



# Mercyhurst College

## Executive Director for the Experiential Learning Program

Experiential learning at Mercyhurst College emphasizes the integration of academic preparation, real-world, hands-on experience, and reflection about one's experience and learning with the expected outcome of assimilating self-awareness, interests, and post graduate opportunities and choosing a life's work that provides meaning, satisfaction, and an appreciation for the dignity of work. The Experiential Learning Program, is a new unit within the Division of Student Life, and is comprised of three departments -- the Center for Student Engagement and Leadership Development, Service Learning, and the Center for Career Development. The role of the Executive Director will be to serve as the leader and key catalyst for the development, integration, and promotion of experiential learning opportunities for undergraduate students. The Executive Director of the Experiential Learning Program will also lead the Center for Career Development.

### POSITION SUMMARY

- o Manage the Experiential Learning Program by leading strategic planning, program development, and evaluation initiatives within and among each of the departments.
- o Streamline processes and operations by utilizing current technologies to implement program development, and communicate with students and by introducing new technology opportunities that allow each area to best serve our students and alumni.
- o Ensure a comprehensive, developmental experiential learning program by providing staff with learning and professional development opportunities such as workshops, conferences, resources.
- o Mentor, manage, and supervise Experiential Learning Program's staff by establishing professional development goals, performance expectations, and evaluation procedures.
- o Develop budgets, determine budget priorities, and oversee the day-to-day budget management by working collaboratively and meeting regularly with the Director of the Center for Student Engagement and Leadership Development, the Director of Service Learning, and the Associate Director of the Center for Career Development.
- o Create, develop, and maintain relationships and partnerships with community organizations, non-profit organizations, government agencies, and corporations by conducting regular site visits and communicating regularly by utilizing available technologies to foster and develop these partnership relationships.
- o Provide vision, leadership, and direction for the Experiential Learning Program and each of its departments by establishing priorities, setting goals, and evaluating performance objectives
- o Oversee the daily operation of the Center for Career Development by implementing best practices in accordance with professional standards.
- o Serve on the Vice President for Student Life leadership team.

### STRATEGIC PLANNING AND EVALUATION

- o Determine annual and long-range program priorities by monitoring and evaluating the scope of services offered and by seeking feedback from the College community.
- o Develop a comprehensive immediate and long-range technology plan that meets the profession's best practices standards – considerations should include the convenience of students and alumni, achieving efficiencies within departmental units, and enhancing the accessibility and delivery of services.

- o Ensure delivery of a comprehensive experiential learning process for students by leading the Experiential Learning Program staff in an annual strategic planning and evaluation process, resulting in prioritization of program commitments and implementation of new activities and services.
- o Implement the Experiential Learning Program's assessment initiatives by executing a "learning outcomes" model of departmental assessment.
- o Serve on the Student Life assessment team to develop mechanisms that effectively measure student learning through involvement in experiential learning opportunities.
- o Prepare Experiential Learning Program's annual report, presenting documentation of specific activities and assessment of progress toward goals.

## OUTREACH TO CONSTITUENTS

- o Identify influential alumni and friends of the college to expand formal opportunities that will provide and enhance meaningful experiential learning opportunities for students by working with the Advancement staff.
- o Develop and implement an alumni outreach program that engages alumni in the experiential learning of current students (e.g. internships, co-operative education, service learning, e-mentoring). Integrate career networking experiences of students and alumni.
- o Collaborate with the Advancement staff to share alumni contact information and record interactions with alumni.
- o Provide vision, guidance, oversight, and supervision for the Experiential Learning Program's staff during the development phase of new experiential learning initiatives.
- o Create and support innovative strategies by researching and obtaining grant funding.
- o Serve on College committees, events, and initiatives as assigned.
- o Attend and present at local, regional, and national conferences.

## STAFFING

- o Define and develop Experiential Learning Program positions by assessing needs and evaluating budgetary requirements.
- o Work with both professional and support staff to develop annual individual professional development plans and periodically assess progress toward goals.
- o Lead the staff in the implementation of annual and long-range goals by creating Experiential Learning Program work teams and monitoring progress of the teams.
- o Develop effective professional relationships by mentoring, managing, and supervising both staff and meeting regularly to maintain communication.
- o Evaluate performance of staff annually by completing the college's annual performance evaluation.

## PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

- Develop a cohesive and integrated Experiential Learning Program by coordinating activities, goals, and objectives of the Center for Student Engagement and Leadership Development, Service Learning, and the Center for Career Development.
- Lead or participate in campus discussions related to experiential learning by developing expertise in experiential learning through research, workshops, and professional development.
- Partner with faculty in the development of programming that complements their academic curriculum by providing content related to vocational discernment and experiential learning.
- Create initiatives and programs for all first year students that ensures a comprehensive, integrated first-year experience by collaborating with Academic Affairs, Academic Support, and Residence Life.
- Develop a strategy that will integrate career, vocational, and academic advising by serving as the Experiential Learning Program's primary liaison with the Office for Academic Affairs.
- Educate and provide workshops for faculty academic advisors about the vocational discernment process by developing programs and materials to support faculty in integrating vocational reflection and career planning into the academic advising process.

## QUALIFICATIONS

- **Education:** Master's Degree in experiential learning, higher education administration, student personnel administration, career counseling, or related discipline is required, doctorate preferred, or extensive experience in a comparable position. Additional graduate work reinforcing professional growth in the field of experiential learning is welcomed.
- **Experience:** Demonstration of increasing levels of responsibility and extensive experience in a leadership role in a college or university setting, preferably an experiential learning, career services, Student Activities, Service Learning, or relevant program is preferred. Program development, program management, and supervisory experience required.
- **Technology:** Understanding of the growing role technology plays in higher education programs and services and ability to use technology to enhance student experiential learning opportunities. Demonstrated ability to implement technological improvements, including centralization of record-keeping, expanding the use of Datatel (the college's student information system), social networking, etc.
- **Knowledge and Skills:** Knowledge of experiential learning theory and student development theory is essential; understanding of career counseling theory and techniques, career planning activities and skills, and job trends desired. Understanding and appreciation of the liberal arts and the role of experiential learning as a complement to academic learning. Strategic planning/visioning aptitude. Effective management, supervisory and relationship-building skills. Ability to organize, prioritize and handle multiple commitments. Strong written and verbal communication skills. Demonstrated public relations/marketing abilities. An appreciation of the centrality of service in the Mercy heritage of the College and an ability to effectively communicate this value to all constituents.