioning successfully in another culture
5. Describe first-hand experience and in-depth knowledge of another culture, and exposure to types of diversity that may not be available in their own country
6. Identify networks that will support them in future careers, especially through internships, research and service learning abroad.

Service Learning

1. By the end of the service learning activity, the student will be able to:
2. Identify a social need and method to address it.
3. Demonstrate the ability to collaborate with a community partner to advance a solution.
4. Demonstrate the ability to account for a diverse set of needs and stakes surrounding an issue of community interest.
5. Demonstrate the ability to work toward effecting change that meets an external community need.
6. Demonstrate the ability to confront real world problems holistically