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Perspectives on Experiential Learning

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Perspectives on Experiential Learning

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Monday February 19, 2018

University of Dayton senior Allyson Pacifico received a full-time job offer from Indianapolis-based information technology company Appirio after showcasing her educational experiences at the University with a video she produced through the Office of Experiential Learning.

“I posted the video on LinkedIn and had about 100 people like it or connect me with someone who would like it,” said Pacifico, an applied math economics major from San Diego. “I got about four or five different job offers.”

The Experiential Learning Lab encourages students to think about what they learned, and how learning in one area applies to another, in order to create stories about lessons learned from experiences. High-impact experiential learning is a signature and distinct element of the College of Arts and Sciences' transformative educational experience.

Through the lab, students gain confidence while expressing what they learned and how they intend to make use of their knowledge in the future.

“That’s really the value of what a college education should be providing students, not just the menu of what you can do but being confident and prepared to say ‘this is what I learned and this is what I think I can do with what I learned,’” said Karen Velasquez, director of experiential learning.



Watch Video At: <https://youtu.be/dnvX9KJR4A8>

In the spring of 2017, Velasquez interviewed 30 students about their experiences and made a video summarizing their perspectives on experiential learning.

Velasquez and Pacifico designed a pilot of the Experiential Learning Lab in July 2017 with Pacifico's video. They then began recruiting students through faculty nominations.

The Experiential Learning Lab consists of an interactive activity, where the students write down their experiences and discoveries. They then write a narrative of their journey. Then all of the students share and discuss their stories. The lab concludes with a short informal interview in the recording studio about their experiences.

After the lab, the students have the opportunity to make a creative project, such as a video, a website, a blog, a podcast or an art piece to share with their families or potential employers.

"It's really fun to see students come up with these realizations or overarching themes that help them know who they are or even who they aren't. I think that's a really special part of the lab," said Chris Miller, a junior program coordinator and peer adviser, from Lorain, Ohio.

The next lab will be 2:30 to 6:30 p.m. Friday, Feb. 23, in the Roesch Library. If you are interested in participating in the lab, email OEL@udayton.edu.

"We've all had experiences that have impacted our lives and others," said Sophia Williamson, a senior digital media producer, from Olney, Maryland. "It's a time to celebrate your accomplishments and display them in a creative and different way instead of just on a resume."

- Clare Gallagher '18



1/6