Introduction to the Applied Learning Framework and Model

This document outlines Camosun's renewed approach to applied learning, including the new Applied Learning Framework and Model. The result of extensive consultations with faculty, the Applied Learning Steering Committee, and the Educational Leadership Team, as well as a review of the literature, the Applied Learning Framework:

- guides and supports faculty in providing rich experiential learning opportunities for students across all programs and disciplines;
- provides a common language for dialogue about applied learning, and;
- facilitates development of a shared understanding of what it means in the context of Camosun.

Central to the applied learning approach at Camosun is a focus on solid, learning-centred teaching strategies grounded in the scholarship of experiential education. The Applied Learning Framework has at its core an emphasis on excellence in teaching reflection, application and practice, and is based on eight principles of experiential learning as conceptualized by the National Society for Experiential Education. The Applied Learning Framework is conceptualized in the Applied Learning Model (see Figure 1, below), and also includes a community dimension, indicating the interconnectivity within and between the College, industry, and society.
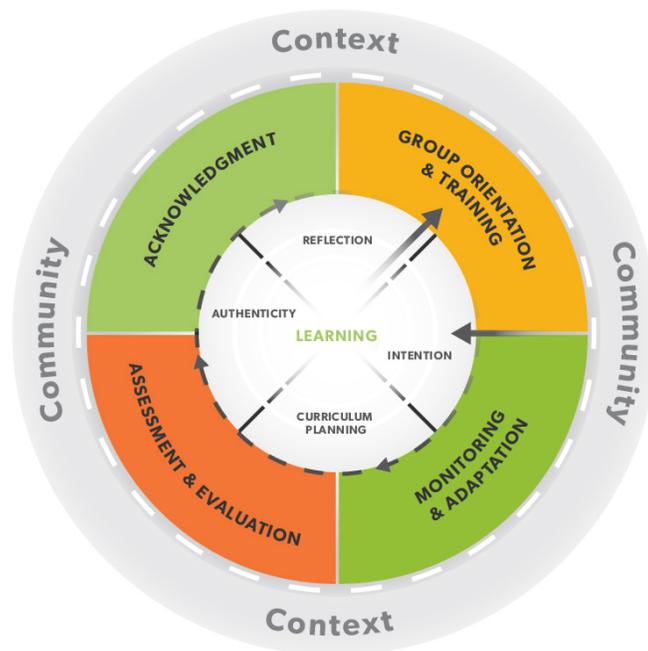

Figure 1: This model representing Camosun's approach to Applied Learning incorporates eight foundational principles of experiential education (National Society for Experiential Education) Link here for further details.

What is Applied Learning?

Applied learning refers to learning experiences that get learners thinking, collaborating, and communicating, and ultimately have them engage with and contribute to the world around them. These learning experiences take place in a range of contexts, including in the classroom, the workplace, the community, and on the land, and enable learners to apply and integrate theoretical knowledge, as well as personal, practical, and professional skills. Ideally the learning activities simulate real-world situations or are situated in a real world context.

Why Applied Learning?

Camosun has a long-standing tradition of, and reputation for, applied learning, including a wide range of classroom-, industry- and community-based opportunities for students to apply their knowledge and skills, from well-established co-op, work placement and internship programs, to classroom-based activities such as case studies, simulations and labs. The myriad forms applied learning takes at Camosun is captured in three main themes—Camosun Works, Camosun Creates, and Camosun Connects (see Figure 1, below.

Curriculum and programs that provide connections with work and the community enrich students' understanding of what is possible and facilitate the transition from school to work. Co-op programs, internships, apprenticeships and practicums further provide opportunities for creativity and innovation in classrooms, as well as to explore social innovation to solve real-world problems in community or industry. These experiences help students make meaning of their education.

The challenge is how to build on this success in a way that is meaningful for all stakeholders: students, faculty, the College, industry, and community. How can we enhance our ability to ensure graduates are able to meet the rapidly evolving and increasingly competitive job market, as well as their social and civic responsibilities? How can we best meet the growing demand for graduates with work-ready knowledge and skills? Or to best prepare them for further education? What is the best way to respond to technology and labour force data that indicates a shift in traditional models of applied learning, with increasing value on experience?

A renewed focus on applied learning, in the form of innovative applied research opportunities that connect students with small- and medium-sized enterprises, positions Camosun to take a fresh look at its current approach to applied learning.

Applied learning offers much more than straightforward transmission of knowledge. While content *informs* the learning activity, it is the *intentionality* of choosing applied learning as the teaching method that provides the environment for transformational learning to occur. Through engagement in quality applied learning activities students gain self-awareness, a deeper understanding of content, and an ability to work collaboratively using problem solving, as well as creative and critical thinking skills. Students also engage in critical reflection, a process that is key to "cementing" learning and enhancing application, transfer, retention, and recall. (Stanchfield, 2013).

Camosun Connects	• Conference Presentation • Community Service Learning • Social Innovation • International Experiences • Mentoring or Tutoring • Student Leadership	• Volunteer Opportunities • Land-based Education, • Case Study • Lab Debate • Field Trip
Camosun Works	• Apprenticeship • Co-op Education • Internship, • Practicum/Clinical Placement	
Camosun Creates	• Applied Research • Capstone Projects • Entrepreneurship • Interdisciplinary Education • Role-playing • Art-Poem • Art Experiment	

Table 1: Camosun Works, Camosun Creates, Camosun Connects. Examples of the types of applied learning opportunities available at Camosun.

Applied Learning at Camosun

Camosun College is a leader in applied learning, with a 25-year track record of co-operative education and work placement programs, alongside a range of other opportunities for students to apply their knowledge and skills in the context of the classroom and the community (See Table 1).

Today, Camosun is building on that tradition by introducing a framework for applied learning that will provide consistency across the College in terms of defining, developing, and delivering quality learning experiences. The Camosun Applied Learning Framework is the result of extensive consultation with stakeholders from across the College, focused on ways to expand applied learning opportunities for students across all schools and departments. The goal was to identify how best to ensure programs across the College are able to provide learning experiences and opportunities that enable students to develop the academic, personal, and professional skills that will lead to successful and meaningful careers, as well as to become socially responsible, engaged citizens.

What is Camosun's Approach to Applied Learning?

The Applied Learning Framework
Camosun's approach to applied learning is grounded in the educational theories of Kolb (2014), Dewey (1938), and Vygotsky (1978), leading thinkers on and proponents of learning through experience, as well as leading practices in applied learning. The Framework is represented by the Applied Learning Model

(See Figure 1), and is a conceptualization of an approach to teaching based on the eight principles of experiential learning as conceived by the National Society for Experiential Education (2015).

Emphasizing excellence in teaching reflection, application and practice, the Applied Learning Framework provides a common language for the College to talk about applied learning, and a sound guide for the development of curricular activities, courses, and programs grounded in educational theory and current leading practices in applied learning.

Reflection of our Values and Alignment with Camosun's Strategic Plan

Indigenization

The Applied Learning Framework aligns with Camosun's values, as well as with its Strategic Plan, including Indigenization as a foundation for all students' success. Applied learning complements the Indigenization of course content and student engagement processes. Please see *Appendix B: Indigenization* for examples of how Indigenous ways of teaching and learning can align with the principles of the Applied Learning Model.

Intercultural communication

The development of intercultural communication skills is critical in a world that is more interconnected than at any other point in history. Applied learning activities designed to engage faculty, domestic, and international students to, for example, problem solve as a team can deepen empathy and build relationships based on mutual respect.

Enhancing community engagement and civic mindedness

Applied learning provides opportunities for students to develop civic-mindedness through community engagement, among other ways, as in all programs and courses there is the potential to support and address real-world problems, issues, or questions, opportunities that help to develop skills required for work and further education.

The Intention of the Model

The Applied Learning Model (Figure 1) is based on eight principles of applied learning (See Appendix D for more detail) as identified by the National Society for Experiential Education:

1. Intention
2. Curriculum preparation and planning
3. Authenticity
4. Reflection
5. Group orientation and training
6. Monitoring and continuous improvement
7. Assessment and evaluation
8. Acknowledgement

Incorporating the College's curricular practices, guiding principles, concepts and approaches, and building on current practices, the Model provides a flexible, scalable framework for the consistent definition, development, and delivery of quality applied learning experiences. These experiences will in turn enhance the College's ability to enable students to develop the academic, personal, and

professional knowledge and skills that will lead to successful and meaningful careers, as well as the skills and attitudes required to be socially responsible, engaged citizens.

A key strength of the Model is the inclusion of critical curriculum design elements that enable faculty to facilitate meaningful learning experiences that allow students to meet program and course learning outcomes. While the Model provides structure in terms of design, it also allows the flexibility to meet discipline/interdisciplinary requirements, as well as for the integration of College values such as Indigenization, equity, diversity and inclusion, and sustainability.

Community
The Model includes the dimension of community, which is indicative of the interconnectivity that exists within and between the College, industry, and society, and acknowledges the potential impact of what we do beyond the College. It further highlights the need to seek out and nurture relationships with people across all sectors of our region and beyond to ensure curricular authenticity, relevance and currency.

The Eight Principles of Applied Learning
The eight principles on which Camosun's Framework of Applied Learning are based provide criteria for applied learning experiences and guidance for the development of learning activities. The first four principles describe the curriculum development process, including the preparation required for an applied learning activity. Reflection (Principle 4) is a critical part of each phase of applied learning experiences for both instructors and students, from planning through to assessment. The final four principles describe the student experience in the learning environment. The principle-based process can be applied at the activity, course, or program level. Cycling through the first four principles during the curriculum development phase is particularly important, in order to ensure that learning activities are grounded in intentional experience.
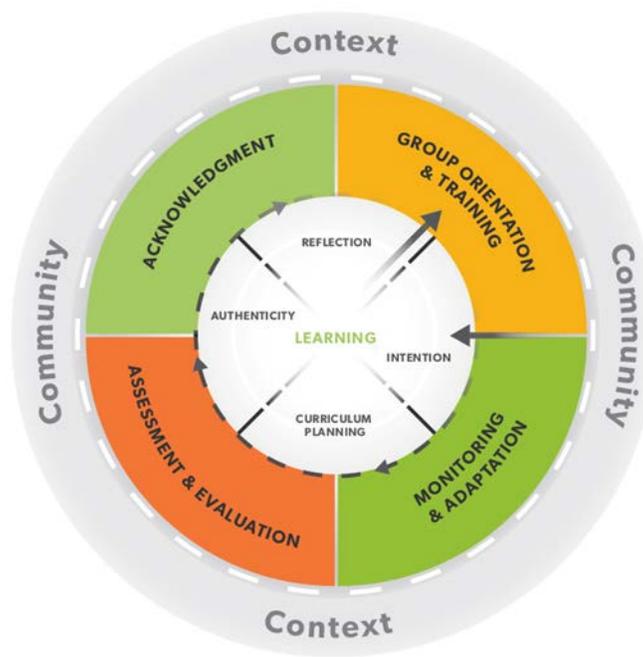
Appendix A: Applied Learning Steering Committee

Joan Yates, VP Student Experience

John Boraas, VP Education

Nancy Sly, Director, Applied Learning

Richard Gale, Director, Camosun Innovates

Peter Moroney, Director, Education Policy and Planning

Sybil Harrison, Director, Learning Services

Jamie VanDenbossche, Associate Director, Camosun Innovates

Richard Burman, Faculty and Student Engagement, Camosun Innovates

T.J. Babey, Associate Director, Applied Learning

Appendix B: Indigenization

Indigenization is a process we value at the College. The following diagram outlines how Martin Brokenleg's Circle of Courage aligns with the *Intention* sector of the Applied Learning Model. Faculty can incorporate Belonging, Mastery, Independence, and Generosity into any applied learning activity.

Belonging: The universal longing for human bonds is cultivated by relationships of trust.

Mastery: The inborn thirst for learning is cultivated; by learning to cope with the world we can succeed.

Independence: Free will is cultivated by responsibility, leading to empowerment to make decisions.
Generosity: Character is cultivated by concern for others.
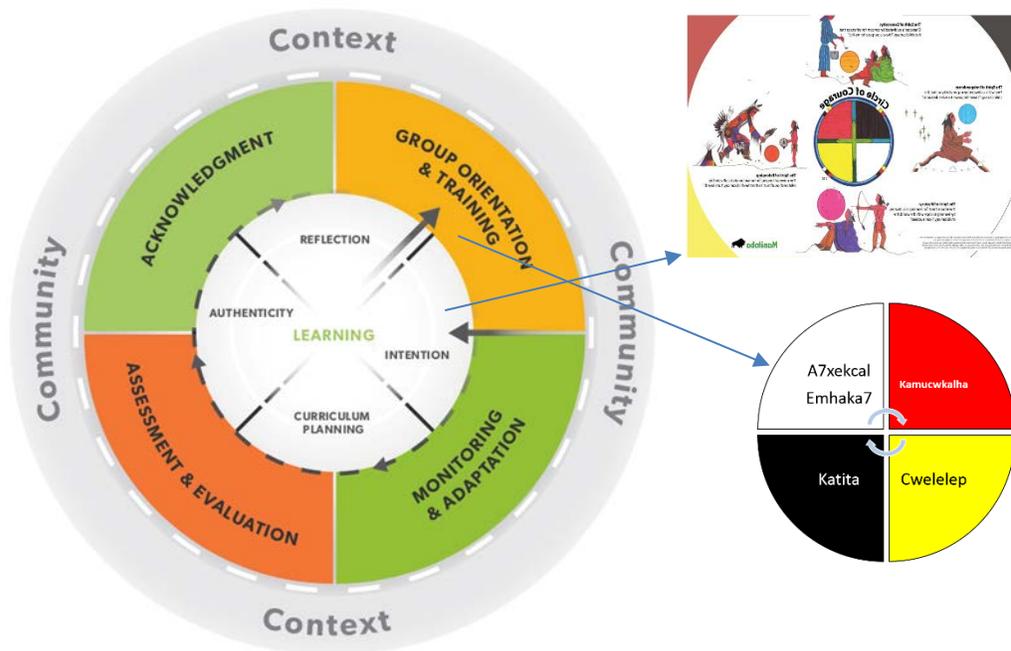
Lorna William's has generously shared the six principles of learning from the Lil'wat Nation. The Lil'wat Principles of Learning augment the eight principles of applied learning by focusing attention on the relationship of the learner to:

- themselves and their learning process
- the other learners in the course
- the community of learners
- the common group purpose.

They can be incorporated into the applied learning experience under the *Orientation and Training* sector. This Indigenizes the learning process and provides a philosophical structure for the activity that considers the needs of the individual learner as well as those of the group.

- In the learning process and in the relationship between the learner and any facilitator(s) of learning, there is a mutual responsibility.

- All parties are empowered to achieve the principles which follow. Yet, at the same time, the facilitator(s) of learning are expected to take the lead in ensuring both the quality of the learning experience and of the work produced, and in supporting the learner to use the principles, which underlie the pedagogy of experiential education.

Appendix C: Lil'wat Principles of Learning

Kamúcwkalha - acknowledging the felt energy indicating group attunement and the emergence of a common group purpose.

Celhcelh - each person being responsible for their own and others learning, always seeking learning opportunities.

Kat'il'a - seeking spaces of stillness and quietness amidst our busyness and quest for knowledge.

A7xekcal - valuing our own expertise and considering how it helps the entire community beyond ourselves.

Cwelelep - recognizing the need to sometimes be in a place of dissonance and uncertainty, so as to be open to new learning.

Emhaka7 - encouraging each of us to do the best we can at each task given to us.

(Lorna Williams, 2008)

Appendix D

Eight Principles of Applied Learning

Curriculum Planning
1. **Intentional**: All parties must be clear from the outset why experience is the chosen approach to the learning that is to take place and to the knowledge that will be demonstrated, applied or result from it. Intention represents the purposefulness that enables experience to become knowledge and, as such, is deeper than the goals, objectives, and activities that define the experience.
2. **Curricular Preparedness and Planning**: Teachers must ensure they enter the experience with sufficient foundation to support a successful learning experience. They must also focus from the earliest stages of the experience/program on the identified intentions, adhering to them as goals, objectives and activities are defined. The resulting plan should include those intentions and be referred to on a regular basis by all parties. At the same time, it should be flexible enough to allow for adaptations as the experience unfolds.
3. **Authenticity**: The experience must have a real world context and/or be useful and meaningful in reference to an applied setting or situation. This means that it should be designed in concert with those who will be affected by or use it, or in response to a real situation.
4. **Reflection**: Reflection is the element that transforms a simple experience to a learning experience. For knowledge to be discovered and internalized the learner must test assumptions and hypotheses about the outcomes of decisions and actions taken, then weigh the outcomes against past learning and future implications. This reflective process is integral to all phases of experiential learning, from identifying intention and choosing the experience, to considering preconceptions and observing how they change as the experience unfolds. Reflection is also an essential tool for adjusting the experience and measuring outcomes.
Student Experience
5. **Orientation, Training, and Engagement**: For the full value of the experience to be accessible to both the learner and the learning facilitator(s), and to any involved organizational partners, it is essential that they be prepared with important background information about each other and about the context and environment in which the experience will operate. Once that baseline of knowledge is addressed, ongoing structured development opportunities should also be included to expand the learner's appreciation of the context and skill requirements of their work.
6. **Monitoring, Reflection, and Adaptation**: Any learning activity will be dynamic and changing, and the parties involved all bear responsibility for ensuring that the experience, as it is in process, continues to provide the richest learning possible, while affirming the learner. It is important that there be a feedback loop related to learning intentions and quality objectives and that the structure of the experience be sufficiently flexible to permit change in response to what that feedback suggests. While reflection provides input for new hypotheses and knowledge based in documented experience, other strategies for observing progress against intentions and objectives should also be in place. Monitoring and adaptation represent the formative assessment tools.

7. **Assessment and Evaluation**: Outcomes and processes should be systematically documented with regard to initial intentions and quality outcomes. Assessment is a means to develop and refine the specific learning goals and quality objectives identified during the planning stages of the experience, while evaluation provides comprehensive data about the experiential process as a whole and whether it has met the intentions which suggested it.

8. **Acknowledgment:** Recognition of learning and impact occur throughout the experience by way of the reflective and monitoring processes and through reporting, documentation and sharing of accomplishments. All parties to the experience should be included in the recognition of progress and accomplishment. Culminating documentation and celebration of learning and impact help provide closure and sustainability to the experience.

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