

IV. Experiential Learning Initiative (ELI)

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Experiential Learning Degree Requirement

The Experiential Learning Initiative (ELI) is a common learning requirement that affects students who matriculated in the fall of 2015 and after. ELI-approved experiences include the following categories: Internships/Practica, Service Learning, Leadership, Off-Campus Programs and Undergraduate Research.

ELI provides students with a structured framework to engage their chosen experience in a way that leads to enhanced self-awareness, career preparation and community engagement opportunities. The ELI aims to teach and prepare students to articulate their “Messiah story” and the tangible impact of their experiences in a way that is meaningful to prospective employers, graduate programs and their communities.

- Students are introduced to the ELI through the CCC course.
- Students must have completed a minimum of **24 credits** prior to completing an approved experience to fulfill their ELI requirement. For transfer students, credits from other institutions will be considered toward the 24 credit requirement.
- Students should check their degree audit and also consult their academic advisor on whether or not a requirement in their major fulfills their ELI requirement.
- *Prior experiences that occur outside of Messiah are not eligible to meet the ELI requirement.*

While students only need to complete one of the experiences to fulfill their ELI requirement, they are encouraged, as manageable, to consider doing more than one of these experiences.

ELI experiences include several distinctive features:

- At the beginning of the experience, students develop learning objectives based on the common ELI reflection prompts.
- At the conclusion of the experience, students reflect on the outcomes of their stated learning objectives, and create a “deliverable” showcasing the “So what?” of their experience in a way that is contextualized for a targeted external audience (employer, graduate school, etc.). Sample deliverables include a résumé, ePortfolio, personal website and LinkedIn profile.
- Students receive feedback from their ELI advisor on the establishment of and progress toward learning objectives/outcomes at least three times during their experience.

As a result of engaging in the ELI, students will be able to articulate the tangible impact of their experience on their academic learning, personal and professional development, and community contributions.

ELI Options

(Note: Certain types of experiences have been revised to include the components of ELI, thus meeting the ELI requirement. For others, particularly department-based research and practica, a corresponding proposal must be submitted to and approved by the respective ELI advisory team.)

Internships/Practica

- All credit-bearing internships that are supervised through the centralized Internship Program in the Career and Professional Development Center (CPDC) have been updated to include the ELI components, thereby meeting the ELI requirement.
- Academic departments interested in offering practicum courses. If approved for ELI, department offers practica as ELI-embedded (all students enrolled). More information about ELI practica, including the faculty proposal form, appears at: https://www.messiah.edu/info/22286/eli_experiences/3118/eli_internshippracticum_options
- ELI advisors for this experience include CPDC staff for internships and faculty supervising ELI-approved practica.

Service Learning

- Beginning in 2016–2017, all officially-designated service learning courses will have been revised to incorporate ELI components, thereby meeting the ELI requirement.
- Faculty who wish to teach a service learning experience must complete the ELI Service Learning Proposal Form at https://www.messiah.edu/info/22286/eli_experiences/3117/eli_service_learning_options
- ELI advisors for this experience include faculty teaching ELI-approved service learning courses.

Off-Campus Programs

- All experiences through the Intercultural Office have been updated to include the ELI components, thereby meeting the ELI requirement.
- ELI advisors for this experience include Intercultural Office staff and faculty overseeing cross-cultural courses.
- More information about options in this area appear at https://www.messiah.edu/info/20698/off-campus_programs/3116/eli_off-campus_program_information

Leadership

- Approximately 160 leadership positions have incorporated the ELI components, and therefore meet the ELI requirement.
- Students can find the list of pre-approved positions at https://www.messiah.edu/info/20885/student_involvement_and_leadership_programs/3119/eli_leadership_options. Instructions for registering for an ELI leadership experience are included.
- ELI advisors for this experience include educators who supervise ELI-approved leadership positions.

Undergraduate Research

- Students must communicate to their supervising faculty member their interest in having their research project fulfill the ELI requirement.
- Faculty who desire to deliver a research experience to meet a student's ELI requirement must complete the ELI Approval Form at https://www.messiah.edu/info/22286/eli_experiences/3258/eli_options_for_undergraduate_research.
- ELI advisors for this experience include faculty supervising ELI-approved research.

Advising ELI

Experience	Embedded or Optional**	Minimum GPA	Registration Notes
Internship*	Embedded	Yes	No additional steps needed beyond course registration INTE 391 or 394.
Practicum*	Embedded for Approved Experiences	No	No additional steps needed beyond course registration for appropriate practica, which must have been previously approved.
Leadership*	Embedded	Yes - varies	Register for ELIR 020 in spring of year in which leadership complete. (Permission of advisory team co-chairs required.) Note:December grads register in fall.
Off-Campus Semester Long Programs*	Embedded	Yes	No additional steps needed beyond course registration
Cross-Cultural Courses*	Embedded	No	No additional steps needed beyond course registration
Research	Optional	Varies	Register for ELIR 040 in semester during which project will be completed, in addition to research course, if credit bearing. (Permission of advisory team co-chairs required.) Currently approved options within specific departments appear on page 5.
Service-Learning*	Embedded	No	No additional steps needed beyond course registration

*Requires advance application for experience by student. Please see www.messiah.edu/eli for more information about each particular experience type.

** All students participating in embedded ELI options will complete the necessary components. Students pursuing experiences which are optional in nature, must have the experiences approved by the relevant advisory team.

ELI advisory team co-chair contacts may be found [here](#).

ELI-Approved Research

ELI-Approved Research Experiences for 2018-19

- NUTR 425 + 426 *

*Two course sequence, registration for tracking course in conjunction with second course.

IMPORTANT NOTE

Many of the ELI experiences have embedded the signature ELI learning components into the experience so that they are not optional even if a student has met his/her requirement. These experiences include: internships through the Career and Professional Development Center; semester-long study abroad programs; cross-cultural courses; service learning courses; approved student leadership positions and some department practica and research courses/ experiences that have been approved to meet ELI.

Students participating in more than one of these experiences may inquire as to why they need to complete these requirements multiple times. It's important for advisors to articulate the value of this approach:

- Research supports that intentional reflection-based pedagogy for experiential learning helps students get the most from their experience.
- Every experience is unique and therefore should have unique learning objectives and outcomes – setting new goals and reporting on them annually is very common practice in the professional world.
- For students participating in the *same* experience more than once (e.g. being an RA two years in a row), this provides an opportunity to advance the level of intentional skill development and practice articulating the transferability of those skills.