

“Action without reflection leads to burn out.

Reflection without action leads to cynicism.”

- Albert Einstein

Experiential Education: Reflection and Assessment

Teaching Commons

My theory of garbage collection...



Learning Outcomes for the Session

At the end of the session, you will be (better) able to:

- Explain what reflection / reflective learning is;
- Articulate how reflective learning is part of the teaching culture/priorities at York University;
- Develop in-class activities that emphasize engagement with your subject matter with the support of structured reflection;
- Strategize for the ongoing assessment of reflective learning.

What IS Reflection?

“There are too many ways to define and engage with reflection to assume that students will understand what is expected of them without clarification.”

Coulson & Harvey (2013: 408)

What IS Reflection?

“There are too many ways to define and engage with reflection to assume that students will understand what is expected of them without clarification.”

Coulson & Harvey (2013: 408)

Using key words only, how do you define reflective learning?

Definitions of Reflection

- [A] generic term for those intellectual and affective activities in which individuals engage to **explore their experiences in order to lead to new understandings** and appreciations.

Boud (1985: 19; emphasis ours)

- Reflection is the process of **deriving meaning from experience**; it is also called “meaning-making.” It engages participants in **conscious, intentional, critical thinking**.

Volpe White (n.d.: 2; emphasis ours)

The Role of Reflection at York

“The explicit emphasis on reflection is a distinctive characteristic of experiential education.”

- A Case for Change, p. 6 (York University, 2013)

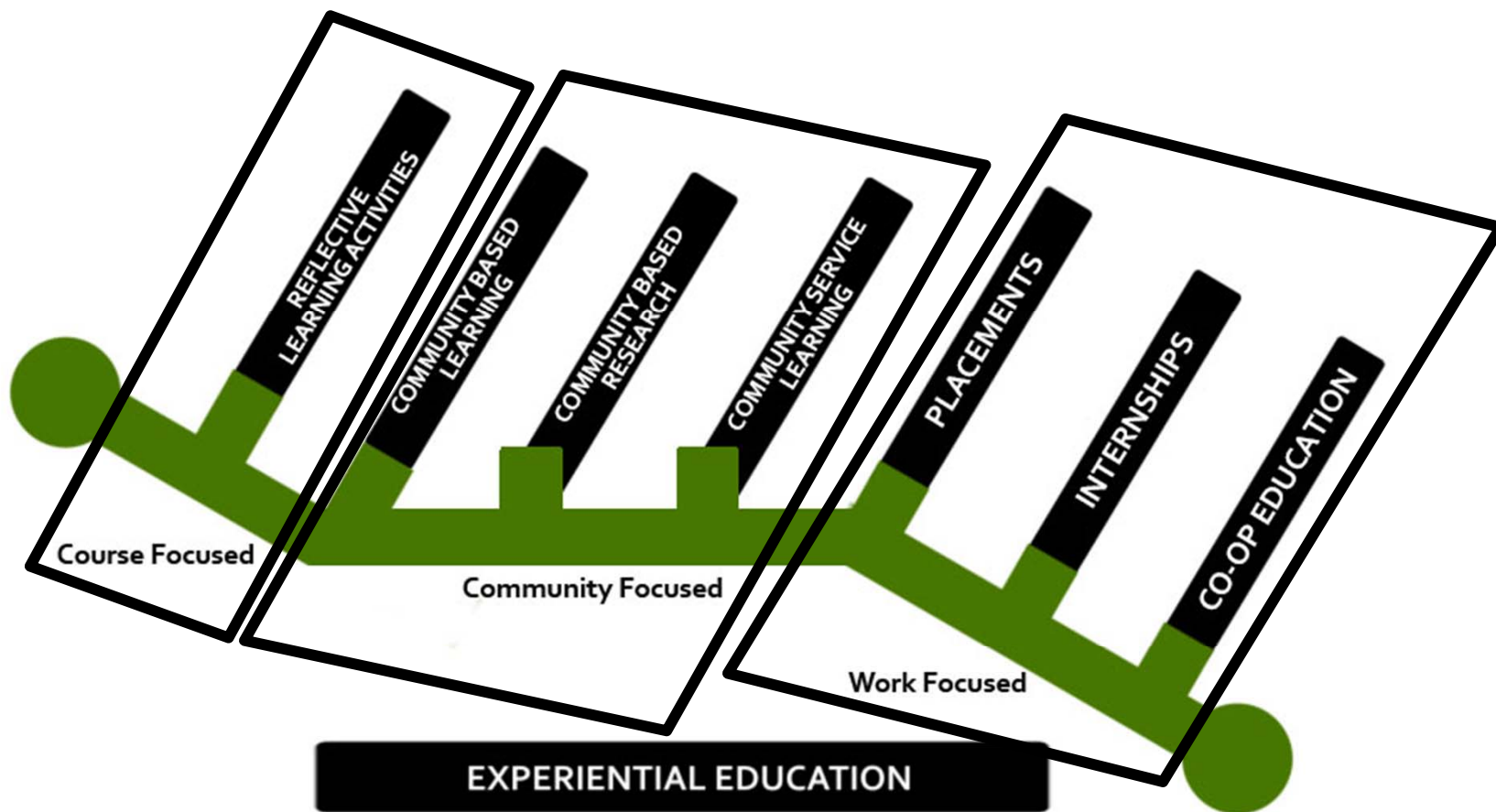
York's Definition of EE

Experiential education is a pedagogical approach that gives students the opportunity to **apply theory** to a concrete experience in a **reflective manner**.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i2fiJwRatOs>

(up to 30 sec)

The EE Subway Line at York



Designing Reflective Activities

- “A key message emerging from the literature is the importance of creating an effective **climate** and **context** for reflection through clearly articulated **intent**, **purpose**, **meaning**, and **expectations** [...]”

Coulson & Harvey (2013: 403; emphasis ours)

Examples of Reflective Learning Activities

Nancy Davis Halifax, associate professor of Critical Disability Studies:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?t=141&v=aVHAVikfNs0>

(1:10 to 1:30)

Grace Ross, assistant lecturer in the School of Nursing:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oFMfvoui41g>

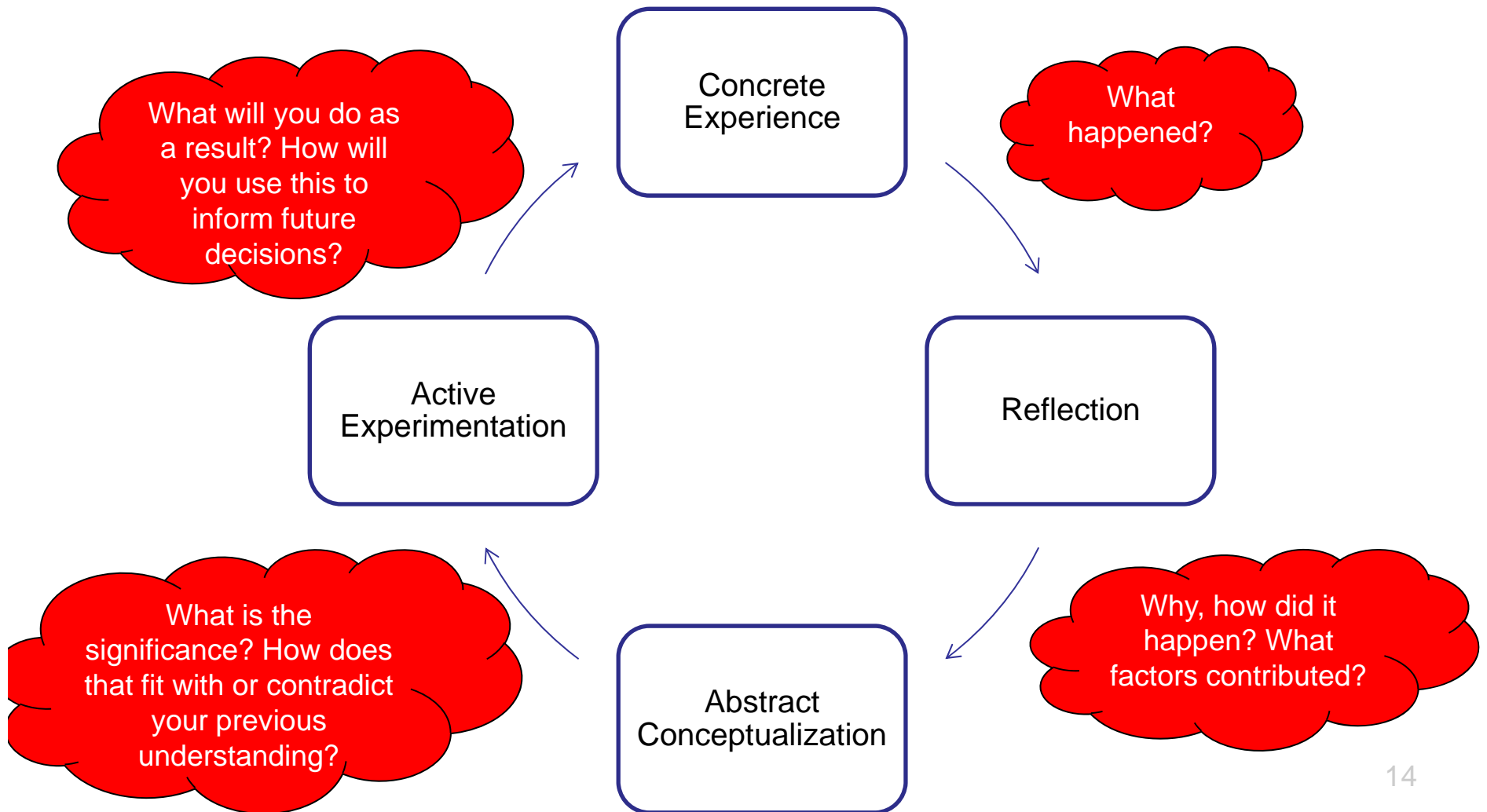
(1:10 to 2:10)

Transparent Alignment of Reflection to Experience & Curriculum

Principle	Element	Reflective Prompts
Intent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intended learning outcomes specified • Experience linked to course 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What is the purpose of the experience?</i> • <i>In what ways are reflection and the experience aligned with the curriculum (e.g. learning and teaching activities, content)?</i> • <i>How does reflecting on the experience contribute to the intended learning outcomes?</i>
Expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflection defined • Assessment criteria/rubric explored • Importance communicated via weighting /allocation of marks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What is meant by reflection in this context?</i> • <i>How will it be assessed?</i> • <i>What is the weighting (proportion of marks) that will be given to reflection tasks?</i>
Authenticity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflection and assessment learning activities relevant and clearly linked to course and experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How do the reflection and assessment tasks relate to the course and the experience?</i> • <i>How do they contribute to authentic learning?</i>

Source: Learning and Teaching Centre, Macquarie University

Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle



The theory vs lived experiences

Take a minute to think of an experience – in the classroom or otherwise – from which you learned something.

- Then try to map out this personal instance of experiential learning to Kolb's cycle.

Share how the model can be applied to that experience. Is it helpful? Are there any gaps, any mismatch?

Scaffolding Goals

- ❖ Learning to Reflect
- ❖ Reflection for Action
- ❖ Reflection in Action
- ❖ Reflection on Action

Source: Coulson & Harvey (2013)

Learning to Reflect

- Reach shared understanding of the role of reflection
- Introduce reflective tools & diverse media
- Provide formative feedback
- Model reflective thinking and metacognitive skills with students

Learning to Reflect: Sample Activities

- One to Three Words: Students share 1 to 3 words that represent their experience.
- Emotion Stickers: Students are provided with stickers. On the wall there are pieces of paper representing different emotions (happy, bewildered, confused, etc.). They place the sticker(s) on the paper that applies to them during a particular activity. The group discusses.
- Four Corners: In groups, students are asked to go to each corner of the classroom and write their reaction to a reflective question. Then groups visit the other corners, consider the answers already posted and comment.

Reflection for Action

- Clarify and contextualize reflection
- Prepare students for the learning experience
- Help students explore their beliefs, assumptions, values, expectations related to the experience they will encounter
- Provide reflective skills practice
- Provide formative feedback and formative assessment

Reflection for Action: Sample Activities

- Sentence Stems: These are useful in helping participants begin to think about their expectations. Example of stems: “This term I hope...”, “I am most anxious about...”
- Sticky Conversation: Students are asked to develop a list of items based on a question. They are provided with sticky notes and record one item per sticky. Then they organize them in some way, either individually or in a group setting.
- Learning plan: Instructor shares how reflection will help achieve the course goals and learning targets and ask learners identify their own learning objectives.

Reflection in Action

- Provide support during the experience itself as students may feel confused or confronted
- Help learners develop meaning from their experience
- Work through issues and critical incidents
- Foster connections between theory and practice
- Provide formative feedback and assessment

Reflection on Action

- Debrief experience, process emotions
- Encourage application of metacognitive skills
- Develop learner capacity to synthesize learning
- Encourage application of learning to course, future work
- Provide summative assessment and feedback

Reflection in / on Action: Sample Activities

- Mind Map: Students are asked to choose one or two key words about their experience and place them at the centre of the page. Extending from the centre, they then branch off ideas related to the topic of their map.
- Timeline: Students create a timeline documenting their experience with all significant events and explanations.
- Collaborative Wiki
- Structured debriefing

Selecting Reflective Activities

Pick one activity from the handout and apply it to your teaching.

- What would be the benefits?
- What would be some possible challenges?

Strategic Questioning

Carefully framed, strategic questions may be used to guide students towards the more critical end of the reflection spectrum.

Usual Question	Strategic Question
Have you thought about... ?	What comes to mind when... ?
Why do you feel that... ?	What causes you to feel that... ?
What will you do now... ?	What happens if you do that... ? Who is affected?
Why do you think that... ?	What evidence do you have for that... ?
	What other views have you considered?
	How can you address... ?

Structured Debriefing

- **Description:**
What is the stimulant for the reflection (experience, event, theoretical idea, etc.)
- **Feelings:**
What were your reactions and feelings?
- **Evaluation:**
What was good and bad about the experience?
- **Analysis:**
What sense can you make of the situation?

Structured Debriefing, Cont'd

- **Conclusions:**
What can be concluded from these experiences and analyses?
- **Personal action plan:**
What are you going to do differently in this type of situation next time? What steps are you going to take on the basis of what you have learned?

Critical Incident Questionnaire (CIQ)

The CIQ “support[s] students’ move towards reflexivity, as it creates a habit of looking back at learning and provides leaping-off points for other assignments such as portfolios that deepen the reflection.”

Hessler & Rupiper Taggart (2011: 2)

Benefits of the CIQ

Benefits to students

- It provides them with regular reflective practice and builds the habit of reflection
- The CIQ records can be used to collect responses and reflect on their growth as learners

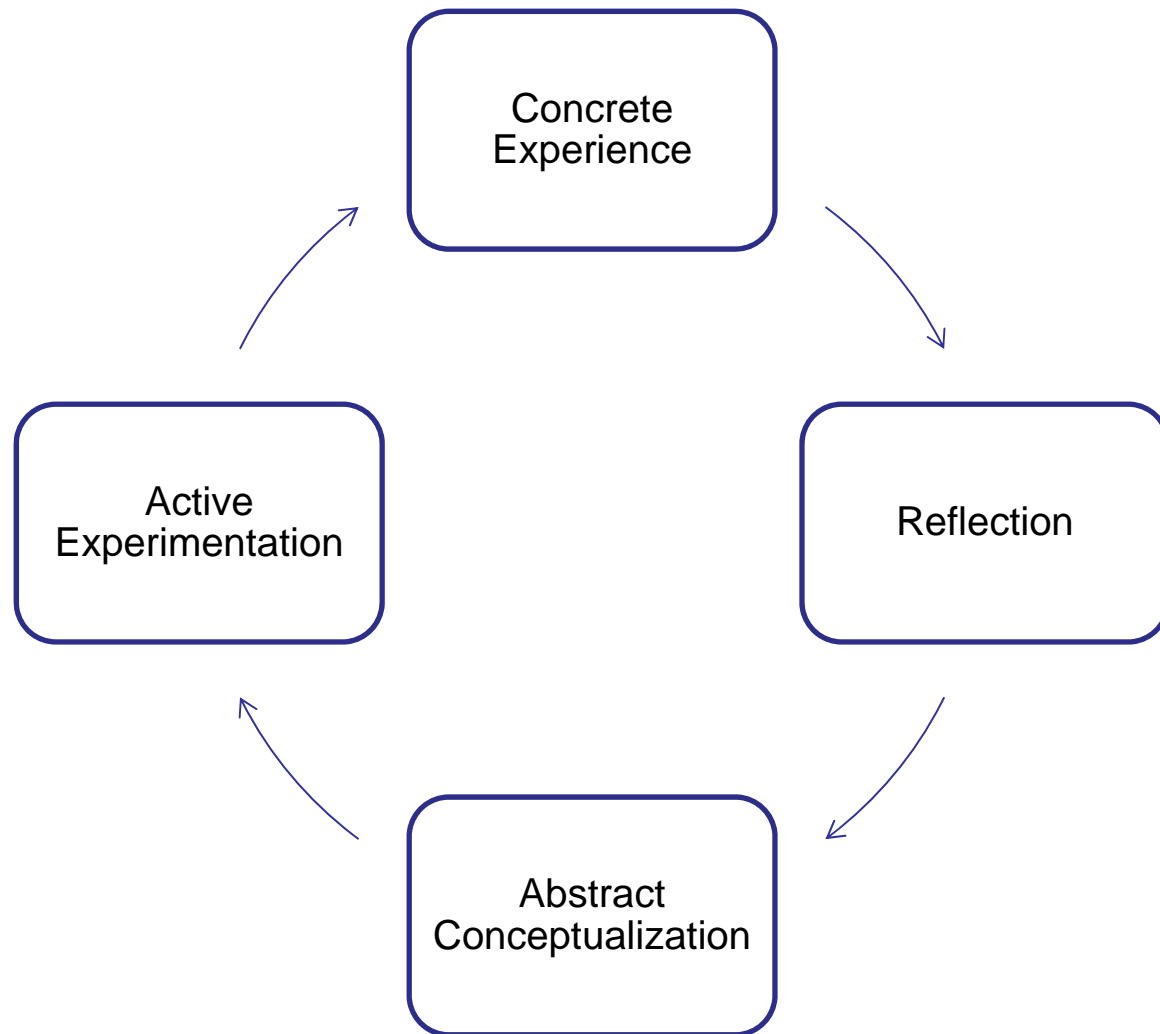
Benefits to the instructor

- The instructor can compare his or her own CIQ with that of the students and reflect on their practice
- Reviewing weekly CIQs helps prepare the upcoming lessons as they provide a mechanism by which to identify learning stumbling blocks
- Week to week patterns, course patterns and cross-semester insights can be observed

CIQ Questions

1. At what moment in class this week did you feel most engaged with what was happening?
2. At what moment in class this week did you feel most distanced from what was happening?
3. What action that anyone (teacher or student) took in class this week did you find most affirming and helpful?
4. What material you read, gathered for a project, or discussed in class this week engaged your thinking most? How did it engage you?
5. Which concept covered in class or in the reading for this week did you find most puzzling or confusing? What was puzzling about it?
6. What connection did you make between the material you read, gathered for a project or discussed in class this week and other material for the class or in other classes?

When to Assess Reflective Learning?



Levels of Reflection

Level and Scoring	Explanation of Level	Assessment of Assignment
Habitual action <i>Grade: D</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students offer answers without attempting to understand them Automatic response, little conscious thought Students exemplify this level when they follow the steps in a lab manual without any consideration of what they are doing or why No reflective activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> student has completed an assignment without significant thoughts (limited or no conscious) simple interpretation no evidence of concept or theory comprehension student has not connected class context (theories and concepts) with experiences and literature superficial work has been produced
Understanding <i>Grade: C</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of knowledge without appraisal In this case, there is an attempt to understand the topic or concept. Students learn concepts but they don't relate that to their lives and do not have personal reactions to them Theories are understood but remain on an abstract level Knows the "what" but not the "how" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> comprehension of class concepts is evident only class material or theories are discussed student has not made a clear connection between practical or personal experience with theories; no reflection
Reflection <i>Grade: B</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students understand the material, and relate that understanding to their personal experiences and/or practical applications Through this process students gain personal insights beyond the material 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> clear connection between theoretical context and experience(s) higher levels of discussion of the relationship between concrete experiences and class content greater insight overall; goes beyond understanding of the class material Evidence of application of theory
Critical reflection <i>Grade: A</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At this stage, the student has a transformative experience Through reflection students reveal underlying beliefs and assumptions, question them, and are able to form new perspectives. This type of reflection occurs gradually over time, and usually involves a disruption of a belief system or the student, necessitating its examination and eventual re-construction. Critical self-reflection can foster self understanding that can facilitate the modification of one's situations (Fisher, 2003) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> superior level of reflection prior presumptions have been recognized and critically examined student demonstrates perspective transformation about a particular issue, problem or concept Work demonstrates higher levels of consciousness

Assessment of Reflective Learning

Provide a range of options for reflective practice

- Artistic Creation: Students create a skit, poem, song or other artistic representation of their experience
- Scrapbook, Memory Box or Quilt: Students create pieces of memories, including pictures, quotes, skills learned, challenges overcome, etc. and piece them together
- Learning portfolios: Document allowing students to keep track of and reflect on all of their learning experiences throughout the course, program
- Other ideas: Video cast, formal presentation, poster, pamphlet, reflective essay, etc.

One-Minute Paper

Consider each question and spend 1 minute writing on each:

1. At what moment in this workshop did you feel most engaged with what was happening? Most distanced?
2. What connection did you make between the material covered in this workshop and your practice as an instructor?

So, do we learn from experience alone?

“Action without reflection leads to burn out [...]”

- Albert Einstein



Resources

Faculty of Health EE Website:

<http://eehealth.info.yorku.ca/course-directors/>

Faculty of LA&PS EE Website:

<http://www.yorku.ca/laps/ee/>

Guide to reflection and activities:

http://www.uvm.edu/~dewey/reflection_manual/

Technology tools for reflection:

<https://sites.google.com/site/reflection4learning/technology-tools-for-reflection>

AVP Teaching and Learning website:

<http://avptl.info.yorku.ca/experiential-education/>

Email teaching@yorku.ca for enquiries or advice

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Thanks for coming!

Please fill out the evaluation form for the workshop!