

Innovation in Experiential Education: Building Communities of Practice



**Western Winter Workshop
January 3 – 5, 2007
Tucson, Arizona**

Led by Martha's Vineyard Experiential Education Summer Institute, College of Arts and Sciences, Northeastern University (see comments below from participants)

Overview

Experiential Education is becoming an increasingly important component of college education. Using the programmatic interests of participants as a guide, this workshop will introduce the concept of *Communities of Practice* in experiential education and actually develop them across participating institutions. Prior to the Workshop, you will join a virtual team to meet and discuss common issues. Once arriving at the workshop you will have the opportunity to engage in *one-on-one* interactions with participants and workshop leaders and in *facilitated, learning-team dialogues* on key issues. The workshop itself will provide a model of a community of practice with whom to share plans, activities, and assessment tools well into the future. Participation in this workshop will be limited in order to form small teams and experience our theme of building communities.

Tell us to reserve your place

Fill out the *online form* (available at www.cea.neu.edu/institutes/tucsonform.html) to indicate your interest in joining us and to reserve your place.

World Leader in Experiential Education

Northeastern University, a private research institution located in Boston, is a world leader in experiential education. Building on its signature cooperative education program, Northeastern links excellence in classroom learning with workplace experience. For five consecutive years, Northeastern has earned *U.S. News & World Report's* top ranking for programs that combine classroom learning with real-world experience.

Experienced Workshop Leaders

Faculty for the workshop will be drawn from the Faculty of the *Martha's Vineyard Summer Institute on Experiential Education* (www.cea.neu.edu/institutes) held each July. The Workshop faculty are leaders in experiential programs and academic initiatives. They combine scholarship with implementation and leadership expertise.



**KEYNOTE WORKSHOP LEADER
ETIENNE WENGER**

“Learning in Communities of Practice: a Journey of the self”

Etienne Wenger is a globally recognized leader in the field of communities of practice. He coauthored the book *Situated Learning*, in which the term “community of practice” was coined, and later wrote *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity*, which lays out a theory of learning based on the concept of communities of practice. This theory views learning as an act of membership in a “community of practice” and therefore as a journey of the self. Most recently, he co-authored *Cultivating Communities of Practice: A Guide to Managing Knowledge*, which is written for practitioners in organizations. He was featured by *Training* magazine as one of sixteen emerging visionaries in the area of corporate training. Wenger helps organizations apply his ideas through consulting, workshops, public speaking, and courses (both online and face-to-face). He is founder of CPsquare, a community of practice on communities of practice, and “Learning for a small planet,” a broad research project to further develop the theory and explore its implications. (For more information, see www.ewenger.com)

Who Should Attend

Administrators, coordinators, and faculty members interested in experiential education and want to:

- Find ways to strengthen the integration of internships and other forms of experiential education with the academic curriculum.
- Increase academic faculty engagement in experiential education including alternative models for involving students and faculty in joint research projects.
- Know more about various models of Service-Learning, and how they can benefit your university and community partners as well as compliment other forms of experiential education
- Increase student and institutional awareness of experiential education opportunities and increase the participation of underrepresented students even if you have limited resources.
- Better articulate for students the value of international education experiences.
- Explore the concept of Communities of Practice as a model for expanding participation in and enriching experiential education across both academic administrative units and the university-community divide.

Join us in Tucson. Participate with your colleagues from other institutions and Northeastern University to find solutions and build a community of practice to help you put those solutions into action.

Workshop Goals

- Build a community of practice
- Enhance your knowledge of best practices in a range of experiential education programs such as Internships/Co-op, Service-Learning, Student Leadership Development, Undergraduate Research and Community-Based Research

- Gain new insights on issues such as assessment, planning, and reflection activities that cross the boundaries of specific program types
- Return to your campus “fired up” and ready to go with action steps and strategies to enrich experiential learning in your program(s) and your school.

Overview of the Workshop Schedule

January 3rd: Gather at 5:00 PM for brief introductions of participants and form community of practice teams based on cross-institutional interests. Enjoy a banquet dinner with your community of practice team and workshop team facilitator.

January 4th:

Morning: Join Etienne Wenger in the morning for his keynote presentation and discussion on Communities of Practice. Discuss with your team areas at your school for possible action steps and begin your work as a community of practice.

Afternoon: Continue work with your team. Participate in workshops on experiential education topics. There will be two sets of workshops. One set of workshops will focus on specific experiential education program types such as Internships/Co-op, Service-Learning, Undergraduate Research, Study Abroad; etc. A second set of workshops will focus on issues such as assessment, planning, reflection; etc. Participants will engage in one workshop of each type. Specific topics for the workshops will be based on feedback obtained during the fall from participants.

Evening: Enjoy dinner on your own followed by informal conversation with participants and consultation with Workshop Faculty.

January 5th

Morning: Develop project action steps within your community including action steps for your unit/school, taking advantage of information gleaned from the prior workshops, support from your community members, and ongoing knowledge provided by the Workshop Faculty. Impromptu learning sessions can be organized within and across communities, as desired.

Afternoon: Discuss with the whole group building communities of practice and content areas and strategies emerging across groups. Share your learning and action steps through cross-community interactions. Debrief on the workshop and provide your feedback and your suggestions for the future.

Adjourn by 3:00 PM.

Note: The registration fee for the workshop includes the welcome reception and banquet on the 3rd, and on the 4th and 5th, continental breakfast, lunch plus beverages and light snacks during morning and afternoon breaks.

Great Location

Join us at the beautiful *Westward Look Resort* in Tucson. The Westward Look Resort features an 80-acre oasis home to an amazing variety of birds, plants, and wildlife. The resort menu features locally grown, organic produce. Horseback riding, hiking, pleasant walks, a desert gallery, and a telescope for viewing the night sky are additional features of this outstanding resort.

Tell us to reserve your place

Fill out the online form at the address below to let us know your areas of interest. There is no obligation. We will keep you up to date on plans for the workshop program and information about registration. The cost of the workshop, \$975, includes a welcome reception and banquet on the 3rd of January, and continental breakfast, lunch, and breaks on the 4th and 5th. Help shape the workshop. Participation is limited, so reserve your place by filling out the online form

www.cea.neu.edu/institutes/tucsonform.html

Comments from participants in the 2006 Martha's Vineyard Summer Institute on Experiential Education

The Experiential Learning Workshop combined the opportunity to share innovative ideas and explore new possibilities to enrich student and faculty learning in an energizing community of practice. (Richard Olesen, Camosun College)

Our team came with an idea and left with a plan ready to be put into action. Northeastern faculty provided expertise and facilitation. The Institute has been a productive experience, and I know I have developed professionally and my university will benefit! (Jill Fox, University of Texas at Arlington)

One of the most useful professional development events I have attended. The length of the program, the content, the balance of plenaries, workshops and team projects, all came together in a very effective outcome. Many thanks! (John Meredith, Camosun College)

The Institute provided the opportunity to share questions and answers facing Experiential Learning today. The result was a dynamic synergy between participants. (Brian Rowe, George Washington University)

The Institute provided an environment in which our team could revitalize and refocus the energy necessary to devise a plan that has a potential to bring about the change we desire on our campus. (Victoria Farrar-Meyers, University of Texas at Arlington)

Northeastern has provided a well-designed incubator where campus teams can work through a whole range of issues related to experiential education on their campuses. The collaborative problem-solving atmosphere models the best features of experiential education. (Judy Krutky, Baldwin-Wallace College)

The Institute was so very helpful in providing a context that allowed us to see that our questions and confusions were not unique to us and in giving us the space and the support of a wonderful facilitator all of which made it possible for us to reach clarity and consensus and to leave with definite steps towards success. (Susan Oldrieve, Baldwin-Wallace College)

Our facilitator was a tremendous help in refining our plan of action. We were particularly appreciative of the opportunity to meet colleagues from across North America that are facing the same issues that we are. (Greg Hale, University of Texas Arlington)