

*Transformation and beyond –
course design and
pedagogical scaffolding for
transformation **and**
employability*

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Transformation and beyond...

Community Internship Course

Community engagement

- Students working with the community to achieve something worthwhile for the community and themselves – ongoing...

Educational engagement

- Discovering personal values
- Reflecting on career choices and developing professional skills
- Experiencing a meaningful link between theory and practice / education and work / self and society

To date, this course has

- **500-600** enrolments per year,
- been implemented as a listed elective in **16 degree programs**, is a **core** requirement in a Masters program and a core requirement in a new undergraduate program,
- **over 2,000 students** engaging in structured personal and professional development, while contributing,
- **over 100,000 volunteering hours** to
- **150 community partner organisations.**



It's not quite yet bigger than Ben-Hur!

Design (WIL Plus)

- **Methods / pedagogy**
 - work-integrated learning and
 - transformative learning through
 - scaffolded experiential learning
- **Purposes**
 - professional skills + identity
 - personal values epiphany
 - → meaningful engagement



Transformative Experiential Integrative

Design

- Free-choice elective, all disciplines (5% over-load)
- 50-80 hours volunteering
- Access and equity (international students, gpa entry requirements, assessment foci)
- Unique credit-bearing assessment approach (discipline knowledge growth, professional and personal development, understanding of need for community organisations)
- Flexible delivery (lectures, workshops, modules)
- Peer interaction (workshops, Peer Discussion)
- A personally assigned **Academic Advisor** for continuous feedback and assistance for assessment preparation



Transformative Experiential Integrative

Design - Team

- **Teaching team**
 - Academic lead / convenor
 - Academic advisors
 - Community partner / WP supervisor
- **Administrative team**
 - Placement procurement
 - Vetting and matching
 - Marketing and promotions



Transformative Experiential Integrative



Design Approaches

Values Approach

+ *Experiential Approach*

= *Transformation*

Design - Values approach

“Educating citizens is one of the oldest aims of liberal learning in the Western tradition, but it has not always coexisted peaceably or on a par with other goals that higher education also serves. Now, after a longish lull, **“citizenship” is back on the agenda**, and a large and diverse group of educators have signed on.”

Huber, M. T. & Hutchings, P. (2010) *Civic Learning: Intersections and Interactions* in Eds Smith, Curriculum. Indiana University Press. Bloomington Indiana

M. B., Nowacek, R. S. & Bernstein, J. Citizenship across the

Design - Values approach

“[W]hat universities ... are **mandated to make** or to help to make is **human beings in the fullest sense of those words** – not just trained workers or knowledgeable citizens but responsible heirs and members of human culture ... Underlying the idea of a university – the bringing together, the combining into one, of all the disciplines – is the idea that **good work and good citizenship are the inevitable by-products of the making of a good – that is, a fully developed – human being.**”

Palmer, P., Zajonc, A., with M. Scribner. (2010) The Heart of Higher Education: A Call to Renewal: Transforming the Academy through Collegial Conversations. Jossey-Bass. San Francisco. P 3. Quoting "Wendell Berry - The Loss of the University." Home economics. San Francisco: North Point Press, 1987. P. 77

Design - Values approach

“...controlling for students’ pre-college disposition toward service, students who spend time volunteering during college, compared to those who do not volunteer, become more convinced that individuals can change society, feel more committed to personally affecting social change, and develop stronger leadership skills.”

Quoting Sax & Astin, Hoekema, D. (2010) *Is there an ethicist in the house? How can we tell?* in Kiss, E, Euben, J. P. Eds. 2010 *Debating Moral Education: Rethinking the Role of the Modern University*

Design – Experiential - Integrative learning and employability

- The course design incorporates the principles of work-integrated learning; it is based on the assumption that disciplinary knowledge that is relevant to professional practices should be applied/integrated by students *in situ* (Patrick et al., 2009; Smith, 2014).
- Careful selection of the theoretical ideas that are to be integrated with practice during the Internship is what supports development of **professional skills and values** and the **Griffith Graduate Attributes**.

Design - Experiential

- Following Dewey (1939:19) the course is designed both
 - to **expose students to** a range of intense, authentic, idiosyncratic and comparatively unpredictable experiences in not-for-profit organisations that deal with poverty, inequality, disability, environmental restoration and protection, and so on, and
 - to **guide them in using those experiences** in a deliberate and purposive way to achieve educational goals and outcomes, deep reflections on personal and professional **identity** and on their life **purpose**, and on the role of **citizenship** in improving communities.

Designing for Transformation

- Following Mezirow (1978, 1991), the course is designed to trigger a transformation of perspective in students; that is,
 - a change in the way they perceive the world and themselves.
 - as a consequence of **triggering experiences** that challenge the students' worldviews and common-sense, and their routine ways of thinking about issues, other people and themselves
 - facilitated through reflective moments designed in the course.
- This is a key outcome of the course, and, commensurate with Dewey, is **supported by preparation and academic advisement** which are cornerstones of the course's design.

Designing for Transformation

“Transformative learning involves experiencing a deep, structural shift in the basic premises of thought, feelings, and actions. It is a shift of consciousness that dramatically and irreversibly alters our way of being in the world. Such a shift involves our understanding of ourselves and our self-locations; our relationships with other humans and with the natural world; our understanding of relations of power in interlocking structures of class, race and gender; our body awareness, our visions of alternative approaches to living; and our sense of possibilities for social justice and peace and personal joy.”

O'Sullivan, E. (2003). "Bringing a perspective of transformative learning to globalized consumption." *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 27 (4), 326-330.

Designing for Transformation

“Community service and community service-learning also offers valuable spaces for college students to engage in identity exploration. Erikson (1965, 1968) famously characterized adolescence as the period in the lifespan in which individuals move beyond a blind adherence to the beliefs, values, and worldview of their parents and mentors and begin to seek out their own understandings of the world around them. Erikson labelled this exploration the adolescent “identity crisis” and characterized this process as crucial to an individual’s development of a mature adult identity.

Seider, S., & Butin D. W. (2012) Introduction to Special Issue on “The Future of Community Engagement in Higher Education”. *Journal of College & Character*. Vol 13, No 1, Feb 2012.

Designing for Transformation

“More recently, Arnett (2000, 2004) has asserted that the period of primary identity exploration for many individuals has shifted from adolescence to emerging adulthood - the period in the lifespan from approximately 18 to 26 years old. According to Arnett and colleagues, it is this period of emerging adulthood “during which youth are[most] free to explore potential identify alternatives without having to assume permanent adult commitments” (Schwartz, Cote, & Arnett, 2005, p. 204).

Seider, S., & Butin D. W. (2012) Introduction to Special Issue on “The Future of Community Engagement in Higher Education”. *Journal of College & Character*. Vol 13, No 1, Feb 2012.

Transformative Outcomes:

- “The course was not what I had expected it to be and I was very grateful to have had the opportunity to think about the world from an entirely new perspective that I now hope to take with me in my career.”
- “This course opened my eyes to the world around me and made me think of how I could make a difference. The staff are extremely accessible.... This has to be the best course I have taken in my six years of study with Griffith.”
- “This course has helped me to critically evaluate and reflect on areas I can improve on in my personal and professional life.”

Transformative Outcomes

- “I found this course particularly helpful in learning more about the needs of the community. As a Masters student upon the completion of my undergraduate degree I have focussed on the Australian ‘Big 4’ firms. However, my internship with the Logan Community Bank (Bendigo Bank) taught me I’ve taken things that are not usually available for people with a mental disability for granted. Assisting the LCB in organising the Best Day Out event was an eye-opening experience that I will never forget. Such hands-on experience has had a positive impact on my personal and professional development which I really appreciate. Further, this course has given me a chance to contribute to the community that I’ve overlooked.”

Transformation and Academic Advisement

- Students transformative “perspective-taking” abilities are “scaffolded” by use of the *social theorems* which facilitate the adoption of **sociological** (systems) and **social-psychological** perspectives on the social issues students work on
- Academic Advisor support empowers students to interpret and negotiate difficult situations themselves, through **reflection**, allowing them to take **responsibility** for addressing personal responses that arise.

Academic Advisor Support

- “pastoral” in nature
- Support students growing self awareness
- Encourage autonomy and agentic learning
- Accessible
- Intent on risk mitigation
- Engaged with each student

Academic Advisor Support

Need for “pastoral” care of students

- 30% of students are international
- 65% are first in family
- 25% underperforming academically (below 4 gpa)
- Most students well outside their comfort zone

Academic Advisor Support

- 50% of students access their AA four or more times across semester (other than in workshops)

Student perceive AA's as

- Effective supervisors (4.3)
- Providing a safe and supportive working relationship (4.3)
- Effective in problem solving issues that arise in their internship (4.0)
- Help them learn from their experience (4.0)
- Link theory and practice (4.0)

“The pivotal impact for me was my Academic Advisor. I struggled with certain aspects of my internship...and she was instrumental in growing me and building my confidence and as a result of her mentorship I’m a graduate.”

Testimonials: Academic Advisor Support

- “Wonderful lecturers/convenors.”
- “The organisers did a wonderful job and were highly supportive of students.”
- “Teaching staff were very helpful and clearly outline assignments.”
- “My tutorials and lectures were an area I particularly enjoyed because it brought an understanding to what I was doing in the internship.”
- “My academic advisor and supervisor were very friendly and welcoming. I felt that this course enabled me to engage better in learning. Overall, I felt that this course pushed me outside of my comfort zone, which was very helpful and beneficial for me.”
- “I received a lot of encouragement and support from both my advisor and the course convenor as well and the modules were really helpful and gave me a real understanding of the importance of core values and community values.”
- “This course should be undertaken by all students. Fantastic teaching staff.”

Transformations: the numbers

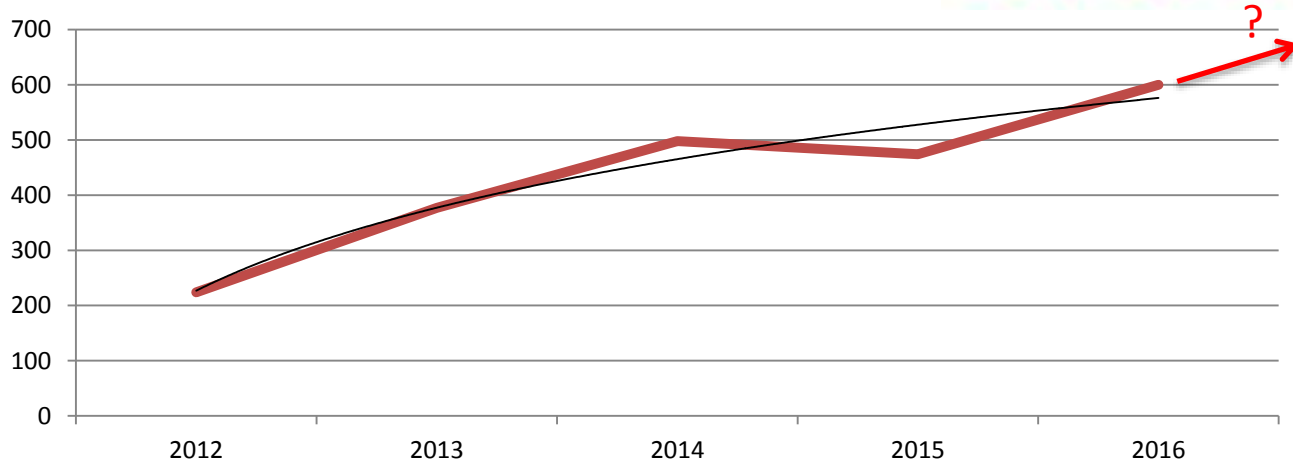
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Enrolments:

Steadily increasing since inception
 Still growing in 2016 (S1 and S2)



*This internship shaped me into an 'active participator' in communities
.....Different from normal classes in university, this internship gave me a
valuable chance to develop consciousness and skill*

*The idea of community Internship is brilliant, students got engaged in service learning,
and got opportunities to apply their knowledge in a real workforce, also the
community gain benefit from the assigned program. After taking this course, I became
more determined about my future career, and it inspires me a lot!*

Student quotes

*I felt more confident in myself and my
own abilities because I had put them to
the test compared to my first day where
I felt nervous and unsure of myself*

*Community Internship was THE best thing I've done in
my life! It broadened my social conscience; I saw how
my actions can make a real impact on a child's life; it
influenced my career...and opened my eyes*

*This course was the most engaging training I have ever
experienced....grew as a person, settled in the direction
of my career, and became committed to joining the
[Organisation Name] as a volunteer*

Thank you.