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Enhancing Experiential Learning Opportunities Through the Integration of Continuous Improvement Practices

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Abstract

Experiential learning (EL) in higher education has become a prominent academic curriculum component. Recent provincial guidelines emphasize that post-secondary institutions provide students EL opportunities, outlining criteria as to what *counts* as an EL activity. While these guidelines provide instruction on *what* an EL opportunity should contain, it does not detail *how* post-secondary institutions should develop and implement these activities responsive to their unique student population needs. This Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) aims to determine how an Ontario university can provide meaningful, student-focused EL opportunities through a centralized, theoretically-informed EL implementation framework. It centers around a Problem of Practice (PoP) at Gordon University (GU), where the absence of formal internal practices on how to develop and implement EL has created an imbalance in current offerings. Throughout the OIP, a distributed-adaptive hybrid leadership approach combined with the change path model (Cawsey et al., 2016) creates a pathway to propel identified change practices forward. An organizational analysis identifies key change areas, determining the scope and type of change needed. Using Starratt's (1991, 1996) ethics of care, justice and critique reveals the ethical considerations and challenges a chosen solution needs to address. The result is a proposed solution to the PoP that focuses on organizational learning using Kolb's (2015) EL theory. Embedding this organizational learning in GU's existing quality assurance academic review framework will formalize the process. The model for improvement (Langley et al., 1994; Langley et al., 2009; Moen & Norman, 2009) guides the implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and communication plans to ensure continuous improvement of the chosen solution.

Keywords: Experiential learning, Continuous improvement, Quality assurance, Distributed-adaptive leadership

Executive Summary

Experiential learning (EL) in higher education has become a prominent academic curriculum component. Both the Canadian federal and provincial governments have recently enacted policies that encourage higher education institutions to provide their students with quality EL opportunities that prepare them for employability. The most recent Ontario guidelines categorize EL into two areas: in-class (course-embedded) or work-integrated activities (MAESD, 2017). This Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) centers around a mid-sized, publicly-funded university in Ontario, Canada, whose current EL provisions fall primarily into the work-integrated learning category. The Problem of Practice (PoP) examines how the absence of a theoretically-informed, centralized internal EL framework at this university has led to the uneven development and implementation of EL provisions, impacting the creation of meaningful EL opportunities for all students.

Chapter 1 introduces Gordon University (GU), a newer university in Ontario, and provides its historical context, including the mission, vision, value, and goals. The author (she/her) assesses GU's organizational leadership approaches and practices, noting that GU's shared leadership values can help achieve GU's goal of re-imagining EL through encouraging collegial, collaborative decision-making. A discussion of gaps between current EL development practices at GU and the desired state outlines several ongoing benefits for faculty and students when using a theoretically-informed EL implementation framework to provide a balanced approach to EL provisions. The author shares the results of a STEEPLED analysis, identifying several enabling and restricting forces, including drivers of change, that need consideration when developing a solution to the PoP. Additionally, when seeking to address the PoP at GU, guiding inquiry questions emerge on EL theory, critical policy analysis and the equity-related

implications for the author to use when assessing possible solutions. To conclude the chapter, a change readiness assessment discloses that GU is ready to change with some possible resistance. This readiness level will factor into the proposed planned change solutions in Chapter 2.

Chapter 2 begins with consolidating the first chapter's findings on GU's leadership approaches, its desired state for EL and the change readiness assessment. These findings lead to the determination that a distributed-adaptive hybrid leadership approach to change will help move a chosen solution forward. Distributed-adaptive leadership extends principles of shared leadership beyond teams, focusing on organizational networks while incorporating creative problem-solving to assist GU faculty and staff with re-envisioning EL implementation. To determine *how* to move change forward at GU, the author undertakes a comparative analysis of three change frameworks, with Cawsey et al.'s (2016) change path model selected due to its ability to provide flexible, detailed direction. Next, a critical organizational analysis using Nadler and Tushman's (1980, 1989) congruence model and four types of organizational change, the author explores *what* needs to change at GU. This exploration determines that an incremental, continuous approach to change would be well received by GU faculty and staff; it also reveals four unique organizational gaps that the solution needs to address when implementing a balanced approach to EL creation. The author then proposes three possible solutions to the PoP, evaluating each against the other and determines one logical choice for GU: a theoretically informed EL workshop series for faculty and staff embedded in GU's quality assurance cyclical program review process. The chosen solution is then analyzed using Starratt's (1991,1996) ethics of care, justice and critique framework to determine which ethical considerations and challenges a change leader should be conscientious of when planning out the chosen solution.

Chapter 3 outlines a plan for implementing, monitoring, evaluating, and communicating the chosen solution's change process and establishes the author as the change leader. Combining principles from the model for improvement (Langley et al., 1994; Langley et al., 2009; Moen & Norman, 2009) and the change path model (Cawsey et al., 2016), the author maps out the strategic objectives and goals for implementing the planned change solution, focusing on how to manage the various organizational transitions in tandem with GU's level of change readiness. The author employs components of Markiewicz and Patrick's monitoring and evaluation framework (2016) to monitor the change implementation plan, track its progression and assess where aspects of the plan may need refining. Integrating Starratt's (1991,1996) ethical framework, coupled with Schein's humble inquiry approach (2013), is proposed when developing evaluation questions to strengthen EL provisions from an equity perspective. The author then presents a communication plan to address the need for change at GU using Klein's (1996) key principles to communicate change combined with Armenakis and Harris' (2002) five principles for crafting a change message.

This OIP concludes by recommending the next steps and future considerations of the planned change solution at GU. The author outlines future government policy implications and how GU can implement the plan parallel to any additional government-mandated EL guidelines. Continuing to use distributed-adaptive leadership approaches will allow the organization to build momentum for the planned change solution while remaining compliant with provincial guidelines. This final section highlights that while the OIP focuses on the PoP within the context of GU, the lessons learned have broader implications for EL creation, implementation and continuous improvement in higher education.

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Table of Contents

Abstract ii
Executive Summary iii
Acknowledgments vi
Table of Contents vii
List of Tables x
List of Figures xi
Acronyms xii
Definitions xiii
Chapter 1: Introduction & Problem 1
Organizational Context 4
    Vision, Mission, Values, Purpose & Goals 5
    Organizational Structure and Established Leadership Approaches 6
Leadership Positions and Lens Statement 8
Leadership Problem of Practice 10
Framing the Problem of Practice 12
    Historical Overview 12
    STEEPLE Analysis 13
    Literature on Experiential Learning Theory 15
Guiding Questions Emerging from the Problem of Practice 17
Leadership-Focused Vision for Change 19
    Current State 19
    Desired State: Priorities for Change 22

Change Drivers 24
Organizational Change Readiness 27
Chapter 1 Summary 30
Chapter 2: Planning & Development 32
Leadership Approach(es) to Change 33
Framework for Leading the Change Process 36
Assessment of Relevant Framing Theories 36
Types of Organizational Change 40
Chosen Framework for Leading Change at GU 43
Critical Organizational Analysis 44
Summary of Nadler and Tushman's Congruence Model: Key Components 45
Possible Solutions to Address the Problem of Practice 51
Proposed Solution #1: Maintain the Status Quo 51
Proposed Solution #2: EL Policy Directives 53
Proposed Solution #3: EL Workshop Series Embedded Within the QA Cyclical Program Review Process. 55
Evaluative Summary of Proposed Solutions 57
Chosen Solution 58
Leadership Ethics and Organizational Change 61
Ethic of Care 61
Ethic of Justice 62
Ethic of Critique 63
Chapter 2 Summary 65

Chapter 3: Implementation, Evaluation & Communication 66

Change Implementation Plan 67

Strategy for Planned Change 69

Determining Goals of the Planned Change 71

Managing the Transition 72

Change Process Monitoring and Evaluation 80

Summary of Planning Format: Monitoring 81

Summary of Planning Format: Evaluation 82

Consolidated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan for the Change Solution 83

Plan to Communicate the Need for Change and the Change Process 88

Guiding Principles Informing the Communication Plan 89

Crafting Targeted Change Messages 91

Communication Plan for the Change Solution 94

Chapter 3 Summary 96

Conclusion: Next Steps and Future Considerations 97

References 99

Appendix A: Potential Distributed-Adaptive Networks 111

Appendix B: Monitoring and Evaluation Plans for GU 112

Appendix C: Communication Strategy for GU 115

List of Tables

Table 1: Nadler and Tushman’s Four Types of Organizational Change…………………………...41

Table 2: Proposed OIP Solutions: Summary and Evaluation……………………………………57

Table 3: Proposed Short-, Medium- and Long-Range Benchmarks for Planned Change Goals...73

Table 4: Excerpt of Proposed Monitoring and Evaluation Plan…………………………………85

Table 5: Phases of Communication Needs Aligned with the Change Path Model………………93

Table 6: Excerpt of Proposed Communication Strategy…………………………………………94

List of Figures

Figure 1: Examples of EL and WIL from the MAESD Guidelines……………………………….2

Figure 2: Experiential Learning Cycle………………………………………………………...16

Figure 3: Nadler and Tushman's Congruence Model Applied to the Current State of EL……...47

Figure 4: Alignment of the Model for Improvement with the Change Path Model…………..….68

Acronyms

CPR (Cyclical Program Review)

EL (Experiential Learning)

ELT (Experiential Learning Theory)

GU (Gordon University)

IAT (Internal Assessment Team)

MAESD (Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development)

MCU (Ministry of Colleges and Universities)

OIP (Organizational Improvement Plan)

PBF (Performance Based Funding)

PDSA (Plan-Do-Study-Act)

PoP (Problem of Practice)

QA (Quality Assurance)

SMA (Strategic Mandate Agreement)

WIL (Work Integrated Learning)

Definitions

Co-curricular: Refers to activities, programs and learning experiences that supplement or complement the academic curricular experience. These activities are often outside of the academic curriculum or syllabi and are voluntary in nature.

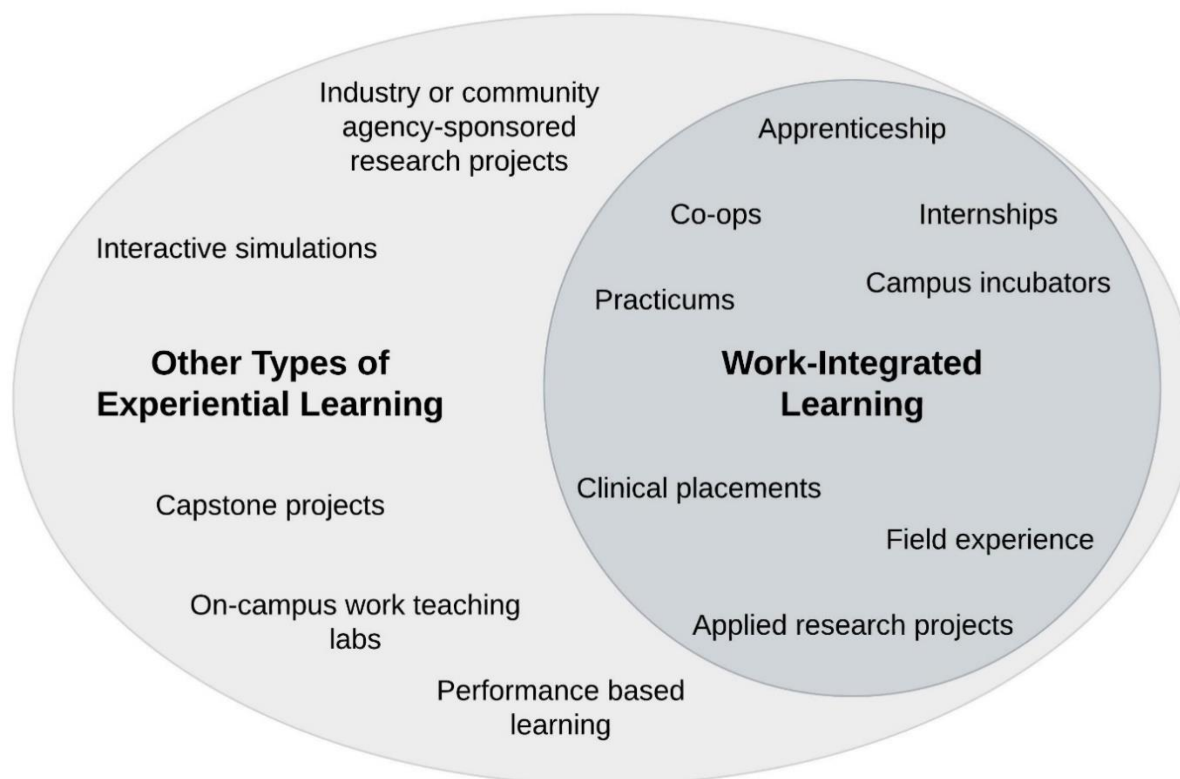
Curricular: Refers to activities, programs and learning experiences embedded directly into the academic curricula through a sequence of courses or syllabi. These activities are often integrated into the classroom experience and are assessed or evaluated.

Chapter 1: Introduction & Problem

Experiential learning (EL) in higher education has been at the forefront of academic curriculum discussions in recent years. In Ontario, this was primarily due to provincial legislation, which made it mandatory that every student participates in at least one EL opportunity during their studies (MAESD, 2017). When this legislation was first mandated in the province, the *Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development (MAESD) Guiding Principles for Experiential Learning* (2017) was released to provide post-secondary institutions with guidelines outlining what would count as an EL opportunity. These guidelines recognized that "experiential learning incorporates work-integrated learning but is broader in its recognition of how educational experiences can prepare students to thrive in the workforce" (MAESD, 2017, p.4). Institutions were encouraged to provide a broader range of EL opportunities beyond how the Ministry defined work-integrated learning (WIL). Figure 1 outlines how the Ministry envisions WIL under the broader EL umbrella within the MAESD guidelines. Additionally, the MAESD document outlined that an EL opportunity should be "meaningful, structured, and verified" (MAESD, 2017, p.3), which places the onus on individual institutions to ensure that the EL opportunities provided met this threshold.

Figure 1

Examples of EL and WIL from the MAESD Guidelines



Note. This image is adapted from the Ontario Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development (MAESD*) Guiding principles for experiential learning* (2017).

In 2019, a change of provincial government[1] saw EL continue to be a priority for post-secondary institutions with a new caveat, the provision of these opportunities would now be tied to provincial funding. In Ontario, the Ministry that oversees post-secondary education and each publicly-funded university enters a Strategic Mandate Agreement (SMA) approximately every five years. A SMA articulates an institution's areas of strength, overarching priorities, accountabilities and performance indicators (MAESD, 2018; MCU, 2020). In 2019, the new

[1] This change in 2019 also included renaming the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development (MAESD) to the Ministry of Colleges and Universities (MCU).

provincial government announced that an institution would now have to meet several performance-based indicators, through the performance metrics outlined in the SMA, in order to procure the 60% performance-based funding (PBF) provided until 2025 (Harris, 2019; MCU, 2020; Ministry of Finance, 2019; Usher, 2019); EL is one of those performance indicators. With this announcement, no new guidelines or criteria were provided, only that the "number and proportion" (Usher, 2019) of students participating in EL needed to be tracked as part of the PBF metrics.

The new PBF criteria modified the earlier government's mandate that every student should have at least one EL opportunity before graduating. For PBF, institutions define their institution-specific performance targets that are then agreed upon with the province; these targets become the metrics the institution gets evaluated on for funding. For universities in Ontario, this heightened the need to continue incorporating EL throughout their academic programs and ensure that these opportunities provide consistent, meaningful EL that can be verified. If unable to provide these EL opportunities, institutions risk losing much needed funding throughout the SMA period by not meeting the agreed upon targets.

This Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) begins with laying out rationale as to why an Ontario university would benefit from enhancing its current EL opportunities through a balanced, meaningful approach to the WIL and in-class, course embedded EL offerings it provides. The first chapter will discuss Gordon University[2]'s (GU) history, including its organizational structure and established approaches to leading. The author (she/her) will then elaborate on her agency within GU and her preferred leadership lens. Next, a problem of practice at GU is articulated, accompanied by factors that have shaped this problem. The discussion then

[2] Pseudonym.

focuses on three inquiry-based questions that have been derived from the problem of practice and explores broader contextual factors that are informing it. From there, the current and future state of GU is explored, with individuals and groups who will drive the change identified. Lastly, an assessment of GU's readiness for change is undertaken, focusing on addressing competing factors that may impact change.

Organizational Context

GU is a newer university in Ontario, and as one of the first universities in the Regional Municipality, its initial vision was to offer programs that would prepare its students for knowledge-intensive careers that would complement college offerings in the surrounding area (Gordon University, 2002). The university's initial mandate noted a commitment to innovative programs responsive to its students' needs and the employers' market needs while advancing the quality of its research, teaching, learning and professional practices (Gordon University, 2002). GU had promoted its innovative practices from its inception by incorporating cutting-edge technology into the classroom and research spaces. The university has also continued to work closely with community and industry partners, developing several significant partnerships with local industries and establishing a research partnerships office in its infancy.

Over the last decade, GU has continued to grow its partnerships, academic programming and student population. Starting with an incoming class of under 1000 students and a handful of academic programs, GU now has over 10,000 students (including undergraduate and graduate) and offers over 90 programs. In its infancy, GU focused its mission and vision statements around creating innovative learning and teaching spaces; as it substantially grew, an evolution of these statements happened in the adolescent years of the institution.

Vision, Mission, Values, Purpose & Goals

The evolution of the vision, mission and values of GU reflects the substantial growth and maturity it has gone through over the last decade. Continuing its focus on technology and community, GU's most recent vision, mission, and values statements situate its purpose within the 21st century higher education landscape. GU's current vision and mission acknowledge its roots in technology and science, focusing on providing STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics) based academic degree and diploma programs responsive to industry and student demand (Gordon University, 2017a). The vision and mission also promote flexible, adaptive learning environments, incorporating both inside and outside the classroom experiences grounded in transformative learning practices (Gordon University, 2017a). Furthermore, GU has established institutional values that highlight its commitment to equity, inclusivity and accountability while being dedicated to quality academic opportunities that allow for the pursuit of innovative practices (Gordon University, 2017a). Recently, with the onboarding of a new senior leadership team at the university (including the president, provost and several decanal positions), the mission, vision, and values have been channelled into a set of revised institutional priorities.

These revised institutional priorities set out the purpose and goal for GU, looking forward by distilling down the mission, vision and values into four main pillars. The four pillars are built around the themes of ethical and conscientious technology, re-envisioning learning, creating a cohesive campus and developing partnerships (Gordon University, 2019a). These priority pillars summarize the institution's purpose and the goals of its planning and implementation of programming, both curricular and co-curricular. The *re-envisioning learning* priority speaks

directly to GU's goals for EL, focusing specifically on providing a wide range of EL opportunities that are learner-centric, flexible and dynamic, with the ability to adapt to an ever-changing educational landscape (Gordon University, 2019a). GU aims to provide its students with EL opportunities that put them at the center of the experience, flexible and dynamic in delivery and responsive to the academic curriculum.

GU's current priority pillar of re-envisioning learning commits the institution to provide a wide range of EL opportunities that can adapt to the ever-changing post-secondary landscape (2019a). This commitment aligns with the current provincial government's mandate to provide students with at least one EL opportunity to procure PBF. How GU prioritizes its goals and articulates them through the four pillars also connects to how it structures its decision-making practices and leadership approaches.

Organizational Structure and Established Leadership Approaches

GU's organizational chart appears hierarchical, with a president, provost, senior leadership comprised of deans and senior administration, followed by the divisions with their respective departments. It is also evident that GU consists of two factions, the academic faction, which is comprised of the faculties, and the academic support faction, which includes student supports such as the office of student life. Typically, this hierarchy would indicate a highly bureaucratic organization, with decision-making processes being machine-like and systematic (Bolman & Deal, 2017; Manning, 2018b; Morgan, 2006). GU eschews the bureaucratic organizational approaches for one that would be considered more collaborative in practice, often utilizing townhalls, consultations and highly participatory governance committees. These practices align with what organizational theorists would deem *collegial* in nature. Most senior leadership encourages faculty and staff to work together when common interests intersect, encouraging an

interdisciplinary approach to decision-making (Manning, 2018a). These collaborative decision-making spaces allow participation to be fluid in nature, sometimes creating coalitions around common interests with different levels of power and authority intertwined (Bolman & Deal, 2017; Manning, 2018c), which is characteristic of a *political* organization. Recognizing that GU organizationally practices collegial-political approaches to process and decision-making is essential, as it speaks to preferred leadership approaches across the institution.

Bush (2015) highlighted that organizational theory intersects with leadership theory regarding goals, structure, culture and context. GU promoting a participatory, collaborative approach to programming and decision-making, both curricular and co-curricular, across the organization aligns with a shared approach to leadership. GU frequently holds various discussion-based forums, such as town halls, where the president and provost, or other senior leadership team members, will co-lead a discussion with the campus community. This practice is characteristic of shared leadership, with the senior leadership team working together and selecting team members to lead at certain times, based on their expertise and knowledge, to maximize the success of their messaging (Bergman et al., 2012; Pearce et al., 2009). While bureaucratic approaches to leading may happen at GU, it is uncommon, not overtly encouraged, and practiced in small silos. Instead, GU opts to promote a shared approach to leadership, establishing this culture of practice by demonstrating the sharing of responsibilities at the senior leadership level in organization-wide forums. Establishing and practicing shared approaches at the senior level has influenced individuals working within the organization by modelling the preferred method of leading.

Leadership Positions and Lens Statement

As a quality assurance (QA) professional who has been at GU for over a decade, the established shared leadership culture has been influential on the author's approach to leadership. The author's portfolio in the QA office at GU oversees the coordination of all academic cyclical program reviews, facilitating the development of program-level curriculum as part of these reviews and supporting the integrated academic planning process. The QA office is considered the central hub for most activities related to quality assurance, curriculum and governance. Staff in this office have regular interactions with stakeholders across the institution, including senior leadership, faculty and administrative staff, working closely with all of these groups to promote and uphold the mission of GU to provide "quality academic opportunities" (Gordon University, 2017c). The QA office's mission and vision focus on quality enhancement over assurance, striving to support the continuous improvement and development of academic and non-academic programming (Gordon University, 2017c).

The author's portfolio within the QA office at GU is administrative, allowing for regular interactions with institutional leaders, both formal and informal, mainly in the capacity of an influencer of change. Her position has informal managerial aspects to it, from providing education on curriculum development to facilitating educational workshops for various stakeholders. Being an influential change leader means that the author can contribute to the decision-making process. However, that ability is balanced with the shared senior leadership group's decision-making powers, including her immediate director and other senior administration. The author's ability to influence change comes from combining the knowledge and expertise gained through being at the institution for over a decade, including building professional relationships across the institution. Mittal and Elias (2015) referred to this as a type

of *expert-referent* power, as the author can influence others by relying on her knowledge and the interpersonal relationships built over the years. This power has helped mitigate the limitations of not being in a formal decision-making role at the institution. It has allowed her to utilize her knowledge and relationships to be influential when working in GU networks that contain individuals who can make those decisions.

The author's role in the QA office and its limitations have influenced her to lead within the organization in a distributed manner. A distributed leadership approach utilizes established organizational and professional networks, working with various individuals in different positions, departments or divisions when leading change (Gronn, 2010; Harris, 2006; Jones et al., 2012). Dispersing leadership throughout a team to share responsibility and maximize group efforts indicates shared leadership principles (Bergman et al., 2012; Northouse, 2016; Pearce et al., 2009). Distributed leadership builds off these principles by extending collaborative sharing beyond the team to more extensive networks of varying individuals and groups within an organization. By collaborating with these networks, the author can gain insight from other colleagues' expertise and work with them to influence their decision-making abilities that are not available in her role.

Having worked at GU in several different roles, the distributed approach allows the author to draw on pre-existing interpersonal connections and networks when working on a change initiative. Distributed leadership practices also consist of creating spaces that allow those involved in the change to work together collaboratively to promote an exchange of skills and knowledge, reciprocity and trust (Gronn, 2010; Harris, 2006; Harris & Deflaminis, 2016). When building and maintaining professional networks using this lens, the author has grown to be mindful of the need to create spaces that allow individuals within the organization, regardless of

title or role, to contribute to a change process she has initiated. The distributed leadership approach is encouraged by the QA office's director and aligns with the broader GU mission, vision and values of creating a cohesive campus and maintaining partnerships (Gordon University, 2017c).

With collaboration being a shared priority at GU, it will not be unwelcomed for the author to use a distributed leadership approach when exploring ways to better EL opportunities for students. A distributed leadership approach strives to involve the participation of leaders, both formal (as defined by position/title) and informal, in a non-hierarchical manner when attempting to further an organizational initiative or goal (Gronn, 2010; Harris, 2006; Jones et al., 2012). With current EL initiatives decentralized across GU, the author's preferred distributed leadership approach will ensure that all internal stakeholders who currently provide EL opportunities, regardless of title, will be considered and consulted when proposing change. As EL opportunities at GU are already happening across different faculties and departments, by operating through a distributed leadership lens, participation in any change initiative regarding EL will need to be widespread and not limited to those with a particular title.

Leadership Problem of Practice

GU's current institutional priorities purposefully highlight the goal of offering various EL opportunities that are student-centered, flexible and dynamic, adapting to an ever-changing post-secondary landscape (Gordon University, 2019a). Coupled with this priority was the creation of an institution-wide EL definition that provides further descriptors of EL. GU's definition of EL calls for the "active engagement of students in opportunities to learn by doing and reflecting on those activities" (Gordon University, 2018a) and that these activities can be in a "workplace setting or volunteer" (Gordon University, 2018a). This priority and definition align with the

current provincial government's mandate for EL (MCU, n.d.), which provides a checklist as to the characteristics EL experiences must have in order for them to count towards its PBF model.

While the priority, definition and government mandate documentation all answer *what* EL should entail, they do not provide specifics on *how* it can be consistently developed at GU. Additionally, across the numerous faculties and administrative units at GU, the planning, implementation and assessment of EL activities are decentralized. A lack of specifics, coupled with decentralization, has led to each faculty and unit interpreting these EL documents and policies in their own way, resulting in various EL practices at the institution, with WIL the default choice of EL opportunities for students. Every faculty at GU mentions WIL on their web pages but less than half mention other EL practices, such as volunteer opportunities outside of the workplace or a reflection component embedded in the offered EL activities (Gordon University, 2020a). Also, not all of the alternative types of EL listed on these sites, for example, activities connected to volunteerism, have been vetted to count "for credit" or as "structured and verified" (MAESD, 2017, p.3) –two components that must be met from the MAESD checklist for it to count.

Without institution-wide guidance on EL implementation, current decentralized practices at GU have resulted in inconsistent and imbalanced offerings when providing students with a broader range of EL opportunities. This risk has become amplified in Canada during the COVID-19 pandemic, with "35% of students participating in WIL [*at a Canadian post-secondary institution*] having their opportunity paused or cancelled and over 6,700 student work placements cancelled for summer 2020" (Lowes et al., 2020). Recognizing that WIL opportunities may be limited moving forward due to the pandemic, and that provincial funding for GU ties into the university's ability to provide EL opportunities, it is necessary that GU

commits to a balanced approach to the provision of these opportunities beyond traditional WIL. The problem of practice (PoP) that this OIP explores is the gap between what defines EL and how it can be consistently planned and implemented at GU. Specifically, how might GU implement meaningful EL opportunities for all students?

Framing the Problem of Practice

It is vital to situate the PoP in broader contexts to understand how internal and external forces have shaped, and continue to shape, the practices that have come to form this problem. First, the author provides a historical overview of how EL is discussed within the broader Canadian and Ontario context, focusing on how this discourse has shaped GU's current approach. Second, the results of a STEEPLE analysis will explore additional situational factors influencing the problem and the current impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic at GU. Last, a brief review of EL theory literature and how it intersects with the PoP is presented.

Historical Overview

In Ontario over the last five years, EL opportunities at post-secondary institutions have been created in alignment with the *MAESD Guiding Principles for Experiential Learning* (2017). These principles outlined several components as to what counts for EL. These components inform GU's view of what an EL opportunity must contain to meet the government's mandate. For example, the EL activity must have the student in a workplace, or simulated workplace, exposing them to authentic demands that improve their job-ready skills, interpersonal skills, and transition to the workforce (MAESD, 2017). The Ministry's mandatory components on EL being directly connected to the workplace for employability purposes favour creating WIL opportunities over other EL activities, with both components already embedded in most WIL activities. At the federal level, reports on EL from the Standing Committee on Human

Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities (2018) and Universities Canada (2018) have echoed the benefits of EL for employment purposes with the need for university students to develop employability skills through these experiences.

WIL opportunities situate learning experiences in work-based settings such as practicums, co-ops, service learning and internships. Several researchers have noted the benefits of WIL, as it provides learners with a chance to try out theories and concepts learned within the classroom in a workplace setting (Peters, 2012; Spanjaard et al., 2018). WIL allows students to practice what they learn as part of their degree in the workplace by applying in-class knowledge to work-based scenarios. However, Spanjaard et al. (2018) highlighted that WIL, and its sole focus on preparing students for the world of work, ensures students are *work ready* (has employment) but does not always ensure that students are *career ready* (has transferable employability skills) and often lack a reflection component. While WIL prepares a student for the world of work immediately after they graduate, it often does not provide them with the chance to extend what they have learned beyond that immediacy to understand the applicability of their knowledge and skill-set to a range of different careers. Simply put, without structured and thoughtful reflection, a student may be unable to envision how what they have learned in one work placement has transferrable employability skills.

STEEPLE Analysis

To further contextualize factors shaping the PoP, the author undertook a STEEPLE analysis to identify those factors and associated discourses. The STEEPLE framework (Cadle et al., 2010) consists of seven areas that can be used to investigate how internal and external factors influence organizational practices: (1) *socio-cultural* refers to factors that arise from customer behaviour patterns; (2) *technological* factors arise from the development and implementation of

technology systems or tools; (3) *economic* factors refer to economic growth or market confidence and the subsequent impacts on the organization; (4) *environmental (or ecological)* factors arise from concerns about sustainability and the natural environment; (5) *political* factors arise from changes in government, including policies, initiatives and procedures; (6) *legal* factors refer to laws, regulation and governance the organization must comply with; and, (7) *ethical* refers to influential factors that arise from traditional or public value systems (Cadle et al., 2010). The author's analysis identified several critical factors derived from the STEEPLE framework (Cadle et al., 2010) that shape EL and its implementation at GU, specifically, political, socio-cultural, economic and technological. This initial identification is not to say that there will be no environmental, legal or ethical factors to consider once the OIP is implemented and underway. For this analysis, the factors focused on have been identified as the influential primary factors to be promptly considered when planning for change.

Political factors consider the "potential change of government with the corresponding changes to policies and priorities, or the introduction of a new government initiative" (Cadle et al., 2010, p.3). As mentioned in the historical context of the PoP, the previous and current provincial governments have adopted specific requirements for EL to count when reporting to them. These requirements are steeped in WIL and employability discourses which inform the preferred EL opportunities at GU. Furthermore, the introduction of PBF models in Ontario further entrenches EL and WIL's importance, linking GU's funding to the achievement and demonstration of EL as one indicator.

From a socio-cultural perspective, the COVID-19 pandemic means that students will no longer be on-campus as often. The university has turned to a hybrid model of learning that has the majority of in-class time now being spent online in a virtual classroom (Gordon University,

2020a). This factor shapes how EL will be taught in-class moving forward, as this new learning model has transitioned the learning spaces to be primarily online. The socio-cultural factor also impacts EL practices provided through WIL opportunities, as now these traditionally in-person workplace activities may have transitioned to either an online or alternative workspace to accommodate pandemic protocols. An economic factor to consider is that a possible decrease in enrolment (due to the pandemic) means a decrease in available university funds that would go to hiring, professional development and other human resource related items. There is an anticipated slow-down/pause in businesses partnering with universities to offer WIL opportunities (Lowes et al., 2020), reducing the number of EL offerings. Considering these socio-cultural and economic factors when attempting to plan solutions to address the PoP will redefine prior EL practices to be responsive to a new, post-pandemic academic landscape.

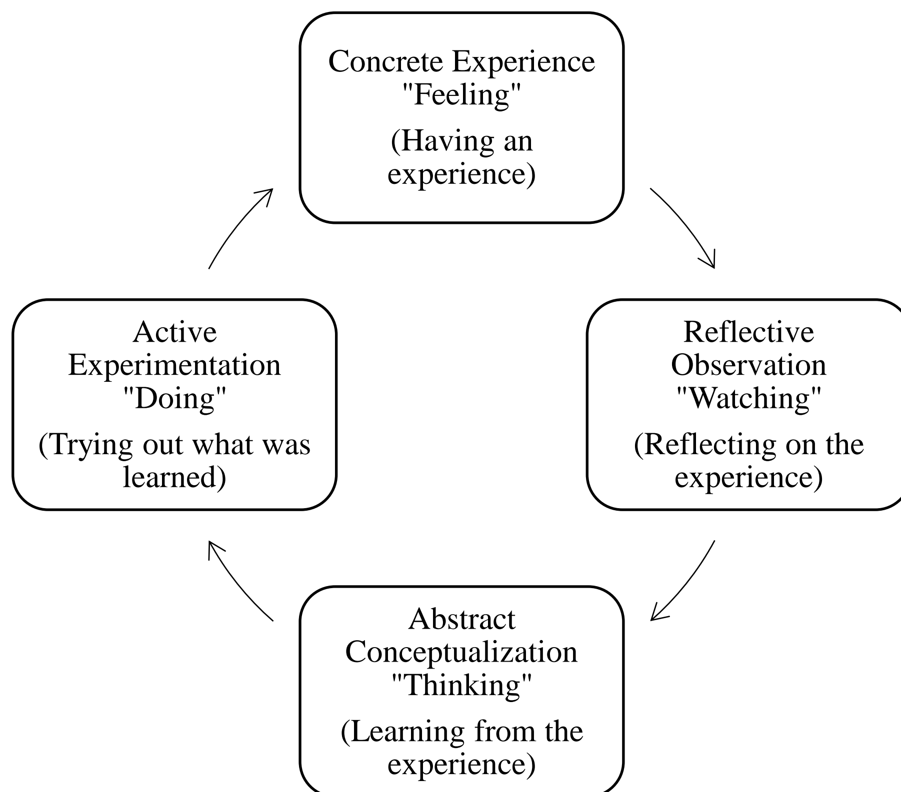
Literature on Experiential Learning Theory

Another contributing factor to the PoP is the absence of a theoretically-informed approach to EL at GU. Experiential learning theory (ELT) is not incorporated into micro-level discourses and practices regarding EL activities at the university. The absence of an institution-wide framework grounded in theoretical, research-based principles has led to various campus stakeholders (e.g., faculty members, EL coordinators.) individually interpreting the ministry guidelines, resulting in inconsistent implementation of various EL opportunities. Notably missing at GU is the consistent, intentional incorporation of ELT designing practices and discourses that could balance the WIL dominant discourses. ELT draws on the works of human development and learning theorists such as Carl Jung, Jean Piaget, Paulo Friere and John Dewey to develop a multifaceted adult development model that encompasses learning through experiencing (Kolb, 2015; Kolb & Kolb, 2005).

Educational theorist, David Kolb, highlighted that EL activities should contain: (1) a concrete experience, (2) the opportunity to think about and reflect on that experience, (3) the opportunity to make connections to prior knowledge and learnings, and then (4) the opportunity to experiment with new learnings/understandings/skills that are developed through reflection (Akella, 2010; Kolb, 2015; Kolb & Kolb, 2005; Kolb et al., 2000; Ramsgaard & Christensen, 2018). Figure 2 illustrates the key components of the cycle and its interrelatedness:

Figure 2

Experiential Learning Cycle



Note. This figure is designed using information from *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development* (Kolb, 2015).

This cyclical model can provide a theory-informed approach for the university to consistently design EL opportunities as it lays out clear milestones that an EL opportunity should

have. Another benefit of its inclusion is that ELT focuses on reflective practices and incorporates these practices into the EL opportunity design, ensuring that even a WIL activity has reflection meaningfully built-in. Also, given GU's current reliance on WIL discourses as the primary vehicle for EL opportunities, incorporating principles of EL can provide a counter-discourse that opens up spaces to discuss balancing WIL opportunities with alternative types of EL programming such as volunteerism and reflection. Recognizing that the history of EL in Canada, coupled with factors stemming from a STEEPLE analysis and EL literature, are situated within the context of GU and has broader implications for EL in higher education, has led to the development of additional questions stemming from the initial PoP.

Guiding Questions Emerging from the Problem of Practice

The initial PoP focuses on addressing the gap at GU between what EL is defined as and how it is implemented. The PoP statement explicitly outlines the current problem at GU and how addressing this gap might help develop meaningful EL opportunities that promote wider student access. Broader contextual forces discussed in the previous section highlight the need for additional lines of inquiry stemming from the main problem. After careful reflection, the author has developed three guiding inquiry questions that will further explore the initial PoP, the main themes that inform current practices at GU and develop potential solutions to the PoP.

The first line of inquiry that stems from the main problem is, "*how can a critical policy analysis approach to the MAESD guidelines reveal underlying assumptions and problematic representations about work-integrated learning?"*. The original MAESD policy document acted as the guiding principle for GU and other Ontario institutions when EL first became mandated by the previous government. Elements of this document continue to inform the current government's and GU's approach to EL. Utilizing Baachi and Goodwin's (2016) policy

problematization approach to analyze some of the key discourses around "employment", "employability" and "skills development" (MAESD, 2017) will be necessary to gain a better understanding of the impacts and effects of these discourses. Through this approach, Baachi and Goodwin noted that discourses are "understood as socially produced forms of knowledge that set limits upon what is possible to think, write or speak about a 'given social object or practice' (McHoul and Grace, 1993, p.32)" (Baachi & Goodwin, 2016, p.35). Exploring the limitations of the WIL discourses in the MAESD policy will provide deeper insight into who is being limited by these discursive practices and what leadership strategies can address these restrictions when creating new EL opportunities.

The second guiding question is an extension of the first and asks, "*what are the equity-related implications around maintaining the status quo of EL provisions?"*. Baachi and Goodwin (2016) explained that "policies do not address problems that exist; rather, they produce 'problems' as particular sorts of problems" (p.16). Recognizing that these problematizations are embedded in discourses that have informed EL practices at GU, it is crucial to understand the implications of whom those discourses privilege and who is restricted by them. These embedded discourses influence the dominant EL culture, which is WIL. This dominating influence is where the intersection of equitable access to EL with power and authority arises. Lumby (2012) highlighted that a dominant culture often works to put some (in this case, students) at an advantage while disadvantaging others through the authority embedded in structures and processes. A resolution to the PoP will need to consider how to negate the dominant discourses around EL to challenge practices that may reduce equitable access to EL.

The final guiding question, "*how can a theoretically informed institutional EL framework provide internal guidelines for implementation and promote equilibrium of offered EL*

opportunities?" aligns with an influencing factor associated with the PoP. Within the PoP, EL theory's direct integration into current dominant discourses about EL at GU is absent. EL theorist, David Kolb, has articulated several EL principles and best practices (Kolb, 2015; Kolb & Kolb, 2005) that a leader could build into an institution-wide framework. These practices can help balance out the current WIL discourse that permeates most EL practices. The three guiding questions develop lines of inquiry concerning EL policy analysis, equity-related implications on maintaining the status quo, and a theoretically-informed EL framework. When exploring solutions, keeping these three questions at the forefront of the discussion will help build mindful recommendations to address the main PoP.

Leadership-Focused Vision for Change

The guiding questions that have emerged from the PoP, and tie into factors that have shaped it, provide insight into lines of inquiry that need consideration when building solutions. To strengthen these solutions, reflecting on the current state of EL at GU and what the envisioned desired state might look like, also allows for a better understanding of gaps found within the PoP. Understanding where the gaps in EL provisions are will allow for deliberative change planning on how to minimize them.

Current State

When the MAESD guidelines were released in 2017, a task force at GU was struck to discuss and ultimately create a definition for EL specific to GU's context. The task force comprised faculty and senior administrative staff whose portfolios had connections to community workplace partnership; absent from this task force was representation from current and former GU students. This definition was created to guide the development and implementation of EL across the institution. The definition notes that EL is the strategic, active

engagement of students in opportunities to learn by doing, reflecting, and empowering students to apply their theoretical knowledge and creativity to real-world challenges, both in the workplace and in volunteer settings (Gordon, University, 2018a). This definition was followed up with a second, clarifying statement to aid with the teaching and delivery of EL activities (Gordon University, 2018a). The second statement reinforced the MAESD guidelines that an EL activity must be “well-planned, supervised and assessed” (MAESD, 2017; Gordon University, 2018). Furthermore, the definition highlights that EL activities should enhance student learning and promote developing different skill sets such as interdisciplinary thinking, teamwork, communication, cultural awareness and other professional skills (Gordon University, 2018a). These two statements went through GU’s internal governance process, and once approved as part of the institution’s nomenclature policy, the task force disbanded without further procedural documents or internal guidelines.

After these statements were approved, faculties and departments have been using this definition with no additional direction on behalf of the task force. As there is no overarching framework beyond the initial MAESD guidelines, how these opportunities are currently developed and implemented has not been standardized across the institution. As the planning, supervising and assessing of EL opportunities are decentralized, it puts the onus on faculties and departments to interpret the definition when embedding EL activities in the curriculum. The result is a seeming over-reliance on WIL as the primary mode of EL opportunities offered, with approximately just under a quarter of undergraduate courses noting an EL component/activity directly embedded in the course curriculum (Gordon University, 2020b).

The concern with WIL being the primary offering of EL at GU is that the level of commitment it takes to participate in one of these offerings is often incongruent with a typical

GU student's additional commitment. GU's student population reports higher than the Ontario student population average as more likely to identify as first-generation students, who commute, do not live in residence, and provide caregiving for dependents (Gordon University, 2017b). GU's students also reported having higher financial assistance needs, with approximately 85% receiving some sort of help through the government-funded Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) or other means (Gordon University, 2017b). The data is indicative that a limited percentage of GU students can afford to take the time away from their caregiving duties, jobs or other ways of financially supporting themselves to participate in WIL opportunities.

Most WIL opportunities at GU often mean that students have to allot additional hours during the academic year for their EL work placement (e.g., co-op, internship) in excess of the time already dedicated for in-class course components, such as a lecture. At GU, most WIL student participation is primarily in the third year or fourth year of study (Gordon University, 2020b). This participation can result in some students needing additional time to ensure they have completed all of their degree credit requirements to graduate. To account for the extra time needed to participate, some students have to reduce their course load, possibly taking an additional year. It can also mean having less time to work a part-time job if the opportunity is an unpaid WIL experience, such as a practicum, which is currently the primary WIL opportunity students participate in at GU (Gordon University, 2020b). Government reports such as the MAESD document currently influence WIL dominant discourses, privileging students who can afford to shun other commitments or have adequate financial supports in place. The previously mentioned reduction of WIL opportunities due to the COVID-19 pandemic will impact the number of students who can afford to participate in these opportunities. The loss of student participation numbers in WIL, combined with those who are already unable to participate in WIL

activities due to competing commitments, makes it necessary for GU to look for alternative ways to provide consistent access to meaningful EL opportunities.

Desired State: Priorities for Change

As articulated in its mission, vision and values, GU prides itself on being an institution that focuses on re-envisioning how students learn through innovatively transforming learning spaces (Gordon University, 2019a). This optimistic organizational vision can positively impact how EL is implemented at the institution, as GU is rife with the opportunity to create a standard for what these EL spaces entail. GU has already laid the groundwork for EL activities by creating an institution-specific definition that adheres to the provincial mandate while also acknowledging that EL is a priority for the foreseeable future. The move from the current state of EL implementation to a desired, enhanced future state is now even more pressing due to the changing educational landscape at GU because of the COVID-19 pandemic and the possible reduction of WIL opportunities.

At GU, the desired state of EL would look to prioritize a balance between its current WIL offerings and actively working to create more course-embedded EL activities. Reducing the amount of WIL would be foolhardy, as research has demonstrated the benefits it can have in developing students' skills and work-related competencies (Peters, 2012; Spanjaard et al., 2018). Instead, a desired state of EL would look to enhance WIL by providing a framework to develop opportunities that are responsive to what the employers need and are considerate of barriers of access GU students are currently facing. Being responsive means developing more course-embedded opportunities by assessing current WIL and providing course-embedded alternatives that meet GU students' needs. When looking to create a more balanced approach to EL opportunities, a proactive, future-minded strategy would utilize the previously mentioned four-

stage cyclical EL model (Kolb, 2015). Grounding an EL development and implementation framework, which would include assessing and enhancing current offerings in a research-based approach, would minimize the subjective interpretations of GU's definition. A research-based approach is also conducive to GU's collegium-political practices as these organizational approaches favour data and academic research when making decisions (Manning, 2018c).

When looking to integrate additional EL opportunities directly into a course's in-class curriculum, the desired practice at GU would be to have these opportunities embedded earlier on in a student's academic program. Implementing this practice at GU using the four-stage EL cyclical model (Kolb, 2015) as a guide will be beneficial for several reasons. First, the design of the EL cyclical model creates scaffold learning, meaning that once a student has an experience and reflects on it, they should get the opportunity to practice the knowledge and skills learned in another scenario, restarting the cycle (Kolb, 2015; Kolb & Kolb, 2005; Kolb et al., 2000). Government and national reports discussed that EL in education should focus on skill development for employability purposes through the creation of opportunities that allow a student to practice their learning (CCL, 2008; MAESD, 2017; Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities, 2018; Universities Canada, 2018). By incorporating the EL cyclical model when curriculum planning, course-embedded EL designed for first- and second-year can align with what students need to learn and which employability skills they need to practice for redeployment in a latter, upper-year EL or WIL opportunity. The second benefit of an earlier course-embedded EL opportunity is that students who may not participate in an upper-year WIL activity will still have one EL opportunity before graduation. Having more students participate in an EL activity earlier also

benefits GU's commitment to the SMA, with this participation counted sooner for PBF purposes, allowing GU to gauge if they are on track to meet agreed upon targets.

A future state of EL at GU would look to centralize the current, established information that covers what EL should be, such as the MAESD checklist, balancing provincial and internal stakeholder priorities. The desired state would provide consistent institution-wide direction on planning, supervising, and assessing throughout faculties/departments, focusing on creating an equilibrium between inside and outside the classroom EL experiences. Creating equilibrium is in the interest of GU due to the potential reduction of WIL opportunities because of the COVID-19 pandemic but also since it aligns with GU's organizational values of putting the student at the *center* of the curriculum (Gordon University, 2019a).

Furthermore, the preferred future state of EL at GU would look to leverage Kolb's (2015) EL principles and best practices across a program's curriculum and explore not limiting EL opportunities to primarily the upper-years. Exploring the integration of EL opportunities both inside and outside of the classroom opens up the possibility to complete the ELT cyclical model, allowing students to reflect on their experiences more often and apply them to several different opportunities. When attempting to achieve this desired state, it is important to consider who needs to be consulted and collaborated with, both organizationally and within the broader community, when planning for change.

Change Drivers

When planning for change and attempting to achieve this desired state, identifying individuals, groups, and current practices that may drive this change can provide insight into what is enabling or restricting the change process. Whalen-Berry and Somerville (2010) defined *change drivers* as factors that "facilitate the implementation of change throughout the

organization, specifically facilitate individual adoption of change initiatives" (p.177) and also, "drivers of the necessity *for* a change, which is whatever gave birth to the desire or need for change in the organization" (p.177). The author undertook a diagnostic STEEPLED analysis to identify key change drivers and to remain consistent in her analysis. While the author's initial STEEPLE analysis looked at factors that are influencing the PoP, according to Bueller (2015), a STEEPLED analysis "moves beyond the symptoms of the problem" (p.68) by determining what significant factors will drive change and how a change leader may need to respond. To do this, the STEEPLED framework (Bueller, 2015) adopts the same seven categorization areas as the STEEPLE framework (Cadle et al., 2010), adding the letter "D" to acknowledge *demographic* change drivers. A diagnostic STEEPLED analysis performed by the author revealed the following relevant change drivers that can potentially assist or restrict progress:

Federal and Provincial Mandates on EL in Higher Education (Political/Economic/Legal/ Demographic)

As previously mentioned, federal and provincial governments have indicated an interest in post-secondary institutions providing EL opportunities to their students. Interest in EL at both levels of government have been documented in various reports and assert that providing EL opportunities should continue to be a priority in higher education (MAESD, 2017; Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities, 2018; MCU, n.d.). With the current government tying the amount of EL offerings provided to funding an institution can receive from the province (Harris, 2019; Ministry of Finance, 2019; Usher, 2019), any change initiatives proposed will need to adopt the criteria outlined by the Ministry. Bueller (2015) outlined that a rise in new stakeholder groups is a demographic driver due to the possibility that these individuals/groups can shift the trajectory of

a change process based on their needs. Solutions to the PoP will include expanding GU's EL offerings while upholding the government's criteria. Expanding EL offerings will create opportunities to work with new demographic groups, such as student union groups and volunteer organizations.

Current Offices/Positions That Have an EL Portfolio (Political/Ethical/Technological)

Several of the GU faculties have a dedicated administrative staff member who currently oversees faculty-specific WIL opportunities. The student affairs office has a careers department that coordinates with these faculty positions to assist students in applying for these opportunities. These staff members bring a wealth of prior knowledge on how WIL currently fits into academic programming. These individuals also have pre-existing communication networks that can be used to communicate the expansion of EL offering to the students, promoting change through familiar pedagogical platforms and channels (Bueller, 2015). When involving these staff members, it is necessary to acknowledge their potential resistance to change, especially if the staff feel that they have not been included in a manner that allows them to actively participate in the change process (Gaubatz & Ensminger, 2017). As a change process is determined, ensuring these individuals can actively engage in the decision-making process will help mitigate conflict that may create barriers to change.

Senior Management and Leadership Support (Political/Social/Ethical)

In addition to the offices and positions directly connected to EL implementation, senior management and leadership at GU can promote change at the organizational level and provide decision-making leverage outside the author's agency. Recognizing these limitations means that gaining buy-in and the assistance of these senior positions is necessary when building collaborative relationships with internal stakeholders who may have essential knowledge and

influence. Drawing on the established political-collegial organizational practices by getting senior leadership support to build a coalition (Bolman & Deal, 2017; Manning, 2018c) around EL implementation will help bring together stakeholders outside of the author's established professional networks to participate in the change process. Senior leadership's institutional knowledge is broader and more wide-reaching than the author's scope. When proposing solutions to the PoP, using institutional knowledge to understand where to promote change in departments and where they may be resistance can ensure that the change solution is within an achievable scope.

The STEEPLED analysis reveals numerous change drivers to consider when planning for change. Environmental drivers, such as environmental sustainability, legislation, and regulation (Bueller, 2015), did not arise as a priority result of this analysis and therefore have not been included. Beyond the scope of this OIP, considering how environmental drivers may factor into the PoP and EL implementation may need revisiting in the future. While it is essential to understand these drivers of change and the potential impact on proposed solutions, it is also beneficial to assess the institution's change readiness.

Organizational Change Readiness

To better understand the degree of change GU is ready to undertake with its EL programming, an organizational readiness assessment should happen as the first step in the process. Researchers have noted that this is a crucial first step, that if missed, can make the change process more challenging when trying to lead as it can help determine the breadth and depth of change an institution is ready for (Napier et al., 2017). Change readiness refers to "an individual's beliefs, attitudes and intentions regarding the extent to which changes are needed and the organization's capacity to successfully undertake those changes" (Armenakis, Harris, &

Mossholder, 1993, p.681). Assessing the change readiness of GU will assist with preparing and selecting appropriate solutions to the PoP. When developing solutions, the readiness assessment results will provide insight into the scope and degree of change that GU's employees would be comfortable with and identify any potential barriers in the process.

For this OIP, the author performed a change readiness assessment using Cawsey et al.'s *readiness for change questionnaire* (2016, p.108-110). Scoring on this instrument can range from -10 to +35, and based on the author's assessment of each question using her contextual lens GU scored a +15 out of a possible 35. A +15 rating means that while GU is satisfactorily ready to change, those leading and influencing the change should prepare for the change solution not necessarily being an easy win to implement. Next, a discussion of the questionnaire results using Judge and Douglas' (2009) *eight dimensions related to readiness* will highlight forces influencing change readiness.

The readiness dimensions of *trustworthy leadership and involved mid-management* refer to senior leadership's ability to earn the trust of those within the organization and mid-management's ability to effectively connect senior leadership's vision with the larger workforce (Judge & Douglas, 2009). Senior leadership and mid-management's involvement in successfully influencing change will be essential as they can generate buy-in at the organizational level that the author cannot. How these two groups earn trust to promote change will impact the effectiveness of any institution-wide solutions proposed to address the OIP. These dimensions received a fair rating within the readiness for change questionnaire (Cawsey et al., 2016), partly due to new hires at GU in these areas that have not had the time to establish trust and engagement. When planning for change, looking to leaders and mid-management at GU who

have established seniority-based experience in their roles may help mitigate the newness of recent hires.

Judge and Douglas' (2009) readiness dimensions of *accountable culture*, *trusting followers*, *capable change champions* and *innovation*, connect to an organization's ability to promote innovative practices rooted in accountability. These dimensions also reflect the organization's ability to retain change champions and employees who trust new directions encouraged by the organization (Judge & Douglas, 2009). Responsible and conscientious innovation is a priority pillar of GU, embedded in its history and focusing on GU's mission and vision (2019a). Thoughtful, innovative practices are customarily welcomed and encouraged at GU, with little recourse if unsuccessful, including the QA department. The readiness for change questionnaire (Cawsey et al., 2016) also revealed that GU's employees tend to trust new initiatives that align with the organization's priorities. Engaging these change champions and the employees who have demonstrated trust in GU's vision will help shape any proposed solutions to the PoP.

Lastly, the dimensions of *effective communication and systems thinking* refer to GU's ability to communicate effectively throughout the organization and recognize GU's interrelationships with internal and external stakeholders (Judge & Douglas, 2009). Historically, GU has performed well when communicating horizontally, vertically and with its student body but has had its challenges in recent years, especially when it comes to new initiatives. When communicating approaches to change, determining various audiences and communications channels is necessary for ensuring that relevant stakeholders remain aware of the proposed changes and feel prepared to incorporate them into their areas. A strategic approach will utilize

GU's systems thinking methods by targeting key established interrelationships to determine what order communications go out and how much information each message should entail.

Based on the change readiness assessment results, GU can start a change process with some possible resistance. Rafferty et al. (2013) have indicated that when an organization dedicates itself to being adaptable through its organizational values, it creates a climate that welcomes change across the institution. GU's commitment to being adaptive and flexible through its priority pillars (2019a) creates an organizational climate that is receptive to change, encouraging groups and individuals within the institution to adopt new innovative practices. When planning for change, identifying factors that can promote or hinder GU's change readiness, such as the established leadership and level of trustworthiness, the innovative culture and communication practices, is essential. When proposing solutions to the PoP, addressing these factors will minimize the potential for resistance.

Chapter 1 Summary

In summary, GU is an organization ready to undertake a planned change initiative to enhance its EL development and implementation practices. GU's mission, vision, values and purpose highlight an organization that promotes openness and willingness to change if it will benefit its students and the community. GU's established organizational approach to leadership demonstrates characteristics of a shared leadership lens that often draws on teamwork to maximize results. This conventional approach modelled strategies that influence the author's own distributed leadership practices, allowing her to build networks across the institution comprised of knowledgeable individuals and teams. Drawing on these networks will help address the PoP, which focuses on how GU can implement meaningful EL opportunities for all students by balancing its EL offerings more consistently. The initial PoP has also generated

additional lines of inquiry that will inform solutions that can address the PoP. In addition to these lines of inquiry, previously identified internal and external change drivers will factor into planning solutions. Chapter 2 will begin with a discussion on suitable leadership approaches that will help move change forward regarding the PoP.

Chapter 2: Planning & Development

In Chapter 1 of this OIP, the author introduced Gordon University (GU), describing its history, institutional priorities, organizational structure and established leadership approaches. Chapter 1 also outlined a Problem of Practice (PoP) relevant to GU's current state, which is the focus of this OIP: the need to explore how meaningful experiential learning (EL) activities can be consistently planned and implemented at GU for all its students. Discussed in Chapter 1 were several guiding questions emerging from the PoP, the gap between the current state of EL and the envisioned future state, as well as the level of change readiness at GU. Chapter 2 builds off these discussions, developing change strategies and proposed solutions to address the PoP. The chapter begins by discussing the selected hybrid leadership approach to be used when promoting change at GU. This discussion is followed by an exploration of three organizational change frameworks, Lewin's (1947) three-stage theory of change, Kotter's (1996) eight-step model of organizational change and Cawsey et al.'s (2016) change path model.

After selecting a change framework to lead the process, the author employs Nadler and Tushman's (1980) congruence model to perform a critical organizational analysis of GU and determine current gaps concerning EL provisions. From there, three possible solutions to address the PoP are proposed and then assessed against the results from the gap analysis, GU's readiness for change and resource needs. A solution is then selected and evaluated against the other two to demonstrate the ability to address the PoP in a timely, relevant manner. Lastly, Starratt's (1991, 1996) multidimensional ethical leadership framework is used to discuss ethical considerations regarding the PoP and further rationalize the chosen solution.

Leadership Approach(es) to Change

It is pertinent to acknowledge GU's collegium-political organizational practices and its established shared leadership approach when determining how to lead change. Recognizing that EL opportunities are spread out across various divisional and departmental teams, any proposed change initiatives will have to span the organization. Selected leadership approaches will need to acknowledge the work these teams are doing and actively engage them in the change process by bringing them together to creatively think about how to practice EL differently from GU's current approach.

Due to the change's scope potentially involving several team networks on campus and the need to re-imagine how to implement EL in a more balanced manner, the author selected a hybrid of distributed and adaptive leadership approaches. A distributed-adaptive approach will consolidate the shared leadership approach currently used across GU teams and extend it to develop collaborative networks around future EL planning. Shared leadership and distributed leadership have similar characteristics (Bergman et al., 2012; Northouse, 2016; Pearce et al., 2009); shifting to an institution-wide network approach will appear expansive, building on pre-existing teams. Distributed leadership practices do not restrict leadership to one individual within an organization but utilize a variety of leaders, both informal and formal, within the organizational network and at various levels to assist with propelling change forward (Gronn, 2002; Gronn, 2010; Harris, 2006; Jones et al., 2012; Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2004). Drawing on individuals from the identified internal change drivers in Chapter 1, such as current EL coordinators, to form a more extensive network can connect teams that are currently siloed within their departmental EL approaches.

Distributed leadership principles encourage knowledge and skills exchange between individuals/teams embedded in these networks (Gronn, 2010; Harris, 2006; Harris & Deflaminis, 2016) and align with GU's collegial organizational practices. Knowledge and skills exchange are necessary when promoting a consistent EL planning and implementation approach as information on theoretically-grounded EL practices can be distributed through these networks. The sharing of knowledge and information on EL activities could also facilitate new EL partnerships between non-academic and academic factions that are collaborative and reciprocal (Gronn, 2010; Harris, 2006; Spillane, 2005; Jones et al., 2012). A distributed leadership network could connect faculty looking for ways to embed EL in their courses with non-academic staff currently implementing *unverified* EL opportunities. This network would allow them to work together to certify these opportunities as *verifiable* and ensure that the academic programs meet the learning outcomes.

Research on leadership in educational organizations has highlighted that employing a distributed approach across networks has been linked to improving student outcomes, learning and achievement (Harris, 2006; Leithwood et al., 2008). Collaborative partnerships between academic and non-academic networks enhance pre-existing, unverified EL activities by making them verifiable benefit GU students who are currently participating in these activities. Making these previously unverified EL activities now count towards an academic experience would allow students who are already participating in EL not to worry about taking on additional EL activities and provide more offerings beyond the confines of WIL in their academic program.

As the PoP seeks to address the need for a balanced, consistent approach to EL, distributed leadership practices intersect with GU's political preferences to build coalitions around "like" interests and the collegial aspect that seeks to make decisions collaboratively

(Manning, 2018a). Distributed leadership encourages dispersing resources and power across a network but does not wholly flatten hierarchical organizational structures (Blackmore, 2013; Harris, 2006). This dispersal of resources and power is necessary as it disallows one coalition from ensuring that only their interests and needs are met when planning change at GU. A distributed leadership approach encourages an equilibrium of input, leadership, knowledge and skills, promoting the balanced approach needed to enhance current EL practices.

Adaptive leadership coupled with the distributed approach acknowledges the organizational complexities of GU and looks to harness the interactions within these networks to produce innovative, creative ways of solving problems (Lichtenstein et al., 2006; Uhl-Bien et al., 2007). Distributed leadership creates the spaces and conditions for a variety of informal and formal leaders to participate in forwarding the change needed at GU to address the PoP. Adaptive leadership uses these spaces as loci for innovation, knowledge production and problem-solving (Lichtenstein et al., 2006; Uhl-Bien et al., 2007), bolstering the knowledge transference between the distributed networks. A distributed-adaptive approach will help create a new vision for EL practice at GU because it addresses the need for a networked approach to EL development and considers how problem-solving should be collaboratively innovative when enhancing EL provisions.

Adaptive leadership principles acknowledge embracing conflict in these spaces to produce new ideas, learning and adapting (Uhl-Bien et al., 2007). This embracing of conflict aligns with the political organizational characteristics of GU, which sees these collaborative spaces as a place for exploring conflict in order to forward the causes of members and understand different groups' positions on the topic (Manning, 2018c). An adaptive leadership approach will use this conflict as an opportunity to problem-solve the current issues with EL and

promote creative solution building that multiple leaders can adopt within the distributed network. Yukl and Mashoud (2010) have noted that the flexibility adaptive leadership promotes is essential in organizations due to rapidly changing commitments and expectations, both internal and external. Recognizing that several factors currently influencing the PoP, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the current government's mandate on what counts as EL and the ties to PBF, will shift over the next several years, therefore it is fundamental to promote flexibility throughout the change process. A distributed-adaptive leadership approach will propel change forward at GU by fostering institution-wide, collaborative networks that will promote innovative problem-solving to current challenges the organization faces regarding the provision of EL opportunities.

Framework for Leading the Change Process

Identifying the distributed-adaptive leadership approach to assist in propelling change forward at GU is a necessary first step. However, it does not address how change should proceed, nor does it lay out a definitive change path. Selecting an organizational change framework will define a process for change at GU that should be responsive to the organizational context and what needs to change. To determine the best fit, the author has briefly assessed three organizational change frameworks for leading the change process commonly found in change management literature. These three frameworks are Lewin's (1947) three-stage theory of change, Kotter's (1996) eight-step model of organizational change and Cawsey et al.'s (2016) change path model.

Assessment of Relevant Framing Theories

Lewin's Stage Theory of Change

Kurt Lewin's (1947) stage theory of change consists of three stages: Unfreeze, change and refreeze. The unfreezing stage focuses on "dislodging beliefs and assumptions of those who

need to engage in the systemic alterations to the status quo" (Cawsey et al., 2016, p.45). This stage is about disrupting standard practices within an organization to have those within it question if the status quo is the best path forward (Cawsey et al., 2016). When this disruption is effective, the change stage begins, allowing for the transformation of "systems, structures, beliefs, and habits" (Cawsey et al., 2016, p.45). Once the transformation happens and the change is complete, the systems, structures, beliefs and habits refreeze.

A benefit of this model is that it focuses not only on the changes needed to processes or structures at the system level but also considers the individuals connected to these systems and their values (Cawsey et al., 2016; Lewin, 1947; Rosch, 2002). These considerations align with the chosen distributed-adaptive hybrid leadership approach as it can be employed throughout a network to promote process changes but does not forget to consider the value individuals in these systems have when attempting to move forward. Researchers (Rosch, 2002; Schein, 2017) have noted that Lewin's model recognizes the need for balance within the system level by acknowledging competing forces, such as the past, present and future change drivers that will need managing. This acknowledgement within Lewin's model can be beneficial for the OIP, as the PoP intersects with several change drivers at various levels within the organization.

One aspect of Lewin's model highlighted as a benefit and concern is how it oversimplifies the change process. The model has been lauded for its straightforward, three-step approach to change that is clear to follow and articulate to individuals involved in the change process (Cawsey et al., 2016). However, the simplistic terminology of the three steps, freeze, change and refreeze, has been criticized for framing the change process as linear, inflexible and unyielding (Cawsey et al., 2016; Rosch, 2002). If Lewin's model is to be followed to precision, an organization such as GU, whose values promote flexibility and adaptability, conflicts with the

model's inflexible nature. The model's inability to be flexible can pose additional challenges for a change leader working with GU employees who are more familiar with the organization's more fluid approach to change.

Kotter's Eight-Stage Model of Organizational Change

John Kotter's eight-stage model is detail-oriented, structured, and a "step-by-step process that overcomes the problem of simplification of Lewin's model" (Cawsey et al., 2016, p.47). Kotter's (1996) eight-stages are: (1) *establish a sense of urgency* which requires leaders to highlight potential threats to the organization to spark members to act; (2) *create a guiding coalition* which involves selecting members of the organization with relevant positions within their departments, the relevant knowledge needed for change and has established collegial networks amongst their peers; (3) *develop a vision and strategy* refers to change leaders needing to establish and promote a vision of change that is inspirational and future-minded; (4) *communicate (the change vision)* requires the change leaders to articulate numerous times the change vision through a variety of communication networks in order to reach as many organizational members as possible and inspire them to believe in the vision; (5) *empower employees (for broad based action)* has change leaders encouraging members to 'buy into' the change vision to then influence the structures, systems, resources and other internal processes needed to enable change; (6) *generate short-term wins* requires change leaders to highlight evidence of success and celebrate these successes with employees in order to sustain motivation; (7) *consolidate gains and produce more change* focuses change leaders on the notion that change takes time to become common practice with the outcomes eventually becoming ingrained in the fabric of the organization; and (8) *anchor new approaches (in the culture)* requires that the change becomes enmeshed within the organization's beliefs and value systems.

A positive aspect of Kotter's model is that there are steps that align with GU's collegial and political organizational practices; for example, step 2 focuses on "building coalitions" around common interests (Manning, 2018c), which is an organizational practice already in place at GU. Additionally, Kotter's model is concerned with the strategic aspects of the organization-level change management process (Cawsey et al., 2016; Mento et al., 2002). Kotter's process focuses on wide-scale change by strategically choosing how different change leaders interact, communicate and embolden organizational members to adopt the change. A change framework focused on strategic organization-wide change is especially useful when identifying a change process for solutions to the PoP, as any proposed solutions should seek to bring changes to EL planning and implementation across GU.

One drawback with Kotter's model, when addressing the PoP, is its high-detailed, step-by-step structure. Kotter indicated that for an organization to be successful, it must go through each stage in the exact sequence that has been laid out as each stage builds off the last (Cawsey et al., 2016; Kotter, 1996). Mento et al. (2002) commented that each stage "lasts a considerable amount of time, and that critical mistakes in any of the phases can have a devastating impact on the momentum of the change process" (p.45). With various change drivers in constant states of fluctuation, this model may be too prescriptive and time-consuming to give GU change leaders the ability to promptly respond to some of the identified change forces, such as reducing WIL opportunities.

Cawsey, Deszca and Ingols' Change Path Model

Cawsey et al.'s (2016) change path model consists of four steps: (1) *awakening* focuses on discovering why an organization needs to change through diagnosing its problems (both externally and internally), clarifying the for need change and developing the overall goals

for/vision of the change; (2) *mobilization* includes analyzing the organizational structure, power and cultural dynamics as well as identifying key change leaders that will champion the change vision; (3) *acceleration* involves engaging and empowering those who will be collaborating/involved with the change by identifying techniques to promote "moving forward" with the change plan; and (4) *institutionalization* includes assessing the progress towards the new desired state and making modifications where needed; this includes adopting new strategies, knowledge, and systems.

Cawsey et al. (2016) described the change path model as one that combines "process and prescription" (p.53) by providing "more detail and direction than Lewin and less instruction than Kotter" (p.53). This combination is beneficial when promoting change at GU because it integrates aspects of the Lewin and Kotter models to create a process that guides in a fluid, flexible manner. These aspects make the change path model better positioned to adapt to forces of change within the PoP that may be uncertain or evolving, such as the threshold for PBF determined by the government. The model's underlying principles acknowledge that "organizations undertake multiple change projects simultaneously" (Cawsey et al., 2016, p.58), which draws a change leader's attention to the multiple changes happening across an organization. Regarding the PoP, having this aspect embedded into the model will be beneficial for a change leader, as it will encourage them to remain cognizant of change projects that may parallel the changes needed to address the PoP.

Types of Organizational Change

In addition to comparing various organizational change frameworks when determining which framework to lead the change process, the author also assessed the type of change needed

to address the PoP. Nadler and Tushman (1989, 1990) suggested four different types of organizational change, which are outlined in Table 1:

Table 1

Nadler and Tushman's Four Types of Organizational Change

		"Scope of Change"	
		Incremental	*Strategic*
"Position of Change"	*Anticipatory*	**Tuning** Incremental change made in anticipation of future events; intensity of change is the lowest of the four types.	**Re-orientation** Strategic change with time afforded by having anticipated the external events requiring change; intensity of change is the second highest.
	Reactive	**Adaptation** Incremental change made in response to external events; intensity of change is the second lowest.	**Re-creation** Strategic change necessitated by external events, usually ones that threaten the organization's existence; intensity of change is the highest.

Note. This table is adapted from Nadler and Tushman's (1989) *Organization frame bending: Principles for managing reorientation.*

Nadler and Tushman's (1989) four types of change are distributed across two dimensions, (1) the *position of change*, which refers to how the change process is positioned in relation to key external events by being *anticipatory* of these events or *reactive* to them; (2) the *scope of change*, which refers to the extent of the change—a change that focuses on individual

components or subsystems is considered *incremental* while a change that addresses the whole organization is considered *strategic*.

The scope of change this OIP focuses on would be considered incremental, or as Cawsey et al. (2016) have termed it, *continuous,* which implies a more gradual approach to change through smaller change initiatives such as training or process manuals (p. 21). As the author attempts to enhance current EL planning and implementation practices utilizing a distributed leadership approach within smaller, established networks, the changes will focus on these subnetworks and slowly work outwards from there to impact practices institution-wide.

The position of change this OIP will address is considered anticipatory as the author is foreseeing a future need for the expansion and balance of EL planning and implementation based on GU's organizational priorities for EL. A fundamental assumption as to why this potential change is anticipatory instead of reactive is that the current EL criteria at GU already address external events by being in complete alignment with the provincial government's EL criteria to procure PBF. The provincial EL criteria provide the framework for the PBF model forecasted to be in place until 2024-2025. Since GU has already met the current PBF criterion, the type of change would be focusing beyond that timeline, attempting to anticipate any future need.

Recognizing that the scope and position of change needed to address the PoP will be incremental and anticipatory, the type of change the author has assessed that the OIP is addressing falls within the *tuning* frame. The rationale for this assessment is that this type of change will address the "need for internal alignment" (Cawsey et al., 2016, p.21) when it comes to EL planning and implementation at GU. As well, this type of change continuously "seeks ways to increase efficiency" (Nadler and Tushman, 1989, p.196), which aligns with the mission of GU's QA Office in regards to the planning and enhancement of academic curriculum.

Chosen Framework for Leading Change at GU

When determining the best fit for implementing change at GU, the author assessed the benefits and drawbacks of several different organizational change frameworks while also evaluating the current state of the PoP through Nadler and Tushman's (1989, 1990) four types of organizational change. The evaluation resulted in the author determining that the type of change needed to address the PoP falls within the tuning frame. Cawsey et al. (2016) noted that it is essential to understand the type of change, not only for selecting the change framework but also because it allows a change leader to gauge their abilities and strengths. When leading change, this means the author will need to be adaptable in her leadership style and draws on others who may have the preferred leadership style needed if the type of change shifts, coinciding with the distributed-adaptive approach chosen for this OIP.

Recognizing that there is a common need for flexibility and adaptability, the author has decided that the best fit for leading change at GU would be to employ the change path model. How the model combines the fluidity of Lewin's stage theory model of change (1979) and the structure of Kotter's eight-stage model (1996) is the balance needed for an organization such as GU. The change path model (Cawsey et al., 2016) framework aligns with GU's priorities to be adaptable, flexible and innovative (Gordon University, 2019a) and the adaptive leadership characteristic of creative problem-solving (Lichtenstein et al., 2006; Uhl-Bien et al., 2007) if an unanticipated change force arises. The framework has the structure needed when taking a distributed-adaptive leadership approach, providing a pathway with modifiable milestones on how to move forward with the OIP that can be consistently applied and communicated throughout the professional networks involved.

Additionally, the term change leader is defined within this model as "those engaged in change initiator, implementer, or facilitator roles. All those involved in providing leadership and direction for the change fall within their broad coverage." (Cawsey et al., 2016, p.32). The change path model (Cawsey et al., 2016) allows multiple change leaders to occupy varying change roles with fluidity, complementing distributed-adaptive leadership characteristics that encourage the participation of both formal and informal leaders. With the change path model selected as the framework moving forward, subsequent references to the term change leader within this OIP adheres to this definition. With how to change at GU identified, the author will diagnose and analyze what needs to change to address the PoP successfully.

Critical Organizational Analysis

With how to change selected, addressing the components and content of what needs to change will provide a holistic approach to identifying solutions to the PoP. The author selected Nadler and Tushman's organizational congruence model (1980) to categorize and analyze what needs to change. The author chose this model as it avoids the more static, linear models for an *open system model*— meaning that components of the model are interrelated, and this interrelation creates transformative processes that lead to specific results/outcomes (Cawsey et al., 2016; Nadler & Tushman, 1980). As noted in Chapter 1, the PoP has several external and internal change drivers that may enable or restrict change. The congruence model encourages examining these relationships and other components within the system. The following sections will briefly discuss the congruence model's parts, and then a gap analysis will be performed on GU's current EL scenario using the model. To conclude this section, the author will prioritize which gaps need solving based on the analysis results and GU's readiness for change.

Summary of Nadler and Tushman's Congruence Model: Key Components

The congruence model focuses on four essential components of organizations and links them to influential input factors, both internal and external, coupled with the organization's strategic vision and outputs. The more congruency between the four essential components and its compatibility with the organization's inputs, strategy and outputs, the higher the likelihood the organization will perform well (Cawsey et al., 2016; Nadler & Tushman, 1980; Sabir, 2018). Below, the author outlines how Nadler and Tushman (1980) defined these components within the congruence model and provides examples of these components within the PoP at GU. A visual summary table is then provided at the end of this section to consolidate the information before moving into the gap analysis.

Input refers to three common factors: (1) *environment*, or external factors to the organization, determined through a PESTE or STEEPLE analysis; (2) *resources*, which refers to "a range of different assets to which an organization has access to. These include, employees, technology, capital, information and so on." (Nadler & Tushman, 1980, p.41); and (3) *history/culture*, which speaks to the way an organization has functioned historically and how this has influenced its current practices and culture. Referring back to the organizational analyses in Chapter 1, examples of inputs relevant to the PoP include the provincial government's mandate, the already established EL coordinator positions, and GU's history grounded in providing students with flexible learning environments. A fourth "derivative input" (Nadler & Tushman, 1980, p.41), *strategy*, is defined as how the organization makes decisions and what leaders strategically decide to focus the organization's efforts on (Cawsey et al., 2016; Nadler & Tushman, 1980). For GU, the strategic direction for EL is outlined in the institution's priorities, specifically, the re-envisioning learning priority that speaks to providing students with a wide

range of EL opportunities that are learner-centric, flexible and dynamic (Gordon University, 2019a).

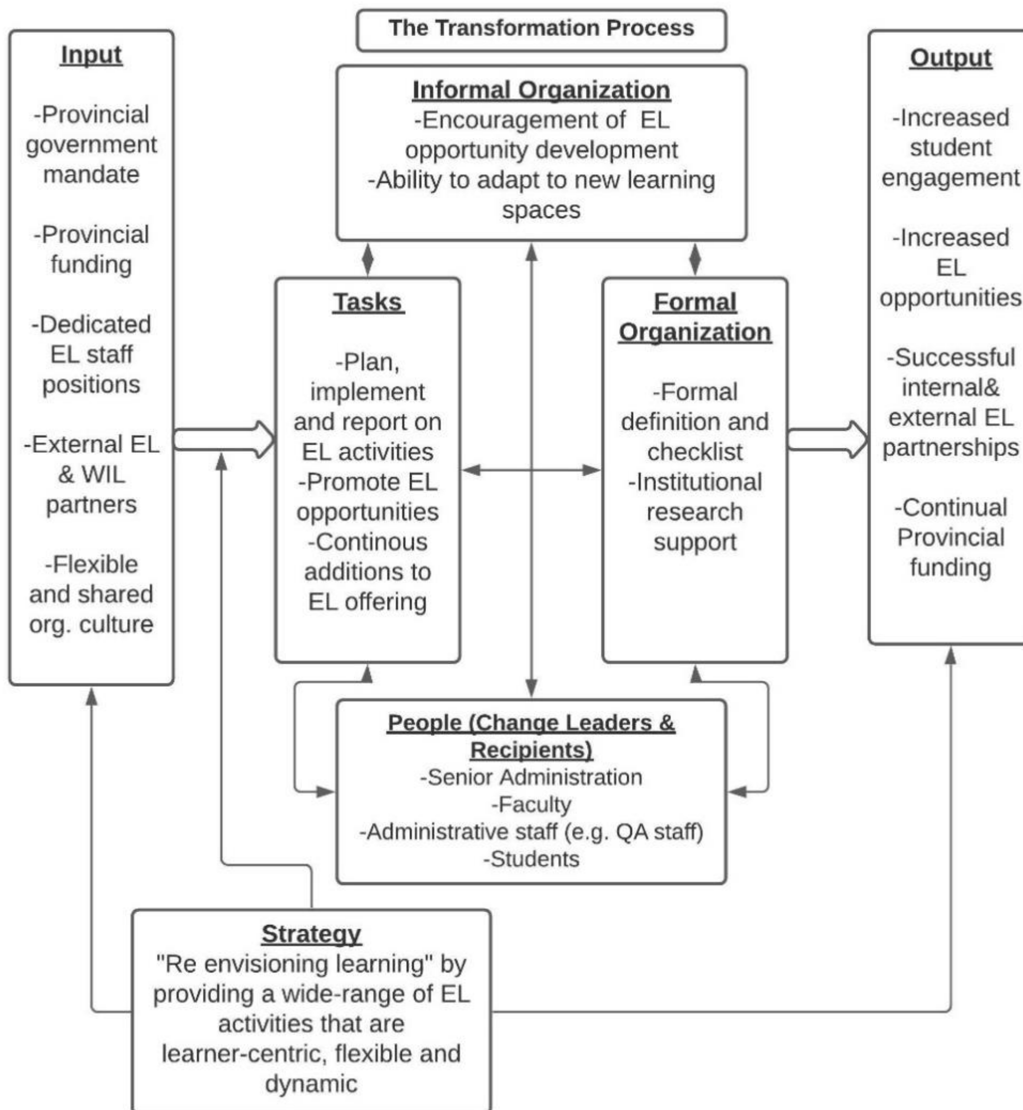
Outputs are defined as "what the organization produces, how it performs and how effective it is" (Nadler & Tushman, 1980, p.41) at the individual, group and organizational levels. The congruence model suggests that outputs at the different levels are interrelated and can influence one another through behaviours, attitudes and reactions (Cawsey et al., 2016; Nadler & Tushman, 1980). Any proposed solution to the PoP should address creating a balance of EL opportunities for students. To assist with creating this balance, organizational level outputs such as goal attainment, resource utilization and adaptability (Nadler & Tushman, 1980) need consideration when analyzing the gaps within GU's current EL practices.

Lastly, the four main components of the congruence model are (1) *task*, this refers to the work that inherently needs to be completed by the organization and its divisions; (2) *individual or group*, this represents the knowledge, skills and attributes of those within the organization; (3) *formal organizational arrangements*, such as the structures, processes, policies and designs that are formalized to get the tasks accomplished; and (4) *informal organizational arrangements*, such as established or emerging interrelationships, communication patterns or work arrangements. (Cawsey et al., 2016; Nadler & Tushman, 1980). Nadler and Tushman (1980, 1989) highlight that these four components are the critical central elements of an organization's transformative process due to its interdependence and interaction. The congruency of these interdependencies and interactions, or fit, can help a leader determine where to focus their efforts when making a change within the organization.

Using these definitions, the author created a congruence model based on the current scenario at GU regarding EL planning and practices. Figure 3 is the resulting model:

Figure 3

Nadler and Tushman's Congruence Model Applied to the Current State of EL



Note. This figure is adapted from Cawsey et al.'s (2016) *Organizational change: An action-oriented toolkit*.

The author analyzed this model using critical guiding questions from Nadler and Tushman's (1980), *A Model for Diagnosing Organizational Behaviour,* and Cawsey et al.'s (2016) *Toolkit Exercise 3.2* to determine where there are currently gaps, or incongruence,

between different organizational components of GU. The analysis resulted in the identification of four critical gaps:

Gap #1 Task/Formal Organization: Absence of Framework/Internal Process

The first identified gap is the absence of a guiding framework and internal process that could provide a balanced, consistent direction for planning, implementing, and reporting EL activities across campus. Nadler and Tushman (1980) noted that issues arise between the task and the organization if there are not adequate formal support structures created to "get individuals to perform tasks" (p.42). This gap has manifested in the inconsistent EL practices and overreliance on WIL as the preferred opportunity, causing an imbalance at GU. Fortunately, based on GU's change readiness assessment, openness to proposed change by non-senior leadership positions (Cawsey et al., 2016) is generally welcomed and accepted. Recognizing that GU's shared and collegial-political organizational practices expect a level of participation of various individuals/groups when proposing change (Bergman et al., 2012; Pearce, Manz & Sims, 2009; Manning, 2018a), to address this gap, the author will have to be mindful of including these parties early on in the awakening stage of the change path model to garner buy-in to any proposed change vision.

Gap #2 Individual/Task: Foundational Knowledge on Experiential Learning Theory

The second identified gap concerns the foundational knowledge about experiential learning theory (ELT) across the institution. The identified gap between the task, providing learner-centred, flexible and adaptable EL opportunities (Gordon University, 2019a), and the individuals who provide those tasks, such as EL coordinators, is that there have been no organizational training provisions or learning opportunities on foundational ELT. This gap is demonstrated through various GU faculty and unit EL websites that have conflicting information

on the importance of reflection, a vital component of the ELT cyclical model (Kolb, 2015; Kolb & Kolb, 2005). The guiding question from Chapter 1, "*how can a theoretically informed institutional EL framework provide internal guidelines for implementation and promote equilibrium of offered EL opportunities?"* stems directly from this gap in foundational ELT knowledge and the subsequent imbalance of EL offerings. This guiding question seeks to answer how ELT can support widespread organizational learning on EL development at GU. When utilizing the change path model, the author will need to consider EL knowledge development and transform the ways change recipients[3] think about EL, which is a component of the acceleration stage (Cawsey et al., 2016). In order to minimize this gap and begin the transformative changes to the WIL dominant discourses, proposed solutions will need to consider how to facilitate this organizational learning at GU.

Gap #3 Formal Organization/Informal Organization: Centralization of Institution-wide EL Strategic Direction.

The third gap that arose from the model is the disconnect between the formal and informal organizational components, resulting in the absence of a centralized department/portfolio to provide strategic direction on EL. GU has a formal definition and checklist that provides direction on what EL activities should contain while formally committing to EL being an institutional priority longitudinally. However, any emerging EL arrangements or partnerships, which Nadler and Tushman (1980) characterized as an informal organizational component, remain without a clear direction for future planning and implementation. While this gap may be minimal at the time of this OIP, as indicated in Chapter 1, it has the potential to widen if WIL opportunities continue to become sparse due to the pandemic (Lowes et al., 2020).

[3] Cawsey et al. (2016) define change recipient as "the person who is affected by the change" (p.32).

With no lead position to centrally direct and align newly created EL opportunities with the formal organization components, faculty and units, risk further inconsistency and imbalance of EL provisions, ultimately creating incongruence with GU's overarching institutional re-envisioning learning priority (Gordon University, 2019a).

The author also acknowledges that this gap is the most sensitive piece to address based on the university's prior change experiences when dealing with centralization. Cawsey et al.'s (2016) *change readiness assessment tool* used in Chapter 1 revealed a less than positive response to change in the past. Further investigation revealed that these negative prior change experiences were often aligned with the centralization of services and tended to be interpreted by change recipients as a loss of transparency regarding why changes were made. Solutions to address this gap will need to have the author consider the negative connotations of centralization and the historical context of previous change initiatives that attempted to perform a similar consolidation.

Gap #4 Individual/Informal Organization: Internal EL Nomenclature

The last gap identified is between individuals and an additional informal organization component, influential communication patterns (Nadler and Tushman, 1980). The absence of an internal EL nomenclature at GU that could create common discourses about EL currently does not exist, contributing to WIL being a dominant discursive practice. This gap intersects with gap two, highlighting a lack of foundational knowledge on ELT. What differs with this gap is that it directly addresses the absence of non-ambiguous organizational communications concerning EL planning and implementation. If a developed internal EL nomenclature strives to balance the dominant WIL discourse at GU, communicating unambiguously about EL methods would help create this balanced counter-discourse. Also identified in the change readiness assessment

performed in Chapter 1 was that GU's communication channels do not always perform effectively with information being communicated in all directions (Cawsey et al., 2016). Keeping this in mind, the author will need to think of the content needed when establishing a consistent approach to how EL is communicated and consider the communication channels this content will need to permeate to combat the pervasive, dominant WIL discourses.

In summary, utilizing Nadler and Tushman's (1980) congruence model to critically analyze GU's organizational components resulted in identifying four critical gaps concerning the current state of EL planning and implementation. The following section will discuss possible solutions and consider how to minimize these four gaps to address the PoP successfully.

Possible Solutions to Address the Problem of Practice

The following section will outline three possible solutions to address the original question posed in the PoP, "*how might the university implement meaningful EL opportunities for all students?"*. The author proposes three possible solutions to this statement and evaluates each by considering the critical organizational gap analysis results in the previous section, the ability to be facilitated through the proposed hybrid distributed-adaptive leadership theoretical framework, and resource needs[4]. Each proposed solutions' evaluation results are consolidated into a summary chart. The author will then select one solution against the other two using this chart as the basis for her justifications.

Proposed Solution #1: Maintain the Status Quo

As GU's current EL provisions meet the criteria set out by the current provincial government and have successfully met the agreed upon performance indicators, maintaining the status quo will be considered for baseline comparison purposes with solutions #2 and #3. EL

[4] For the purpose of this OIP, resource needs will consider the time, human, fiscal, and information implications for GU.

activities happen across all faculties, even though the majority is WIL in nature. Additionally, the current state of EL does have GU partnering with external stakeholders, maintaining ties within the community, aligning with GU's priority pillars of re-envisioning learning and maintaining successful partnerships (Gordon University, 2019a).

Evaluation of Proposed Solution #1: Maintain the Status Quo

A benefit to maintaining the status quo is that it offers little resistance from identified change drivers, such as the current EL coordinators and faculty. The notion of if "it is not broken, why fix it" is often a powerful source of resistance for change participants or recipients (Gaubatz & Ensminger, 2017). In this case, maintaining the status quo is working to meet the standards set out by the Ministry with the resources currently in place, meaning that it is not broken.

The ramifications of maintaining the status quo outweigh its benefits for several reasons. As previously mentioned, there is a heightened uncertainty around the amount of WIL opportunities available due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with no timeline for restoration or an increase of these provisions post-pandemic. Due to this instability, it is difficult to predict if the current resources allocated to WIL opportunities will continue to suffice. The status quo's lack of future planning for such uncertainty could put GU at risk of losing PBF if WIL opportunities dwindle due to the ongoing pandemic. A lack of future planning would shift the type of change needed, from tuning to adaption, or even re-creation, as GU would need to respond to these external forces strategically to ensure the lack of WIL does not hit crisis proportion and threaten institutional funding (Nadler & Tushman, 1989, 1990). Also, the lack of guiding principles and an internal framework for consistent, balanced implementation reinforces dominant discourses about WIL by not addressing the equity-related implications identified in Chapter 1. By not

addressing the need to balance WIL opportunities with alternative EL activities, such as course-embedded EL activities, GU will continue to prioritize a select subsection of its student population.

Proposed Solution #2: EL Policy Directives

Another proposed solution is to create EL policy directives to be embedded within GU's policy library. Policy directives at GU are defined as "a set of mandatory instructions that specify actions to be taken to support the implementation of, and compliance with a policy or procedure" (Gordon University, 2020c). At GU, to produce, oversee the implementation and sponsor the directives, it would take several individuals, specifically a *policy lead*, *policy owner*, and a *policy sponsor*[5] (Gordon University, 2018b). As an influential change leader, the author would assume the role of policy lead, working with the QA director to draft the EL directive policy instrument and facilitate a thorough campus-wide consultation per GU's policy framework's development and review cycle. GU's policy development and review cycle consist of twelve steps (Gordon University, 2018c) that must be adhered to when passing a new policy instrument. The author would use the three guiding questions posed in Chapter 1 to steer the EL policy directives' initial creation to address underlying concerns embedded within the PoP.

Evaluation of Solution #2: EL Policy Directives

When evaluating solution #2, the creation of EL directives, against the gaps identified through the critical organizational analysis performed in the prior section, there are several benefits to the proposed solution addressing the PoP. First, this solution would almost fully

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[5] At GU, Policy Lead is defined as "the individual(s) responsible for drafting, reviewing or amending a Policy Instrument and for facilitating consultation throughout the development and approval process" (2018b). A Policy Owner is, "the position responsible for overseeing the implementation, administration and interpretation of a Policy Instrument" (2018b). A Policy Sponsor is "the Vice-President or delegate who oversees the organizational unit proposing a new Policy Instrument" (2018b).

address gap #1, *the need for an internal EL implementation framework/process*, and formalize this process within GU's governance structure. GU's internal twelve-step policy development and review cycle consists of several rounds of consultation, aligning with the principles of collegiality that suggest that decision-making interactions should occur amongst various stakeholders and traditionally is a preferred way of governing by academics (Austin & Jones, 2016). This solution would also minimize gap #3, *centralization of institution-wide EL strategic direction,* as GU's policy framework outlines that any new policy instruments, including directives, must have a policy owner who is "responsible for overseeing the implementation, administration and interpretation of a Policy Instrument" (Gordon University, 2018b). Having a policy owner responsible for overseeing the policy directive can resolve the various interpretations of how to implement EL at GU by centralizing the strategic direction under the policy owner's office.

Consequently, the collegial-political organizational practices that enable thorough consultation may also restrict its ability for change to move forward, especially if the policy lead, owner and sponsor do not agree to the purpose of the EL directives. Researchers have warned that a characteristic of collegial-political coalitions, specifically, the ability to rally individuals around common interests to move an initiative forward, can have adverse effects if these coalitions have not fully bought into the purpose and value of the change initiative (Bolman and Deal, 2017; Manning, 2018c). These coalitions can reinforce powerful, dominant discursive practices, resisting counter-discursive evolutions the change initiative may be seeking to address, especially if these coalitions interpret the changes as a loss of freedom, positional power or trust (Austin & Jones, 2016; Botas & Huisman, 2012; Gaventa, 2006; Lumby, 2012). Managing these coalitions through a distributed-leadership approach will take ample time for the policy lead,

owner and sponsor, who will have to strategically disseminate consistent information and messaging on EL directives' purpose to garner buy-in.

Proposed Solution #3: EL Workshop Series Embedded Within the QA Cyclical Program Review Process.

As part of GU's mandated two-year cyclical program review (CPR) process, academic programs must address EL opportunities as part of the discussion and reflection on curriculum within their self-study document[6]. This section of the self-study asks program review teams to indicate any applied EL opportunities, reflect on its relevancy to the larger program structure, and the advantages/challenges for students (Gordon University, 2019b). Historically, responses to this section have been inconsistent and do not always extensively address how the program's EL opportunities' quality could be enhanced.

A workshop series grounded in Kolb's (2015) principles of EL and developed using backward design principles, or "designing with the end goals in mind" (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005), could be embedded in the CPR process. The workshops, utilizing Kolb's principles (2015) as the underpinning theoretical framework, will have defined learning outcomes that will motivate program teams to consider how they would answer the PoP in connection to their students. EL data from GU's institutional research office can be incorporated into reflective discussions held within the workshop and then embedded into the self-study document for further elaboration by the program team. The development of these workshops would fall under the QA office's purview, aligning with the author's agency and current portfolios' scope, as it is similar to another workshop series she currently facilitates for the CPR process.

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[6] A self-study document is written by the academic program under review and is to provide a critical, internal reflection on aspects of the program such as admissions, curriculum, teaching, assessment, resources, quality indicators and quality enhancement (Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance, 2010).

Evaluation of Proposed Solution #3: Embedded EL Workshop Series

Evaluating the proposed solution of an EL workshop series embedded within the CPR process against the four gaps identified from the critical organizational analysis revealed several benefits. First, it addresses gaps #2 & #4, *foundational knowledge on ELT and an internal EL nomenclature*, by directly embedding ELT principles (Kolb, 2015) into the workshop's curriculum. Additionally, scaffolding the workshop series using backward design's "identifying the desired results" methodology (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005) can help minimize these two gaps if addressed from the beginning when planning the workshops' learning outcomes. For example, an identified desired result for the workshops could be developing participants' foundational knowledge on EL and assisting with creating common terminology when discussing EL at GU.

A second benefit is that this solution indirectly addresses gaps #1 and #3, *the need for an internal EL implementation framework/process* and *centralization of institution-wide EL strategic direction* by incorporating EL planning and implementation into the more extensive CPR process. Minimizing these gaps is less challenging to implement than solution #2 because ownership of the strategic direction of EL within the program will continue to lie with the faculty and their EL coordinators. The QA workshop curriculum will drive the informal centralization of ELT content and help to inform the decisions made by those owners.

A drawback to this solution is that it will be time and information intensive to start up. The author will need to gather theoretical and gray literature, including ELT research, to develop the workshops. The author will also need to consult with her pre-establish institutional distributed networks to understand what misconceptions and misinformation may be driving the current state of EL at GU to rely on WIL.

Evaluative Summary of Proposed Solutions

The three proposed solutions to the PoP are: Maintaining the status quo, creating EL policy directives and developing an EL workshop series as part of the CPR process. All three solutions have been individually analyzed against the gaps identified in the critical organization analysis and potential resource needs. Table 2 presents a visual representation of this analysis, including a third evaluating factor, *anticipated readiness for change*, based on the change readiness assessment performed in Chapter 1.

Table 2

Proposed OIP Solutions: Summary and Evaluation

	Ability to address gap				***Resources needed***				
	Gap #1	**Gap #2**	**Gap #3**	**Gap #4**	**Time**	**Human**	**Fiscal**	**Info**	**Readiness**
Solution #1	1	1	1	1	3	3	3	3	*n/a*
Solution #2	4	2	4	2	5	3	2	4	2
Solution #3	3	5	3	4	4	2	2	4	4

Note. The rating scale is 1 through 5, with **1 being the lowest** and **5 being the highest**.

As highlighted in Table 2, each of the proposed solutions has its benefits and deficits when addressing the gaps, resource implications and the ability for GU to be ready to implement the proposed solution. While solution #1, maintaining the status quo, has the benefit of needing no change readiness and may need some resources but not as many as the other two solutions, it fails to address any gaps impeding possible resolution of the PoP adequately. For this reason, the author eliminated it for consideration as the preferred solution moving forward.

Solution #2, creating EL policy directives and solution #3, creating an EL workshop series to be implemented as part of the CPR process, did not completely address all of the noted gaps but did a better job minimizing them, more so than solution #1. In table 2, both solutions #2 and #3 tend to have a high resource need for time and information but very little need for capital. The biggest differentiator between solution #2 and #3 is GU's change readiness level, with solution #2 assessed at a lower readiness rate.

According to Cawsey et al. (2016), a lower readiness rate indicates that resistance to adopting the proposed change solution will be higher and not as likely achievable. The author attributes this lower readiness rate to the previously mentioned concern at GU with centralization and the loss of perceived ownership of EL provisions. Solution #3 received a higher readiness assessment because of its ability to balance the centralization of foundational ELT knowledge, institutional EL nomenclature, and best practices within these workshops, with the ownership of decision-making remaining with the academic program review team as part of the CPR process. For these reasons, the author has selected solution #3 as her chosen solution to the PoP. In the next section, the author provides further justification for solution #3 against the alternatives and describes the Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cyclical model in relation to the chosen solution.

Chosen Solution

The author chose solution #3 to address the PoP because of its ability to focus on a prominent undercurrent of the PoP– the need for institutional learning about EL theory, terminology, and best practices. Solution #3 manages these needs by infusing the workshops with sensemaking and organizational learning approaches. *Sensemaking* is about modifying mindsets through getting individuals to participate in dialogue and conversation that results in new meanings of familiar concepts (Eckel & Kezar, 2003; Kezar, 2018; Weick, 1995), while

organizational learning is data-oriented in approach with a focus on change for improvement (Eckel & Kezar, 2003; Kezar, 2018).

Solution #3 can employ these approaches within the workshop curriculum and embed them in the learning outcomes (or desired results) that will guide the rest of the design backwards from there, ensuring that the learning activities, tools and methods of assessment align with these outcomes (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). Solution #2 does not engage individuals in active sensemaking or organizational learning; once an EL policy directive is drafted, it is up to the individual to take the initiative to put the directives into practice, resulting in inconsistent and imbalanced EL offerings.

Furthermore, the rationale for selecting solution #3 is grounded in its ability to be adaptive, flexible and responsive to the unique student EL needs on a program level. Going back to the second guiding question from Chapter 1, "*what are the equity-related implications around maintaining the status quo*?", solution #3 can motivate faculty and staff to think of these implications by focusing on student EL needs from the specific program under review. The author can use student demographic data typically found in the CPR self-study document to guide critical conversations with each program around where the gaps are in their EL programming.

The author would utilize a distributed-adaptive leadership approach to promote equity-considerate solutions, reaching out to her professional networks to create Socratic, inquiry-based questions that would implore program teams to think creatively about their EL offerings during the workshop. Solution #2, EL policy directives, would address high-level equity implications across GU only if the policy lead, sponsor and owner all agree that is a focus. However, it would

not address the specificities of what GU students need by an academic program to have a meaningful EL experience.

Finally, the EL workshops will be continuously monitored, assessed and enhanced, similarly structured like the PDSA cycle. This cycle is known as a model for continuous improvement (Langley et al., 2009; Donnelly & Kirk, 2015) by requiring the change facilitator[7], in this case, the author, to facilitate the change through the PDSA's "trial and learning methodology" (Langley et al., 2009, p. 24-25). EL workshop planning will include setting learning outcome goals/objectives for each workshop (Donnelly & Kirk, 2015), aligning with the first step in the backward design process of identifying the desired results (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). As previously mentioned, the author currently facilitates another curriculum development workshop series commended during GU's quality assurance audit for the training and support it provides to programs undergoing review (Gordon University, 2020d). Planning for the EL workshop series will take a similar approach when structuring the curriculum and outcomes, with the workshop series then implemented for two CPR cycles before being evaluated. Participants of the workshops will be assessed on the learning outcomes and surveyed for participant satisfaction, aligning with the *do* phase (Donnelly & Kirk, 2015). Next, in correspondence with the *study* phase, the data gathered from the workshop surveys would be analyzed (Langley et al., 2009; Donnelly & Kirk, 2015). Last, from the survey results, the author would prioritize areas for improvement, which would then be integrated into the workshop content's next planning cycle, meeting the criteria for the *act* phase of the PDSA model (Donnelly & Kirk, 2015).

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[7] Cawsey et al. (2016) define a change facilitator as "the person who assists initiators, implementers, and recipients with the change-management process. Identifies process and content change issues and resolve these, fosters support, alleviates resistance and provides other participants with guidance and counsel" (p.32).

As the PDSA model is cyclical, similar to the CPR process, considerations must be made when implementing solution #3 on how these cycles might parallel one another to provide workshops promptly. In addition to considering these cycles, when developing solution #3, addressing the ethical responsibilities of those leading and participating in these EL workshops is of paramount concern. The final section of this chapter will explore ethical considerations concerning the organizational changes and proposed solutions.

Leadership Ethics and Organizational Change

When determining the chosen solution to the PoP to propel organizational change forward at GU, the author pondered the ethical implications and challenges that would need consideration throughout the change process. For this OIP, and when determining possible solutions to the PoP, the author employed Starratt's multidimensional ethical leadership framework (1991, 1996). Starratt's framework focuses on three ethical themes within the context of a school environment: An ethic of care, an ethic of justice, and an ethic of critique.

Ethic of Care

According to Starratt (1991, 1996), an ethic of care places value on dignified human relationships that respect and honour an individual's needs. Regardless of their informal/formal position, a change leader who employs an ethic of care would concern themselves with fostering the development of a mutually respectful relationship by maintaining transparent communications, honesty and trust (Starratt 1991, 1996). The author recognizes that applying an ethic of care to the networks embedded in the selected distributed-adaptive leadership approach can encourage identified change drivers' participation. It is an ethic of care that can help the author better understand any hesitations or feelings of loss that change participants[8] may be

[8] For the purpose of this OIP, the term 'change participants' is inclusive of all change leaders as initiators, implementers, facilitators and/or recipients involved in the change process.

experiencing by facilitating open conversations rooted in honesty and trust about the change process.

Aligning with an ethic of care, researchers (Burnes, 2009; Ehrich et al., 2014; Liu, 2015) have highlighted that ethical leadership consists of social, relational practices that promote collaborative engagement of formal and informal leaders; recognizing that organizations are social systems that contextualize these practices. When selecting the chosen solution to address the PoP, the author considered which of the three solutions would encourage active, collaborative engagement across GU in a manner that allowed individuals to feel valued and their perspectives on EL heard. The status quo for EL implementation at GU has not actively engaged individuals to collaborate or created ongoing opportunities to facilitate discussions on EL perspectives. EL policy directives would passively engage organizational members through GU's policy consultation process, which consists of individuals providing input that a committee comprised of select individuals then considers. An EL workshop series embeds an ethic of care by having the lead facilitator practice "a deep attention to the unique human beings involved in the exchange and the issues of self-esteem, personal confidence, and ego anxieties" (Starratt, 1991, p.196). By paying careful attention, the facilitator can promote collaboration amongst change participants and acknowledge the different groups' unique challenges concerning EL provisions.

Ethic of Justice

An ethic of justice centers around the challenges of governance within a school, focusing on an individual's choice to act in a just manner and the internal community's ability to act, direct and govern justly (Starratt, 1991, 1996). For Starratt (1991), promoting an ethic of justice "will see to it that specific ethical learning activities are structured within curricular and extra-

curricular programs to encourage discussion of individual choices as well as discussions of school community choices" (p.193). These ethical learning activities need to consider the countering of dominant discourses around EL by providing the opportunity to examine discursive practices critically and how it is impacting GU's ability to address equal access and democratic student participation (Liu, 2015; Starratt, 1991) in EL activities.

When deciding on a chosen solution to address the PoP, the ability to create a space for respectful debate where individuals and the wider community could participate in "ethical learning activities" (Starratt, 1991, p.193) heavily factored into the author's decision-making. Creating the opportunity for organizational members to participate in ethical learning activities, focusing on EL creation, can address the current imbalance of EL provisions by examining the effects of dominant discursive practices in connection to equal, meaningful student access and choice.

Ethic of Critique

An ethic of critique calls on leaders to "critically reflect on current policies/practices" (Liu, 2017, p. 200) in order to critique organizational structures, relationships and established mindsets that reinforce hegemonic practices (Starratt, 1991, 1996). A change leader who promotes an ethic of critique believes that carefully examining these organizational structures, relationships, and mindsets can lead to more equitable outcomes for all faculty, staff and students (Liu, 2017; Starratt, 1991). As the PoP is concerned with addressing how GU might implement meaningful EL opportunities for all of its students, the chosen solution needs to promote an ethic of critique to determine which structures, relationships, and mindsets impede moving change forward.

As noted in Chapter 1, the MAESD policy (2017) currently guides GU's approach to EL implementation and has defined what EL should contain in order for GU to receive funding from the province. A chosen solution would embed an ethic of critique that builds off the first line of inquiry from Chapter 1, "*how can a critical policy analysis approach to the MAESD guidelines reveal underlying assumptions and problematic representations about work-integrated learning*?". An ethic of critique could be implemented by having participants critically reflect on the effects of unchallenged assumptions about current EL provisions. Employing reflective questions derived from Baachi and Goodwin's (2016) post-structural approach to policy problematization would encourage discussion about the dominant, hegemonic mindsets that have been currently informing EL provisions at GU by framing the dialogue around "what is the problem represented to be?".

For a change leader, the difficulty then becomes how to ethically address any noted inequities or injustices resulting from these conversations that will benefit all within the community (Liu, 2017; Starratt, 1991, 1996). The author acknowledges that not all dominant discursive practices that contribute to the imbalanced approach to EL provision will be immediately addressed but wanted to select a solution that would allow for the continued application of an ethic of critique when reviewing and enhancing EL opportunities. The status quo at GU does not apply an ethic of critique as organizational members have not been motivated to do so. An EL policy directive has the opportunity to balance the dominant discursive within the policy's language. However, this is dependent on participants in the consultative policy process being actively encouraged to develop counter-discursive language by critically reflecting on current policies and practices using a problematization lens (Baachi and Goodwin, 2016). GU's current consultation process does not formally embed reflective nor

problematization practices for ethical critique purposes. EL workshops can bridge this gap if the change facilitator mindfully develops critically reflexive ethical learning activities and spaces that encourage change participants to apply an ethic of critique.

Chapter 2 Summary

In summary, Chapter 2 focused on the planning and development phase of the OIP, drawing on discussions, topics and themes introduced in Chapter 1. When planning for change, a hybrid distributed-adaptive leadership approach built on GU's established shared leadership preferences was selected to propel change forward. After assessing several change frameworks, the author chose the change path model (Cawsey et al., 2016) for how to lead to change as it aligns with GU's organizational tendencies to be adaptable and flexible. Once the how-to lead change was identified, the author undertook a critical organizational analysis to identify what to change, resulting in four critical gaps.

Three possible solutions to address the PoP were then evaluated against these four gaps; the change readiness assessment results from Chapter 1 and identified resource needs. One solution was then selected based on the evaluation results and its ability to address the changes needed at GU in a relevant, timely manner compared to the other two proposed solutions. Lastly, the ethical considerations and challenges that heavily factored into the decision-making process when selecting a chosen solution to address the PoP were discussed. The author acknowledges that these ethical themes will need to continue to be examined, with strategies grounded in an ethics of care, justice and critique, woven into the implementation, evaluation and communication planning for the chosen solution. Chapter 3 will begin with an introductory discussion of this change implementation plan.

Chapter 3: Implementation, Evaluation & Communication

In Chapter 2, the initial PoP and focus of this OIP, "*how might GU consistently implement meaningful EL opportunities for all its students?*" was critically analyzed with several potential change solutions proposed. The author established how a distributed-adaptive leadership approach to change compliments GU's preferred organizational ways of leading and how this would assist with moving any planned change forward. From there, the author analyzed several relevant change theory frameworks and selected Cawsey et al.'s (2016) change path model for its ability to balance "process and prescription" (p. 53). Using Nadler and Tushman's (1980) congruence model, the author performed a critical organization analysis, revealing several gaps between the current state of EL at GU and the preferred desired state outlined in Chapter 1. The author then proposed several change solutions to address these gaps and ultimately the PoP, assessing each solution's benefits and limitations against the others. This assessment led to selecting the chosen solution, an embedded EL workshop series within GU's cyclical program review (CPR) process, and a discussion of ethical considerations that need addressing.

Chapter 3 will develop the implementation, monitoring, evaluation and communication of the chosen solution across three integrated plans. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the author will continue to be positioned as the primary change leader in a facilitator role throughout these plans, collaborating with various change participants (including other change leaders at GU) across different distributed-adaptive networks to facilitate change moving forward. The change implementation plan co-mingles guiding principles of the model for improvement (Langley et al., 1994; Langley et al., 2009; Moen & Norman, 2009) and the change path model (Cawsey et al., 2016) to develop strategic objectives and goals for the chosen solution while considering how the change leader will manage transitions. The monitoring and evaluation plans build off the two

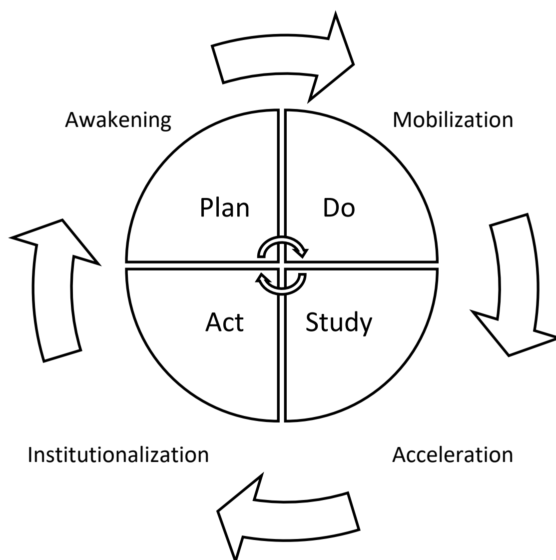
forenamed models using Markiewicz and Patrick's (2016) planning format to structure the framework and Schein's (2013) humble inquiry to reinforce the ethical leadership principles discussed in Chapter 2. The communication plan incorporates Klein's (1996) communication principles and Armenakis and Harris' (2002) crafting change messaging strategies to ensure that communicating the chosen solution to change participants is timely, transparent, and appropriate. After summarizing the learnings from Chapter 3, the OIP concludes with the next steps and future considerations for the planned change solution.

Change Implementation Plan

For the change implementation plan of the selected change solution, embedding an EL workshop series within the existing quality assurance (QA) CPR process, the author will be using aspects from the model for improvement (Langley et al., 1994; Langley et al., 2009; Moen & Norman, 2009), which incorporates the PDSA cycle mentioned in Chapter 2, as a part of her guiding framework. The author will also align characteristics of each phase from the change path model (Cawsey et al., 2016) at different stages of the model for improvement to ensure her role as change leader considers various leadership approaches, possible stakeholder reactions, and organizational needs. The model for improvement aligned with the change path model (Figure 4) acts as the guiding strategic pathway for outlining the change implementation plan and the subsequent monitoring and evaluation plan of this OIP. The first stage in the model for improvement is *plan*, which refers to planning the change by determining the objectives and priorities of the planned change using information (Langley et al., 1994; Langley et al., 2009; Moen & Norman, 2009) based on the organization's history, context, leadership and stakeholder needs.

Figure 4

Alignment of the Model for Improvement with the Change Path Model.



- What are we trying to accomplish?
- How will we know that a change is an improvement?
- What changes can we make that will result in improvement?

Note. This figure is adapted from the *model for improvement* (Langley et al., 1994; Langley et al., 2009; Moen & Norman, 2009) and the *change path model* (Cawsey et al., 2016).

The model for improvement was selected to guide the development of the EL workshop series' overarching objectives and associated goals due to the model's underlying principle of continuous improvement, aligning closely with GU's quality assurance office's mission and vision (2017c). Researchers (Donnelly & Kirk, 2015; Langley et al., 1994; Langley et al., 2009; Moen & Norman, 2009) have recommended using the model for improvement, which combines the PDSA cycle with three guiding questions, to plan for change and assist with the identification of initial objectives. The first guiding question, "what are we trying to accomplish?" provides change leaders with a starting point in the change planning process (Langley et al., 2009; Moen & Norman, 2009). Within the context of this OIP, a more direct way of asking that question

would be, “what is the chosen solution trying to accomplish?” and use the responses to frame the objectives and goals for the chosen solution, the embedded EL workshop series.

Aligning the change path model with the model for improvement provides the change leader with a deeper understanding of change participants’ attitudes and reactions at different stages. The model for improvement uses principles from the scientific method to plan the process of change in stages, focusing on being systems-oriented (Langley et al., 2009; Moen & Norman, 2009). The change path model reminds the change leader to contemplate the people component of the change, focusing on what attitudes and beliefs change participants may have and possible participant reactions (Cawsey et al., 2016). By aligning the two models, the change leader can plan how to implement the process while also considering the change participants’ reactions at each stage.

The following section will outline the beginnings of the change implementation plan by consolidating the organizational findings from Chapters 1 and 2 while using the models mentioned earlier to create the overarching strategy, objectives and goals.

Strategy for Planned Change

To respond to the model for improvement question, “what are we trying to accomplish?” (Langley et al., 2009; Moen & Norman, 2009), the author revisited the organizational analysis from Chapter 2 that used Nadler and Tushman’s (1980) congruence model to identify gaps in GU’s current EL practices. The organizational analysis revealed the following four gaps: (a) absence of an internal guiding framework, (b) foundational knowledge on EL theory, (c) lack of centralization of an institution-wide EL strategic direction, and (d) the absence of an internal EL nomenclature. The organizational analysis highlighted the distance between the current state of EL at GU and the desired state, with the resulting gaps indicating what needs addressing to bring

GU closer to the desired state. Gap (a) and (c) are mainly addressed by embedding the EL workshop series in the established CPR framework. To lessen gaps (b) and (c), the author considered how the EL workshop series' objectives can integrate foundational EL knowledge while building an internal EL nomenclature, ultimately addressing all four gaps. Managing these gaps within the planned change solution's implementation strategy can create the conditions needed to achieve the desired state at GU while also addressing the underlying concern of the PoP; consistent planning, development, and implementation of meaningful EL activities for all GU students.

When determining the EL workshops' high-level objectives, it is important to consider how they align with GU's organizational strategy. The organization's overarching strategy needs to be considered because if the planned change objectives are considered too cumbersome or incongruent to the strategy, the less likely they will be initiated or fully adopted (Kotter & Schlesinger, 2008). Chapter 1 established that a strategic priority pillar of GU is to re-envision learning by providing a wide range of diverse EL opportunities that are learner-centric, responsive to their academic discipline and can adapt to an ever-changing educational landscape (2019a). Additionally, Chapter 1 highlights GU's overall commitment to developing and implementing quality academic opportunities (2017). GU's strategic priority pillars, combined with its mission and vision, depict an organization that values change that contributes to increasing learners' knowledge, bettering the academic curriculum, and adapting to a constantly fluctuating educational landscape.

Using the results from the organizational gap analysis, coupled with the GU's organizational pillars, the author developed two objectives for the planned change solution:

- Increase faculty and staff's foundational knowledge of EL theory and best practices.

- Increase the consistent development, implementation, frequency and review of in-class EL and WIL alternative opportunities for GU students.

These two objectives respond to the first question of the model for improvement, "what are we trying to accomplish?" and set the parameters for the next question the change leader must consider, "what changes can we make that will result in improvement?" (Langley et al., 2009; Moen & Norman, 2009). To answer this question, the change leader can employ SMART criteria (Doran, 1981) to develop goals with measurables for the two stated objectives, creating indicators that will assist in the monitoring and evaluation plan discussed later in this chapter.

Determining Goals of the Planned Change

Determining goals that incorporate SMART criteria (Doran, 1981) will help make the two overarching objectives outlined in the previous section manageable and attainable for change participants, including the change leader. Doran's SMART criteria (1981) provided the following guidelines when creating a goal: It should be (a) *specific*, targeting a specific area for improvement or enhancement; (b) *measurable*, containing a quantifier or some indication of progress; (c) *assignable*, indicating who will be involved; (d) *realistic*, stating what can be achieved with the available resources; and (e) *time-related*, specifying when the results can be achieved.

Considering several aspects of the SMART criteria, coupled with the overarching priorities from the previous section, the author determined the following three goals:

- Develop and facilitate an EL workshop series for GU faculty and staff undergoing an academic program review.
- Create an EL resource and best practice internal repository for GU faculty and staff.

- Assess the development of new in-class and non-WIL EL opportunities for completed academic program reviews.

When developing these goals, the measurable and time-related criteria within these statements were purposefully left out at this stage as the change implementation plan needs to focus on building momentum by identifying short-, medium- and long- terms goals. Analysis of the PoP statement from Chapter 1 revealed that GU's current EL provision development and implementation are inconsistent. A strategic implementation approach to achieving the desired state should focus on these three goals and slowly increase defined benchmark thresholds. Determining measurable goals assists with answering, "what changes can we make that will result in improvement?" as the goals provide the change leader three actionable items derived from the initial two central objectives. This last question of the model for improvement, "how will we know that change will be an improvement?" (Langley et al., 2009; Moen & Norman, 2009), focuses on assessing these goals to gauge if the improvement is taking place and if the implementation plan needs modifying. The gauging to see if the improvement is happening will be discussed as part of the monitoring and evaluation plan later in the OIP.

Managing the Transition

Next, this OIP focuses on how the change leader can manage transitions associated with the change implementation plan. The following sections will include discussions on building momentum, understanding stakeholders' reaction to change, selecting personnel to champion the planned change, identifying additional resources and acknowledging potential implementation challenges.

The change leader will need to build the initial three goals' momentum over the short-, medium- and long-range of the implementation plan to start managing the change transition.

Building Momentum

In addition to using the SMART criteria when creating the three goals, the author considered the type of change discussed in Chapter 2 and the implications of appropriately scaling the planned change solution within GU's organizational context. The type of change identified as "tuning" (Nadler & Tushman, 1989) or "continuous" (Cawsey et al., 2016) focuses on a gradual change approach by implementing smaller planned change increments in a distributed manner through established networks (Cawsey et al., 2016; Nadler & Tushman, 1989). When building momentum at GU, the planned change solution's goals will be gradually phased in, focusing on continuous growth. Table 3 outlines the proposed short-, medium- and long-term strategies for benchmarking the goals.

Table 3

Proposed Short-, Medium- and Long-Range Benchmarks for Planned Change Goals

	Short	**Medium**	**Long**
	(6-12 months)	**(13-18 months)**	**(18+ months)**
Goal 1: Develop and facilitate an EL workshop series for GU faculty and staff undergoing an academic program review.	2 programs under review participate in EL workshop series.	3 additional programs under review participate in EL workshop series.	All programs under review for that cycle participate in EL workshop series.
Goal 2: Create an EL resource and best practice internal repository for GU faculty and staff.	One new resource created or best practice documents shared.	Two new resources created or best practice documents shared.	At least two new resources created or best practice documents shared.
Goal 3: Assess the development of new in-class and non-WIL EL opportunities for completed academic program reviews.	Not applicable, an entire CPR cycle has not yet been completed.	25% of programs being reviewed are assessed.	50%+ of programs being reviewed are assessed.

Drawing on the distributed-adaptive leadership approaches (Gronn, 2002; Gronn, 2010; Harris, 2006; Harris & Deflaminis, 2016) discussed in Chapter 2, the change leader can augment the planned change by determining with which academic programs to pilot the planned change solution. She can then use these pre-determined, smaller networks (Gronn, 2010; Harris, 2006; Harris & Deflaminis, 2016) to build momentum, slowly acclimating these groups to the EL workshop series and learning outcomes. This smaller scale, phased-in approach supports the implementation plan's priority to increase organizational learning through building individual's foundational EL knowledge, as "individual learning and organizational learning are inextricably linked" (Siemens, Dawson & Eshleman, 2018, p.28). While the goals may appear small-scale, a distributed-adaptive leadership approach at GU will encourage the learning dissemination, starting with those change participants undertaking a CPR process. The learning gained from the workshops can then permeate outwards to the more extensive organizational networks these individuals also participate in. Starting with smaller benchmarks that can be scaled up also ensures that the planned change goals do not overwhelm GU's change participants heightening the planned change's likely success, eventually being implemented organization-wide as part of all CPRs.

The organization analysis results from Chapter 2 demonstrate that GU prefers, and is prepared for, continuous, incremental change. In response to this preference, transitioning to the planned change solution focuses on slowly building momentum through manageable, smaller-scale goals. However, in addition to building momentum through the established change strategy, it is crucial that the change leader gauge stakeholder reactions to this momentum and adjust accordingly (Cawsey et al., 2016).

Understanding Stakeholders Reactions to Change

While it is essential to layout the planned change solution's objectives and goals for stakeholders, the change leader must consider their reactions to change and modify the implementation plan accordingly. Kezar (2018) highlighted that change leaders should focus not only on the structures and processes impacted but also on the stakeholder attitudes and values towards the planned change. The author, as change leader, plans to understand stakeholder reaction by having critical, collegial discussions throughout the CPR process that allows them to provide input on aspects of the change implementation plan. The change leader can insert foundational questions into those discussions that will gather qualitative data to be used as part of the monitoring plan outlined later in this chapter. Kezar (2018) noted that encouraging ongoing dialogue is an ethical, collaborative approach to problem-solving and can minimize resistance to change. Pairing this collaborative approach with distributed-adaptive leadership allows for problem-solving while promoting collegial knowledge creation and transference between change participants (Gronn, 2010; Harris, 2006; Harris & Deflaminis, 2016). Once the change leader has established an ongoing dialogue with change participants, she can use the group's expertise to promote knowledge sharing to collaboratively problem-solve any aspects of the plan that create legitimate barriers to moving change forward.

GU's QA cyclical program review process's current structure provides the change leader several opportunities to collaborate with change participants, allowing her to gauge reaction and encourage transparent dialogue about the EL workshops. In order to maximize these opportunities and focus stakeholder dialogue, the change leader will overlay characteristics from the change path model (Cawsey et al., 2016) with the model for improvement (Donnelly & Kirk, 2015; Langley et al., 2009; Moen & Norman, 2009) to determine what the discussions should

address and how to support their reactions (see Figure 1). For example, the acceleration stage of the change path model encourages a change leader to "continuously and systematically reach out to engage others by helping them developmentally in ways that will support the change" (Cawsey et al., 2018; p.55). The change path model stages indicate for the change leader what the discussions should focus on at that particular point of the change process. By outlining what support change participants may need, and when, the change path model can remind the change leader to continuously reach out at certain stages to address stakeholders' concerns.

The change path model's person-focus approach augments the model for improvement's process-focused approach by highlighting potential stakeholder reactions at different stages of the planned change process. Knowing what stakeholder groups are typically concerned with at different stages of the planned change will help focus the change leader's discussions on how to support the group, potentially limiting resistance to the change. The change leader can employ distributed-adaptive leadership elements (Gronn, 2002; Gronn, 2010; Harris, 2006; Harris & Deflaminis, 2016), such as engaging stakeholder networks, to draw on GU's stakeholder knowledge when the need to adjust the implementation plan arises. The distributed-adaptive leadership approach is also beneficial to the change leader when selecting personnel to engage and empower others through the change.

Selecting Personnel to Champion the Planned Change

When selecting personnel to champion the planned change and engage others at GU, the change leader will collaborate with individuals who have demonstrated a passion for the continuous improvement of academic programming. Using internal networks, pre-established through prior program reviews and curriculum workshops in which the change leader participated, she can select faculty and staff members who have shown a predisposition to

supporting quality enhancement initiatives. The change leader's starting point can be to review GU faculty and staff on prior Internal Assessment Teams (IATs) and identify those who have successfully collaborated or championed any changes linked to the review. Typically, these team members represent a wide range of GU positions, including departmental chairs, academic advisors and budget officers, each with further connections to other organizational networks (e.g., presidential committees, senate roles).

Using a distributed-adaptive leadership approach, the change leader can collaborate with her immediate network in GU's QA office to determine personnel who will support the planned change. The QA director and colleagues can identify key personnel and provide alternative viewpoints that constructively challenge any bias the change leader may show in her selection by providing alternative viewpoints. The change leader can leverage the QA departmental team's extended networks (see Appendix A- Potential Distributed-Adaptive Networks), which will provide additional avenues for identifying stakeholders outside of the CPR process and organizational champions of continuous improvement. A benefit of the distributed-adaptive approach (Gronn, 2010; Harris, 2006; Harris & Deflaminis, 2016) is that the change leader can also use these networks to learn about creative engagement strategies that have been successful in the past with stakeholders and modify them to promote the planned change solution. Another benefit of this approach is that it provides the change leader access to a broader network of GU stakeholders to select from, allowing for a more inclusive and diverse representation within the change process. In addition to identifying a diverse range of personnel who can champion change, determining other support and resources for the planned change will help the change leader further the implementation plan.

Other Resources and Supports

In Chapter 2, resource needs were outlined and assessed for the planned change solution, the EL workshop series, to determine feasibility during GU's current financial climate. Even though this solution is time and information intensive for change participants in its start-up phase, the solution was chosen because it needs fewer new human, technological and financial resources than the other options. When examining the two strategic objectives for the workshop series, incorporating the existing curriculum management system at GU will help evaluate the short-, medium- and long-range goals, allowing for consistent and continuous monitoring over time. GU's curriculum management system tracks all curriculum changes and modifications, including in-class and WIL EL activities. Working with the curriculum systems analyst, the change leader can review the current parameters for counting these opportunities and discuss if re-occurring data reports can be generated for dissemination to identified key stakeholders. Although the planned change solution is not resource-intensive, the change leader should remain cognizant of potential challenges and limitations that may arise.

Potential Implementation Challenges and Other Limitations.

The planned change solution's implementation goals provide a clear map of what needs to be accomplished over the next six to eighteen months at GU in small, incremental steps. External factors that have shaped the PoP also need to be considered at the implementation stage of the OIP. Specifically, one external factor that could create challenges for the current scale of the short-, medium- and long-range goals of the implementation plan would be if the provincial government's PBF model EL definitions and targets change, impacting GU. For example, due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the provincial government has postponed rolling out the PBF model from an initial start date of 2020 to now starting in 2022 (MCU, 2020). However, in June

2022, Ontario’s provincial government elections will occur and may change which provincial party holds a majority in the legislature. This change could potentially shift the EL definition and scope within the PBF model for post-secondary institutions, including GU.

While the author does not anticipate the next government will abandon EL as a priority for higher education, due to EL historically being a focus of previous governments (MAESD, 2017), should the provincial targets for EL opportunities increase, it could create challenges when implementing the OIP. The OIP’s implementation plan’s goals have been scaled and phased in to be responsive to the type of change GU has demonstrated readiness for and the financial climate in which it currently operates. The chosen solution requires few new resources and relies on the incremental use of pre-existing resources to avoid overextension. Furthermore, the distributed-adaptive leadership strategy diffuses over-reliance on any one resource stream. The change leader must invest a significant amount of time for start-up; however, this is balanced within the implementation plan as only two workshops are scheduled to be held by the one-year mark. If government PBF targets were to double or triple in scale, this would strain the resources currently allocated for the EL workshops and require modifications to the resources, which may not be feasible for GU to accommodate.

The next section of this chapter develops a monitoring and evaluation plan for the planned change solution that builds on the implementation plan and considers the previously discussed limitations. The monitoring and evaluation plan will continue to use the model for improvement and change path model as a guide, focusing on “how will we know that a change will be an improvement?” (Langley et al., 2009; Moen & Norman, 2009).

Change Process Monitoring and Evaluation

The model for improvement and the change path model guided the development of the change implementation plan. For continuity and to strengthen the cohesiveness with the implementation plan, these two models will continue to inform the monitoring and evaluation plan development. Both models highlight that change should be measured and analyzed through continuous monitoring of the change implementation plan's goals (Cawsey et al., 2016; Langley et al., 2009). The model for improvement asks a change leader to consider, "how will we know change will be an improvement?" aligning with the study phase of the PDSA cycle (Langley et al., 2009; Moen & Norman, 2009). The study phase promotes gathering data by monitoring objectives in the plan and do phases for analysis and developing new knowledge on how to improve (Langley et al., 2009). Similarly, the institutionalization stage of the change path model encourages a change leader to monitor change through various assessment tools to "help assess what is needed, gauge progress towards the goal, and to make modifications as needed and mitigate risk" (Cawsey et al., 2016, p.345).

Both models indicate that to monitor and evaluate change effectively, objectives and goals are needed, but so are measurable targets that, when evaluated, provide insight on how to improve the planned change (Cawsey et al., 2016; Langley et al., 2009). The stated measurements for short-, medium- and long-term goals in the previous section help build momentum and track the change process. Defining indicators and targets to be monitored, measured and evaluated will give change participants a clear idea if the goals are meeting the planned change's priority objectives. The model for improvement and the change path model provides a starting point to monitor and measure change, laying out phase-specific questions and recommending assessment strategies. To extend these models' underlying principles, the author

will incorporate components of Markiewicz and Patrick's monitoring and evaluation planning format (2016) to develop a structured layout for this OIP.

Summary of Planning Format: Monitoring

According to Markiewicz and Patrick (2016), monitoring serves "as a means to identify any corrective action that is necessary" (p.12), noting that "pre-determined performance indicators and targets are often used as an important point of reference" (p.12). Likewise, Cawsey et al.'s (2016) change path model reinforces the plan's need for "multiple balanced measures" (p.345) in order to "make modifications as needed and mitigate risk" (p.345). Identifying performance indicators and targets is beneficial for the change leader when refining the implementation plan. Assessment of identified indicators and targets will generate data for data-informed decision-making purposes, supporting continuous improvement practices to improve students' experiences and achievement (Datnow & Park, 2014). GU's Institutional Quality Assurance Policy (2020e) commits the university to practice a continuous quality enhancement culture to better the academic curriculum and student achievement. Monitoring the implementation plan heightens GU's commitment to ongoing improvement by ensuring that decisions about the content of the EL workshop series are data-informed and with student success as the priority.

Markiewicz and Patrick (2016) outlined categories for the monitoring planning format. For this OIP, the author selected several of their categories to use as part of her monitoring plan. The first category, *evaluation questions*, are organized under domain areas, which focuses and structures not only the monitoring but also the subsequent evaluation by helping to provide rationale "for decisions about the data needed from routine monitoring and from periodic evaluation" (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016, p.94). Next are *indicators*, which "demonstrate a type

of change, event or condition" (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016, p.131) and to what degree it occurs. *Targets* specify factors such as "number, timing and location of results toward which program efforts are directed" (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016, p.131). The last two categories, *monitoring data sources,* identifies where the data is being gathered from and, *who is responsible and when,* outlines select personnel and timing (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016).

The author's decision to select specific categories keeps the monitoring plan manageable and in line with the anticipated resources discussed in Chapter 2 while ensuring she can still effectively monitor the planned change. A benefit of using an adapted version of Markiewicz and Patrick's monitoring format categories (2016) is that it will frame the monitoring plan for the planned change solution at GU and act as the foundation for the evaluation plan.

Summary of Planning Format: Evaluation

Markiewicz and Patrick (2016) developed their monitoring and evaluation planning formats to be complementary, with the evaluation plan integrating categories of the monitoring plan in its schema. Their rationale for doing this is that the monitoring and evaluation processes are scaffolded, with the evaluation component building off the data that is collected through monitoring to identify outcomes and approaches that were successful or not (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016). While *monitoring* is the planned, ongoing means to track implementation progress, correcting course where necessary, *evaluation* is planned but periodic, focusing on determining the *quality and value*[9] through "summative judgements as to the achievement of the program's goals and objectives" (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016, p.12).

[9] Markiewicz and Patrick (2016) define 'quality' as "the intrinsic merit of a program in relation to meeting a stated or implied need, as determined by measurement and/or based on experience", and value as, "the extrinsic worth, significance, usefulness, or benefit of a program to its key stakeholders including funders, program partners and intended beneficiaries" (p.152).

Researchers suggest using evaluative tools to assess change and gauge progress to determine whether the goals and objectives are being met (Cawsey et al., 2016; Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016). For the planned change solution, the embedded EL workshop series, the ability to evaluate effectiveness reinforces the QA's mission and vision to support quality academic programming at GU (Gordon University, 2017c). By evaluating the planned change, the change leader and participants can make data-informed decisions to refine the next iteration of the implementation plan, improving faculty and staff opportunities to develop meaningful EL activities for all students as part of the CPR process.

Markiewicz and Patrick (2016) outlined several categories for the evaluation planning format, starting with restating the monitoring plan's evaluation questions. The author, using the same resource-minded approach to selecting categories as was done for the monitoring plan, chose the following categories to use as part of the evaluation plan: (a) *summary of monitoring,* which is restating the indicators from the monitoring plan; (b) *evaluation method*, determining what tools to use to evaluate the indicators; (c) *method implementation,* identifying the breadth and depth of the evaluation method; (d) *who is responsible*, determining who will be the lead, who will support and their responsibilities; and, (e) *when,* determining the timeframe (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016).

Using the author's selected categories from Markiewicz and Patrick's (2016) monitoring and evaluation planning format, the following section discusses the consolidated plan for monitoring and evaluating the change solution at GU.

Consolidated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan for the Change Solution

The author, as change leader, developed the following monitoring and evaluation plan similar to the implementation plan, starting with targets and indicators that can increase

incrementally moving forward. Monitoring and evaluation plans that are too cumbersome and not congruent with the organization's resource allocations result in data collection but often fail to then meaningfully evaluate the data for improvement purposes due to resource overextension (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016). The author considered this while developing both plans to ensure that data collection did not become too time and human resource-intensive when GU is practicing conservative resource allocation because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Markiewicz and Patrick's format (2016) indicated that each evaluation question can have sub-questions, resulting in more indicators and targets; however, the monitoring and evaluation plan for GU only poses one evaluation question per domain to limit overextending resources.

Table 4 is an excerpt of the monitoring and evaluation plan that will track change, gauge progress, and assess the embedded EL workshop series' goals, with the entire proposed plan found in Appendix B.

Table 4

Excerpt of the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan.

	Monitoring			
Evaluation Questions	**Indicators**	**Targets**	**Monitoring Data Sources**	**Who is responsible? When?**
Appropriateness To what extent was the EL workshop series design and learning goals suitable to meet faculty and staff needs?	Level of participant satisfaction Changes to EL language used when writing program review documentation.	70% of participants report satisfaction 20% of self-study documents contain EL language from workshop.	Satisfaction survey. Self-study reports developed for an academic program review.	QA Analyst, Academic Curriculum Planning (ACP). Following completion of workshop series for program review cycle.
	Evaluation			
	Summary of Monitoring	**Evaluation Method**	**Method Implementation**	**Who is responsible? When?**
	Level of participant satisfaction Changes to EL language used when writing program review documentation.	Participant interviews using humble inquiry approach. Case studies	3 interviews per cyclical program review cycle. 3 case studies per CPR cycle	QA Analyst, ACP (lead), Institutional research & Communication Officer (support) End of CPR cycle.

Note: This monitoring and evaluation plan has been adapted from Markiewicz and Patrick's (2016) *Developing monitoring and evaluation frameworks.* The above chart is a truncated version of Appendix B.

The proposed evaluation methods (i.e., tools) are varied to be responsive to the data needed when answering the evaluation questions (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016) and maintain the anticipated resource allocations mentioned in Chapter 2 for the planned change solution at GU. These tools will require time and information resources but no new costs to the organization. The monitoring and evaluation plan's timing is developed parallel to the two-year CPR process at GU to ensure any subsequent refining of the implementation plan does not happen mid-cycle.

Based on the preferred distributed-adaptive leadership approach to change outlined in Chapter 2, the change leader will present this plan for interpretation and comment to select GU personnel before finalization. In recognizing the limitations within her role, the change leader will reach out to colleagues in her pre-established professional networks (e.g., the office of institutional research), working with those who have expertise in data-gathering to ensure alignment between the monitoring and evaluation plan. The change leader will also present these plans to her director and select senior leadership to verify that indicators and targets are set per GU's organizational priorities and any continued external commitments, such as those outlined in the strategic mandate agreement (SMA).

This distributed-adaptive leadership practice promotes collaboration between the change leader and participants, creating spaces (Lichtenstein et al., 2006; Uhl-Bien et al., 2007) to lead when expertise is required (Gronn, 2010; Harris, 2006; Harris & Deflaminis, 2016). Creating a collaborative space to refine the monitoring and evaluation plans can produce reciprocal benefits for individuals within both networks. For example, institutional research colleagues will benefit from knowing that any evaluation methods launched by the change leader will be aware of, and not directly in conflict with, other ongoing institutional evaluation timelines. The change leader

will benefit from continuous collaboration with the experts and use their knowledge to enhance the plans.

To complement the distributed-adaptive approach to monitoring and evaluating the planned change solution, the change leader will also integrate an ethical leadership lens by practicing humble inquiry to further these positive collaborations.

Promoting an Ethical Leadership Lens Using Humble Inquiry

To reinforce Starratt's (1991,1996) ethical leadership principles discussed at the end of Chapter 2, the change leader will incorporate a humble inquiry approach to monitoring and evaluating the planned change solution. Schein (2013) describes the humble inquiry approach as the foundation for building trust-based relationships grounded in collaborative interdependence. Schein (2013) asserts that to build those relationships, the leader needs to have a genuine interest and curiosity about what they can learn from others. This approach will help develop discussion questions to embed in planned evaluation methods, such as community forums and participant interviews. It encourages the change leader to ask questions to learn and to be vulnerable in that learning (Schein, 2013).

Connecting back to Starratt's multidimensional ethical leadership framework (1991, 1996) mentioned at the end of Chapter 2, a humble inquiry approach can further an ethic of care, justice and critique within the monitoring and evaluation plan. Ethical leadership principles require a change leader to develop respectful relationships grounded in honesty and trust (Starratt, 1991, 1996), connecting directly to the humble inquiry approach of having empathetic, honest discussions and interactions (Schein, 2013). Embedding the humble inquiry approach encourages the change leader to develop evaluation tools that elicit responses from change participants rooted in an ethics of care, justice and critique.

Starratt (1991, 1996) and Schein (2013) have suggested that the ability to develop and maintain transparent, open and straightforward communication indicates a change leader who is committed to principles of ethical leadership and humble inquiry. The next section of this chapter summarizes a communication plan for the change solution, focusing on building awareness of the need for change at GU. The change leader will integrate ways to communicate with relevant audiences transparently and straightforwardly to further the ethical leadership and humble inquiry principles found in the monitoring and evaluation plans.

Plan to Communicate the Need for Change and the Change Process

When communicating to change participants in a timely, transparent and straightforward fashion, the change leader's distributed-adaptive networks will be critical. However, it is not enough for the change leader to take a "one-size-fits-all" approach to her communications at GU. Researchers (Klein, 1996; Mento et al., 2002) have noted that a change leader needs to select *how* (modality) to disperse the message, *what* (content) the message contains about the planned change and to *who* (audience) the message is being sent to in a strategic, discerning manner to have an impact. Furthermore, the message must answer *"what's in it for me?"* (Armenakis & Harris, 2002; Beatty, 2015; Napier et al., 2017) for the various stakeholders and change participants to demonstrate the personal value of the planned change solution. To do this, the communication plan for GU will combine a two-pronged strategic approach to communicating within these networks. The first prong focuses on structuring the flow of communication to account for the who, how, and when of the change message, using phases from Cawsey et al. change path model's communication plan (2016) that is derived from Klein's (1996) communication key principles. The second prong will tactically integrate the five key change

message domains (Armenakis & Harris, 2002) to craft targeted messages to capture the "what's in it for me?" component.

Guiding Principles Informing the Communication Plan

Beatty (2015), Cawsey et al. (2016), and Klein (1996) have highlighted that a change implementation plan can be easily derailed when the change leader assumes that the recipients have understood the planned communications. By assuming the communication has been successful and not following up on the message, this can lead to misunderstandings and misconceptions of the planned change; creating resistance and making it difficult for the planned change solution to successfully move forward (Beatty, 2015; Cawsey et al., 2016; Klein, 1996).

Klein (1996) proposed integrating several empirically supported communication principles to mitigate misconceptions and potential resistance. The first principle highlighted that *repeating the message through several mediums increases the chances it will be remembered by the intended audience* (Klein, 1996). As the change leader will be using a distributed-adaptive network approach to change implementation (see Appendix A), she will also use these networks to communicate outwards to relevant change participants. Employing multimodality to how the change leader communicates will include individual face-to-face meetings, face-to-face group meetings, email, GU's internal instant messaging system and newsletter.

The second principle asserted that *face-to-face communication is proven to have the most significant impact over any other medium due to its ability to allow the participants to clarify the message immediately* (Klein, 1996). When writing this OIP, face-to-face communication is primarily through virtual environments due to the pandemic. Prolonged and frequent virtual meetings can create participant fatigue for various reasons (Palisoc, 2020; Schroeder, 2020; Supiano, 2020). The change leader will hold shorter, virtual face-to-face meetings to combat this,

immediately switching to in-person when it is safe to do so. The change leader will balance the frequency of meetings to avoid fatiguing change participants. These meetings are dispersed throughout the communication plan phases (see Tables 5 and 6) and not concentrated in any one phase.

The next principle suggested that *formal positions are an effective channel for communicating due to the ability to enhance distributed influence and help get the message across all levels of the organization without minimizing collaborative-based processes* (Klein, 1996). Within the communication plan for GU, individuals with more formal positions than the change leader, such as faculty deans, can further the change message within their distributed-adaptive networks. As noted in Chapter 2, the change leader has limited influence for a wide-scale organizational change, which is why a distributed-adaptive leadership approach was selected. A distributed-adaptive leadership approach encourages using the most appropriate leader for the task (Gronn, 2002; Gronn, 2010; Harris, 2006; Harris & Deflaminis, 2016). Within the communication plan, the change leader must encourage formal leaders to use their influence to further promote the targeted change message to networks outside of her scope and agency.

In addition to calling on formal leaders to help further the change message, Klein's (1996) next principle highlighted that *the immediate supervisor is a key communicator who can keep others within the organization accurately informed*. The change leader's supervisor, the QA director, coordinates and sits on several key curriculum committees and frequently connects with other GU supervisors. Klein (1996) noted that supervisors usually are in constant, close contact with those they supervise. The QA director can pass on important change messages to other supervisors, who can then relay these messages to their direct supervisees. Klein (1996) asserted that supervisees tend to trust communications from their direct supervisor as "accurate and well-

informed" (p.34). Having direct supervisors pass on key change messaging helps reinforce consistent information about the planned change the supervisees may have already encountered through less formal channels.

Klein's (1996) following principle encouraged *using informal opinion leaders to help shape others' opinions, attitudes and values on the planned change*. Besides using formal leaders who have influence based on title or position, informal leaders with influence based on experience or longevity can impact other change participants' attitudes and values (Klein, 1996). This principle connects back to the discussion in Chapter 1 about the change leader's "expert-referent power" (Mittal & Elias, 2015) due to working over a decade at GU and how influential informal leaders with institutional longevity have pre-established professional networks they can utilize. Within the change leader's identified distributed-adaptive networks (see Appendix A), she can select change participants known to have similar longevity at GU and use their organizational influence to promote a positive reception of the change message with those in their immediate networks.

Klein's (1996) last principle recommended that *a message that is crafted to be personally relevant will resonate and be remembered by the audience*. This principle relates to the "what's in it for me?" (Armenakis & Harris, 2002; Beatty, 2015; Napier et al., 2017) values-based question of how change recipients want to know how the change will impact and benefit them. To answer the "what's in it for me?" component, the change leader needs to be strategic in her target messaging to the different change recipients throughout the organization.

Crafting Targeted Change Messages

Armenakis and Harris (2002) provided five domain areas that the change message must address to resonate with the audience, complimenting Klein's (1996) last principle. Each domain

plays a role in shaping "an individual's motivations, positive (readiness or support) or negative (resistance), toward the change" (p.170), which is critical for the change leader when developing the change message, as the domains help provide the key areas of importance for the change message recipient.

Armenakis and Harris' (2002) five domain areas for the change leader to consider when crafting a change message are as follows: (a) *discrepancy*, addresses the 'gap' between the current and desired state within the organization by highlighting what is missing, or needs to change, for the message recipient; (b) *efficacy*, refers to motivating and instilling confidence in the message recipient that the change will succeed; (c) *appropriateness*, discusses communicating the suitability of the change and highlights that if there is resistance from change participants, this is an indicator that the change may need to be modified; (d) *principal support* highlights that change messaging should articulate support for change participants early and continuously through-out the planned change; and, (e) *personal valence*, which indicates that change participants' self-interest in the proposed change is a priority to them, so the message must communicate the benefits of the change or else the participants may resist.

When crafting the change message for the communication plan, the author applied the five domain areas to strategically create targeted messaging to change participants and recipients (see Table 4). In addition to planning for the who, when, why, how and what (is in it for me), Klein (1996) noted that a communication plan needs to align with the proposed stages of the planned change path and the relevant components. Cawsey et al. (2016) used Klein's communication principles (1996) to outline phases that indicate when specific communication needs arise and at which point of the change process. To create visual continuity with the change

path model used throughout this OIP, the author has aligned the phases summarized by Cawsey et al. (2016) to the different stages of the change path model. Table 5 demonstrates this:

Table 5

Phases of Communication Needs Aligning with the Change Path Model.

Phase	Associated Stage of the Change Path Model	Communication Need(s)
Pre-change	Awakening	Convincing highly influential senior managers, who have approval authority, that the change is needed.
Developing the Need for Change	Mobilization	Creating awareness about the change with urgency and enthusiasm to change participants. Concrete steps with supportive data can be used to demonstrate need.
Midstream Change	Acceleration	Informing change participants of change implementation progress and obtaining their feedback, while also clarifying any misconceptions or new processes.
Confirming the Change	Institutionalization	Celebrating successes of the planned change and preparing change participants across the organization for the next steps.

Note. This table has been adapted from Cawsey et al.'s (2016) *Organizational change: An action-oriented toolkit*.

Klein's (1996) communication principles, combined with the five domains areas when crafting a change message (Armenakis & Harris, 2002) and the change path model phased approach to communication needs (Cawsey et al., 2016), act as the foundation for the planned change solution communication plan at GU. The subsequent section discusses the resulting plan and how the change leader can engage her distributed-adaptive networks to refine the plan upon commencement.

Communication Plan for the Change Solution

The author combined elements of Klein's (1996), Cawsey et al. (2006) and Armenakis and Harris' (2002) communication planning principles to create the strategic framework for communicating the embedded EL workshop series at GU. An excerpt of the strategic communication framework can be found in Table 6 and highlights how these combined elements informed the framework:

Table 6

Excerpt of Communication Strategy for GU

When	Who (audience)	Targeted Messages	How (medium)
Pre-change	• Senior Administrative Leadership	• Articulate the benefits of the desired state of EL. • Demonstrate ability to improve EL participation rates for PBF purposes. • Confirm alignment with GU's strategic priorities and targets.	• Email memo • Curriculum committee meetings • Individual face-to-face
	• Faculty Deans	• Outline potential increase of student EL participation. • Align with EL targets set to meet GU's strategic priorities. • Demonstrate how the change is a continuous improvement and consistent approach to EL curriculum.	
	• QA Director	• Demonstrate innovative alignment with the office's mission and vision. • Review change implementation plan for any critical gaps.	

Note. The full communication plan can be found in Appendix C.

Throughout the communication strategy for GU, the change leader will focus on unique targeted messages to different audiences about the EL workshops that align with the change

process's timing. For example, in the plan's *pre-change* stage, communications will highlight the change's benefits and adapt the message to indicate how the change uniquely benefits the target group. When *confirming the change* (see Appendix C), the target message will celebrate various groups' successes and be widely communicated to the larger GU community. The change leader will incorporate various mediums to relay the targeted message, using a mix of formal and informal channels dependent on the situation. The purpose of this mixed approach is to garner candid feedback, allowing the change leader to understand any misconceptions the change participants have. Then, she can further strategize how to minimize the amount of resistance generated from any misunderstandings to ensure the change progress is not adversely impacted (Armenakis & Harris, 2002; Beatty, 2015; Cawsey et al., 2016; Klein, 1996). As outlined in Chapter 1, GU's organizational practices are rooted in collegial-political approaches, meaning that formal and informal communication methods that help build consensus around the planned change (Manning, 2018a) are not unexpected by change participants.

When communications about the EL workshops start to be disseminated to the larger GU community, the change leader will benefit from working with colleagues in GU's communication office who are the experts at wide-scale messaging. Klein (1996) and Beatty (2015) encouraged working with communication experts to ensure the messaging is appropriate for the intended audience and effective in its delivery. Identifying colleagues within the change leader's distributed-adaptive networks with expertise in organization-wide communications can help refine the change message to better suit a larger audience. GU's communication office works with internal stakeholders across the institution and external stakeholders within the community, allowing them to provide expert insight and leadership on how best to navigate larger-scale communications outside the change leader's current agency. Additionally, the

communication office staff's expertise in formulating messages for diverse audiences can assist the change leader with crafting communications that are conscientious of being inclusive and accessible. Working with these colleagues, the change leader can refine and strengthen the change messaging and overall communication plan based on their guidance.

Chapter 3 Summary

Chapter 3 of the OIP focused on developing a change implementation plan, a monitoring and evaluation plan and a communication plan for the chosen change solution at GU; an embedded EL workshop series within the CPR process. For the change implementation plan, the author aligned the model for improvement with the change path model to develop key objectives and goals for the planned change, plus identify what support is needed for change participants. The author continued to use aspects of these two models when creating the monitoring and evaluation plan, incorporating an adaptation of Markewicz and Patrick's (2016) framework to augment the plan's structure. Starratt's (1991, 1996) ethical leadership framework discussed in Chapter 2 is reinforced through Schein's humble inquiry approach (2013) to ensure an ethic of care, justice and critique are continuously applied to the evaluation plan.

The last section of Chapter 3 focused on developing a communication framework guided by Klein's (1996) principles for communication and Armenakis and Harris's (2002) five domains for crafting change messages. The change path model's communication need phases (Cawsey et al., 2016) were also applied to ensure messaging is crafted promptly and responsive to change participants' information needs. The change leader will collaborate with colleagues using distributed-adaptive leadership approaches to fortify the communication plan and the implementation, evaluation, and monitoring plans. The change leader will continuously engage various change participants throughout the planned change process and use participant feedback

to improve all three plans. The concluding section of this OIP will focus on the next steps and future considerations for the planned change.

Conclusion: Next Steps and Future Considerations

When the writing and revising of this OIP concludes, it will be the end of summer 2021, leaving approximately ten months before the next provincial election. Recognizing that the election results may impact the proposed indicators and targets outlined in the monitoring plan, the author recommends piloting the planned change solution during GU's 2022-2024 CPR cycle to minimize impact. In the interim, the next steps should have the change leader continue to use a distributed-adaptive leadership approach to focus on building continued awareness of the planned change and developing the workshop series curriculum. The change leader can work with identified stakeholders with expertise in teaching and learning to prepare a curriculum that is responsive to a post-pandemic academic environment.

Additionally, this interim period before the suggested 2022-2024 CPR launch provides the change leader more time to bolster pre-existing connections by creating buy-in and generating awareness of the change solution's benefits. The extended pre-change stage can allow the change leader to do informal, diagnostic assessments of her colleagues' reactions to initial discussions about the change and modify plans before piloting. Building a culture of collaboration before initiating the change will signal to the change leader's networks that she is committed to working with change participants throughout the change process. It also allows the change leader to model distributed-adaptive leadership approaches with these change participants and demonstrate that it will take a network of formal and informal leaders for this change to succeed at GU.

Future considerations of this OIP should continue to explore the synergies between QA processes and developing meaningful, consistent EL opportunities for GU students. The results of this OIP pertain to the current state of EL at GU; however, the frameworks and plans developed have the potential to be further reaching. All publicly-funded universities in Ontario adhere to the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance guiding framework when developing their internal QA policies. The change solution for this OIP has been developed considering those guidelines, allowing other institutions to adopt the change solution and associated plans for EL integration within their internal QA processes while remaining compliant with the Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance guiding framework.

The final future consideration of this OIP is the ongoing promotion and development of EL opportunities at post-secondary institutions, focusing on integration within the academic curriculum. While this OIP addresses how to incorporate EL comprehensively at one Ontario university, the guiding questions emerging from the PoP are applicable beyond GU. Change leaders should analyze these questions concerning their own institution's EL provisions and consider how current EL frameworks may be impacting a student's ability to participate in EL opportunities meaningfully. Having change leaders advocate for continuous improvement of EL opportunities to better the student's academic experience ensures that EL activities are consistently purposeful and obtainable for all students.

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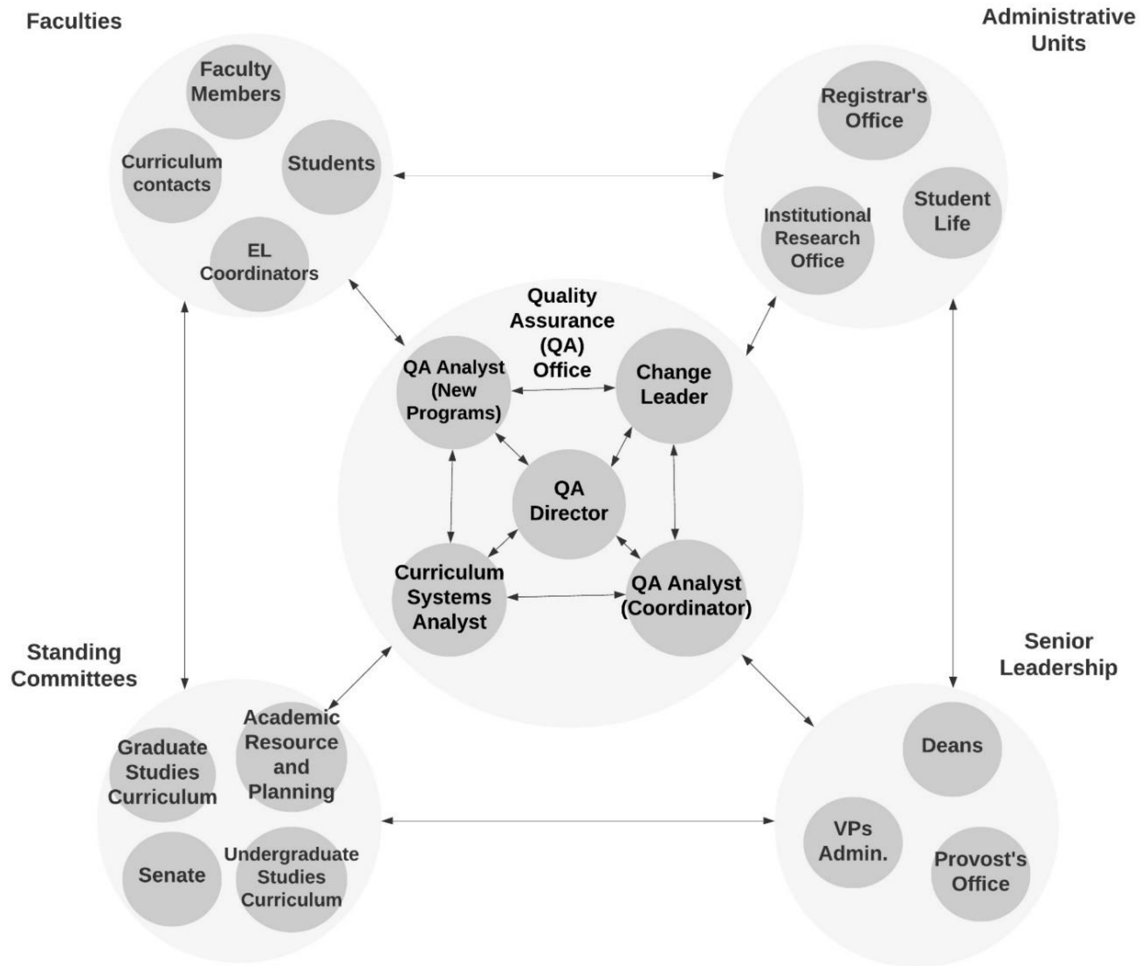
Appendix A: Potential Distributed-Adaptive Networks



Note. The change leader's full title is QA analyst, academic curriculum planning.

Appendix B: Monitoring and Evaluation Plans for GU

Monitoring Plan				
Evaluation Questions	**Indicators**	**Targets**	**Monitoring Data Sources**	**Who is responsible and when**
Appropriateness To what extent was the EL workshop series design and learning goals suitable to meet faculty and staff needs?	Level of participant satisfaction. Changes to EL language used when writing program review documentation.	70% of participants report satisfaction. 20% of self-study documents contain EL language from workshop.	Satisfaction survey. Self-study reports developed for an academic program review.	QA Analyst, Academic Curriculum Planning (ACP). Following completion of workshop series for program review cycle.
Effectiveness To what extent did workshop participants increase their knowledge on EL theory and best practices?	Difference in participants knowledge pre and post workshop.	70% of participants demonstrate an increase of knowledge on EL theory and best practice.	Pre and post learning quiz.	QA Analyst, ACP. Following completion of workshop series for program review cycle.
Efficiency Was the resource allocation (human and time) to deliver the workshop series within reason?	Difference between proposed amount of resources and amount actually used.	Less than 20% variation between allotted amounts and actuals.	Email records. Number and duration of workshops.	QA Analyst, ACP & QA Director. Following completion of workshop series for program review cycle.
Impact To what extent was there an increase of in-class and/or non-WIL opportunities developed and implemented?	Changes in amount of new EL opportunities from year-to-year.	10% increase of in-class and/or non-WIL opportunities.	Curriculum reports from GU's Curriculum system.	QA Analyst, ACP & Curriculum Systems Analyst. Annually.

Sustainability Was their evidence of increased ability to respond to the initial priority objectives beyond the program review process?	Number of requests for EL workshops/resources for other QA-related process (e.g., new academic program development).	No target.	Email records. Records of EL support related meetings.	QA Analyst, ACP, & QA Director. Quarterly.
Evaluating Plan				
Evaluation Questions	**Summary of Monitoring**	**Evaluation Method**	**Method Implementation**	**Who is responsible and when**
Appropriateness To what extent was the EL workshop series design and learning goals suitable to meet faculty and staff needs?	Level of participant satisfaction. Changes to EL language used when writing program review documentation.	Participant interviews using humble inquiry approach.	3 interviews per cyclical program review cycle.	QA Analyst, ACP (lead), Institutional Research & Communication Officer. End of CPR cycle.
		Case studies.	3 case studies per CPR cycle.	
Effectiveness To what extent did workshop participants increase their knowledge on EL theory and best practices?	Difference in participants knowledge pre and post workshop.	Analysis of program learning outcome achievements.	Pre and post learning quiz results for all CPR teams that participated.	QA Analyst, ACP (lead), QA Director, Institutional Research & Communication Officer. End of all workshop series as part of the CPR cycle.
		Workshop participant forums.	3 forums across all faculties.	
Efficiency Was the resource allocation (human and time) to deliver the workshop series within reason?	Difference between proposed amount of resources and amount actually used.	Key stakeholder focus groups using a humble inquiry approach.	2 focus groups with key stakeholders.	QA Analyst, ACP (lead) & QA Director. End of CPR cycle.

Impact To what extent was there an increase of in-class and/or non-WIL opportunities created?	Changes in amount of new EL opportunities from year-to-year.	Year-to-year analysis.	Curriculum reports from 3 CPRs and 3 who have not.	QA Analyst, ACP (lead), QA Director, QA Curriculum Systems Analyst &, Institutional Research. Annually.
Sustainability Was their evidence of increased ability to respond to the initial problem of practice?	Number of requests for EL workshops/resources for other QA-related process (e.g., new academic program development).	QA department forum.	Interviews with Director and QA colleagues.	QA Analyst, ACP (lead), QA Director, QA Curriculum Systems Analyst, QA New Programs Analyst. Bi-annually.

Appendix C: Communication Strategy for GU

When	Who	Targeted Message	How
Pre-change	• Senior Administrative Leadership	• Articulate the benefits of the desired state of EL. • Demonstrate ability to improve EL participation rates for PBF purposes. • Confirm alignment with GU's strategic priorities and targets.	• Email memo • Curriculum committee meetings • Individual, face-to-face meetings
	• Faculty Deans	• Outline potential increase of student EL participation. • Align with EL targets set to meet GU's strategic priorities. • Demonstrate how the change is a continuous improvement and consistent approach to EL curriculum.	
	• QA Director	• Demonstrate innovative alignment with the office's mission and vision. • Review change implementation plan for any critical gaps with change leader.	
Developing the Need for Change	• Faculty and staff members piloting the workshops	• Provide a compelling reason for the change and its direct benefits for the academic program. • Articulate the vision for the desired state using past EL data. • Outline support from senior leadership.	• Emails • Internal Assessment Team (IAT) meetings • Individual face-to-face meetings • Instant messaging platform • Informal 'coffee chats'

Developing the Need for Change (Cont'd)	● Key experts/contacts within the distributed-adaptive network (e.g., QA colleagues)	● Generate awareness of the EL workshops. ● Demonstrate potential efficiencies using EL data. ● Reassure that the change is not resource-intensive.	
	● Informal opinion leaders	● Promote the need for the EL workshops and its benefits. ● Clarify the change process and where support is needed.	● Individual face-to-face meetings ● Instant messaging platform ● Informal 'coffee chats'
Midstream Change	● Faculty and staff members who are piloting the workshops	● Gather feedback on opinions/attitudes about the change. ● Clarify any misconceptions. ● Champion enthusiasm.	● Online Survey ● Focus group style meetings with IATs ● Individual face-to-face meetings ● Email
	● Select senior management	● Demonstrate progress of the EL workshops. ● Communicate finalized content of the EL workshops. ● Recognize faculty and staff participation.	● Email memo ● Curriculum committee meetings ● Individual face-to-face meetings (where appropriate)
	● Key experts/contacts within the distributed-adaptive network	● Gather feedback on opinions/attitudes about the change. ● Clarify any misconceptions. ● Request support where needed.	● Online Survey ● Focus groups ● Individual face-to-face meetings
Confirming the Change	● Wider GU community, internal and external	● Communicate success of piloted EL workshops. ● Celebrate programs who have participated in the change.	● Organization online newsletter ● Corporate website announcement

	• Select senior leadership and management	• Communicate success of piloted EL workshops. • Report on completion numbers of workshops and learning outcome evaluations. • Report on EL development results as part of CPRs.	• Email memo • Curriculum committee meetings
	• Faculty and staff members piloting the workshops	• Celebrate their participation in the workshop series. • Celebrate any EL developments as a result of their CPR. • Report on wide-scale success across all programs who participated and report overall result.	• Emails • Internal Assessment Team (IAT) meetings • Individual face-to-face meetings