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LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The University of Western Ontario is located on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Lunaapeewak and Attawandaron peoples, who have long-standing relationships to the land and region of southwestern Ontario and the City of London. The local First Nation communities of this area include Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, Oneida Nation of the Thames, and Munsee Delaware Nation. In the region, there are eleven First Nation communities and a growing Indigenous urban population. Western University values the significant historical and contemporary contributions of local and regional First Nations and all of the Original peoples of Turtle Island (North America).

To learn more about these Indigenous communities and how you can best be an ally, please refer to the London & Middlesex Indigenous Culture Card. For more information about land acknowledgements, please refer to the article “Rethinking the Practice and Performance of Indigenous Land Acknowledgment” by Robinson et al. A land acknowledgement is an important step in recognizing colonial history but should by no means be the full extent to which we acknowledge and support indigenous communities.



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KEY TERMS

Experiential Learning (EL) - as originally theorized by Kolb,¹ experiential learning is the act of learning, applying the learning and reflecting on the experience. It engages whole brain learning through the introduction of a concept, working through practical applications, questioning aspects of it, and reflecting on the experience in order to fully understand the concept presented. Current notions of EL have moved away from Kolb's foundational concept to focus more on the idea of work preparedness.

In 2017 the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities identified 6 principles to determine if an experience qualified as experiential learning: the student is in a (simulated) workplace, the student is exposed to real-life scenarios, the experience is meaningful, the student is able to apply their classroom learning to the situation, there is an element of student reflection about the activity and an evaluation of the student's performance. Finally, the experience must count towards a course credit or be formally recognized by the institution.

Applications of the above principles that are generally accepted as experiential learning include case studies, simulations, work placements, internships, practicum, cooperative education, entrepreneurship, work study, field experience, laboratory/studio experience, internships, field exercises, study abroad, undergraduate research, participation in clubs and leadership roles.

Work Integrated Learning (WIL) - integration of a work placement as part of the course to gain real-world experiences. May be paid or unpaid. Examples include internships, co-ops or practicum placements.

Community Engaged Learning (CEL) - an opportunity to apply learning to community based initiatives. The focus is on civic engagement and assisting not-for-profit or service groups. Generally unpaid volunteer work.

STEM fields - Science, Technology, Engineering, Math

¹ Alice Kolb and David Kolb, "Learning Styles and Learning Spaces: Enhancing Experiential Learning in Higher Education," Academy of Management Learning & Education Vol. 4, No. 2, (2005): 193-212.



INTRODUCTION

Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn.

– Benjamin Franklin

Experiential learning (EL) brings together classroom learning with practical applications. It allows students to gain a much deeper understanding of a topic or practice through immersion, working through challenges, and discovering solutions. Work integrated learning (WIL) adds another dimension to the experience with actual workplace scenarios, often including remuneration. For students who are juggling the rising costs of food, housing and tuition, the ability to participate in paid learning experiences can help offset those costs as well as provide practical knowledge that can bolster employment prospects.

Beyond students' needs while they are in school, the competition for jobs after graduation can be fierce, and work experience is often a factor that gives one candidate an advantage over another. Statistics Canada indicates that employability rates are superior for those who are able to participate in practical experiences during their schooling. They can expect a higher rate of pay, have a better chance of obtaining a job in their field of study and tend to be employed faster than students without WIL.²

Unfortunately, not all fields of study enjoy the same types or quantities of experiential learning opportunities. Programs funded by the federal and provincial governments emphasize the creation of a greater wealth of opportunities for those in STEM fields, designed to move students quickly into high-demand jobs. Universities are leaning into this by providing increased numbers of experiences which align with government priorities. Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning Canada (CEWIL) indicates that the top areas of WIL programming for undergraduate students are found in engineering, and related technologies (17%), business, management, and public administration (15.5%), and health and related fields (14.2%).³ By comparison, there are significantly fewer opportunities offered for the humanities (6.2%) and education (5.6%).⁴

² Marc Frenette, Tomasz Handler and Ping Ching Winnie Chan, *Leveraging postsecondary student employment into a career: The importance of remaining in the firm after graduation*, prepared by Statistics Canada (Ottawa, ON, 2021).

³ ulie Peters PH.D and Roger Pizarro Milian PH.D, *Mapping the Terrain: A Synthesis of Recent Reserach and Future Directions*, (CEWIL Canada/Academica Group, 2024), 14.

⁴ ibid



Even within fields where WIL opportunities are more plentiful, there can still be barriers. Women, visible minorities, those in the LGBTQ2S+ communities, and those with disabilities also face additional challenges obtaining paid placements which further impacts their employment outcomes. Fewer are represented in STEM fields, but reports indicate that these groups contend with additional challenges during the interview process, face discrimination within their placements and often work in unpaid positions.⁵ Students from lower income households also face barriers as they must often work during the school year and/or the summer making it challenging to participate in unpaid experiences, or in placements that have additional fees or travel costs.⁶

It is not only students who benefit from WIL opportunities as part of their academic experience. It is imperative that the current emphasis on providing STEM opportunities to fill labour gaps does not eclipse the fact that all disciplines can and do provide valuable contributions to our society and in meeting labour market needs. People skills, effective communication, leadership, problem solving, and analytical abilities top the list of most sought after by employers, followed by industry knowledge and experience.⁷ These are skill sets that are notably achieved by students in arts and humanities studies.⁸ In a labour market being rapidly redefined by the rapid rise of artificial intelligence liberal arts students will be in high demand as those who have studied “languages, art, history, economics, ethics, philosophy, psychology and human development courses can teach critical, philosophical and ethics-based skills that will be instrumental in the development and management of AI solutions.”⁹

In order to provide students with the best opportunities for development and prepare them for life after graduation, The University Students’ council believes that all students at Western University should have access to enriching, practical skills that will help them obtain employment, regardless of their chosen field of study.

5 Ken Chatoor and Lena Balata., *Student Identity and Work-integrated Learning (WIL): Exploring Student Experiences of WIL by Demographic*, Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario, 2023.

6 Sarah Rathner, “In Your Debt: Get skills, not bills, at an unpaid internship,” City News Toronto, Dec. 17, 2021. <https://toronto.citynews.ca/2021/12/17/in-your-debt-get-skills-not-bills-at-an-unpaid-internship/>

Gabrielle Drolet, “The curse of unpaid internships keep students from getting jobs,” Toronto Star, Mar. 13, 2019, https://www.thestar.com/opinion/contributors/the-curse-of-unpaid-internships-keep-students-from-getting-jobs/article_6267a155-55f0-546f-baed-7d6d0776edfe.html.

“Can’t afford unpaid internships when you’re poor,” Reddit, https://www.reddit.com/r/LateStageCapitalism/comments/hgr3r6/cant_afford_unpaid_internships_when_youre_poor/.

7 *Bringing Life to Learning at Ontario Universities*, (Toronto:Council of Ontario Universities, 2014), 12.

8 Alexandra Jonca and Jordan Eli, “Beyond Boundaries: Why the Arts and Humanities Are Needed in a STEM Dominant World,” Medium, Jan. 11, 2018, <https://medium.com/@jordanel/beyond-boundaries-why-the-arts-and-humanities-are-needed-in-a-stem-dominant-world-7d7aabbcee6d>.

9 *Study on experiential learning and pathways to employment for Canadian youth- Supporting university students to succeed*, prepared by Universities Canada (Ottawa, ON, 2018), 7.



RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 1

Increase the number of non-STEM experiential learning options

To ensure that all students are able to benefit from experiential and work integrated learning opportunities, **Western University should increase the number of non-STEM experiential learning options to be proportionate with the number of students enrolled in non-STEM programs.**

Given that employers show a preference for employees with tangible work experience, it is vital that Western University provides sufficient opportunities to meet the demands of all students, regardless of faculty. Significantly more opportunities exist for fields related to STEM than for Arts and Humanities, leaving many of the latter students unable to obtain practical skills that will allow them to easily assimilate into the workforce.

As of November 2023, there were 589 experiential learning opportunities posted on Western University's Experience Catalogue.¹⁰ After applying filters, only 55 of those opportunities were open to the 864¹¹ undergraduate Arts and Humanities students on campus, with nothing specifically available for Music or Social Science students; the rest were geared to STEM fields. Despite there being close to 10,000¹² students in the fields of Arts and Humanities, Information and Media Studies, Music, and Social Science, these faculties are poorly represented in the number of opportunities available.

There are specific faculty internship programs offered (AHIP, FIMS, Social Science etc.); however, the eligibility criteria is quite stringent and may be an impediment for many students. Many of the placements are unpaid, or have fees associated with them which can greatly affect the participation levels of students who are from low-income households. A number of the current postings are not of a particularly high calibre or related to field-of-study: Beer Scout, content marketing and soft drink sales positions are examples of some of the positions being offered to Arts and Humanities students for the summer of 2024.¹³

¹⁰ <https://connect.uwo.ca/catalogue.html>.

¹¹ Western University Facts & Figures 2022-2023 <https://www.uwo.ca/about/whoweare/facts.html>.

¹² *ibid*

¹³ Arts and Humanities Internship Program, Current Opportunities, Western University accessed March 20, 2024, <https://www.uwo.ca/arts/internships/opportunities/index.html>.



According to their 2023-2024 budget, Western University has committed to hiring a Work-Integrated Learning and Experiential-Learning Specialist for the faculty of Arts and Humanities. While we can assume that this will lead to increased EL and WIL opportunities for non-STEM students, the amount spent on a single staff member is a small fraction of the money being allotted to various other initiatives: \$20 million for an interdisciplinary research and experiential learning Bio-convergence Centre and \$2.6 million for the Undergraduate Summer Research Internship Program.¹⁴

Western University must work harder to actively source and equally fund additional EL and WIL opportunities, particularly for students in non-STEM, fields. Every student should be able to participate in, and gain appropriate skills throughout their educational journey to assist them in obtaining meaningful employment after graduation.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Work Integrated Learning opportunities should provide financial compensation

Unpaid experiences also reinforce the inequality of opportunities experienced by many demographic groups. With some program fees ranging from \$3,000 to the cost of tuition, exclusive of food, lodging and travel expenses, many students simply cannot afford to participate without compensation. **As Western University values its enrichment programming, it should commit to a goal that by the year 2030 all WIL opportunities will be paid, and provide grants or stipends to cover travel and program expenses for students who demonstrate financial need.**

Unpaid positions are more often filled by women and minorities, leading to increased dissatisfaction with their experiences.¹⁵ In a survey conducted by the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario, the authors noted that 47% of women were more likely to be placed in unpaid WIL placements compared to 28% of their male counterparts.¹⁶ Students from low income households may also find it challenging to participate in unpaid opportunities, with up to 25% of students citing that extra expenses involved with WIL activities pose a financial barrier.¹⁷ Many students have to work in order to pay for living expenses and tuition, and cannot afford to stop working, or pay additional program fees and travel expenses that may be part of many opportunities.¹⁸

14 2023-24 Operating and Capital Budgets, Western University, March 31, 2023
https://www.ipb.uwo.ca/documents/2023_budget.pdf.

15 Ken Chatoor and Lena Balata., *Student Identity and Work-integrated Learning (WIL): Exploring Student Experiences of WIL by Demographic*, Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario, 2023..

16 *ibid.*

17 Julie Peters PH.D and Roger Pizarro Milian PH.D, *Mapping the Terrain: A Synthesis of Recent Reserach and Future Directions*, (CEWIL Canada/Academica Group, 2024), 25.

18 Regular tuition fees are charged for in-program placements, students are responsible for transportation and other incidental expenses. International study programs require students to pay tuition fees, accommodations, food and transportation. The virtual Costa Rica Global Learning Program requires Western students to pay \$100USD per week of the program to cover language classes, activities and mentorship. Western Heads East charges a placement and application fee as well as a donation fee. Past international Impact Experience trips cost over \$3000 plus snacks and some meals.



Studies have shown that students entering the workforce not only benefit from higher education but also from the networking advantages that experiential learning opportunities provide.¹⁹ Students with internship experience are twice as likely to receive job offers than those without, and 50-60% of paid internships result in job offers, leaving those unable to participate at a distinct disadvantage.²⁰ By ensuring that WIL opportunities are supported with appropriate remuneration, Western University can ensure that all students have access to more equitable experiences, regardless of gender, demographic status or financial situation. In the interim, funds should be dedicated to support students in unpaid positions. By providing travel stipends and increasing the number of bursaries available for low-income students, a segment of the student population will have the opportunity to participate in valuable experiences that would otherwise be denied to them.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Increase the flexibility and delivery modes of experiential learning opportunities

As a result of COVID-19, post-secondary institutions were forced to adapt and create delivery modes to accommodate remote students. This opened up new methods of providing online EL opportunities that enabled students to participate in-situ, and even enabled some to explore international or long-distance placements remotely without the prohibitive costs of travel to contend with. **Western University should continue exploring ways to increase the flexibility and delivery modes of experiential learning opportunities that are available to students.**

The ability to participate in simulations or fieldwork through virtual reality, set up a home laboratory, or conduct international community-based or service learning research from a home base allows students added flexibility and diverse opportunities that they may not be able to experience otherwise.²¹ With the advent of hybrid work and more people being able to work from home, students also need to learn the skills and gain familiarity with the technology that will allow them to work independently in those situations.

While in-person partnerships are always going to be the most beneficial and practical in many circumstances, modern delivery modes also need to be incorporated in order to provide students with as many options as possible. Increasing overall program flexibility should be the goal, with varied duration and start dates to allow more students to participate throughout the year.

19 Wolfgang Lehmann, "Forms of capital in working-class students' transition from University to employment," *Journal of Education and Work* 32:4, 347-359. (2019). <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13639080.2019.1617841>.

20 Noah Isenberg, "In Defence of Internships," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Oct. 17, 2023. <https://www.chronicle.com/article/in-defense-of-internships>

21 Sparrow McGowan, "Re-imagining experiential learning during the pandemic," *University Affairs*, Jan., 2021.



In addition, increasing on-campus initiatives would allow international students and those with limited incomes to participate without jeopardizing their visas and incurring additional expenses. Interdepartmental collaborations, partnerships with international schools, and working with smaller local businesses would also increase and improve the number of enriching opportunities for the entire student body.

RECOMMENDATION 4

Make the Experiential Learning Website user friendly

Creating easy-to-navigate platforms that facilitate students' access to Experiential Learning opportunities is key to encouraging participation. **Western University should work to improve their Experiential Learning Website²² to make it more user friendly.** It should contain all available experiential learning opportunities in one location and include more robust filters that will easily allow students to search for opportunities that are suitable for them. Each listing in the Western Experience Catalogue²³ should include detailed information about the scope of the opportunity, the proposed learning or experience outcomes, eligibility, location, start and end dates, remuneration and expected costs.

Western University currently uses its Experiential Learning webpage as a centralized location for resources, information, and EL program postings. An effective landing page should easily direct students to areas of interest, but students navigating the current Experiential Learning page are frequently redirected through chains of other web portals and websites in order to obtain important information. For a student, it is challenging to develop an organized and comprehensive understanding of Western's offerings when compiling information across so many webpages. The fragmentation is ineffective and remains a barrier for greater participation in EL.

For example, a student who is interested in both internships/co-ops and international learning opportunities must navigate through two different, convoluted web pathways to find available opportunities. While local internships are listed within the Experiential Learning website, international learning opportunities are listed through the International Learning website. Even more confusing, both websites offer internship opportunities, and yet are still listed in different formats and through different sites. In order to find out information about the Undergraduate Summer Research Internship (USRI), a student must locate the Western Research site²⁴ and then look at the "funding" menu tab. These opportunities should be accessible through a cohesive and all encompassing Experiential Learning website.

22 <http://www.experience.uwo.ca/>

23 <https://connect.uwo.ca/catalogue.htm>

24 www.https://uwo.ca/research/



A suggestion would be to utilize a database similar to that of Atlas, Western's International experience portal. The merit of Atlas lies in its search functionality. Through the database, students are able to select filters to refine their search and identify exchange opportunities that best fit their needs and interests. Additionally, Atlas acts as a centralized location for information about each exchange program, which is hyperlinked in the database. The hyperlink brings students to a subpage that then outlines all the information related to the exchange program. This information includes a thorough description of the partnering educational institution, eligibility criteria, program details, fees, application details, and relevant resources. By comparison the detail and information available about local internship postings is a fraction of that available for the international postings or requires further research to find.

The University Students' Council strongly recommends that Western University conduct a review of their Experiential Learning websites for cohesiveness, and work on improving the ease of navigation functions and amount of information that is available for each opportunity.

RECOMMENDATION 5

Increase community engaged learning opportunities by 50% by 2028

In their strategic plan Towards Western at 150²⁵, Western University has committed to doubling the number of international experiences offered by 2028. In order to achieve this goal, **Western University should expand the number of courses with embedded international community engaged learning opportunities (CEL), increase the scope of placements available in the Impact Experience²⁶ program, and offer additional opportunities throughout the academic year.**

Outside of self-initiated study abroad programs and field placements, there are limited opportunities for students to engage in short-term exploration outside of the local community. According to the Community Engaged Learning website²⁷ there are 39 courses which contain an integrated CEL experience as part of the curriculum, and only a handful of these involve international travel or learning situations. Similarly, many of the placements through Impact Experience are located within the London community. These programs are limited to 15 participants and are generally offered during reading week or after final exams, requiring students to choose between gaining a meaningful experience or going home to visit family. Competition for the limited number of spots means many students who are willing and able to participate will be turned down.

25 Towards Western at 150 Western University Strategic Plan <https://strategicplan.uwo.ca/>

26 Impact Experience is a Western-run program connecting students with community service type projects. Generally, programs only run during Reading Weeks. Prior to Covid, many of the opportunities involved international travel.

27 Western's Community Engaged Learning <http://cel.uwo.ca/students/curricular/index.html>



Gaining a global perspective is not only incredibly enriching for students, but collaboration with international partners is necessary to remain competitive in an ever changing global landscape. Western University must expand their current in-class offerings and Impact Experience programs in order to increase the number of available international experiences for students. They must look beyond the London community for learning partners, and offer more short duration opportunities throughout the year for students looking to reach outside their comfort zone.

RECOMMENDATION 6

Government funded EL programs should provide equal numbers of STEM and non-STEM opportunities

A skills and labour shortage has resulted in governments prioritising educational opportunities designed to quickly move people into high demand jobs.²⁸ As a result, trades industries and STEM fields are receiving more attention and government funding than other occupations, creating an imbalance in experiential learning opportunities for students. With the clear benefits that meaningful experiential learning opportunities provide, the goal must be to extend the same level of opportunities to all students regardless of discipline. **Both federal and provincial governments must mandate that any government funded EL program create equal numbers of STEM and non-STEM opportunities in order to ensure that all students are able to participate and gain valuable experiences.**

Federally funded programs like Student Work-Integrated Learning Program (SWILP), which provides wage subsidies to businesses providing student placements, is heavily focused on STEM and business fields. The available partnership categories include several options for technology, aviation, innovation, medical, natural resources, manufacturing, skilled trades, food and agriculture with just single streams for tourism, media and cultural opportunities.²⁹ The result is that half of undergraduate students who are specializing in the social sciences and humanities are left out of these well-funded experiences.³⁰ With fewer women and visible minorities participating in STEM fields, there is even more inequality surrounding who is able to take advantage of these important advancement opportunities.

The Business + Higher Education Roundtable (BHER), a company which creates partnerships between education institutions and WIL opportunity providers, claims to have provided over 58,000 opportunities for students to date. In March

28 In 2022 Statistics Canada indicated that there was a skills-gap in the STEM labour force, particularly healthcare, technology, engineering and skilled trades. The provincial government began offering tuition incentives such as the Learn and Stay Grant for certain healthcare fields to encourage students to enroll and ultimately fill job vacancies. The provincial government also reduced the age and educational requirements for skilled trades apprenticeships. The federal government began to offer Express Entry to prioritize immigrant applicants who had in-demand skills in STEM fields to fill current vacancies.

29 *Find wage subsidies to hire post-secondary students*, prepared by Employment and Social Development Canada (Ottawa, ON, 2023).

30 *Study on experiential learning and pathways to employment for Canadian youth-Supporting university students to succeed*, prepared by Universities Canada (Ottawa, ON, 2018), 6.



2024, they announced a partnership with Emily Carr University to create 140 art and media opportunities. This is a welcome start to broadening the range of opportunities that are offered, but a paltry number when compared to BHER's current STEM offerings.³¹ A far more substantial increase in arts and humanities fields is needed to address the opportunity gap.

The provincial government is following the same path, with funding initiatives that favour STEM and construction fields. A major funding announcement in March 2024 to support post-secondary research will split \$278 million between the Ontario Research Fund and Early Researcher Awards,³² with the projects scheduled to benefit from these funds in medical, automotive and natural resources related fields. A significant amount of regular provincial support goes to Mitacs, a company which matches students to industries with research internship positions. In 2021 they coordinated up to 8,000 paid research internships, and currently have 13,000 on-going projects that they are recruiting for. A recent search of their site shows 232 open opportunities; of those, 42 are open to undergraduates in Social Sciences, Humanities and the Arts, along with STEM faculties. Only 6 results appeared when using filters to select options for Literature and Visual Arts.³³

Provincial Strategic Mandate Agreements (SMAs) with post-secondary institutions strongly encourage universities to focus their resources towards areas with positive economic and labour market outcomes to the exclusion of all else. With four of the six benchmarks for funding tied to skills, job outcomes and earning potential, universities are being pressured to ensure a wealth of opportunities for STEM fields. Even in primary and secondary schools, students are feeling the impact of provincial funding which shows a marked preferential treatment for STEM, with budget allocations for technology projects receiving for 10% of their total, and art supplies being limited to \$500.³⁴

This tunnel vision which only values post-secondary education as a purveyor of an in-demand labour force comes at the detriment of not only student opportunities but risks undermining the balance between arts and culture and science and technology that is indicative of a healthy, well rounded society. All students, regardless of their field of study, deserve equal access to opportunities to enrich their educational experiences and provide them with a solid transition into the workforce. All levels of government need to acknowledge the value of each and every faculty, and work to ensure that there is equitable financial support and partnership opportunities for each and every student.

31 Business + Higher Education Roundtable, accessed March 14, 2024, <https://bher.ca/>

32 Ontario Investing More than \$270 Million To Support new Innovations and Discoveries, prepared by Ministry of Colleges and Universities (Toronto, ON, 2024).

33 Mitacs, accessed March 14, 2024, <https://www.mitacs.ca/>.

34 Guiding Principles for the Experiential Learning Allocation in the Grants for Student Needs (GSN)- Learning Opportunities Grant (LOG) Funding, prepared by Ministry of Education, (Toronto, ON 2020).



CONCLUSION

Enriching EL provides students with the skills needed for lifelong learning. The resulting practical experiences provide students with an advantage when seeking positions in a highly competitive job market. Students expect innovative post-secondary institutions to ensure that there are ample opportunities for students in all fields of study. While STEM fields are receiving the most focus, it must be acknowledged that all fields contribute valuable services, and ways of thinking, that should not be ignored. With the broad range of career paths found in Arts and Humanities disciplines, it can be challenging to provide enriching EL opportunities but these fields are just as worthy of attention as technology based studies. In Canada, we are facing a series of social crisis', most notably mental health, addictions and homelessness. Solutions to these problems are going to be found in the Humanities. More must be done to provide increased numbers of EL and WIL opportunities to students studying outside of STEM disciplines.

While unpaid EL and WIL placements can provide valuable stepping stones to better opportunities or job offers, financial considerations may limit the ability of some students to participate in these types of experiences. To ensure that equal opportunities and beneficial outcomes exist for all participants, institutions should strive to increase the number of paid opportunities that are offered. Grants and stipends would ensure that student opportunities aren't impeded by financial barriers. By utilizing technology for virtual placements, students could participate in a broad spectrum of local or even international experiences without added costs.

Institutions and governments have a shared responsibility to ensure that opportunities for all fields are equally funded. To prioritize STEM over other disciplines shows a lack of foresight: industry cannot move forwards without the thinkers and dreamers creating new ideas and solutions. Future innovation and progress will be the result of interdisciplinary cooperation.



RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS

The University Students' Council puts forth the following recommendations designed to improve student's experiences of experiential learning and work integrated learning:

1. In order to ensure that all students are able to benefit from experiential and work integrated learning opportunities, Western University should increase the number of non-STEM experiential learning options to be proportionate with the number of students enrolled in non-STEM programs.
2. In order to increase the value of enrichment programming, Western University should commit to a long term goal that all Work Integrated Learning opportunities are paid, and increase the number and amount of bursaries, grants and scholarships for students who demonstrate financial need.
3. Western University should continue exploring ways to increase the flexibility and delivery modes of experiential learning opportunities that are available to students.
4. Western University should improve their Experiential Learning Website to make it more user friendly. It should contain all available experiential learning opportunities in one location and include more robust filters that will easily allow students to search for specific opportunities. Each listing in the Western Experience Catalogue should include detailed information about the scope of the opportunity, the proposed learning or experience outcomes, eligibility, location, start and end dates, remuneration and expected costs.
5. In order to double the number of international experiences offered as per the Towards Western at 150 strategic plan, Western University should expand the number of courses with embedded international community engaged learning opportunities (CEL), increase the scope of placements available in the Impact Experience program, and offer additional opportunities throughout the academic year.
6. Both the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario must mandate that any government funded EL program create equal numbers of STEM and non-STEM opportunities in order to ensure that all students are able to participate and gain valuable experiences.





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