



Activity 3.2 Strategies for WPE Courses

Activity Preview

The following activity has been developed in conjunction with the learning plan called *Takin' Care of Business: Making the Most of Work-based Learning in AFNR*. This activity is supplemental to Module 3. WBL in the Classroom and assesses the following learned skill: *Review strategies and resources for simultaneously teaching students placed in different career clusters*. In this activity, teachers will review helpful resources, tools, and strategies for teaching Group 5. Workplace Experience Courses. Then they will collaborate to develop a course outline and/or syllabus for an AFNR WPE course.

Directions

1. Review the requirements for Workplace Experience courses in **Figure 1. Requirements**
2. Explore additional resources on [EdSystems' Career Development Experience \(CDE\) Toolkit](#)
Note: "CDE" in this context is not in reference to a competitive career event, but rather this is referencing a comprehensive work-based learning experience facilitated within an approved AFNR course, in this case as a Group 5. WPE course.

Optional: Use the resources in Steps 1 and 2 to develop a syllabus or course outline for a Workplace Experience Course starting from the Workplace Experience Course Outline ([linked here](#)).

Essential Questions

1. What are the benefits of the WPE framework as compared to Cooperative Education?
2. What are the certification requirements for teaching a WPE course?
3. What strategies should be used to simultaneously teach WPE students in different career clusters?

Figure 1. Requirements for Workplace Experience Courses

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| RELATED INSTRUCTION | <p>Experience must include related classroom instruction that incorporates essential and technical employability skills <i>and</i> focused skill development related to each student’s placement. Skills are available here from EdSystems. See p. 6 for the Essential, Technical, and Entrepreneurial Skills and p. 7-12 for focused skills in manufacturing, business, health sciences, information technology, arts and communication, and human and public services. Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resource focused skills have not yet been finalized, but a draft is available and linked here. See p. 16 for AFNR recommended skills.</p> <p>Shared Best Practice for Related Instruction: Have students work with employers in drafting their workplace agreement so that the employer and educator-coordinator can provide feedback on which skills most clearly align to the tasks to be completed by the student.</p> |
| SYNCHRONOUS MEETING | <p>Experience must include at least one synchronous meeting per week to be led by the educator coordinator. The educator coordinator is, in this case, an educator with a Professional Educator License (PEL) endorsed in Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources (AFNR) <i>or</i> an educator with the traditionally required graduate credit hours for Cooperative Education. Synchronous meetings meaning all enrolled students or cohorts of students in similar pathways meet at the same time.</p> <p>Shared Best Practice for Synchronous Meetings: Host synchronous meetings during a consistent day of the week such as a Monday or Tuesday so that employers and students can develop a stable schedule.</p> |
| PLACEMENT AGREEMENT | <p>Experience must include a written placement agreement between the student, employer, and the local education agency (LEA) such as a high school or career center. Agreement must include tasks for occupational and employability skills, duration of the course of training, working hours, student date of birth, company name, and outlined responsibilities of the employer, coordinator, students and parents/guardians. Agreement must be signed by the employer, educator-coordinator, student and parent or guardian.</p> <p>Shared Best Practice for Placement Agreements: Make this a requirement to be mostly completed prior to the start of the course. Students can identify most of the required components before the course begins, and the remaining components can be a required assignment before work is allowed to proceed.</p> |
| WORKPLACE VISIT | <p>At least one visit (direct supervision in the workplace) for each student during the semester as well as direct and indirect supervisory activities on a weekly basis is required for the duration of the workplace experience. “Direct” in this case means conducted by the educator-coordinator personally and onsite. “Indirect activities” means either with the assistance of the workplace supervisor <i>and/or</i> remotely by the educator coordinator.</p> <p>Shared Best Practice for Workplace Visits: Use a consistent checklist for each visit that includes verifying safety measures and emergency plans, visiting with the student one-on-one, visiting with the supervisor one-on-one, and a student-led tour of the workplace.</p> |
| STUDENT EVALUATION | <p>At least one formal evaluation of the student by the conclusion of the work placement is required. In this case, a formal evaluation would mean a written or documented evaluation of the student performance in the workplace. Typically, this would be an opportunity for the educator-coordinator to review the strengths and weaknesses of work performance thus far.</p> <p>Shared Best Practice for Student Evaluations: Conduct the formal evaluations so that the student has time to grow and develop based on the feedback provided, perhaps one-third to one-half way through the experience. Use this as an opportunity to help the student identify and learn from past mistakes and successes.</p> |