Assessment & Evaluation in Experiential Education

An Honors Thesis for the
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I. Executive Summary

Experiential Education is a pedagogical approach that facilitates student learning through reflection on active experience. Each student constructs knowledge based on his or her own interpretation of an experience through his or her unique frame of reference; consequently, each student's learning outcomes are personal and varied. Given this core aspect of experiential education, assessment and evaluation of student learning within an experiential education program is challenging.

My introduction to assessment within the context of experiential education occurred at the Courageous Sailing Center. I was tasked to develop an evaluation strategy to measure the impact of the 2012 Summer Youth Sailing Programs on students. As the Courageous vision states, the Youth Programs aim to provide students with both the technical skills of sailing as well as the opportunity to develop character skills.

Courageous Vision: *To prepare Boston's diverse youth for responsible and confident futures through active discovery of sailing on their city's harbor.*

In line with this vision statement, the evaluation focused specifically on measuring the impact of the program on the development of the following character skills: Confidence, Responsibility, Respect for Diversity and Preparedness for the Future.

There were some initial challenges in developing the assessment tools and implementation strategy. First, although the development of these character skills is part of the Courageous mission, there was no explicit curriculum to encourage or facilitate students' development of these skills. Second, I did not have prior knowledge regarding the theoretical foundations of experiential education nor the role of assessment within experiential education and was therefore unprepared in many respects to develop the assessment strategy.

Ultimately, I developed a series of assessment tools to measure the impact on the students at the end of the program. Although the assessment tools were successfully implemented and the evaluation report provided evidence that the students had, in fact, developed these character skills at Courageous, I was not convinced that the students had been provided the opportunity to internalize these lessons. My experience at Courageous, explored in Section II, sparked my interest in experiential education and how assessment and evaluation can be implemented in experiential education.

In Section III, I will explore the theoretical foundations of experiential education as well as the development of historical and contemporary models of experiential education. The challenges and complexities of operationalizing experiential education will be identified and addressed. In Section IV, I will introduce basic structures of assessment and evaluation. Based on the theoretical framework in Section III, I explore what assessment and evaluation structure best supports the practical and pedagogical approach of experiential education. Utilizing the theoretical framework of experiential education and the assessment and evaluation framework, I will critique my initial evaluation approach at Courageous in Section V. Finally, I will propose a new assessment and evaluation strategy for Courageous that will support Courageous as an experiential education program.

II. Courageous Case Study Context

Brief History of Courageous Sailing

A brief history of Courageous Sailing provides insight into the foundation of the organization's current social mission and operations. Courageous Sailing was founded in 1987 by Harry McDonough, an avid sailor and tenacious advocate for youth sailing

programs in Boston. McDonough, know by students fondly as "Skipper" and by donors fearfully as "Hurricane Harry," brought his enthusiasm and persistent nature to the establishment of the Courageous Sailing Program. McDonough's approach to teaching sailing, developed over 20 years of experience, was based upon the principles of discipline, responsibility and integrity (Devine, 1987). These principles influenced the foundation of the Courageous Sailing program.

In 1986, McDonough began gathering support for a 10-week formal youth sailing program for youths aged 8-20. Based in the Charlestown Navy Yard, the program would serve the diverse youth of Boston. As McDonough asserted, "this is for our kids, from Roxbury all the way around to Charlestown" (Chamberlain, 1987). In a letter to the owner of the *Courageous*, an America's Cup award winning yacht, McDonough outlined the foundational mission and purpose of the Courageous Sailing Center:

> *"The sailing school is being designed for the youth of Boston – to take this long neglected city resource, our beautiful harbor, and use it to build the skills and character of our children… the things sailing can give to boys and girls are those that build them to men and women. It teaches responsibility, self-reliance, confidence in learned skills, incentive to do better, the ability to work together and an appreciation of the beauty, indeed the forces, of nature."*
>
> *"We have given ourselves a mighty and important mission… to help the next generation of Boston boys and girls. Boys and girls who are locked into ethnic neighborhoods and often do not know or trust those who are different from themselves. Learning sailing on the harbor, which touches all neighborhoods, can bring them together."*
>
> *"I am going to teach kids how to sail instead of hate. Im going to teach how to get in a sailboat instead of on drugs…I don't care if a kid is black, brown, yellow or purple…They are going to have a home here. They are going to come here, go out on the ocean and discover that they can live together and like each other. There's no hate out there. They're going to learn something about life here, so help me God."*

McDonough clearly asserted his belief in the power of a dynamic sailing experience to teach valuable and formative lessons to youth. He also identified the various character skills one can develop through sailing. McDonough's vision continues to be the foundation of Courageous as an experiential education program and is reflected in the current social mission of the organization.

Courageous Today: Mission, Vision and Youth Program Description

In the 25 years since its establishment, Courageous sailing programs have grown and changed to address challenges and to take advantage of new opportunities. Consequently the mission and vision have been reviewed and revised over time to reflect the organization's intended impact ("About us").

Mission

> *Courageous Sailing transforms lives through sailing programs that inspire learning, personal growth and leadership.*

Vision

> *Courageous Sailing is a community that embraces sailing as a platform for life-long learning, personal growth and leadership; a center of sailing excellence committed to removing barriers to access for all Boston youth, the public and people with physical and intellectual challenges.*

Youth Program Description

In 2012, 357 students participated in the Courageous Sailing Summer Youth Program (SYP) at three locations across Boston. The Charlestown location operates the primary youth program from mid-July through mid-August. There are four levels, called Steps, through which students progress as they learning sailing skills ("Summer youth program"):

Step 1: Introduction to Sailing
Step 2: Beginner Sailing
Step 3: Intermediate Sailing
Step 4: Advanced Sailing

Throughout the summer there are six 1-week sessions for Step 1 students and two 3-week sessions for students in Steps 2-4. After completing Step 4 at the age of 15, students can apply to the Instructor-in-Training (IIT) program. Through the IIT program, students continue to develop their technical sailing skills and leadership skills. The IITs have the potential to be the future staff members of Courageous and are an integral part of the Courageous community.

Jamaica Pond, located in the Jamaica Plain community, serves students of various ages and sailing skill levels through six 1-week sessions. The JP location teaches the equivalent of the sailing skills presented in Steps 1 and 2 at the Charlestown location. Courageous operates the youth program and boathouse rentals on behalf of Boston Parks and Recreation. The third Courageous community is part of Camp Harborview – a city-sponsored camp for inner-city youth located on Long Island in the harbor. All campers have the opportunity to sail for about three hours total throughout their two-week session. Additionally, campers can choose sailing as their "club-time" activity to spend an additional hour on the water every day. This program teaches the equivalent sailing skills of Steps 1 through 3 depending on the initial skill level of the student. The Courageous program is an important addition to the dynamic learning community at Camp Harborview.

Target Population

Consistent with McDonough's initial vision, Courageous strives to be inclusive today. Courageous aspires to engage students from different socio-economic levels,

ethnicities and races as well as neighborhoods throughout Boston. A diverse sailing community benefits all students by presenting the opportunity for all of them to meet kids from backgrounds different than their own. Courageous recruits students through partnerships with local elementary schools, such as Warren Prescott and Harvard Kent, as well as through partnerships with local youth organizations such as the Charlestown YMCA. As an inclusive youth sailing program, Courageous sailing attempts to address the common exclusion of lower SES youth from most sailing programs due to the high cost. Until 2005, Courageous Sailing maintained the mantra of "free sailing for the children of Boston" that McDonough championed. In 2008, Courageous changed their tuition policy to a sliding pay scale based on household income:

Household Income	***Tuition Fees***
Income < $65,000	$10
$65,000< Income < $135,000	$225
Income > $135,000	$525

The new system was implemented to address poor attendance that plagued the youth program. Partly because the program was free, many high SES families were not committed to consistent attendance - the Courageous program was viewed as a day-to-day back up option to other camps and family vacations. The implementation of the pay scale has improved attendance of students from the top family income bracket because it required an appropriate buy-in on behalf of the family (Henderson, K. Interview, 7-19-2012).

Assessment Strategies Fall 2011 to Summer 2012

In the Fall of 2011, Courageous partnered with Inspire, a non-profit consulting group sponsored by the consulting firm Monitor, to determine the current social impact of

the youth sailing programs on the students as well as the young adults on staff. This partnership signified a shift in the organization's priorities. From 2007-2010, Youth Director Kate Henderson had implemented rigorous safety protocols, staff expectations and a professional culture that had previously been lacking.[1] After years of developing the youth program's organizational capacities, Courageous had the opportunity to focus on improving the fulfillment of their social mission. Additionally, between 2010 and 2011, competition for philanthropic funds increased as a result of the financial crisis; consequently, funders have placed greater emphasis on quantitative and qualitative data to demonstrate the social programs' impact. This funding climate further motivated Courageous to investigate the extent of their social impact (Henderson, K. Interview, 7-19-2012).

The Inspire consultants set out to determine the baseline of impact – what impact were Courageous programs having on the students and young staff members? Through a series of assessments including 40 interviews with stakeholders – students, parents, staff and board members – Inspire produced a list of four character skills that represent the social value and impact of the Courageous youth program (Inspire Consultants, 2011):

CONFIDENCE	- Able to complete tasks effectively and make decisions in a resolute manner - Convinced of the value that they bring to their crew, to their relationships, to the workplace
PREPAREDNESS FOR THE FUTURE	- Understand consequences of actions - Motivated to plan for the future and ability to execute those plans - Ready to be a functional, contributing member of society - Flexibility and adaptability in challenging situations

[1] Examples of safety protocols include: stricter life jacket rules for students and staff; all staff that operates motor boats must be Level 1 keelboat certified; staff must record any damage to boats in the Repair Log; staff must also record any student or staff injuries in the Injury Log; senior staff members are also required to record daily float plans that detail each their Step's boating trajectory; finally, Kate developed an emergency protocol safety handbook.

RESPONSIBILITY	- Responsible for themselves and other crewmembers - Care for and feel a responsibility to help others including their crew, community members and the environment
DIVERSITY	- Program is representative of the diverse youth of Boston - Able to communicate and work effectively with others regardless of diverse backgrounds

The Inspire consultants used these four skill areas to construct a vision statement that represented the current Courageous approach to social impact (Inspire Consultants, 2011):

> ***To prepare Boston's diverse youth for responsible and confident futures through active discovery of sailing on their city's harbor.***

This vision and the four character skills echo McDonough's original commitment to teaching Boston's youth life skills while encouraging a sense of community amongst them.

Both the historical roots of Courageous and the Inspire report influenced the assessment strategy that I developed to evaluate the impact of the 2012 Summer Youth Program. Unfortunately, I lacked the theoretical knowledge of experiential education necessary in order to construct an evaluation strategy that integrated into and effectively assessed the experiential sailing program. In order to critique my initial evaluation attempt as well as to propose an improved evaluation strategy, it is essential to understand the theoretical foundations of experiential education. The following section details the theoretical foundations and introduces historical and contemporary models of experiential education.

III. Literature Review: Experiential Education

Defining Experiential Education

The general consensus, throughout the literature on experiential education, is that it is challenging to define. This is, in part, because individuals experience and interpret any event through their own unique perspective; therefore, each individual will learn in his or her own unique way while sharing a similar experience (Beard & Wilson, 2006, p.16-21) (Kolb, 1984, p. 61-65). If learning outcomes are inherently subjective, how, then, can an educative experience be constructed? What constitutes an educative experience? How and what is one meant to learn through an experience?

The field of experiential education has historically been experience rich but theory poor (Roberts, 2012, p. 14). Therefore, over the past 30 years there has been a concerted effort to explore a definition of experiential education in order to better understand how, as an educational pedagogy, it can best be implemented. There is a hesitation, however, to restrict experiential education with the boundaries of a definition. Experiential education, as an educational theory, can be applied to a wide variety of experiences including "cross-cultural homestays, community service projects, work-study programs, internships [and] cooperative education within classrooms" (Chapman, McPhee & Proudman, 1992, p. 4). Although adventure education is commonly associated with experiential education, physically active experiences do not inherently constitute experiential education. Instead, the experience must be student-centered and engage the student's interests physically, emotionally, philosophically, intellectually or otherwise (Chapman et al., 1992, p. 4-6). Therefore, it is misguided to restrict or identify a specific "type of experiential education" when experiential education is a "unique teaching and learning process that is applicable in many learning environments" (Chapman et al., 1992, p. 8).

Furthermore, an engaging experience alone does not constitute experiential education. The experience must be contextualized by an intentional teaching process that structures and facilitates students' experiences and reflections. This teaching process is the distinguishing factor between experiential education and experiential learning**.** Although these terms have been, and continue to be, used interchangeably, there is an important distinction between experiential education and simply 'learning by doing.' Experiential learning is "the process of change that occurs for the individual" (Itin, 1999, p. 136). As will be further explicated below through Kolb's cycle, experiential learning is an individual's learning process of creating meaning from an experience. This process of knowledge construction does not require any facilitation and can occur when an individual has any experience.

Experiential education, on the other hand, is best understood as a transactive teaching process, with intended learning outcomes, through which an individual's experiential learning process can be structured and facilitated (Breunig, 2005, p. 79). Through the transactive teaching process, educators and students exchange information and influence one another's knowledge construction (Itin, 1999, p. 136). The intended learning outcomes can be a set of facts, skills, or character traits that the teacher is trying to present to the student through the experience. An experiential education teaching process therefore consists of 1) the construction of an engaging experience, 2) the facilitation of student reflection about the experience, and 3) both of which are designed with the intended learning outcomes in mind. Designing and implementing this teaching process, however, is no simple task. Because of the subjective nature of experiential learning, teachers must respect and take into consideration each individual student's construction

of knowledge in addition to the intended learning outcomes. The complexities of the experiential education teaching process and challenging role of the teacher are further explicated below through the Diamond Model.

Regardless of the distinction between experiential learning and experiential education, it remains challenging to define and to operationalize experiential education. Therefore, rather than seeking a narrow definition, the conceptualization of experiential education as a philosophy or a field "allows for a much broader discussion of the range of approaches and strategies that can be utilized and how they can be linked within this philosophy framework" (Itin, 1999, p. 145). Within the field of experiential education there is no expectation of "homogeneity or consensus," rather it is a "common space within which questions are raised, answers are sought and the overall inquiry is engaged" (Roberts, 2012, p. 6). The pursuit of a definition within this space is an important exercise that encourages educators to reflect upon the theoretical framework as well as their own implementation of experiential education (Chapman et al., 1992, p. 8). Rather than a restrictive definition, that delineates whether or not a program is technically experiential education, the boundaries of the field are based on "common intellectual roots" (Roberts, 2012, p. 6). Therefore, in order to gain a better understanding of Courageous as an experiential education program as well as how to assess learning with experiential education, it is essential to explore the common theoretical roots and models.

Epistemological Roots of Experiential Education

Although the field of experiential education has primarily focused on methodology and practice, it has strong philosophical foundations in constructivism and transformative learning. These epistemological roots distinguish experiential education from traditional "banking education" in which the teacher *deposits* objective and finite knowledge to the

students. Within this traditional form of education, the teacher student relationship is primarily narrative rather than transactive; the teacher, as the narrator, "fills" the students, as the objects, with knowledge. Banking education, in its extreme form, is implemented through rote memorization of facts; consequently, students do not develop creativity, curiosity or critical thinking skills (Freire, 2000, p. 52-53). Constructivism and transformative learning, on the other hand, conceptualize knowledge as subjective and constructed by individuals through their unique frame of reference.

Constructivism

Constructivist theory defines learning based on the conceptualization of knowledge as a meaning making *process* rather than a *product* (Ultanrr, 2012, p. 196). Through this lens, "individuals create or construct their own new understandings or knowledge through the interaction of what they already believe and the ideas, events and activities with which they come into contact" (Ultanrr, 2012, p. 195). Learning and knowledge are, therefore, respected as subjective and personal rather than objective and finite.

Educational constructivists in the late 19th to mid 20th centuries, including Dewey, Piaget and Montessori, applied this conceptualization of knowledge and learning to education. Rather than a top-down model with the teacher imposing "objective knowledge" upon students, constructivists promote a democratic classroom in which students actively engage in their own individual creation of knowledge (Ultanrr, 2012 p. 200). Teachers facilitate student learning by encouraging students to "question, challenge and formulate their own ideas, opinions and conclusions" (Ultanrr, 2012, p. 195). The ideal constructivist learning environment is a student-centered classroom focused on

collaborative learning through both individual and group work (Ultanrr, 2012, p. 205-206).

Therefore, according to constructivism, knowledge is pluralistic, with many conceptions of "fact" and correct answers. This conception of knowledge is essential to experiential education as each student constructs unique lessons through reflection on their experience. Teachers must acknowledge and respect the pluralism of fact and knowledge within experiential education (Chapman et al., 1992, p. 6). The role of the teacher as a facilitator of individual student learning as well as the importance of a student-centered learning process, characteristics of a constructivist classroom, are essential to experiential education.

Transformative Learning

The theory of transformative learning builds on constructivism by establishing that experiences can result in the re-construction of an individual's frame of reference in addition to inspiring the construction of new knowledge. This frame of reference "is a composite of the person's basic assumptions, cultural attitudes, religious beliefs, moral norms and experiential concerns… the structure or filter through which the individual person sees the world and interprets the meaning of his or her own experiences in the world" (Josten, 2011, p. 66). Therefore, through transformative learning, the lens through which one interprets all subsequent experiences is reconstructed.

Piaget emphasizes this dual process of assimilating and accommodating new experiences. Through assimilative learning, a "new experience is shaped to conform to existing knowledge structures" (Kegan, 2000, p. 47). This aligns with the constructivist approach to education in which all experiences are interpreted through an existing frame of prior knowledge to construct new knowledge. The concept of accommodative learning

refers to the process "in which the structures themselves change in response to new experience" (Kegan, 2000, p. 47). This re-formation of one's frame of reference aligns with the theory of transformative learning which seeks to "change not only *what* we know but change *how* we know" (Kegan, 2000, p. 49).

Transformative learning is essentially a process in which students are challenged to reflect on "the way they understand themselves, their world and the relationship between the two" (Kegan, 2000, p. 68). The "critical examination of the underlying assumptions of one's frame of reference" reveals and challenges an individual's assumptions (Josten, 2011, p. 67). It is through this process of transformative learning that an individual develops a lens that is not self-oriented but rather a higher cognitive frame of reference that acknowledges and values the external perspectives of others. This cognitive frame, called a "self-authoring mind," includes the development of high cognitive abilities such as abstract thinking, critical thinking, and meta-cognition (Kegan, 2000, p. 49). Similar to constructivist education, transformative education is based on student-centered learning in which the role of the educator is "to support the learner's ability to negotiate his or her own purposes, values, feeling and meaning" (Kegan, 2000, p. 66). This facilitator role is, again, essential within experiential education.

According to these epistemological theories, learning is a process of constructing knowledge by interpreting new experiences through one's existing lens as well as by reconstructing one's lens as a result of new experiences. As was asserted above, experiential learning is an individual process of constructing knowledge while experiential education seeks to facilitate this individual construction of knowledge through a teaching process that facilitates reflection on engaging experiences. Primary

theorists of experiential education, including Dewey and Kolb, have developed theoretical models that further explicate the process of constructing knowledge through both experiential learning and experiential education.

Historical Models of Experiential Education

Dewey's Constructivism and Foundational Theory of Experiential Education

John Dewey, an educational constructivist, continues to be one of the most influential experiential education theorists. Through his works *Democracy and Education* and *Education through Experience,* published 1916 and 1938 respectively, Dewey was a formative voice during the progressive era of education reform. His educational theories and perspectives provide a historical foundation that has informed contemporary experiential education theory. Dewey viewed experimentation and mistakes as formative and essential to learning (Roberts, 2000, p. 53). Dewey additionally asserted that one does not inherently learn from experience; rather, one learns through reflection upon the experience and the subsequent application of the constructed knowledge in future situations. Thus, knowledge is an upward spiral of continuous development through experience (Kolb, 1984, p.133). The formative reflection necessary for learning, however, is dependent upon the challenging nature of the experience. Therefore, for Dewey, "where there is no problem, no perplexity, no difficulty, there is no reflective thinking" (Josten, 2011, p. 33).

As a constructivist and an advocate for democratic education, Dewey viewed schools as "laboratories for democracy." Dewey acknowledged that "students come to classroom not as blank slates, but already with a vast and varied set of experiences" that inform their perspective and their interests (Tozer, 2009, p. 151). The democratic classroom was designed to cultivate and support a child's curious and active nature. Although Dewey

did not construct a model of experiential education, he introduced the experiential educational philosophy in which an individual's experiential learning process is structured and facilitated by an educative teaching process.

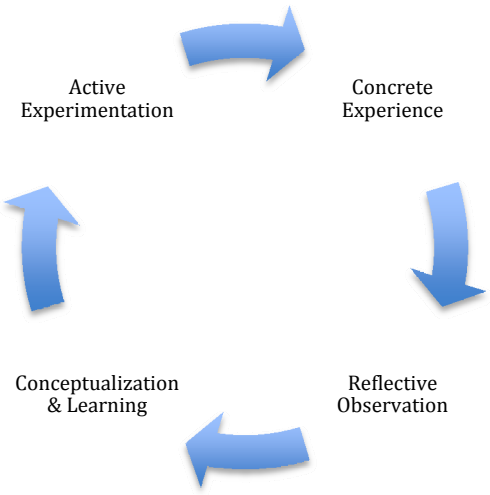
Dewey viewed formal schooling as the primary cultural institution in which a student's experiential learning could be best facilitated by experiential education (Roberts, 2012, p. 58). Just as the teaching process influences the student's learning process, the school or organizational culture influences the design and implementation of the teaching process (Itin, 1999, p. 136). Depending on school culture, a teacher may or may not be supported when constructing an experiential education curriculum. Dewey's theory of experiential education, therefore, considers the impact of the larger socio-political-economic situation on school culture, and consequently on the teaching process and students' individual experiential learning. The larger culture toward education can influence and determine a school's, or educational program's, capacity to support an experiential education teacher. Deweyian education would thrive within a school culture that supported teachers with the time, resources and professional autonomy to construct a student-centered classroom in which their students could explore and learn.

While students' education is influenced by the socio-political-economic situation, Dewey believed "that the main aim of education was the preparation of individuals to participate in social change" (Breunig, 2008, p. 81). Through experiential education, students could develop a "critical consciousness… [to] be better able to participate in the democratic political process" (Itin, 1999, p. 138). Therefore, just as students' relationships with teachers involves a transactive exchange of information, students' relationships to the broader educational context are transactive as well.

Dewey introduced the concept of experiential education as a framework to structure and facilitate an individual student's experiential learning. Kolb built upon Dewey's theoretical foundation by presenting a cyclical model of individual experiential learning.

Kolb's Cycle of Experiential Learning

David Kolb is another primary theorist whose work informs contemporary experiential education. Kolb's book *Experiential Learning*, published in 1984, builds on Dewey's foundational assertion that experience alone does not result in learning. He developed a cyclical model that formalized the upward spiral construction of knowledge through experience, first proposed by Dewey. Kolb defines learning as "the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience" (Kolb, 1984, p. 41). Kolb's cycle is a model of experiential learning – it conceptualizes an individual's construction of knowledge through experience. Within the cycle, a concrete experience is interpreted through reflective observation. The reflection produces knowledge - the conceptualization of lessons learned. This knowledge eventually informs active experimentation (Kolb, 1984, p. 45) Knowledge is therefore constructed through several steps, reinforcing Dewey's assertion that one does not inherently learn from experience.



Kolb reflects Dewey's belief that "learning is by its very nature a tension, conflict-filled process" (Kolb, 1984, 25-38). Kolb's theory suggests that learning is rooted in the confrontation between one's frame of reference and the reality of a new experience; the resulting cognitive dissonance results in either assimilative learning or accommodative learning, as defined above.

The cycle above only illustrates an individual's process of experiential learning – this process can occur whenever an individual reflects upon their experience. This cycle of experiential learning can also be facilitated within the structure of experiential education. Kolb's cycle of experiential learning does not illustrate the intentional facilitation of experiential learning through experiential education. The contemporary models of experiential education did, however, build upon the foundation of Kolb's initial cyclical model of experiential learning.

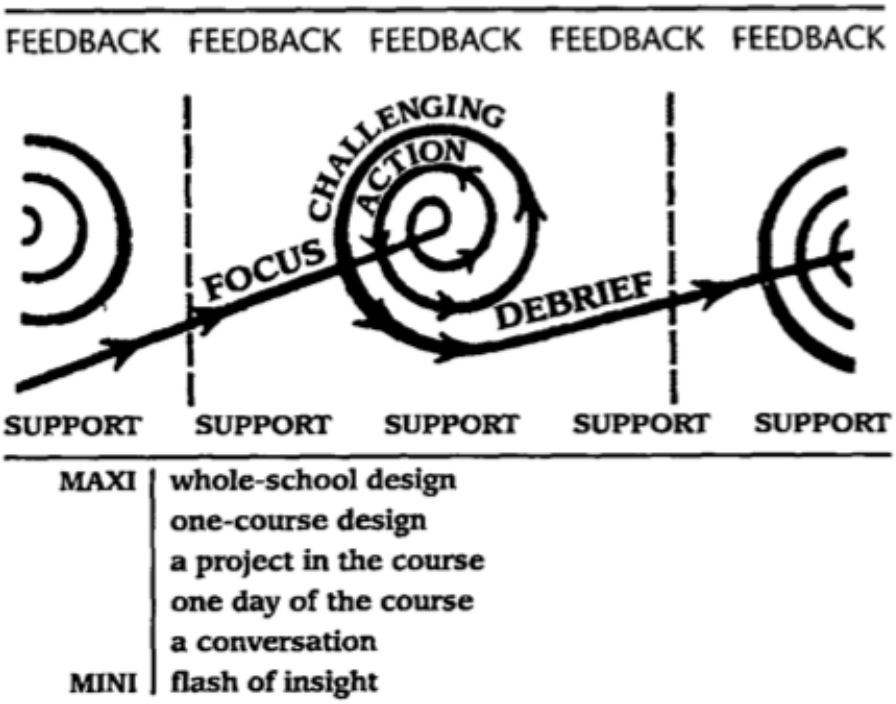
Contemporary Models of Experiential Education

The contemporary models of experiential education explored below seek to operationalize Dewey's and Kolb's initial theories. Both the Action-Reflection Model as well as the Diamond Model consider the environment in which an individual's experiential learning takes place. Additionally, the models develop the role of the teacher as a facilitator of a student's experiential learning within the context of an experiential education program.

Action-Reflection Model of Experiential Education

The Action-Reflection model, developed by Laura Joplin in 1981, introduces a five-stage cycle that expands upon Kolb's basic cycle of experiential learning and attempts to operationalize Dewey's basic theory of experiential education. The model is centered on

an active experience that is preceded by a contextualizing exercise to establish focus, and followed by a debriefing exercise to facilitate reflection. The model can occur on a range of levels from mini to maxi - from a single conversation or unit within a course to a whole-school model. Similar to Kolb's cycle, the Action-Reflection cycle is a spiral progression in which the constructed knowledge and reconstructed frame of reference from one experience informs the focus and starting point of the next cycle (Joplin, 1981, p. 17).



The first stage, focus, introduces the student to the "subject of study and prepares the student for encountering the challenging action" or experience. This focus should be "specific enough to orient the student, but not too specific so as to rule out unplanned learning" (Joplin, 1981, p. 18). In order to establish a focus, the teacher must determine the intended outcome of the educative experience. This intention and preparation are defining characteristics of experiential education.

The second stage is the action or experience. The central action should challenge students within an atmosphere of support and feedback. Joplin asserts that the experience typically places the student in an "unfamiliar situation requiring new skills or the use of new knowledge" (Joplin, 1981, p.19). It is essential that the experience is student-centered – it is the student's responsibility to engage within the experience, learn from the experience, and succeed, or fail, within the experience. This responsibility may be new and overwhelming for students and can provoke anger or discouragement (Joplin, 1981, p. 19). It is vital, therefore, to create an atmosphere of support and feedback to alleviate these negative emotions and encourage students to continue to engage throughout the challenging experience. After the action, the teacher must facilitate a debrief in order to encourage students to learn from their experience through reflection. The debrief is "a sorting and ordering of information, often involving personal perceptions and beliefs" (Joplin, 1981, p. 20). The knowledge and frame of reference constructed by a student within the debrief will inform their learning in the next Action-Reflection cycle.

The Action-Reflection cycle builds on the theoretical foundations of Dewey and Kolb by highlighting the essential role of the teacher as a facilitator of the experiential education process. Within the process, the teacher is responsible for establishing focus, planning and implementing the action, facilitating the reflection and ensuring feedback and support for students. The complexities of the teacher's role as facilitator are fully explicated through the Diamond-Model below.

Diamond Model of Experiential Education

The Diamond Model of experiential education builds upon the Action-Reflection Cycle by illustrating the transactive relationships between teachers and students. The Diamond Model clearly shows a student's experiential learning cycle, on the left in the diagram, and the teacher's experiential learning process, on the right in the diagram. Both the student's and the teacher's learning is facilitated within the structure of experiential education. Including the teacher's learning process in the model acknowledges the dynamic role of the teacher as facilitator – rather than as an objective actor, the facilitator learns along with the student. Therefore, through their transactive relationship, students and teachers influence each other's construction of knowledge (Itin, 1999, p. 142).

Figure 2. **The diamond model of the philosophy of experiential education.**

As is shown in the diagram, The Diamond Model is centered on the Teaching Process, Concrete Experience, Learning Environment and Subject Matter. The arrows show that the students and teacher have transactive relationships with each of these elements.

Therefore, each element influences each student's learning process (as well as the teacher's learning process). Simultaneously, each student, as well as the teacher, influences each of these elements – thus creating a transfer of knowledge and perspective (Itin, 1999, p. 142). The transaction between a student and the elements shown above is best understood through three dynamic relationships 1) Learner to Self; 2) Learner to Learning Environment; and 3) Learner to Teacher. In the following section, each of these relationships, and how they influence one another, is explored.

The **Learner to Self** relationship occurs within each individual's experiential learning cycle. The Diamond Model illustrates both the student's experiential learning cycle as well as the teacher's experiential learning cycle. Within the experiential learning process, the individual constructs knowledge by reflecting on the experience through his or her own personal frame of reference. Although each learner is in control of this process and "is ultimately responsible for the learning and growth that takes place," his or her learning is also influenced by the other transactive relationships described below (Chapman et al., 1992, p. 9). These relationships have the potential to support, or impede, a learner's experiential learning cycle.

The **Learner to Environment** relationship includes "the content material being covered, the people… directly and indirectly involved with the learner and the surrounding physical environment" (Chapman et al., 1992, 9). The content material, or Subject Matter within the Diamond Model, includes any information provided to the student about the learning experience as well as the students' pre-existing frame of reference (Itin, 1999, p. 142). A student's frame of reference, including their prior knowledge and assumptions, will determine how he or she engages with, interprets and

learns from the experience (Beard &Wilson, 2006, p. 17). The Subject Matter of the experience should align with the student's interests, as "experiences are more likely to be educative when they connect to the unique histories, stories and differences of each learner… [and] respect the multiple ways of interacting with the world" (Cassidy, 1008, p. 288). It is, therefore, the responsibility of the teacher to discover and take into consideration the diverse perspectives, learning styles and interests of their students when selecting the Subject Matter and designing the educative experience (Chapman et al., 1992, p. 9*).* In order to incorporate the learning needs of each student, the teacher must be capable and willing to listen to their students.

The Learner to Environment relationship also includes the transactive interpersonal dialogue between learners. Through this dialogue, the teacher and students influence one another's construction of knowledge. Within the Diamond Model, "learning is proposed to include both reflection and interpersonal dialogue to create individual and social meaning" (Cassidy, 2008, p. 282). Therefore, in addition to facilitating student reflection within the Learner to Self relationship, a teacher must strive to construct a positive learning environment to support interpersonal dialogue. Finally, the Learner to Environment relationship includes the physical environment in which the learner is expected to reflect and construct knowledge. Consequently, the teacher should try to create, to the best of their ability, the time and space for students to reflect.

Although each student is ultimately in control of his or her own individual experiential learning, this process is facilitated, and influenced, by the **Learner to Teacher** relationship. The teacher is responsible for facilitating the Learner to Self relationship as well as for structuring the Learner to Environment relationship (Itin, 1999,

p. 140-142). Therefore, within the Teaching Process, the teacher must 1) construct an engaging experience based on intended learning goals as well as their students' interests, 2) facilitate students' reflection and 3) work to understand each student's interpretation of the experience.

Clearly a teacher has significant influence upon a student's learning process. In experiential education, the teacher must strive to use this influence to make the educative experience student-centered. Student-centered "describes a learning process where much of the power during the experience resides with students" (Estes, 2004, p. 247). As an integral component of this learning approach, teachers are "cast as coaches and are largely removed from their roles as interpreters of reality, purveyors of truth [or] mediators between students and the world" (Chapman et al., 1992, p. 7). Therefore, the teacher must provide enough structure so that the student is supported through the learning experience while encouraging and allowing students to take responsibility for their own learning. This process of creating a student-centered educational experience is no simple task. The complex dimensions of the teacher's challenging role, as well as the resulting criticisms and concerns, are outlined and addressed in the following section.

Challenges & Criticisms of the Facilitator Role in Experiential Education

Through the Teaching Process, a teacher has significant influence on each student's learning experience. The Teaching Process involves the following key components: designing and implementing the experience; fostering a positive learning environment; and providing context prior to the experience and facilitating student reflection after the experience. It is often challenging to maintain the necessary balance between structure and student engagement throughout all of these components. Despite

this student-centered theoretical foundation, experiential education is, in practice, too often more teacher-centered (Estes, 2004, p. 245).

The sections below detail the complexities and challenges of the teacher's role as well as the skills and capacities required to overcome these challenges. Although all of the capacities outlined below are important, they are goals to be aspired to rather than pre-requisites for experiential educators. Teachers, just like their students, are learning through experiential education. It is crucial, therefore, that experiential educators be self-aware and self-critical in order to continue learning and to best support students.

Designing the Experience

Prior to designing the experience, the teacher should have intended learning goals in mind (Albert et al, 1997, p. 6). These intended learning goals can help guide the selection of contextualizing information or activities to prepare the students for the experience. Concurrently, however, this structure should encourage students to discover their own lessons within the experience. Therefore, learning goals should also take into consideration the student's interests and needs to ensure an engaging and student-centered experience. In order to incorporate students' needs and interests, "the teacher must assess the learning needs of the students, select appropriate teaching strategies to meet the students' needs, and be willing to use multiple teaching strategies to make it an educational experience" (Itin, 1999, p. 145). This assessment of student's needs can be informal or formal – regardless of the assessment method, it is essential that a teacher recognizes the importance of student's interests and aspires to incorporate them. Additionally, an effective experience design process will engage students in the planning process as much as possible (Albert et al, 1997, p. 6). Although the teacher must have

intended learning goals in mind, he or she also needs to be comfortable enough to share power with students so that they can contribute to the direction of the experience. Students typically need opportunities to develop the skills necessary to be independent learners. Engaging students in the planning process "provides powerful learning opportunities in areas like decision making, team work, communication, and problem solving" (Albert et al, 1997, p. 6-7). Additionally, involving students in the design process encourages student interest and ownership over the learning experience. Students can engage in the design of the experience by brainstorming possible topics or activities. The teacher can structure this brainstorming process and help students select the topic and activity.

The development of the intended learning goals and the design of the experience are inherently mediated by the teacher's frame of reference. Teachers, as well as students, have "various stances toward knowledge and authority, truth and ways of knowing" (Lyons, 1990, p. 169). An individual's nested knowing is "informed by his or her own stance towards a discipline as well as consideration of the self as a knower" (Lyons, 1999, p.175). This "nested way of knowing" determines how an individual perceives and constructs knowledge from an experience. Through the transactive student-teacher relationship in experiential education, the teacher's way of knowing and the students' ways of knowing will ideally interact and influence one another (Lyons, 1999, p. 162).

The teacher's "nested knowing," however, holds considerable influence over the Teaching Process. A teacher's perspective on a discipline or experience may determine the intended learning goals. For example, a teacher may create a set of learning goals based on his or her own previous interpretation of an experience, assuming that the

students will have the same interpretation. "Nested knowing" also influences a teacher's "understanding of students as knowers" (Lyons, 1999, p. 175). His or her perception of students, and their way of knowing, may influence an assessment of students' needs and interests and, consequently, the experience design. Failing to acknowledge the influence of one's own nested knowing can result in a bias that "negates other cultural and personal interpretations" (Chapman et al., 1992, p. 10*)*.

Therefore, the teacher should be cognizant of the influence of his or her own "nested knowing," its influence on the Teaching Process and, ultimately, on students. A teacher should strive to understand "their own comfort level with the different ways of interacting with the world in order to ensure that all are considered when designing educational experiences" (Cassidy, 2008, p. 288). Through the critical awareness of their "nested knowing," teachers can identify challenges and problems within the design and implementation of the experience and work to re-focus on the students and their interests. It is not easy to develop the self-reflective and critical capacity required to understand and challenge one's internal lens. It is, however, a necessary skill for a teacher facilitating student-centered experiential education. Critical self-awareness begins with the recognition that a teacher can never be an objective or neutral participant in the experiential education process (Brown, 2004, p. 388). Additionally, a teacher must be open to the prospect of continuing to learn, along with their students, through experiential education.

This critical awareness is also rooted in a teacher's level of social and emotional competence (SEC), specifically in his or her Self-Awareness. The five core competencies of Social and Emotional learning include (What is SEL, 2011):

1) **Self-Awareness**: "The ability to accurately recognize one's emotions and thoughts and their influence on behavior
2) **Self-Management**: "The ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations."
3) **Social Awareness**: "The ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others from diverse backgrounds and cultures"
4) **Relationship Skills:** "The ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups.
5) **Responsible Decision-Making**: "The ability to make constructive and respectful choices about personal behavior and social interactions"

An experiential educator will benefit greatly from the development of their five Social and Emotional competencies. Socially and emotionally competent teachers have high self-awareness and have a realistic understanding of their capabilities including strengths and weaknesses. SEC teachers understand that others may have different perspectives or understandings than their own. Additionally, teachers who are socially and emotional competent are "comfortable with the level of ambiguity and uncertainty that comes from letting students figure things out for themselves" (Jennings & Greenberg, 2008, p. 495). Possessing these social and emotional competencies enables such teachers to be open-minded and confident in their ability to create a student centered learning experience.

Creating the environment

The teacher is also responsible for the creation of a positive community, or "holding environment," in which students can learn. Within a "holding environment," used by Keagan within the context of developmental theory, students are both challenged by the experience as well as properly supported by the learning community including other students and the teacher as facilitator (Draper, 2008, p. 41) A supportive environment prepares the student for the experience and facilitates their reflection after the experience within a positive community. If a student is not properly supported through the challenging experience, they may have a negative or harmful experience.

This may deter the student from engaging in similar experiences in the future and may not lead to the construction of new knowledge (Beard & Wilson, 2006, p. 139). For example, a student who has a fear of the water must be supported throughout an experience involving water. If he or she does not feel properly supported, his or her fear may increase and the potential of a formative learning experience is lost. Therefore, in addition to designing and implementing a challenging experience, it is the responsibility of the teacher to create a supportive environment.

Prior to an educative experience, a student must be prepared with both informational context as well as the skills to engage as an independent learner. The informational context should "provide the background, conceptual information, and basic skills that will be required to participate effectively in the situation" (Albert et al, 1997, p. 7). Although the teacher may design an engaging student-centered experience, students who have grown up in a teacher-centered classroom with a top-down flow of "knowledge" may not have the skills to engage as an independent learner with the experience. Therefore, the teacher must also facilitate a transition of power by empowering students to become independent learners (Warren, 1988, p. 486-487). An independent learner has the intrinsic motivation and skills to successfully engage in learning experiences. Higher level cognitive skills that empower individuals, as well as the class as a community, to become independent learners include (Warren, 1988, p. 487):

- Brainstorming & prioritizing
- Decision-making skills & consensus building skills
- Various leadership roles
- Problem-solving skills
- Feedback & debriefing skills

Students are not inherently prepared with these skills; therefore, it is the responsibility of the teacher to help the students develop these skills prior to and throughout the experience. Students can be introduced to and practice these skills when working with the teacher to design the experience.

In addition to the development of informational context and students' skills, it is essential that the teacher facilitate the establishment of a positive community of support among the students. Within the learning environment, a group of students "will establish standards of behavior or norms whether they are openly discussed or not" (Cassidy, 2008, p. 286). In order to ensure the establishment of group norms that promote a positive environment, the teacher should "bring the process into the open and discuss how the group may best function together…[by] working with group participants to create community guidelines" (Cassidy, 2008, p. 286). Co-creating behavioral guidelines with students empowers them to take responsibility for their own, as well as the group's, behavior. Discussing and establishing a group vision and guidelines also clarifies student and group expectations for the learning experience. Similar to the learning outcomes, a group vision "must be broad to capture where the collective wishes to go but must include the goals of individual members" (Cassidy, 2008, p. 285). Incorporating the goals of all individuals while creating a cohesive group goal can be very challenging, but it is important to both engage each student's perspective while establishing the common ground within the group.

According to Cassidy, there are three foundational norms that the teacher should strive to establish with his or her students: respect for difference, constructive conflict management, and care. "These norms help form a group foundation that encourages open

communication between members" (Cassidy, 2008, p. 284). As Cassidy asserts, open "communication is at the root of an effective learning community. When every voice is heard, people best come to know themselves and the world" (Cassidy, 2008, p. 285). Students and teachers have the opportunity to learn from one another's unintended learning discoveries through experience. Without a safe and supportive environment that respects diversity and appreciates different ways of knowing, this learning opportunity may be lost. Within a pluralistic learning community, in which individual students have their own perspectives, there is a possibility of conflict. Therefore, it is essential that the teacher encourage the development of "norms and strategies that support the safe and productive management of conflict" (Cassidy, 2008, p. 285). Additionally, constructive conflict can be integral to individual student growth and community development within a pluralistic learning community (Johnson & Johnson, 2009, p. 37-39). The establishment of ground rules is essential to the cohesion of the group as well as to the individual student's learning process. Students are more comfortable taking risks and responsibility for their own learning within the safety net of ground rules (Warren, 1988, p. 487).

The teacher's social and emotional competence, explored above, also influences the establishment of the environment. A socially and emotionally competent teacher, based on their own Self-Awareness, Social Awareness and Relationship Skills, "set the tone of the classroom by developing supportive and encouraging relationships with their students… [and] act as a role model for respectful and appropriate communication" (Jennings & Greenberg, 2008, p. 492). Additionally, by "establishing and implementing behavioral guidelines," discussed above, a teacher can "promote intrinsic motivation,

coach students through conflict situations, [and] encourage cooperation among students" (Jennings & Greenberg, 2008, p. 492).

Facilitating Reflection

Based on the theory and models described above, it is clear that "structured reflection is a valuable element of the experiential learning process" (Chapman et al., 1992, p. 9). It is through reflection that students construct new knowledge and transformative learning. Facilitated reflection encourages the construction of new knowledge and is vital to ensure that students challenge the assumptions they held going into the experience. If these assumptions are not challenged and reflected upon, the experience may serve to reinforce a student's prejudice or stereotypes (Beard & Wilson, 2006, p.139). Within the structure of experiential education, it is the responsibility of the teacher to facilitate student reflection in order to ensure that the experience does not remain "unquestioned, unrealized, unintegrated or unorganized" (Joplin, 1981, p. 20). Facilitating student reflection, however, is not an easy task. The teacher must strive to provide enough structure to facilitate student reflection while encouraging students to construct their own knowledge.

Although the teacher and student share a common experience, "no two people experience the same event exactly the same way" (Beard & Wilson, 2006, p. 16). Therefore, through their own meaning-making perspective, the teacher and student will draw unique conclusions from the experience. It is essential that the teacher be aware of, respect, and encourage a pluralism of ideas from students. A teacher can encourage students to reflect on their experience following this format (Ash & Clayton, 2004, p. 142) (Koliba & Reed, 2003, p. 28):

- *Describe your experience?*
- *What did you learn from this experience?*
- *When will you use this knowledge in the future?*

Through these questions, students are prompted to think critically about their experience. The description prompts reflective observation about the experience. The process of identifying lessons learned is inherently influenced by each individual's frame of reference. Conceptualizing future applications of the lessons learned "establishes a foundation for learners to carry the results of the reflection process forward beyond the immediate experience, improving the quality of future learning and of future experience" (Ash & Clayton, 2004, p.141). The question framework proposed above should be viewed as a basic script - students should be encouraged to develop their self-reflective skills, which includes curiosity and asking questions about their own experience.

In theory experiential education is student-centered; unfortunately, however, facilitation too often devolves into a teacher-centered practice. Many common forms of facilitated reflection are at risk of becoming teacher-centered: "talk circles provide a familiar teacher-centered environment that encourages the teacher to direct the learning process through questioning, validating, paraphrasing and allocating turns to talk" (Estes, 2004, p. 255). If a teacher is directing the discussion and indicating whether a student's answer is right or wrong, they are establishing themselves as the "purveyor of truth" and, in turn, devaluing an individual student's knowledge (Brown, 2004). This does not mean, however, that teachers should disengage and never share an opinion or perspective; rather teachers must strive to be aware of how their own actions when facilitating reflection influence the power dynamics within the classroom. If they are to voice an opinion or perspective, it should be as a member of the learning community rather than as an

authority of knowledge (Cassidy, 2008, p. 291). Teacher-centered authority is necessary at times, however, for instructional purposes such as presenting safety information prior to a potentially dangerous experience. The teacher must be aware of this contradiction and strive to present instruction in the most student-centered way possible.

Similar to the skills necessary to be an independent learner, self-reflection is a learned skill. It is therefore the responsibility of the teacher to empower students to become self-reflective. Student-centered facilitation strategies encourage students to develop the self-reflective skills that will empower them to engage and learn through experience independently in the future (Estes, 2004, p. 256). Just as students learn from experience in their own way, they also "reflect in different ways and at different paces;" therefore, in order to encourage all students' reflection and learning, the teacher must provide various outlets and forms for facilitation (Cassidy, 2008, p. 290).

In addition to self-reflection and awareness, open dialogue and the sharing of ideas are essential to knowledge construction and reconstruction of frames of reference. A supportive environment is crucial to establish a community in which an individual is comfortable exploring and sharing their learning process. Through dialogue and group reflection, the community can "uncover assumptions and may help people better understand how meaning is influenced by each person's unique history. Dialogue helps bring people together as they come to see their perspective as one part of a cohesive whole" (Cassidy, 2008, p. 289). Through this process of dialogue, students, and the teacher, have the opportunity to learn from one another.

Throughout the teaching process the teacher must balance the need for structure while striving to ensure that the process is student-centered. It is clear that operationalizing this

balance is challenging and requires the teacher to develop a critical awareness and reflective capacities. It is important to note, however, that the "social process of critical reflection only thrives in institutions that create and maintain a culture conducive to reflective discussion" (Josten, 2011, p. 62). Therefore, the broader context influences the teacher's learning and teaching process as well as, consequently, the students' learning process. This context includes factors such as school culture or organization culture as well as "the larger socio-political-economic systems" (Itin, 1999, p. 142). A school culture that favors top-down banking education within the context of high stakes standardized testing may not support a teacher's self awareness and student-centered teaching. Therefore, in order to encourage reflective practice for teachers, the organization or school should structure dialogue between teachers and encourage a culture of collaboration (Josten, 2011, p. 63). The organization must strive to construct a positive learning environment for the teachers. As learners, teachers will "be at a different level in professional knowledge, skills and dispositions" (Josten, 2011, p. 41). Teacher professional development should, therefore, mirror the constructivist and transformative learning principles that influence students' experiential education.

Further Critiques of the Theory and Models of Experiential Education

In addition to the challenges within the context of the teacher's complex role, there are other criticisms of the theory and cyclical models of experiential education that must be identified and addressed. First, the lack of a concrete definition has resulted in the conflation of experiential learning and experiential education. Consequently, programs that merely implement active learning – such as field trips – can claim the complex process and benefits of experiential education without the necessary

philosophical foundation. Although a student may be engaging in an active experience, their reflection on that experience is not necessarily facilitated nor has the experience been contextualized by the complex and intentional teaching process outlined above. The lack of a finite definition of experiential education continues to inspire an ongoing, critical dialogue within the field. This culture of reflection and analysis also encourages the critical awareness of individual educators on their own practice – an essential capacity as asserted above.

Another central criticism questions the validity of cyclical models of experiential education, asserting that they are too simplistic and do not capture the holistic process of learning through experience (Seaman, 2008, p. 9). Within early cyclical models, such as Kolb's cycle, the experiential learning process is split neatly into a series of steps. Action and reflection are separate and occur linearly within the model. Although Kolb sought to clearly depict the learning process through the model, action and reflection are not always separate and sequenced. Rather, action and reflection can occur simultaneously and inform one another (Beard & Wilson, 2006, p. 17). In fact, within the context of experience there can be three forms of learning (Beard & Wilson, 2006, p. 247):

- **Concurrent Learning** in which the individual makes immediate observations and decisions during an experience
- **Retrospective Learning** through which the individual analyzes a past experience through reflection
- **Prospective learning** includes the conceptualization of future experiences in which an individual can utilize their knowledge from previous learning

Within Concurrent Learning, reflection and action may occur simultaneously; consequently, Concurrent Learning is primarily based on habit, instinct and previous knowledge (Beard & Wilson, 2006, p. 247). Therefore, this learning may validate previously held beliefs rather than challenge the learner to construct new knowledge or to

reconstruct his or her frame of reference. Additionally, as Dewey asserted, every experience "does not always lead to new insights and new learning" (Beard & Wilson, 2006, p. 20). It is the reflection on the experience that encourages growth and learning. Retrospective Learning and Prospective Learning, in which reflection occurs after the action, challenge the learner's previously held beliefs. These forms of learning align with the roots of experiential education - constructivism and transformative learning – in which an individual constructs new knowledge and perspectives through reflection (Beard & Wilson, 2006, p. 247). It is the reflection after an experience that produces the most formative learning and challenges the learner's previously held beliefs. Therefore, although Kolb's cycle does not incorporate every form of learning during an experience, the cyclical model identified the importance of reflection within an individual's experiential learning.

The purpose of the cyclical models is to establish the components of an individual's experiential learning cycle as well as to explore the complexities of the teaching process within experiential education (Joplin, 1981, p. 18). Early cyclical models, however, isolated the individual's learning process from the context in which they are learning. Constructivist models, like that of experiential education, can isolate the individual from the "social and environmental aspects of learning… this is especially problematic since social and physical conditions are believed to play a central role in individual and group learning" (Seaman, 2008, p. 14). Kolb's learning cycle does not take into consideration the impact of the teacher, other students, and learning environment on an individual's construction of knowledge. Contemporary models, however, incorporate the learning environment as an essential component. The Diamond

Model, in particular, highlights the transactional relationships between and among the students, teacher and environment.

Due to the complexities of experiential education, in particular the teacher's role, however, even contemporary models of experiential education are challenging to implement as a framework for program design (Joplin, 1981, p. 17). Ultimately, however, "all models are, by definition, idealized visions or representations that help one examine the key principles within a theory" (Itin, 1999, p. 141). Therefore, it is important to acknowledge the theoretical foundation that the contemporary experiential education model provides while remaining critically aware of the challenges.

IV. Evaluation in Experiential Education

Within the context of education, evaluation can provide valuable information about the teaching and learning process as well as the educational outcomes of that process. Assessment and evaluation can be used within education to "document what students have learned and what they still need to obtain" (Witte, 3). To this effect, "assessment serves a critical role in teacher decision making" (Frey, 8). In addition to supplying crucial information to guide the teaching process, evaluation fulfills a purpose within the teaching profession: "educators are no different from other professionals in their need to find confirmatory evidence of work effectiveness and impact. Teachers need to know that students have learned the desired goals of the lesson" (Witte, 66).

The process of measuring student learning, however, is challenging, as "students are able to demonstrate their understanding in different ways" (Frey, 8). Consequently, "teachers need to use a wide variety of assessment systems," as well as various interpretations and understandings of those systems, in order to incorporate the diverse

learning and communication styles of students (Frey, 8). Additionally, the evaluation approach should be tailored to the teaching process and intended outcomes because "assessment is most effective and useful when it matches with the instructional content that is taught in the classroom" (Witte, 12). So, to be most effective, assessment strategies will vary depending on students' diverse learning as well as the pedagogical approach of the teaching process.

Although it is important to assess the teaching process and student learning, it is important to remember that teaching and learning are complex and, therefore, cannot be easily quantified or measured. Consequently, assessments can only capture a small picture of what happens in a classroom or program. Before exploring assessment within education, specifically experiential education, it is important to understand the various dimensions of assessment and evaluation.

The Dimensions of Assessment & Evaluation

There is a distinction between assessment and evaluation: assessment is the systematic process of measuring and collecting data about the "operation and/or the outcomes of a program or policy;" evaluation is the subsequent analysis of that data as "compared to a set of explicit or implicit standards as a means of contributing to the improvement of the program or policy" (Weiss, 1997, p. 4). Assessment data alone can be used to establish a base line of knowledge regarding the program's operations. Without an evaluation of the assessment data, however, the information collected does not provide any insight into the successes or shortcomings of a program relative to the established standards. Explicit standards are typically a benchmark that, if reached, indicates a program's success. For example, an explicit standard could be a benchmark

that 80% of program participants attend the program with no absences. Explicit standards are typically adopted when assessments produce quantitative data that is easily compared to numerical benchmarks. Implicit standards can be based on a common perception of success such as that program participants are engaged in the program. This perception of engagement may be based on the observation of program participants. Additionally, implicit standards can be goals of the program, expressed through their mission or vision, which have not been operationalized into explicit benchmarks. These implicit standards, although not easily assessed or evaluated, can be central to a programs intended impact. Implicit standards can be used when the assessment collects qualitative data, such as interview responses, from program participants, program staff and other stakeholders. From this qualitative data, an evaluator can get a sense as to whether or not the implicit standard of the program was met.

There are different dimensions of assessment and evaluation that can be determined: the phase of the program that is being assessed (Process or Outcome); the purpose and impact of the evaluation (Formative or Summative); and the role of the evaluator in the design and implementation of the assessment and evaluation (Traditional or Participatory). An assessment and evaluation strategy combines these dimensions. Two common strategies are 1) Traditional Summative Outcomes evaluation and 2) Participatory Formative Process evaluation. An evaluator should consider all forms of assessment when tailoring an evaluation to a program's design and intended outcomes.

Process vs Outcome Assessment

Depending on what phase of the program is being examined, an assessment can take the form of a Process assessment and/or an Outcome assessment. A Process

assessment examines the implementation of the program throughout its operation while an Outcomes assessment measures the impact of the program on the participants after the program's completion (Weiss, 1997, p. 32).

Through a Process assessment, the evaluator can gain a better understanding of how and what the program is doing (Weiss, 1997, p. 181). Examining a program's operations can identify problems as well as possible solutions. A Process assessment can help the evaluator understand the data from an Outcomes assessment (Weiss, 1997, p. 32). In education, a teacher may implement a process assessment to gauge students' learning throughout a specific curriculum. This critical look at the teaching and learning process may help the teacher understand the causes behind students' positive or negative learning outcomes.

An Outcomes assessment, depending on its design and implementation, can measure both intended and unintended outcomes (Weiss, 1997, p. 8). In education, an Outcomes assessment attempts to measure students' learning outcomes at the end of some educational program, curriculum or unit.

Formative vs Summative Evaluation

An evaluation operates on a continuum between Formative evaluation and Summative evaluation. Unlike the Process or Outcome assessment, which indicate what phase of the program is being assessed, Formative or Summative evaluation indicate what influence the evaluation results seek to have on the program operations.

If the evaluation intends to influence the program's ongoing implementation, it is a Formative evaluation. A Formative evaluation occurs during/throughout the program's process and the conclusions of the evaluation are fed back to program operators in order

to help improve the program (Weiss, 1997, p. 31). Teachers use informal and formal Formative evaluation everyday to gauge students' learning. Based on the outcomes of the assessment, as compared to the explicit or implicit standards, the teacher can make adjustments to the teaching process as needed.

A Summative evaluation, on the other hand, does not seek to influence the process of a program (Weiss, 1997, p. 32). Rather, "a Summative evaluation is done after the program is finished and provides information about the effectiveness of the curriculum" (Weiss, 1997, p. 31). Although a Summative evaluation does not immediately feed back into and influence the program's operations, the outcome of the evaluation may influence the implementation of future programs. Summative evaluations in education can be used to evaluate student learning at the end of a program, unit or curriculum. The data from the assessment is compared to explicit or implicit indicators to determine the success of the teaching and learning process.

Traditional vs Participatory Evaluation

Traditional and Participatory describe the influence of the evaluator on the design and implementation of the evaluation. Both the Traditional and Participatory approaches have advantages and disadvantages; therefore, the role of the evaluator should be determined within the context of the program.

The traditional evaluator approaches an evaluation as an "objective inquiry" in which he or she "is careful to avoid becoming unduly biased by the views, hopes or fears of the program staff" (Weiss, 1997, p. 98). Although "absolute neutrality is impossible, the [evaluator] tries to uphold the conventions of scientific research with special emphasis on good data and sound analysis" (Weiss, 1997, p. 98). Through this objective

approach, the evaluator seeks to determine the effectiveness of the program to answer questions regarding the continuation, expansion or termination of a program. Depending on who funds the evaluation, the evaluator will most likely focus on answering the questions that the funders deem important (Weiss, 1997, p. 10). A Traditional approach gives the evaluator the power to quickly design and implement the evaluation to answer the evaluation questions.

Although the Traditional approach is neutral and streamlined, the evaluator too often focuses on a single measure of effectiveness and may not have access to information and perspectives that are essential to understanding a program's operations (Weiss, 1997, p. 102). Increasingly "the major use of evaluation results was not in making go or no-go decisions about programs or projects but rather in finding ways to improve them" (Weiss, 1997, p. 101). Therefore, evaluators should incorporate program operators' insights in order to implement an effective improvement evaluation. Additionally, if an evaluation seeks to improve a program, buy-in from program operators and stakeholders is essential because they are the practitioners who will implement, or not implement, recommendations from the evaluation (Weiss, 1997, p. 101). The power dynamics of Traditional evaluation does not encourage buy-in from the stakeholders whose participation can be essential to the evaluation. Stakeholders can feel as though "the evaluation was foisted on them, and … [can] regard the evaluator with suspicion" (Weiss, 1997, p. 101). This negative perception of the evaluator is heightened when there are higher risks to the evaluation, such as defunding a program or punitive evaluation of program operators (Weiss, 1997, p. 101).

In contrast to a Traditional approach, Participatory evaluation is an "approach to evaluation in which stakeholders actively engage in developing the evaluation and in all phases of its implementation" including (Luluquisen & Zukosi, 2002, p.1):

- Identifying relevant questions
- Planning the evaluation design
- Selecting appropriate measures and data collection methods
- Gathering and analyzing data
- Reaching consensus about findings conclusions and recommendations
- Disseminating results and preparing an action plan to improve program performance

Along the continuum between Traditional and Participatory, the evaluator and various stakeholders have varying degrees of influence within the program design and implementation. The potential benefits as well as the challenges must be considered when deciding whether to implement a participatory evaluation model (Luluquisen & Zukosi, 2002, p.1-6). Participatory evaluation is rooted in the "constructivist ideas of multiple perspectives and multiple realities" in which there is no "single truth" because "truth is contingent and conditional" (Weiss, 1997, p. 100). Based on this perspective, "evaluation should not privilege one set of beliefs over others "(Weiss, 1997, p. 101). Therefore, the Participatory evaluator "engages in a structured effort to learn the concerns, assumptions, questions, data, needs and intentions" of the program operators and/participants (Weiss, 1997, p. 100). By incorporating the various perspectives of program stakeholders, Participatory evaluation ensures that the evaluation questions are relevant and will help improve program performance. This evaluation structure also provides an opportunity for communication between different stakeholders resulting in a better understanding of the diverse interests and expectations within the organization (Weiss, 1997, p. 105).

Involving stakeholders in the design, as well as the implementation, of the evaluation also encourages ownership of the evaluation (Weiss, 1997, p. 102). This engagement is essential to the successful implementation of the evaluation because stakeholders will "not only understand but also support what the evaluation is doing…[consequently] they care about the quality of the information that is being collected" (Weiss, 1997, p. 105). Buy-in is also vital to the adoption of recommendations from the evaluation as invested stakeholders are more likely to "pay attention to results and use them as a basis for subsequent change." (Weiss, 1997, p. 101). Additionally, engaging stakeholders builds their capacity to engage in evaluation and develops leaders. Through Participatory evaluation, evaluation becomes a form of staff development and accountability for all stakeholders (Weiss, 1997, p. 105-106). This empowerment and preparation ensures the sustainability of the evaluation culture.

By incorporating stakeholders in the evaluation, Participatory evaluation is inherently time consuming. Although a Participatory evaluator may want to include the perspectives of all stakeholders, "the wider the range of participants, the less likely it is that they can readily reach consensus on the purpose of the evaluation" (Weiss, 1997, p. 104). The evaluator must be prepared to facilitate these complex discussions between stakeholders – a far more taxing process than the Traditional approach. Even if stakeholder perspectives are successfully incorporated, they may not have the authority within the organization to enact improvements suggested as a result of the evaluation (Weiss, 1997, p. 107). In this circumstance, a Traditional approach would be a more cost effective way to answers the questions of the stakeholders who do have the authority to make changes to the program – rendering the participation of other stakeholders pointless.

Additionally, stakeholders may lack necessary knowledge of evaluation techniques. This may make it difficult to develop and implement an informed, but also technically sufficient, evaluation strategy. As a consequence of the engagement of stakeholders, the evaluation may lose the objectivity, grounding in scientific method and professionalism of a Traditional evaluation (Weiss, 1997, p. 107). The evaluator must, therefore, try to balance the engagement of stakeholders while ensuring the legitimacy of the evaluation. A training or introduction to evaluation can be useful to prepare stakeholders to design and implement the evaluation. This training, however, can be expensive and time consuming (Weiss, 1997, p. 106).

Regardless of this inclusive approach, stakeholders may continue to see the evaluation as unnecessary and/or may not have time to participate (Weiss, 1997, p. 103 & 106). In this circumstance, stakeholders may view the evaluation as waste of time and useless "paperwork" (Weiss, 1997, p. 106). This apathy or dislike of evaluation can be circumvented through the top-down Traditional approach or combated by trying to encourage buy-in through the Participatory approach.

Assessment & Evaluation Constructs in Education

The dimensions above can be combined in various ways to structure an assessment and evaluation strategy in education. Process and Outcomes assessments can be combined into one evaluation strategy. Additionally, Formative and Summative, as well as Traditional and Participatory, operate along continuums and are wholly dependent upon implementation – for example, even if an evaluation is intended to be Participatory, its implementation may look more like a Traditional evaluation. Common evaluation

structures, however, are Traditional Summative Outcomes evaluation and Participatory Formative Process evaluation.

A **Traditional Summative Outcomes** evaluation is a top-down evaluation design that collects and analyzes assessment data at the end of the program's process. Multiple-choice testing is a clear example of a Traditional Summative Outcomes evaluation. Many teachers may use a standard form multiple-choice test to assess students' retention of content knowledge at the end of a unit or at the end of the year. Within the context of banking education, however, a Traditional Summative Outcomes evaluation may focus on assessing the students' ability to memorize and reproduce the "knowledge" provided to them by their teacher. In banking education, knowledge is finite and objective, rather than plural and complex, and can, therefore, be assessed through standardized tests (Frey, 2007, p. 136).

End of the year Annual Yearly Placement (AYP) standardized tests, within the context of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), are a top-down, Traditional evaluation because the evaluators, those that design the tests, are far removed from the classroom and students being assessed. The tests are designed to answer questions that policy makers, those funding the evaluation, deem important. The teachers as well as the students have no control over the assessment design or implementation. The tests are summative in nature as they are "used to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional programs at the end of an academic year" (Frey, 2007, p. 4). In the case of standardized tests, there is no feedback loop through which the test results impact the teaching process or student's learning. "The goal of summative assessments is to judge student competency after an instructional phase" rather than to influence the ongoing learning process (Frey, 2007, p.

4). Although the scores from a previous year may influence a teacher's approach in the following years, any changes that will be made will not influence the students who were evaluated.

As a consequence of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), federal education legislation enacted in 2001, the assessment culture within education has increasingly been focused on outcome assessments and standardized, test-based accountability. Under the legislation, all students must score at the proficient or better level on state required Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) tests. "Schools that do no meet this benchmark will be identified and could possibly receive sanctions" (Witte, 2011, p. 4-5). Due to the high-stakes nature of the AYP tests, "daily instructional practice is directed toward the preparation and successful completion of these tests" (Witte, 2011, p. 5). Critics of NCLB assert that the high-stakes testing and accountability culture results in "narrowing the curriculum by excluding subject matter not tested…exclusion of topics either not tested or not likely to appear on the test even within tested subjects…reducing learning to the memorization of easily recalled facts for multiple choice testing… [and] devoting too much classroom time to test preparation rather than learning" (Frey, 2007, 102). These standardized tests have high stakes not only for students but also for teachers and schools. NCLB has cultivated a culture of punitive accountability for teachers - "increasing number of state boards of education require teachers to demonstrate and meet specific assessment standards as part of their teaching practice" (Witte, 2011, p. 2). Assessment is no longer a tool used within the classroom to monitor student learning and adjust teaching practices at the teacher's discretion. Rather, teachers do not have control over

the assessment strategies that are used to measure student success as well as their competency as teachers.

As the negative repercussions of NCLB become more pronounced, critical discussions regarding assessment's role in education are increasing (Witte, 2011, p. 4-5). It is important to acknowledge that assessment and evaluation in education is not inherently benevolent; as exhibited by the impact of NCLB, an assessment and evaluation strategy can alter the culture of education and restrict the teaching process. It is not possible, however, to completely abandon assessment and evaluation within education due to the current culture of accountability. How, then, can assessment and evaluation be reframed and redesigned to support the complexities of the teaching and learning process? Additionally, how can assessment and evaluation be implemented in experiential education?

Evaluation in Experiential Education

An evaluation should be tailored to the practical and pedagogical aspects of a program because "one size does not fit all and cannot address the myriad of circumstances of placements, nor the different emphasis and learning outcomes of each program or placement" (Mackaway, 2011, p. 10-11). Due to their drastically different pedagogical approaches and intended learning outcomes, assessment and evaluation for experiential education should be fundamentally different from the Traditional Summative Outcome evaluation common within banking education. Based on the theoretical foundations of experiential education, a **Participatory Formative Process** evaluation best supports the fundamental pedagogical and practical elements of experiential education. Within this Participatory evaluation approach, various stakeholders are

involved, to some degree, in both designing as well as implementing the assessment strategies. The assessment strategies are implemented throughout the program's process and, through a feedback loop, the evaluation results are intended to inform the ongoing implementation of the program.

Before exploring the application of Participatory Formative Process evaluation in experiential education, it is important to understand the limitations of an Outcomes assessment. Depending on the value placed on outcomes in an experiential education program, however, an Outcomes assessment may be necessary to verify student learning, inform operation decisions, as well as legitimize a program to funders (Mackaway, 2011, p. 4). An Outcomes assessment alone paints a shallow picture of the complex student and teacher learning within an experiential education program. Outcomes assessments, however, are far easier, and typically less expensive, to design and implement than Process evaluations. For this reason, an Outcomes assessment may be the most attractive option for funders and education non-profit programs. Additionally, it is very challenging to measure the complex and diverse learning and knowledge of each student within an experiential education program.

Each student constructs their own knowledge through their own experiential learning process. The constructed knowledge may include the intended learning outcomes, as defined by the teacher, but will also include the unintended learning outcomes as a result of each student's individual frame of reference. It is challenging to develop an outcomes assessment that can adequately measure both intended and unintended outcomes.

In order to assess diverse learning outcomes, an evaluator must consider a wide range of assessment strategies. For example, should an assessment "be based on the product of learning (research or project report, an essay or a portfolio that includes samples of work); the actual practice of a skill or competency; or the process of learning" (Mackaway, 2011, p. 5). A standardized testing approach to measure learning outcomes from experiential learning, for example, makes little sense. Additionally, such forms of "shallow assessment can devalue complex learning" (Mackaway, 2011, p. 6).

In addition to the challenge of assessing diverse learning outcomes, experiential education aspires to facilitate the development of soft skills, such as problem-solving and critical thinking (Mackaway, 2011, p.1). These soft skills are challenging to assess because any empirical evidence, "behaviors and skills that are directly observable," are challenging to quantify using traditional standardized assessment strategies. Therefore, in order to assess these skills, an evaluation can measure the "behaviors and performances that are believed to represent those constructs" (Witte, 2011, p. 66). The measures, however, are based on subjective interpretations of how one might demonstrate a soft skill. Therefore, "it is important that we as educators are aware of these assumptions and recognize the limits of the data" (Witte, 2011, p. 66). Additionally, it is important to acknowledge that an evaluation may "focus on the more tangible identifiable technical competencies at the expense of the more difficult to measure soft competencies" (Mackaway, 2011, p. 1). Evaluation within experiential education should "concentrate on finding evidence of higher-order and critical thinking" rather than only technical skills (Mackaway, 2011, p. 5). Clearly an outcomes assessment of experiential education is

challenging and may provide a shallow understanding of the program's capacity to facilitate student learning.

Instead of assessing the outcomes of student learning, or to gain a better understanding of the outcomes, one may try to assess the student's learning process. Students' reflections are an essential component of their experiential learning process. Therefore, instead of assessing the myriad of learning outcomes (or to contextualize those learning outcomes), an evaluation may try to assess a student's reflective capacity. When considering how to assess an individual's reflection, however, one is confronted with the reality that reflection is subjective, personal and internal. Consequently, requiring students to share their reflection raises ethical concerns. Additionally, "not all students are naturally reflective… students find reflection time consuming… [and/or] may not feel comfortable sharing their 'personal thoughts'" (Mackaway, 2011, p. 7-8). Furthermore, the Teaching Process may not provide the necessary structures to facilitate student reflection. Consequently, students may provide seemingly shallow, untruthful or incomplete evidence of reflection. These reflections, when assessed, may indicate that learning did not take place when, in fact, a student had learned. Clearly there are "issues around equity, reliability and validity" in regards to assessing student reflection as students may not be reflective or feel comfortable expressing their reflection (Mackaway, 2011, p. 7).

Participatory Formative Process Evaluation of the Teaching Process

A Participatory Formative Process evaluation can provide insight into a student's learning by assessing and evaluating the Teaching Process that facilitates student learning. The Participatory aspect of the evaluation strategy encourages buy-in and includes the

perspectives of the facilitator. The Formative Process evaluation can integrate into the Teaching Process to structure critical self-reflection, and, consequently, self-assessment, for both students and facilitators. Student involvement in assessing his or her own learning outcomes aligns with the student-centered nature of experiential education. Rather than a single assessment tool, a Participatory Formative Process evaluation seeks to cultivate a reflective culture within the organization or program that supports the critical awareness and development of facilitators as well as of the learners with whom they are working.

When assessing the Teaching Process, one must focus on the vital, and incredibly challenging, role of the facilitator. The facilitator is responsible for striking the balance between structure and ensuring a student-centered program. Due to the complex role of the facilitator, it is essential that facilitators participate in the design and implementation of assessments – especially assessments that evaluate their skills as a facilitator. Participatory evaluation incorporates the crucial perspectives of various stakeholders to ensure the accuracy of the assessments. Within experiential education, "educators are in the best position to review their own teaching and its impact on students" (Witte, 2011, p. 39). Additionally, control and engagement with the design of assessments encourages buy-in. Without a sense of ownership, the facilitator may not feel responsible for the implementation of the assessment and may not implement changes suggested through the feedback loop. The development of assessment tools and facilitation strategies through participatory evaluation serves as a forum for discussion. Through collaboration with other stakeholders and peers, teachers can "develop greater clarity about their purpose for teaching and how [student] understanding can be assessed" (Frey, 2007, p. 137).

Within experiential education, student "learning is evaluated mutually by the learner and teacher" (Itin, 1999, p. 140). A participatory evaluation approach aligns with the student-centered nature of experiential education. If students are influencing their learning process, then they should be influencing how that learning is assessed. This is particularly pertinent in experiential education due to the complexity and diversity of learning outcomes. Self-assessment is an "internal review of an individual's progress along with the recognition of required adjustments and modifications, based on that review, that need to be made to reach the intended learning target" (Witte, 2011, p. 38-39). Just as reflective capacities need to be cultivated, students need the opportunity to develop self-assessment skills (Witte, 2011, p. 178). Regardless of a student's reflective or self-assessment capacities, however, an experiential education program must facilitate the time and space for students to reflect (Witte, 2011, p. 180). It is, therefore, the responsibility of the teacher to both cultivate students' reflective capacities and to construct time for students to reflect.

The Formative Process evaluation within experiential education "serves an essential and direct purpose: to provide the learner, as well as the instructor, with useful feedback regarding his or her present performance in order to improve or enhance that performance in the future" (Witte, 2011, p. 35). Through this feedback the teacher can "improve instructional methods" and the student "becomes increasingly aware of how to monitor their own understanding" (Frey, 2007, p. 2-4). Through this self-awareness, students can reflect on experiences, challenge their own assumption, set learning goals and track their own progress. Teachers must also be aware of their students' reflection and learning in order to make program adjustments when necessary. Additionally,

teachers must be critically reflective of their own practice in order to improve their skills as a facilitator. The teacher can use this information to alter the design, implementation and facilitation approach within the Teaching Process. Therefore, a Formative Process assessment is essential within experiential education in order to 1) provide the student crucial information about their own progress, 2) provide the teacher with information about student progress and 3) provide the teacher with information about their own facilitation skills.

Within experiential education, assessment tools should be integrated into the program structure to facilitate student and teacher and reflection. When developing assessment as reflection, however, student and teacher reflection and learning should take priority. Rather than developing a self-assessment exercise that can be easily quantified and compared to explicit standards, the focus should first be on how to best facilitate student reflection and learning. This should also be the case when considering critical facilitator self-reflection. The primary function of structured reflection exercises for facilitators should be to encourage the critical reflection of their skills in order to improve rather than to obtain easily quantifiable measures of facilitator success. Therefore, reflection exercises can be simultaneously utilized as self-assessments as long as their development and implementation prioritizes reflection over assessment and evaluation.

Clearly the development of a Participatory Formative Process evaluation is not as simple as developing a series of outcomes assessment tools; rather, a successful Participatory Formative Process evaluation is dependent upon the cultivation of a reflective culture within an experiential education program. The Participatory development and implementation of the evaluation can begin to develop this reflective

culture. Similarly, the Formative Process evaluation encourages continuous critical reflection and improvement. Therefore, over time, the implementation of a Participatory Formative Process evaluation will create the reflective culture necessary for teachers and students to learn and grow through experience.

My initial approach to assessing student learning at Courageous resembled a Traditional Summative Outcomes assessment. Despite the positive quantitative data outcomes of this evaluation strategy, I was skeptical that students had been provided the reflective space in which to learn. The implementation of a Participatory Formative Process evaluation, on the other hand, would facilitate the development of a reflective culture at Courageous whiles structuring both staff and student reflection.

V. Courageous Case Study

The purpose of the evaluation at Courageous last summer was to assess the impact of the Summer Youth Programs on the students. The evaluation sought to determine if the students developed the following soft skills or character traits: Confidence, Responsibility, Preparedness for the Future and Diversity. The purpose of the evaluation was to collect data to show the positive impact of the program to its funders, primarily foundations. With no prior knowledge of the theory of experiential education, I developed a Traditional Summative Outcomes evaluation strategy to assess the impact of the program on the students. The evaluation strategy consisted of various assessment strategies to measure the development of character skills in the Youth Program students. Although the evaluation strategy produced numbers that indicated that students had developed and internalized the intended soft skills, I was not convinced that numbers reflected the learning of the students. Based on my observations at Courageous,

I will argue that the organization, while providing an experiential learning experience, does not have the necessary experiential education Teaching Process to structure student learning and provide a reflective space in which students could learn. Finally, I will propose a development and assessment strategy for Courageous to ensure that the program and staff creates such a reflective space.

Traditional Summative Outcomes Evaluation

Assessment Strategies

The evaluation that I developed and implemented was a Traditional Summative Outcome evaluation. As an objective evaluator, I developed the assessment tools and implementation strategies. The assessments focused on measuring the outcomes of the program and were primarily summative in nature with no established feedback loop to inform the program during the summer.

To determine the impact of the 2012 Summer Youth Program on its students, I developed assessment strategies to measure whether students and Young Leaders on staff were developing the following character skills – Confidence, Responsibility, Diversity and Preparedness for the future. My supervisor, Kate Henderson, proposed that we adapt various assessment tools used by other non-profits or organizations to measure the attainment of similar soft skills. Each assessment tool was adapted to reflect the Courageous sailing approach to teaching these soft skills. Additionally, each assessment tool had to be adapted for the various age groups of Courageous students: a Young Student version for Step 1, Step 2 and Jamaica Pond students as well as an Older Student version for Step 3, Step 4 and Camp Harborview students. Surveys were also adapted to assess staff members' development as Young Leaders. The age-based adaptations were

implemented to make the assessment tools accessible and age appropriate. Specifics of these adaptations are provided below. All questionnaires were anonymous to encourage honesty and openness. In order to match pre and post surveys, students were asked to provide their date of birth on the surveys.

The Individual and Team Character in Sport Questionnaire (ITCSQ) is a survey assessment tool designed to measure character development through involvement in youth sports. Independent consultants originally developed the questionnaire for MetroLacrosse, a highly regarded sports-based youth development program headquartered in Boston (See Appendix I for the Original ITCSQ).

I adapted the language of the ITCSQ to match the sailing exercises and culture at Courageous (See Appendix II for the Courageous ITCSQ). For example, I adapted a statement that originally read: "Players try to get their teammates to follow the team rules" to read, "Crew members try to get their crewmates to follow the class rules and the 'rules of the road.'" The "rules of the road" are the basic boating safety rules encouraged at Courageous. Common adaptations included changing "players" to "crew members" and "coaches" to "instructors" as these terms were more applicable to the Courageous community.

The ITCSQ questionnaire asks students to rate the applicability of various character statements to themselves, their peers and their instructors. For example, two statements from the self-assessment section read as follows:

1. Think about yourself. Please circle the answer that describes how much these statements are true about you.	Not like me at all	Mostly unlike me	Mostly like me	Exactly like me
1) I show respect to my crewmates, even if I do not agree with them	1	2	3	4

2) I make negative comments about my instructor to other students	1	2	3	4

Statements can indicate positive character traits or negative character traits. Student answers to the questions are scored as follows:

Statement	Answer Scale Range	Scoring Rubric
"I show respect to my crewmates, even if I do not agree with them"	"Not like me at all"	1
	"Mostly not like me"	2
	"Mostly like me"	3
	"Exactly like me"	4
"I make negative comments about my instructor to other students"	"Not like me at all"	4
	"Mostly not like me"	3
	"Mostly like me"	2
	"Exactly like me"	1

Identifying with the positive character statements, and disagreeing with the negative character statements, results in a high character development score.

The ITCSQ measures a student's character development across three scales including: 1) Sportsmanship, Responsibility & Perseverance; 2) Collective Responsibility; and 3) Character Development Experiences. Courageous used the results from the ITCSQ to determine student development of the following soft skills: Responsibility, Preparedness for the Future and Confidence.

The ITCSQ was administered to older students in Steps 3 and 4 as well as at Camp Harborview at the end of their experience at Courageous. Due to its length and questionnaire style, the ITCSQ was not age appropriate for the younger students. As an alternative, I adapted ITCSQ questions to include in the Young Student post-test (See Appendix XII for the Young Student Post-Survey)

The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) is a well-respected psychological survey that assesses an individual's self-esteem through ten very simple questions. This survey method was implemented as a pre and post survey allowing Courageous to

measure their impact on students' confidence over the course of the program. The original format and language of the RSES is very complex; therefore, to make it accessible for the students, I modified the language of the assessment tool (See Appendix III for the Student RSES):

Please answer the following questions as honestly as you can. **Read each question and circle the best answer** Remember there are no right answers!					
#1	I feel I am as important as others	Always!	Yeah Sometimes	No, Not Really	Never!
#2	I feel that there are a lot of good things about me	Always!	Yeah Sometimes	No, Not Really	Never!

The RSES was also adapted to assess Young Leader confidence through a pre and post survey (See Appendix IV for the Young Leader RSES).

Similar to the ITCSQ, the RSES has both positive and negative statements. Identifying with positive statements, and disagreeing with negative statements, results in a higher score and indicates high self-esteem. Calculating the difference between a student's initial RSES and their score at the conclusion of the program indicated the impact, if any that Courageous had on the student's confidence.

Courageous adapted the ***Most Significant Change*** (MSC) theory of assessment to gather qualitative data about student experiences and growth. MSC, in its basic form, asks the open-ended question "what is the most significant change that you experienced?" This allows the respondent to identify any impact, intended or unintended, that the program had on them. Similar to other methods, MSC methods were adapted for each age group of students and for staff. For the youngest group of students, MSC was adapted into a series of four, more structured questions (See Appendix V for the Young Student MSC):

1) What is the best part about sailing at Courageous?
2) Name something that you like most about a new friend that you met at Courageous.
3) Name 3 Things that you have learned at Courageous.
4) Name 3 things you learned about yourself at Courageous.

These questions attempted to identify any unintended impacts in addition to assessing whether students developed the intended impacts - Confidence, Responsibility, Preparedness for the Future and Diversity.

The Young Student MSC was facilitated through the group discussion framework Think-Pair-Share (See Appendix VI for the Young Student MSC Discussion Guide). In this framework, students are given the opportunity to reflect individually on their own answer to the question and then share with one other student before participating in a whole group discussion. This gives each student the opportunity to reflect, participate and share in whatever way they are most comfortable.

For the older students, MSC was adapted in a series of four questions to be completed on a written form (See Appendix VII for the Older Student MSC):

1) Describe 3 ways that you have grown at Courageous
2) How did Courageous help you grow?
3) Name 3 things that you learned at Courageous
4) What is the best part about Courageous?

The Older Student MSC was implemented as a written form without any facilitation or group discussion.

Instructors were also asked to provide stories about their students, answering the question: "what was the most significant change that you saw in your students?" (See Appendix VIII for the Instructor MSC). Additionally, Young Leaders were asked to answer the following questions about their own growth at Courageous over the summer (See Appendix IX for the Young Leader MSC):

- During the course of your summer at Courageous, what do you think was the most significant change in yourself?
- Why do you think this change is significant?
- How do you think Courageous contributed to this change?

The MSC assessment provided vital qualitative insight into each student's individual experience and growth and contextualized the quantitative data provided by other assessment tools.

Courageous utilized ***The Massachusetts Work Based Learning Program*** (MWBLP) to encourage and monitor the professional development and Preparedness for the Future of the Young Leaders on staff (See Appendix X for the MWBLP Form). The MWBLP is an assessment tool designed to encourage learning and productivity on the job. The MWBLP was developed by a group of employers, educators and workforce development professionals and is used by over ten thousand people each year in a variety of work experiences for students and youth across Massachusetts.

The MWBLP benefits both employers and young workers by:

1. Setting clear expectations
2. Opening up conversations about goals and performance
3. Providing a structured opportunity for reflection and growth

The MWBLP assesses individuals on eight foundational skills as well as any workplace specific skills agreed upon by the supervisor and supervisee. The foundational skills include:

WORK ETHIC AND PROFESSIONALISM

Skill	*Performance Expectations*
Attendance and Punctuality	Showing up in timely manner prepared for work Providing sufficient notice if unable to report for work
Workplace Appearance	Dressing appropriately for position and duties Practicing personal hygiene appropriate for position and duties
Accepting Direction and Constructive Criticism	Accepting direction and feedback with positive attitude through appropriate verbal and non-verbal communication skills Displaying willingness to work in a cooperative manner
Motivation and Taking Initiative	Participating fully in task or project from initiation to completion Initiating interaction with supervisor for next task or project upon successful completion of previous one
Understanding Workplace Culture, Policy and Safety	Demonstrating understanding of workplace culture and policy Complying with health and safety rules for the specific workplace Respecting confidentiality and exhibiting understanding of workplace ethics

COMMUNICATION AND INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

Skill	*Performance Expectations*
Speaking	Speaking clearly Using language appropriate to the environment, both in person and on phone
Listening	Listening attentively Making and maintaining eye contact appropriate to the workplace culture Confirming understanding
Interacting with Co-Workers	Relating positively with co-workers Working productively with individuals and in teams Respecting racial and cultural diversity

In order to adapt the MWBLP to Courageous, I developed a rubric that clarified expectations at Courageous for each of the foundational skills (See Appendix XI for MWBLP Skills Rubric). The rubric also provided a list of suggested Courageous specific skills including:

- Interacting with Students
- Leadership
- Problem Solving
- Teaching & Instructing

Each Young Leader was encouraged to select a Courageous specific skill to work on, in addition to the foundational skills, at the beginning of the summer. Finally, the rubric includes a set of guiding questions to help supervisors facilitate discussions with staff members. For example:

Courageous Specific Skills	***Skills Indicators:***	***Questions:***

Interacting with Students	• Treat students with respect, kindness and patience
	  ○ Employ a strong sense of fairness when mediating an argument between students
	• Using appropriate language
	  ○ No use of profanity or offensive language
	  ○ Ensure that Students use appropriate language
		• Describe a successful or positive interaction from your experience interacting with students.
		• Describe a challenging situation from you experience interacting with students. How did you address the challenge? How else could you have addressed the challenge?

Each Young Leader and their supervisor met at the beginning of the summer to set goals regarding the foundational skills and the Courageous specific skill of their choice. At subsequent meetings throughout the summer, during the third (Review #1) and seventh week (Review #2) of employment, the supervisor assessed staff performance and provided constructive feedback. Young Leaders receive a numerical score for each foundational skill and their Courageous specific skill. The key for the numerical scores is as follows:

(1)	Performance Improvement Plan Needed	Is not yet demonstrating the foundation skills required for the position and needs to have a formal plan for improving skill and performance
(2)	Needs Development	Beginning to demonstrate and develop the skills required for the position
(3)	Competent	Demonstrates skills required for position
(4)	Proficient	Consistently demonstrates skills required for the position and shows initiative in improving own skills
(5)	Advanced	Consistently demonstrates the foundation skills required for the position and shows initiative in improving own skills and using these skills to support the work of the organization

The supervisor used the MWBLP assessment form to record each Young Leader's performance over the course of the summer:

Performance Assessment (See key below)	(1) Performance Improvement Plan Needed	(2) Needs Development	(3) Competent	(4) Proficient	(5) Advanced	
FOUNDATION SKILLS						
Work Ethic and Professionalism						***Goals***
Attendance and Punctuality						
Review #1	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Review #2	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Workplace Appearance						
Review #1	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Review #2	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	

The difference between a staff member's score at Review #1 and Review #2 indicated professional development over the course of the summer. This quantitative data was used to illustrate the Young Leader's Preparedness for the Future.

The Senior Staff, including Step Leaders and Site Directors, received a brief training on how to implement the MWBLP with the staff in their step. The implementation strategy of the MWBLP is described below.

In addition to the four adapted survey methods described above, I designed and implemented supplementary ***Post Surveys*** to collect additional information regarding the impact of the program on students and Young Leaders. Each question on the post surveys collected data regarding one of the four character skills – Confidence, Responsibility, Preparedness for the Future and Diversity. For example, the Young Student Post Survey asked students (See Appendix XII for Young Student Post Survey):

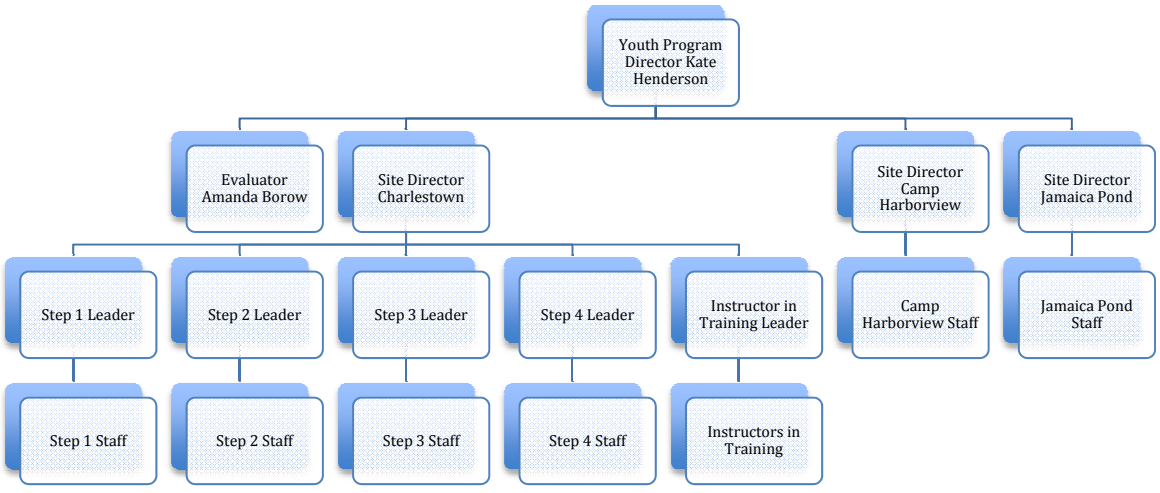
After sailing at Courageous,
I like trying new things
☐ More than before
☐ Same as before
☐ Less than before

This question collected data regarding the influence of Courageous on a student's willingness to try new things - if a student is more willing to try new things after his or

her time at Courageous, it is possible that they experienced an increase in their confidence or ability to succeed when trying new things. The Older Student Post Survey (Appendix XIII) and the Young Leaders Post Survey (See Appendix XIV) also pose a variety of questions to collect more information about the possible impact of Courageous.

Implementation Strategy

As the evaluator, I developed the assessment strategies outlined above in consultation with my supervisor, the Youth Director Kate Henderson. In general, staff members had very little involvement in the development of the assessment strategies. There were a few staff members who were consulted based on their experience working with children. The assessment strategies were presented to the Senior Staff during staff training week. Senior Staff includes the Step leaders of Steps 1 through 4 as well as the Site directors of Camp Harborview and Jamaica Pond.



The Senior Staff training included a brief introduction to the Impact assessment in 2011, described in Section I, and the four character skills that Courageous aspired to

teach students. The presentation was intended to prepare senior staff members to implement the assessment strategies throughout the summer. I detailed their assessment responsibilities and provided a timeline of their Step's assessments throughout the summer. Other staff members received minimal to no training regarding the purpose or implementation strategy of the assessment tools.

I created a binder for each Step as well as for Camp Harborview and Jamaica Pond. The binder contained an assessment schedule for the senior staff member to reference as well as copies of all pre-surveys and post surveys for students and staff. As the evaluator, I reminded senior staff when they needed to administer assessments.[2]

The RSES surveys were administered as a pre and post-survey while the ITCSQ and MSC were administered along with the Post-Survey at the end of each session. There was no uniform approach to facilitate the implementation of the survey assessment tools – RSES, ITCSQ and Post-Survey. For the more complicated, qualitative assessment tools, the MWBLP and MSC, I developed the MWBLP Skills Rubric (Appendix XI) and the MSC Discussion Guide (Appendix VI) to provide more guidance for the senior staff. I also facilitated the first MSC discussion groups for younger students in Step 1, Step 2 and at Jamaica Pond. These were meant to provide a facilitation example for senior staff so they would be more prepared and comfortable facilitating the group in the future. Because students were divided into two smaller groups for the MSC, in order to encourage better group discussions, I continued to facilitate the second group throughout the summer. Additionally, in some instances, if a senior staff member was not

[2] Step 1 as well as Jamaica Pond operated on a one-week schedule with six sessions total. Steps 2, 3, and 4 operated on three-week sessions with two sessions total. Camp Harborview operated on two-week sessions with 3 sessions total.

comfortable or invested as the facilitator, I would facilitate the MSC discussion group along with another senior staff member.

The initial versions of the assessment tools were further modified and improved at a mid-term review 3-weeks into SLP. The review took into consideration preliminary results, staff feedback and instructor feedback. In particular, the ITCSQ was further revised. The number of questions was reduced to make it a more manageable length. Additionally, the language was changed to make it more accessible for students.

Evaluation Results

Despite the various critiques of this assessment strategy, which will be explored in the next section, the assessments had a 79% completion rate across the three sites, higher that the set benchmark of 75% completion. The 2012 Evaluation Report (see Appendix XV) produced positive numbers to show foundations, fulfilling the assessment's original purpose.

The evaluation results showed the diversity of the Courageous students. The students that attended Courageous SYP in 2012 came from over 31 different neighborhoods throughout the greater Boston area including Charlestown, Dorchester, Hyde Park, Jamaica Plain and Roslindale. Demographically, 60% of students identified as White, 16% identified as African American, 12% identified as Hispanic or Latino, 6% identified as Asian while 6% identified as Multi-Ethnic. The household income range included 30% with incomes less than $65,000, 33% with incomes from $65,000 to $135,000, 18% with incomes greater than $135,000 and 19% of household incomes not reported.

In terms of Confidence, 96% of students reported trying something new at Courageous. 49% of students' RSES scores increased after their time at Courageous. Additionally, 98% of older students agreed that they felt more confident after their time at Courageous. The evaluation data showed that students developed a sense of responsibility for themselves, for others and for the environment at Courageous. 100% of young students expressed that they care for the environment. 91% of older students agreed that they feel more responsible after their time at Courageous. Finally, the evaluation results reflected students' perseverance and problem solving capacity – indications that they are more Prepared for the Future. 91% of older students agreed that they fell better prepared to overcome obstacles after their time at Courageous. Additionally, 41% of younger students felt that they can solve problems better than before their time at Courageous (57% expressed that their problem solving capacity remained the same).

The evaluation fulfilled its primary objective to provide funders with an outcomes focused evaluation. The Traditional Summative Outcomes approach was also a successful approach for me as the evaluator. I was the only evaluator at Courageous; therefore, in addition to designing the assessment tools and monitoring the day-to-day implementation, I was responsible for coding and analyzing the data. The Summative nature of the evaluation gave me the time to do data entry without worrying about providing timely feedback to the staff. Additionally, the Outcome focus of the assessment allowed me to use survey form assessment tools that were easier to code and translate into quantitative data. In addition to the quantitative data, the MSC provided qualitative data from students and staff. These assessments were far more time-consuming to code

and analyze but, because the MSC questions were open-ended, they could catch unintended learning outcomes. Consequently, the Traditional Summative Outcomes evaluation fulfilled its primary objective by measuring the impact of the program on the students.

Critique of Traditional Summative Process Evaluation

Although I accomplished the task I was assigned at the beginning of the summer, the evaluation design did not seek to evaluate the Courageous sailing program as an experiential education program. The first shortcoming in the evaluation design was my own lack of knowledge regarding experiential education, evaluating education, and, consequently evaluating experiential education. Without the necessary theoretical knowledge, I approached assessing the Courageous program with basic program evaluation knowledge. I did not know at the time that I was developing a Traditional Summative Outcomes evaluation and the consequences of that approach. Due to my lack of knowledge regarding experiential education, I was not prepared with the skills of a facilitator. Additionally, I only had a cursory knowledge of the organizational culture and operations as I developed the assessment tools. Therefore, my lack of knowledge led to the disconnect between the evaluation design and the basic principles of an experiential education program.

As a result of my Traditional evaluation approach, the staff was not invested, and the assessments and implementation strategy did not take into consideration their perspectives and was, therefore, not tailored to the program needs. Prior to presenting the evaluation plan to the Senior Staff, I only had a week to develop the assessment tools. The top-down development of the assessment tools and implementation strategy was

efficient; unfortunately, I lacked the organizational knowledge to tailor the tools to the practical needs of Courageous. I did have the perspective of my supervisor, the Youth Director Kate Henderson, to guide the evaluation plan. Additionally, I encouraged constructive criticism from the Senior Staff and consulted a veteran staff member, Sara Murphy, to revise the assessment tools and incorporate some of their concerns. Regardless of these insights, I had presented completed assessment tools rather than developing them with the staff.

As a consequence of the lack of staff involvement, there were logistical problems with the implementation. The first problem was the reality of time and space at Courageous. The assessments were particularly challenging for Step 1 and for Jamaica Pond staff because their sessions were only a week long. As a consequence they had to implement the pre and post surveys very closely together. This was, needless to say, a taxing process for the staff. The implementation of these assessments was more challenging because of the young age of the students. Regardless of the modifications to make the RSES age appropriate, it was still challenging for many students. As will be addressed further below, the staff did not receive sufficient training about how to facilitate that assessment. Additionally, with only a week of the program, the staff was skeptical that students were learning enough to measure. This was particularly apparent through the Step 1 MSC discussion groups I facilitated or observed. Many times the students were confused by the reflective questions and were unable to answer them.

The physical space at Courageous was also a challenge. The boathouse, in the Charlestown Navy Yard, is too small to provide any space for activities or group discussions. Therefore, any on land instruction or discussion took place primarily outside

under a series of tents. Anytime that a Step may have to teach a lesson, in the morning, at lunch and at the end of the day, the pier was hectic as staff organized the launch and return of boats. Consequently, there was no quiet space free from distractions in which staff members could facilitate assessment strategies or reflection. Although learning in the outdoor environment on both land and sea may provide some consistency or connection to the experience for students, the physical space was a significant challenge to the implementation of the evaluation strategy. An additional challenge was the reality of three different locations – Charlestown, Camp Harborview and Jamaica Pond. Finding a space in which to facilitate the assessment was also a challenge at both Camp Harborview and Jamaica Pond. Additionally, I was not on-site to remind Senior Staff of their responsibilities or to step in as a facilitator. I had to trust that they would be able to get it done, but their lack of buy-in to the evaluation plan undermined my hope that they would implement the assessments without supervision.

The realities of the daily schedule at Courageous presented another challenge to the implementation of the assessment strategies. Staff and students spent most of the day on the sailboats away from the docks. Each day was a different schedule contingent upon factors such as when the boats got off the dock, when and how long lunch was as well as the planned activity for the day which might include day-trips or overnight trips. Weather was a serious factor as well. If the wind died, the boats might have a hard time getting back to the dock. If there was rain or if it was too hot, the boats would not go out. Essentially, the schedule and the program structure varied day-to-day and did not have built in reflection or assessment time. Therefore, determining when assessments should take place was an ongoing challenge. Although the final assessments were scheduled

initially to take place on the last day of each session, due to the realities of unpredictable schedules, I started working on getting the assessments done three days prior to the end of the sessions. Essentially, I had to work around each Step's schedule each session; this required a lot of time and energy reminding the Senior Staff to implement the assessments.

A significant consequence of the Traditional approach was a lack of buy-in from the staff. Although I attempted to encourage buy-in during Senior Staff training and throughout the summer, the staff justifiably viewed the evaluation from the start as "more paperwork" – the assessment was important for the organization but was not relevant to the staff's instruction nor, really, to their students' learning. When presenting the assessments to the Senior Staff, I connected the four impact measures to the mission and vision of Courageous. Regardless of this connection to the mission of the organization, staff members did not view the evaluation as important. The only leverage that I had was Kate's support as well as the reality that the evaluation report was necessary to obtain funding from foundations. Although the staff had no ownership of the assessment designs, the assessments needed to be implemented and facilitated by staff members. I could not facilitate all of the discussion groups or surveys due to the number of Steps, students and locations. Without a sense of ownership, senior staff members were not committed to following the assessment schedule.

This was a significant problem at Jamaica Pond and Camp Harborview as they were off site, and I could not monitor the completion of the assessments. This lack of buy-in was particularly problematic among the non-Senior Staff members. Only the Senior Staff received a brief training on the assessment strategies. The rationale behind

this decision was two-fold: 1) I only had time during staff training week to brief the 20 Senior Staff and 2) from a top-down perspective it seemed that only the Senior Staff needed to be trained. As a result, non-Senior Staff had a very minimal understanding of the purpose and value of the assessments. Due to this lack of understanding non-Senior Staff members had even less of a sense of responsibility to implement the assessments.

Throughout the summer I observed that non-Senior Staff members would not participate in facilitating the assessments and used the time, instead, to work with the boats or to socialize with one another. This was especially the case with the Instructors-in-Training (IIT's). IIT's split their time between instructional lessons and working within the Steps as an Instructor in Training. Consequently, they were the most disengaged staff members in terms of the assessment because of this transient position. Their transient age, between student and staff, also posed a challenge to their active role as facilitator.

Non-Senior Staff received no training regarding the assessment strategy. The lack of training made the evaluation design seem complicated, inaccessible and pointless. Additionally, due to a lack of training, staff members across the board were not prepared to facilitate the various assessments. Younger students would, at times, be confused by the RSES. Staff members were not formally trained to facilitate the survey assessments including the RSES and ITCSQ. Just as my top-down introduction to the assessments negatively affected staff commitment, the way that staff introduced the assessments influenced students' buy-in. Therefore, without facilitation training, staff members projected their perception of the assessments as "useless" onto the students. This projection of negative sentiments occurred among staff as well. Senior Staff were

responsible for implementing the MWBLP for the staff members in their Step. This form of assessment was more qualitative and its purpose was to gain insight and structure a dialogue between supervisor and supervisee rather than to just produce an outcomes assessment. The MWBLP was, therefore, a formative assessment with an initial goal setting meeting and two subsequent meetings to assess a staff member's progress. Although this assessment strategy had the potential to cultivate growth within the staff, it was dependent upon the Senior Staff member who was facilitating the discussion. In some cases, the Senior Staff member had no buy-in to the process and, as a consequence, the staff under them did not find the MWBLP formative.

Across all of the assessment strategies there was inconsistent and insufficient facilitation due to a lack of training and buy-in. Although I attempted to address negative sentiments toward the evaluation and the lack of training throughout the summer, it was a triage situation that could not reverse the effects of a Traditional evaluation approach. I tried to gain an understanding of improvements to the evaluation through informal discussions with senior staff and staff members. Based on this information I revised the assessment tools half way through the summer. Additionally, based on the surveys from the first session, I presented some basic impact data to the staff during the second session. This data, however, was not presented in a timely manner nor did it encourage any changes in the programs operations. Rather, it was an attempt to gain more buy-in and support from the staff and to provide encouragement for the rest of the summer in the form of inspirational data and impact quotes. Although these efforts may have encouraged staff to implement the assessments, the Traditional approach was inherently

unsustainable. The staff would not be prepared, or willing, to implement the evaluation strategy without an evaluator on staff.

Although the Traditional Summative Outcome approach provided data to show to foundations, the assessment failed to structure a reflective space for students and failed to encourage teachers and students to examine their own learning throughout the program. Survey assessments did not assess unintended outcomes of students' unique learning and growth; rather, the questions attempted to quantify students' internalization of only the four skills focused on by Courageous – Confidence, Responsibility, Diversity, and Preparedness for the Future. The legitimacy of the survey tools to assess the development and internalization of these skills can be called into question. Although most of the assessment tools were adapted from legitimate original forms, I made language and length modifications and my assessments have not been vetted for their accuracy. Additionally, a written survey approach was not accessible for the younger students. I was unable to adapt an ITCSQ form that would be accessible. The only assessment tool that encouraged student reflection and could identify unintended learning outcomes was the MSC. Unfortunately, as was asserted above, the MSC was not effectively or consistently facilitated.

The shortcomings of the 2012 assessment and evaluation strategy inspired my quest to gain a better understanding of assessment in experiential education. Additionally, the outcomes and critiques of my initial assessment have informed the development of a proposed assessment strategy at Courageous.

Experiential Learning at Courageous

In addition to the shortcomings of my Traditional Outcome Summative assessment strategy, the Courageous Youth Sailing program lacks the Teaching Process crucial to experiential education. This assertion is based on my observations throughout the summer. As a new staff member, my perspective was limited by my short time at the organization. As an external evaluator, my perspective was limited by the time that I was able to spend with staff members and campers. My conclusions are also based on the data that was collected through the evaluation, general feedback from staff members, and from conversations with Senior Staff.

As it stands, Courageous provides a phenomenal experiential learning program in which students have the opportunity to learn the technical skills of sailing through hands-on experiences. On one level, the intended impact of the Courageous program is to teach campers how to sail through active experience. In this regard, Courageous excels at providing an active and safe environment in which students can take supported risks from which they can learn and grow. The technical skills of sailing are taught through an explicit curriculum in order to scaffold the development of each student's skills. These technical skills are assessed throughout the program through a Blue Book. The Blue Book is a packet of questions and diagrams that each student completes by answering questions, and staff signs-off on skills that the student can demonstrate. This formative process evaluation can be viewed as facilitated reflection to help students internalize the technical skills of sailing. The Blue Book has the potential to provide outcome data by measuring students' mastery of certain skills. Based on this data, staff can determine whether a student is prepared to move on to the next step.

Unfortunately, the Blue Books are not utilized to their full potential as either a reflective exercise or as an assessment tool. The Blue Books are implemented inconsistently among steps and individual staff members. In some instances, the Blue Books would not be introduced until the end of the session in which case they are simply an outcomes assessment rather than a formative process assessment tool. Staff received no training, to my knowledge, regarding the facilitation of a Blue Book as a reflection tool. I did observe on several occasions Senior Staff members reminding their staff members that students had to demonstrate a skill a certain number of times and with confidence before that skill could be signed off on. The Blue Books were not implemented at Jamaica Pond nor at Camp Harborview due to the differences in their programs. Additionally, data from the Blue Books were not recorded and therefore could not be used to inform program decisions or the promotion of a student to the next step for the subsequent summer. Essentially, the Blue Book has the potential, within a reflective organizational culture, to become a successful formative process assessment and reflection exercise.

On another level, however, the intended impact of the sailing program extends beyond the technical skills of sailing. As one senior staff member put it, Courageous is not trying to teach kids how to sail, but rather how to be a sailor. Implied in this statement as well as in the organization's mission is that there are soft skills that one needs to develop in order to be a sailor. Therefore, in addition to the explicit curriculum of hard sailing skills, students are given the opportunity to develop soft skills through the sport of sailing.

Unfortunately, these intended learning goals, the four metrics of impact, are not included in any formal program structure. If the students develop the intended soft skills, or any unintended soft skills, it is through their own experiential learning process without any experiential education structure. In fact, the staff had only a cursory knowledge of the intended impact – as far as many instructors were concerned, their only responsibility was to teach the students the technical capacities of sailing. The focus on teaching technical hard skills was clear in both staff training and the daily schedule. There was no staff training or program structures to prepare staff to facilitate student reflection.

Just as there were no structures to facilitate student reflection, the structures to encourage instructors' self-reflection were not sufficient. Although the MWBLP was intended to be a tool that inspired staff self-reflection and critical dialogue, the implementation varied due to the lack of buy-in and training amongst senior staff members. An additional attempt at formative assessment that facilitated staff reflection was Instructor-in-Training journaling. I was not involved in the design, implementation or assessment of these journals so I cannot attest to their effectiveness or student-centered nature. I can assert, however, that the effectiveness of both the MWBLP and IIT journals suffered within the context of an organizational culture that did not value reflective time. Overall, Courageous lacks the experiential education facilitation structures and reflective culture to encourage the experiential learning of both students and staff.

Experiential Education Design and Rationale

To implement experiential education at Courageous, the Teaching Process must structure and facilitate students' experiential learning. In order to successfully implement the Teaching Process, however, Courageous must create a reflective culture to cultivate

instructors' capacity as facilitators. A Participatory Formative Process evaluation can be utilized to create a reflective culture and, simultaneously, to monitor the implementation of the Teaching Process.

There is no single model or handbook that can ensure the implementation of an experiential education Teaching Process; rather, it is a skill set and reflective culture within an organization or classroom. Central to the complex nature of the teaching process is the critical self-awareness of teachers and, consequently, an organizational culture that supports reflective teachers. The staff must be capable and dedicated to the process – a Participatory evaluation approach will engage the staff and ensure that they are knowledgeable and invested in the Teaching Process and assessment strategy. Evaluating the implementation of an experiential education methodology is similarly complex. There is not a single assessment tool or strategy that can ensure that students are reflecting within his/her own experiential learning cycle – reflection is internal, personal and subjective. Instead, one can assess the implementation of the experiential education Teaching Process in order to ensure an optimal reflective space in which students can learn.

Proposed Participatory Formative Process Evaluation Strategy

A Participatory Formative Process evaluation at Courageous can be used to implement and assess an experiential education Teaching Process. The assessment and reflection tools proposed below were developed to facilitate staff and student reflection while collecting assessment information about staff facilitation capacities and student engagement in reflection exercises. It is essential that these tools are developed to prioritize reflection over assessment. As a formative assessment, the evaluation will

provide feedback to staff on how they can improve their facilitation skills throughout the summer. It is essential, to both the implementation of the Teaching Process as well as the assessments, to cultivate staff buy-in. Therefore, through participatory evaluation, staff will be engaged in the development of assessment tools, the facilitation of reflection exercises, as well as the implementation of the reflection assessment. This proposal is written primarily for the consideration of the Courageous senior staff and board of directors. The primary stakeholders, however, include all staff members as well as the students. Both the staff and students will engage the most with the reflection process and reflection assessment. They will also gain the most from the successful implementation of the reflection process and, therefore, the reflection assessment.

The proposed Participatory Formative Process evaluation seeks to ensure the successful implementation of the experiential education Teaching Process by examining two essential components: **staff facilitation skills** and **student reflection.**

The reflection process to develop staff facilitation skills includes: staff training, staff facilitation of discussion groups as well as midterm and end of summer staff reflection exercises. The following evaluation questions will be answered in order to assess staff facilitation skills:

- Have staff facilitation skills improved over the course of the summer?
- Has the implementation of a reflection process changed the culture at Courageous?

The student reflection process includes: an initial framing exercise, daily reflection group discussions and a final reflection exercise. The following evaluation questions will be answered to assess student participation in reflection activities:

- Are students participating in reflection exercises?
- What concrete experiences do the students reflect upon?

- What skills/lessons do students identify within those experiences?
- Do students conceptualize the application of these lessons in the future?

To facilitate the reflection process while, simultaneously, assessing the reflection process, I propose two reflection/assessment tools: 1) Facilitator Assessment Survey (Appendix XVI) and 2) Student Sailor Log (Appendix XVII). The Facilitator Assessment Survey structures and encourages staff members' reflection on their own skills. The Student Sailor Log similarly structures staff facilitation of student reflection.

Staff Training Process and Facilitator Assessment Survey

In order to cultivate a reflective staff culture at Courageous, staff applicants should be briefed on the social mission of Courageous and be encouraged to embrace their role as an educator as well as a sailing instructor. To prepare staff for their role as facilitators, Courageous should include intensive facilitation training as part of staff week. The training will be facilitated by Kate Henderson, the Youth Program Director or, alternatively, a skilled experiential educator. This training will ensure that staff members are prepared to facilitate formal and informal student reflection. It is important that the staff members understand and appreciate the importance of reflection to students' learning. Currently at Courageous, there is no explicit staff training to prepare staff to facilitate student learning beyond technical sailing skills. Staff training will, therefore, include a basic introduction to the theory of experiential learning – Kolb's cycle that explicates how individuals construct knowledge through reflection on an experience. Staff members will then be introduced to their role as experiential educators – to facilitate and structure their students' experiential learning process. The importance of their role as facilitators of reflection will build on this foundational information. Admittedly, the staff member role as an experiential education is complex and requires self-awareness as well

as other facilitation skills in addition to sailing skills. Every staff member will have their own unique skill set and, although every staff member may not become a phenomenal experiential educator, it is essential that every staff member participate in the staff training in order to cultivate a reflective organizational culture. Additionally, due to the structure of the sailing program, a single staff member is frequently with students in a boat – that staff member has the opportunity to encourage student learning throughout the day. Therefore, it is imperative that all staff are encouraged to be experiential educators to the best of their ability.

The staff will be introduced to basic facilitation skills and principles. The training should provide staff members with the knowledge to recognize teachable moments during formal and informal reflection as well as to overcome potential challenges they may face during reflection exercises. This information will also inform the Participatory development of the reflection tools. Staff members will role-play both formal reflection group discussions and informal reflection that may occur on the boat. Additionally, throughout staff training week, group reflection will be used to wrap up various staff training exercises. Staff members will have the opportunity to lead group reflections. These facilitated group discussions will not only provide staff members the opportunity to reflect on their training but also to improve their skills as facilitators.

It is important that this training introduce the Teaching Process and reflection exercises as a culture shift within the organization rather than as assessment tools or additional "paper work." Staff members should be encouraged to incorporate reflection as part of their experience. Reflecting on their own experiences as staff members will encourage their own learning in regards to leadership skills, responsibility, and

communication skills. The implementation of the Teaching Process, and consequently opportunities for students to reflect, is dependent on staff because they will be facilitating all reflection exercises; therefore, it is essential that staff are invested in the reflective culture. To inspire this buy-in, the training should start with a conversation about how staff members perceive themselves – whether they see themselves as educators. This conversation should be used to help the staff discover their potential impact as both sailing instructors and as educators. Staff should be encouraged to recognize that they already inspire students to develop skills such as confidence and responsibility through the experience of sailing.

This investment in the Teaching Process will be encouraged through the Participatory development of the reflection/assessment tools. When implementing a Participatory approach, however, the staff must be given some guidance in order to ensure that the tools developed will facilitate reflection and produce viable assessment data. Therefore, I have created proposed reflection and assessment tools to act as a foundation upon which staff can collaborate and develop Courageous specific tools.

During training, all staff members will participate in the development of the Facilitator Assessment Survey – the tool that will help staff members better understand and improve their own facilitation skills (see Appendix XVI). The staff will work together to solidify which facilitator principles are most important at Courageous. This will build on the introduction to basic facilitation principles that took place earlier in the staff training. The facilitation principles in the proposed Facilitator Assessment Survey include:

Positive Attitude

- *Facilitator sets a positive tone, and demonstrates a commitment to the reflection process*

- *Facilitator creates and maintains a safe space for students to participate (reiterates the rules of the reflection activity, stops negative comments, etc.)*

Effective Communication

- *Facilitator actively listened to each student*
- *Facilitator comments were constructive and guided students toward deeper reflection and learning but did not dominate the discussion*
- *Facilitator encouraged participation by every student while respecting each students choice to participate*

Guide Students through Reflection

- *Facilitator guides students through the three phases of reflection: Description, Reflection and Application of lessons learned to future situations*
- *Reflection exercise was age appropriate; facilitator made reflection exercise accessible to younger students or applicable for older students*
- *Facilitator provides a good wrap-up of reflection (synthesizes group's ideas, thanks students for their contributions, etc.)*

Overall, how do you think the reflection group went?

- *Majority of students were engaged, most participated in partner and/or group discussions*
- *There were little to no behavioral issues*
- *Students made substantive observations, identified lessons learned and how they might apply those lessons in the future*
- *Enough time was set aside for reflection activity and time was not taken from another necessary activity*

These are only the proposed Facilitator Principles – it is important that the staff members have a role in discussing what facilitation skills are important to them and to their learning community. It is essential that the staff contributes to the formation of the Facilitator Principles in order encourage staff buy-in as well as to ensure that the tool reflects and supports the Courageous teaching process. In addition to discussing and adapting the facilitation principles, the staff will also discuss and decide how often the assessment will be implemented. The staff will need to decide whether or not the assessment will only be utilized after formal reflection activities with students or after both formal and informal facilitation.

The survey will be completed as a self-reflection tool, to be filled out by the staff member acting as the facilitator. The staff member will be asked to rate themselves on a scale from 1-10 for each facilitator principles. Staff members will also be prompted to record a positive and constructive observation for the each of the principles. The survey

will also filled out by other staff members participating in the group reflection. This peer assessment will inform the facilitator self-reflection. The positive and constructive comments and observations on the surveys will provide immediate feedback to staff facilitators so they can improve their facilitation skills as the summer progresses.

The use of a number rating system within the context of a self and peer assessment is potentially harmful to the reflective purpose of the assessment tool. It is imperative that the rating system be discussed and critiqued during staff training. It should be made clear that the number ratings will not be used in any punitive measure against facilitators. Their purpose is to illustrate, to the facilitator, the improvement of facilitation skills over the summer. Through the self-assessment, especially, each staff member will be prompted to think about their facilitation skills relative to where they perceive them to be at the beginning of the summer. Additionally, unlike the MWBLP reviews described above, the Facilitator Survey will not be implemented in a top-down manner with the Step Leader assessing each instructor. Rather, the Facilitator Survey will ideally encourage communication horizontally among all instructors as well as their Step Leader. This equity will hopefully encourage staff to willing reflect and improve upon their facilitation skills.

Discussions to develop the Facilitator Assessment Survey will address the use of a numerical rating system. If the staff accepts the number rating system as constructive, and not harmful to their reflection, the Facilitator Assessment Survey can provide quantitative data about individual facilitators as well as the reflection culture as a whole. Calculating the average facilitation score of each facilitator at the half point in the summer as well as at the end of the summer can indicate an individual's improvement

over the summer. At the mid-point, this data can also inform any recommendations as to which staff members may need more facilitation training. The data from the Facilitator Assessment Survey can also be used to calculate overall staff average scores throughout the summer – indicating the development of a reflective culture. This data can also be used to determine which facilitation principles would be valuable to include in any mid-term staff training.

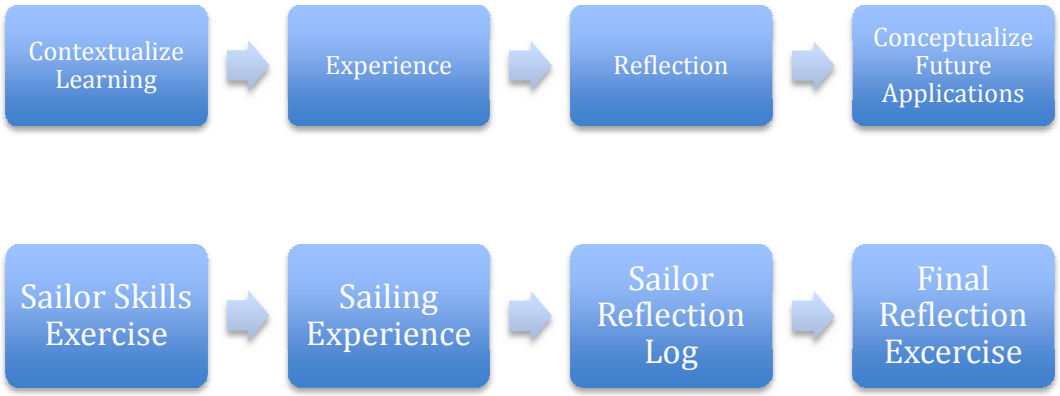
In addition to discussing the Facilitator Assessment Survey, the staff will participate in the development of the Student Sailor Log (see Appendix XVII). The staff will work together to determine what "Sailor Skills" will be used in the Student Sailor Log as part of the initial framing exercise. The Sailor Skills are a list of skills and attributes that one may develop through the experience of sailing. As sailors and sailing instructors, the staff can reflect on what skills they developed through their sailing experiences. With this awareness, they will be able to easily recognize and encourage the demonstration of those skills in their students. Additionally, through this participatory process, staff members will have more of an investment in the traits that they propose - increasing buy-in and collective responsibility.

Student Reflection Process and Student Sailor Log

The Sailor Log assessment tool is used to facilitate student reflection and learning as well as to collect assessment data. Each student will have a Sailor Log in which they will complete reflection exercises. The Sailor Log can be combined with the Blue Book – an assessment design to evaluate students' internalization of technical sailing skills. Combining these two assessment processes would increase the consistent implementation of Blue Books while fundamentally incorporating the reflection process into the sailing

curriculum at Courageous. The logs will be kept, along with the Facilitator Assessment Surveys, on-site in an evaluation binder for each Step.

The Sailor Log structures a series of student reflection exercises that mirror the experiential learning cycle established in the literature review:



The ***Sailor Skills Exercise*** (see Appendix XVII) is the component of the experiential learning process in which staff facilitators introduce students to a frame of reference through which they can reflect upon their sailing experience. It is imperative that staff establish context for the students prior to their experiences on the boat. Students need to be aware that, through sailing, they have the opportunity to learn more than technical sailing skills.

Staff will introduce the Sailor Skills on the first day during the general introduction to the program. The Sailor Skills should be incorporated into the discussion about safety rules and boat rules; many of the Sailor Skills, such as demonstrating respect and teamwork, are essential to students' safety on the boat. The introduction to boat rules should be interactive; students should help form the rules so that they feel more ownership and collective responsibility over them. Although students may not be familiar with all of the necessary sailing safety rules, they will be able to contribute greatly to

community rules that will guide how the students and staff will interact with one another. Staff should prompt students to define the various sailor skills themselves and have a discussion about what they mean to the group. Then students should fill out their Sailor Logs answering the questions:

- Which Sailor Skill do you want to work on at Courageous?
- Why do you want to work on this skill?
- How will you know if you have gotten better at that skill?

These questions should encourage the students to consider the Sailor Skills when they perceive and reflect upon their sailing experiences.

While providing this structure for students is important, it is essential that staff members also encourage and validate each student's individual learning. The framing exercise and reflection exercise do not give the students "answers" to what they are learning - rather, they should provide students with a lens through which they can analyze their own experience when reflecting on the lessons they learned. Staff should emphasize that these skills are just some of the things that the students may learn through sailing. Part of staff training will be a discussion about how to balance establishing context and facilitating students' personal reflection and learning. One method to ensure that students are reflecting on personal experience and learning rather than merely reiterating the Sailor Skills is to consistently encourage students to describe their experience and then draw out the lessons learned. If students are identifying a Sailor Skill that they demonstrated without first establishing their experience, they may simply be trying to give the "right" answer.

In addition to providing context for students, the Sailor Skills Exercise will be used to provide data on student participation in the reflection process. The Evaluation Specialist will assess student entries and determine:

- The % of students that selected a sailor skill to improve upon,
- The % of students that identify a substantive reason why they want to work on that sailor skill
- The % of students that identify how they will know they have improved on their Sailor Skill

The ***Sailor Reflection Log*** (see Appendix XVII) facilitates astudent's experiential learning process. The exercises encourage students to reflect on their experience by 1) describing an experience, 2) identifying lessons learned and 3) conceptualizing future applications of those lessons. Students will answer the following questions:

- Describe an exciting experience or a challenging experience that you had today
- What did you learn from this experience?
- How do you think you can use those lessons in the future?

Daily reflection will take place as a 15-20 minute group discussion, facilitated by a staff member using the discussion framework Think-Pair-Share. In this framework, students are given the opportunity to reflect individually in their journals, then share with one other student before participating in a whole group discussion. This gives each student the opportunity to reflect on many levels in which they are comfortable. An essential component of group reflection is creating a safe space in which students can reflect and participate in whatever way they feel comfortable. It is essential that students understand that there are no wrong answers and the impact of the reflection time depends on how much they choose to engage. Facilitators must ensure, however, that students respect their peers within the exercise. For example, if a student chooses not to participate, they must not be allowed to disrupt the other students' reflection and participation.

During staff training, the implementation of the reflection exercises will be discussed. Due to the inconsistent daily schedule at Courageous, it may not be possible to find the time and space to implement a group discussion and utilize the Sailor Log everyday. This challenge, and possible solutions, will be discussed with the staff. It may be more practical for staff members to set a goal for the number of formal facilitations they would like to have with the students each week. The written format of the Sailor Log may not be possible at times (on the boat, on an overnight, on a day trip to an island or museum). In this case, student reflection can be facilitated through a group discussion. Additionally, staff should be prepared and willing to take advantage of informal facilitation. Throughout their day, instructors will be there for many teachable moments – it is up to them to help their students take advantage of those learning opportunities by encouraging them to reflect on their meaning. This informal facilitation can be as easy as asking a question to get the student to think about what just happened.

Due to the wide age range at Courageous, ages 8 to 15, the facilitator will need to implement age appropriate group reflection activities that are accessible for his or her students. For the youngest students it is important to explain to them that it is most important that they take the time to think about their answers – then, as an alternative to writing sentences, they can write key words or draw a picture of their experience. Developing age appropriate and interactive reflection activities will be part of staff training. Students will also have the opportunity to indicate whether staff, as facilitators, helped them reflect and internalize lessons from their experiences. Questions such as, "describe a challenging experience that you have had a Courageous? Who helped you overcome that challenge - A staff member and/or another student? How did they help you

overcome that challenging experience? These questions can be used to provide additional qualitative data about staff facilitation skills. It will also provide insight into peer interactions and how they influence a student's experiences.

The Evaluation Specialist will code student log entries to collect qualitative data to answer the evaluation questions pertaining to student reflection:

- What kind of experience are they reflecting on?
  Coding key includes steering the boat, working with their peers, etc.
- What skills do the students identify based on their experience?
  Coding key includes Sailor Skills such as Respect and Teamwork
- How do the students conceptualize the application of these lessons in the future?
  Coding key includes situations such as school or sports teams

This qualitative information will provide insight into which experiences students are finding most formative, what lessons in particular they are learning through their sailing experience and, finally, in what situations they think they will be able to use those skills. The Evaluation Specialist can share this data with the staff as evidence of their impact on their students. The information can also be used to identify activities that are particularly formative for students as well as to determine which Sailor Skills are most frequently developed through sailing.

At the end of the session, staff will lead the students in the ***Final Reflection Exercise*** (see Appendix XVII) to wrap up their experience at Courageous and their learning. Students are prompted to define the Sailor Skills that were discussed at the beginning of the session in the Sailor Skills Exercise. This should not be introduced as a test. Rather, staff should emphasize that there are no right or wrong answers and ask that students just try their best and write what each skill means to them. The final page of the journal asks students the following questions:

- Which Sailor Skill did you want to work on at Courageous?

- What experiences helped you improve on this skill?
- How do you think you can use what you learned at Courageous the future?

These questions encourage students to reflect back on their experience as a whole to distil the lessons that they learned and how they can use them in the future.

The final reflection exercise will produce both quantitative and qualitative data regarding:

- The % of students that define the sailor skills
- The % of students that identity how they have improved on their sailor skill
- The % of students that identity future applications of their sailor skills

This quantitative data will indicate general student participation in the reflection exercise. The students' answers can additionally be coded to determine:

- Student definitions of sailor skills
- How they improved on their sailor skill
- How they plan to use their sailor skills

This qualitative data will provide insight into whether the students internalized the Sailor Skills as was defined at the beginning of the session or, alternatively, how they choose to define them. The coded data from the last two questions provides similar information to the Sailor Log in regards to what experiences students found most formative as well as the situations in which students think they will use their skills.

The development and implementation of a Participatory Formative Process evaluation at Courageous can structure staff and student reflection while also collecting valuable data to inform the program's operations. The Student Sailor Log, as part of the Teaching Process, can facilitate and assess student reflection. The Facilitator Assessment Survey can facilitate critical staff reflection while assessing the implementation of the Teaching Process. These tools will cultivate a reflective culture and support the Teaching Process of experiential education at Courageous.

VI. Conclusion

Experiential education is rooted in the epistemologies of constructivism and transformative learning. Within these epistemologies, knowledge is not finite or objective; rather, knowledge is constructed by individuals and is therefore subjective and complex. Experiential learning is the process through which an individual constructs knowledge by reflecting on an experience. Experiential learning can occur whenever an individual reflects on an experience. Experiential education, on the other hand, is an intentional pedagogical approach that strives to structure and facilitate individuals' experiential learning cycles. Central to experiential education is the Teaching Process in which a teacher is responsible for: 1) designing and implementing the experience; 2) fostering a positive learning environment; 3) providing context prior to the experience; and 4) facilitating student reflection after the experience. Throughout the teaching process, the teacher must strive to provide structure while ensuring that the experience is student-centered. The complexities and challenges of the teacher as the facilitator give rise to many of the criticisms of experiential education. In order to overcome these challenges, a teacher must aspire to develop various facilitator skills - essential to the development of these various capacities, however, is a teacher's self-awareness and self-reflection. It is therefore crucial that, in addition to facilitating student reflection and learning, an experiential education program structure and encourage teacher reflection as well.

Any assessment within education should be tailored to the pedagogical approach utilized by a teacher. Two common evaluation structures, Traditional Summative Outcomes and Participatory Formative Process, can be implemented within education. Although there is no single assessment tool that can or should be used in experiential

education, the Courageous case study explored above provides insight into what forms of assessment and evaluation do not work in experiential education. It is clear that the Traditional Summative Outcome approach that I implemented in the summer of 2012 provided shallow information regarding student learning and did not support Courageous as an experiential education program. Additionally, Courageous lacked an experiential education Teaching Process to facilitate student reflection.

The proposed Participatory Formative Process assessment is tailored to the practical and pedagogical aspects of experiential education. Through the assessment strategy, Courageous can implement the Teaching Process and cultivate a reflective organizational culture. The assessment tools proposed above facilitate reflection for both staff and students while collecting valuable data regarding the implementation of the Teaching Process. Within the field of experiential education, Participatory Formative Process assessment should be regarded as a foundational framework when designing an assessment strategy. That said, assessment and evaluation within experiential education should be explored further through theory, research, and practice.

VII. Appendix

Assessment Tools 2012

I. Original ITCSQ

Individual & Team Character in Sport Questionnaire

THIS QUESTIONNAIRE IS NOT A TEST.
We hope you will answer every question, but you may skip any question you do not wish to answer.

Mark one answer on each line Like this: ● Not like this: ✓ ✗ /

1. Below are descriptions of the way different people think or act. Please mark the answer that describes how much these people are like you.		Not like me at all	Mostly not like me	Somewhat like me	Mostly like me	Exactly like me
1)	These people work hard in practice on things they are not good at.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2)	These people would cheat to win or get ahead.	①	②	③	④	⑤
3)	These people show respect to their teammates, even if they do not agree with them.	①	②	③	④	⑤
4)	These people often forget to bring their equipment to practices and games.	①	②	③	④	⑤
5)	These people try to get out of practicing things that are difficult or boring.	①	②	③	④	⑤
6)	These people keep trying after they have made a mistake.	①	②	③	④	⑤
7)	These people are never rude to players on the other team.	①	②	③	④	⑤
8)	These people take time outside of practice to work on improving their skills.	①	②	③	④	⑤
9)	These people make negative comments about their coaches to each other.	①	②	③	④	⑤
10)	These people feel good when they have done their best, even if they haven't won the game.	①	②	③	④	⑤
11)	These people congratulate opponents who won or played well.	①	②	③	④	⑤
12)	These people believe it is okay to break the rules if they won't get caught.	①	②	③	④	⑤
13)	These people admit when they make a mistake.	①	②	③	④	⑤
14)	These people would hurt an opponent if it would help them win the game.	①	②	③	④	⑤
15)	These people continue playing hard, even when their team is losing.	①	②	③	④	⑤
16)	These people can be counted on to do their part for the team.	①	②	③	④	⑤

Continue on next page

II. Courageous ITCSQ

1. Think about yourself. Please circle the answer that describes how much these statements about you are true.	Not like me at all	Mostly unlike me	Mostly like me	Exactly like me
1) I make negative comments about my instructor to other students	1	2	3	4
2) I show respect to my crewmates, even if I do not agree with them	1	2	3	4
3) I can be counted on to do my part for the crew	1	2	3	4
4) I believe it is okay to break the rules if I wont get caught	1	2	3	4
5) I work hard in class on things I am not good at	1	2	3	4
6) I take time outside of class to work on improving my skills and knowledge	1	2	3	4
7) I often don't put my boat or equipment away properly	1	2	3	4
8) I try to get out of practicing things that are difficult or boring	1	2	3	4
9) I admit when I make a mistake	1	2	3	4
10) I feel good when I have done my best, even if I haven't won a game or was not the best at a new skill	1	2	3	4
11) I continue sailing my best, even when my crew is loosing a game	1	2	3	4
12) I keep trying after I have made a mistake	1	2	3	4
2. Think about your crewmates Do you agree or disagree with these statements about them?	Completely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Completely agree
13) Students gossip about one another	1	2	3	4
14) Crew members get mad at their crewmates for making mistakes during drills or games	1	2	3	4
15) Crew members care about each other	1	2	3	4

16) Crew members are kind to one another	1	2	3	4
17) Crew members who aren't very good sailors get picked on or are excluded	1	2	3	4
18) When crew members see someone being picked on, they try to stop it	1	2	3	4
19) Crew members give positive encouragement to each other, even to those who aren't very good sailors	1	2	3	4
20) Crew members use fights, insults or threats to resolve conflicts among crewmates	1	2	3	4
21) Crew members work together to develop new skills	1	2	3	4
22) Crew members try to get their crewmates to follow the class rules and the "rules of the road"	1	2	3	4
3. Think about your instructor and your crewmates. **How often did the following things happen during your time at Courageous?**	Almost Never	Rarely	Often	Almost always
23) My instructor talked to me about moral values (such as respect, responsibility and fairness)	1	2	3	4
24) My instructor held me accountable for my actions	1	2	3	4
25) My instructor talked to me about the importance of my role on the crew	1	2	3	4
26) My instructor praised me for giving my best effort	1	2	3	4
27) My instructor talked to me about their expectations and goals for class	1	2	3	4
28) I thought about how my instructor would act before making an important decision	1	2	3	4
29) As a crew, we talked about how well we met our personal and crew goals	1	2	3	4
30) My instructor went out of their way to help every crewmember	1	2	3	4

Is there anything else you would like us to know?

III. Student RSES

Please answer the following questions as honestly as you can.
Read each statement and circle the response that you think best applies to you.
Remember there are no right answers!

#1	I feel I am as important as others	Always!	Yeah Sometimes	No, Not Really	Never!
#2	I feel that there are a lot of good things about me	Always!	Yeah Sometimes	No, Not Really	Never!
#3	I feel that I am a failure	Always!	Yeah Sometimes	No, Not Really	Never!
#4	I feel I can do things as well as most other people	Always!	Yeah Sometimes	No, Not Really	Never!
#5	I feel I don't have much to be proud of	Always!	Yeah Sometimes	No, Not Really	Never!
#6	I have good feelings about myself	Always!	Yeah Sometimes	No, Not Really	Never!
#7	Most of the time I am happy with myself	Always!	Yeah Sometimes	No, Not Really	Never!
#8	I wish I could appreciate myself more	Always!	Yeah Sometimes	No, Not Really	Never!
#9	I feel useless at times	Always!	Yeah Sometimes	No, Not Really	Never!
#10	At times I think I am no good at all	Always!	Yeah Sometimes	No, Not Really	Never!

IV. Young Leader RSES

Please answer the following questions as honestly as you can. Circle the response that you think best applies to you.
Remember there are no right answers!

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
#1	I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an	SA	A	D	SD
#2	I feel that I have a number of good qualities	SA	A	D	SD
#3	All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure	SA	A	D	SD
#4	I am able to do things as well as most other	SA	A	D	SD
#5	I feel I do not have much to be proud of	SA	A	D	SD
#6	I take a positive attitude toward myself	SA	A	D	SD
#7	On the whole, I am satisfied with myself	SA	A	D	SD
#8	I wish I could have more respect for myself	SA	A	D	SD
#9	I certainly feel useless at times	SA	A	D	SD
#10	At times I think I am no good at all	SA	A	D	SD

V. Young Student MSC

Courageous Sailing and YOU! **Date of Birth: _____**

Answer the questions in the bubbles as best you can!

What is the best part about sailing at Courageous?

Name something that you like most about a new friend that you met at Courageous!

Name 3 things that you have learned at Courageous

1.

2.

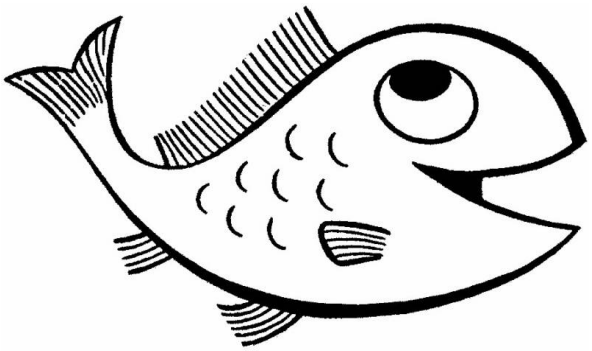
3.

Name 3 things that you learned about yourself at Courageous

1.

2.

3.



VI. Young Student MSC Discussion Guide

Young Student MSC Discussion Guide

Please use the form below to start a discussion and record the answers of our younger students in order to capture their Significant Change stories.

THINK – Ask the first question and have the students think about their answer
PAIR – Students pair up and share what they have thought about
SHARE – Come back together and have each student share his or her answer
Take notes below while the students share their answers
Repeat steps for each question. Then pass out the answer sheets for the students to write in their answers. Select a Most Significant Change for each question.

Step Leader Name: _____ Date: _____

Questions:

1. What is the best part about sailing at Courageous?

-
-
-
-
-

Select the Most Significant Change:

2. Name something that you like most about a new friend that you met at Courageous

-
-
-
-
-

Select the Most Significant Change:

3. Name 3 things you learned at Courageous

-
-
-
-
-
-
-

Select the Most Significant Change:

4. Name 3 ways that you have grown at Courageous
   (3 things you have learned about yourself while at Courageous)

-
-
-
-
-
-
-

Select the Most Significant Change:

VII. Older Student MSC

Courageous Sailing & ME!

Please answer each question as best you can with complete sentences

Date of Birth: _____

Name (optional): _____

Describe 3 ways that you have grown at Courageous

1._____

_____

_____

2._____

_____

_____

3._____

_____

_____

Name 3 things you learned at Courageous

_____

_____

_____

2._____

_____

_____

3._____

_____

_____

How did Courageous help you grow?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

What is the best part about Courageous?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

VIII. Instructor MSC

MSC Written Form: Instructor

Thank you for answering this brief questionnaire. Your responses will help us celebrate the successes of this summer and improve our programs for next summer.

Instructor Name: _____ Date: _____

Step #: _____ Boat Number/Group: _____

Location:

☐ Charlestown ☐ Jamaica Pond ☐ Camp Harbor View

QUESTIONS:

1. During this course, what do you think was the most significant change in your students?

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. Why do you think this change is significant?

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. How, do you think you contributed to this change?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

IX. Young Leader MSC

Date of Birth _____ (ex:05-21-1991) Name (optional): _____

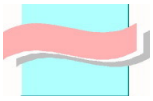
Position: ☐ Instructor (Step # ___) ☐ Step Leader (Step # (____) ☐ IIT ☐ Other: _____

During the course of your summer at Courageous, what do you think was the most significant change in yourself?

How do you think Courageous Sailing contributed to this change?

Why do you think this change is significant?

X. MWBLP Form



Massachusetts Work-Based Learning Plan
The Massachusetts Work-Based Learning Plan is a diagnostic, goal setting and assessment tool designed to drive learning and productivity on the job.

Participant's Name:		Participant's ID Number (if applicable):	
Worksite:		Supervisor Name:	
Job Title:		Teacher Name:	
Career Specialist / Facilitator Name:		School / Program:	
Start Date:		Review Date #1:	
		Review Date #2:	

Job Description:

1

Section 1: Foundation Skills
Instructions: The Foundation Skills on this page are common to all jobs and should be viewed as the foundation upon which specific workplace and career skills are added. Please review and discuss the following Foundation Skills that will set the basic expectations for the job or internship. These skills will be included in the evaluation in Section 3.

WORK ETHIC AND PROFESSIONALISM

Skill	*Performance Expectations*
Attendance and Punctuality	Showing up in timely manner prepared for work Providing sufficient notice if unable to report for work
Workplace Appearance	Dressing appropriately for position and duties Practicing personal hygiene appropriate for position and duties
Accepting Direction and Constructive Criticism	Accepting direction and feedback with positive attitude through appropriate verbal and non-verbal communication skills Displaying willingness to work in a cooperative manner
Motivation and Taking Initiative	Participating fully in task or project from initiation to completion Initiating interaction with supervisor for next task or project upon successful completion of previous one
Understanding Workplace Culture, Policy and Safety	Demonstrating understanding of workplace culture and policy Complying with health and safety rules for the specific workplace Respecting confidentiality and exhibiting understanding of workplace ethics

COMMUNICATION AND INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

Skill	*Performance Expectations*
Speaking	Speaking clearly Using language appropriate to the environment, both in person and on phone
Listening	Listening attentively Making and maintaining eye contact appropriate to the workplace culture Confirming understanding
Interacting with Co-Workers	Relating positively with co-workers Working productively with individuals and in teams Respecting racial and cultural diversity

2	**Section 2: Specific Workplace and Career Skills** **Instructions:** Choose the specific Workplace and Career Skills that you will focus on during this workplace experience, concentrating on skill areas that relate to the individual's job description, the company's goals, the individual's academic or career goals or other relevant skills. Select from the list or add additional skills. For each of the skill areas you select, please briefly describe related job tasks and performance goals.

- Collecting and Organizing Information
- Computer Technology
- Critical Thinking
- Interacting with Customers or Clients
- Leadership
- Mathematics and Numeric Analysis
- Problem Solving
- Project Management
- Reading
- Research and Analysis
- Teaching and Instructing
- Time Management
- Understanding All Aspects of an Industry
- Writing
- Occupation-Specific Skills
- OR IDENTIFY YOUR OWN SPECIFIC WORKPLACE SKILLS

Specific Workplace and Career Skills	***Tasks and Performance Goals***
Skill #1:	
Skill #2:	
Skill #3:	
Skill #4:	
Skill #5:	
Skill #6:	
Skill #7:	

3	**Section 3: Evaluation of Performance and Progress** **Instructions**: Please meet at least twice during the workplace experience to review performance and progress and to set additional goals as needed. The first review meeting (Review 1) should take place during the first few weeks to assess the individual's level of competency and to set goals. The next review meeting (Review 2) should be scheduled at that meeting to review progress.

Performance Assessment (See key below)	(1) Performance Improvement Plan Needed	(2) Needs Development	(3) Competent	(4) Proficient	(5) Advanced	
FOUNDATION SKILLS						
Work Ethic and Professionalism						***Goals***
Attendance and Punctuality						
Review #1	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Review #2	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Workplace Appearance						
Review #1	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Review #2	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Accepting Direction and Constructive Criticism						
Review #1	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Review #2	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Motivation and Taking Initiative						
Review #1	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Review #2	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Understanding Workplace Culture, Policy and Safety						
Review #1	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Review #2	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Communication and Interpersonal Skills						***Goals***
Speaking						
Review #1	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Review #2	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Listening						
Review #1	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Review #2	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Interacting with Co-Workers						
Review #1	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Review #2	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	

KEY		
(1)	Performance Improvement Plan Needed	Is not yet demonstrating the foundation skills required for the position and needs to have a formal plan for improving skills and performance
(2)	Needs Development	Beginning to demonstrate and develop the foundation skills required for the position
(3)	Competent	Demonstrates foundation skills required for the position
(4)	Proficient	Consistently demonstrates foundation skills required for the position and shows initiative in improving own skills
(5)	Advanced	Consistently demonstrates the foundation skills required for the position and shows initiative in improving own skills and using these skills to support the work of the organization

ubric

	Skills Indicators:	*Questions:*
m		

	• Showing up in a timely manner prepared for work
	  ○ Use Paylocity system
	  ○ Youth Program Senior Staff – 45 minutes prior to first lesson
	  ○ All other Youth Program Staff – 20 minutes prior to first lessons
	• Providing sufficient notice if unable to report for work
	  ○ If employee is going to be 5 minutes late, must contact and speak with supervisor
	  ○ If employee is sick, must contact and speak with supervisor as soon as possible
	  ○ Comply with time-off request policy
	  ▪ Request for time off must be submitted one month in advance
		• Have you been able to maintain good attendance for work?
		• Have there been any challenges resulting in you being late for work or missing work? How are you addressing those challenges?
		• What could you do to improve your attendance?
		• Have you show initiative or gone above and beyond? (ex: showing up on time, covering shifts, being flexible to help the organization, etc.)

	• Dressing appropriately for position and duties
	  ○ Neat, clean and professional appearance
	  ○ Courageous Sailing shirt, khaki pants or shorts, closed toe, non-marking sole shoes
		• Can you explain the safety considerations for the dress code?
		• Do you think you have complied with the dress code?
		• Is there anything that you could improve upon in regards to the dress code?

uctive	• Accepting direction and feedback with positive attitude through appropriate verbal and non-verbal communication skills
	  ○ Ask questions to clarify
	  ○ Repeat back what you were told
	  ○ Smile, nod and make eye contact
	  ○ Make a suggestion about how to do task
	• Displaying willingness to work in a cooperative manner
		• When you receive directions or instructions from a supervisor, what do you do?
		• When you receive directions or instructions from a co-worker/peer, what do you do?
		• Can you describe a situation in which you received constructive feedback? How did you react to the feedback? What is one positive thing you could do to respond to feedback?

Motivation & Taking Initiative	• Participating fully in task or project from initiation to completion
	  ○ Take initiative in down time – clean dock, ask what needs to be done, etc.
	  ○ NO Facebook /cell phone/email policy
	• Initiating interaction with supervisor for next task or project upon successful completion of previous task
		• Can you describe a typical task (ex: lesson plan) that you worked on recently? What was your role? Did it go smoothly? Did the project get finished on time?
		• Can you describe a situation in which you showed motivation and initiative in starting and completing a task?
		• Can you describe a situation in which you showed motivation or initiative by asking a supervisor for additional tasks or projects?

Understanding Workplace Culture, Policy & Safety	• Demonstrating understanding of workplace culture and policy
	• Complying with CS Safety Policies as outlined in the *Employment Manual of Policies and Procedures*
	  ○ Dock /Lifejacket Safety Policies
	  ○ Drug, Alcohol and Tobacco Policies
	  ○ Harassment Policies
	• Respecting confidentiality and exhibiting understanding of workplace ethics
		• Can you describe a conversation you have had with a supervisor to clarify or learn more about the workplace culture, workplace ethics, and workplace safety?
		• Can you describe one or more "good practices" you follow in order to observe workplace safety?
		• Have you faced any challenges in regards to workplace safety? How have you addressed these challenges?

Communication & Interpersonal Skills		

Speaking	• Speaking clearly
	  ○ Front Desk and Telephone procedures as outlined in the *Employment Manual of Policies and Procedures*
	• Using language appropriate to the environment
	  ○ No use of profanity or offensive language
		• Can you describe one observation you have noticed about communication at Courageous? How is it different from other places you spend your time?
		• Describe one way that your communication skills have changed or improved because of this work experience?
		• Have you had any challenges relating to communication? How have you addressed these challenges?

Listening	• Listening attentively • Maintaining eye contact appropriately ○ Sunglasses and caps may not be worn while giving presentations	• Are you comfortable with the way information and instructions are communicated to you? • Can you describe one or more things you have done to strengthen listening and communication

	• Confirming understanding
	  ○ Ask questions to clarify
	  ○ Repeat back what you were told
	  ○ Smile, nod and make eye contact
	  ○ Make a suggestion about how to do task
		skills as a result of this experience?
		• Have you had any challenges related to communication? What have you done to address these challenges?

Interacting with Co-workers	• Relating positively with co-workings
	  ○ Positive, Professional, Polite attitude
	  ○ Respect all other employees
	  ○ NO drama; NO gossip
	• Working productively with individuals and in teams
	  ○ The team and Courageous Sailing come first
	• Respecting racial and cultural diversity
	  ○ No use of offensive or inappropriate language
	  ○ Ex: "That's so gay"
		• Describe a situation in which you worked productively on a team.
		• How do you convey a positive attitude through words, tone of voice, and body language?
		• Describe a situation in which you have used interpersonal skills to clarify a confusing situation, calm an upset person or solve a problem?

Specific Workplace & Courageous Specific Skills		

Interacting with Students	• Treat students with respect, kindness and patience
	  ○ Employ a strong sense of fairness when mediating an argument between students
	• Using appropriate language
	  ○ No use of profanity or offensive language
	  ○ Ensure that Students use appropriate language
		• Describe a successful or positive interaction from your experience interacting with students.
		• Describe a challenging situation from you experience interacting with students. How did you address the challenge? How else could you have addressed the challenge?

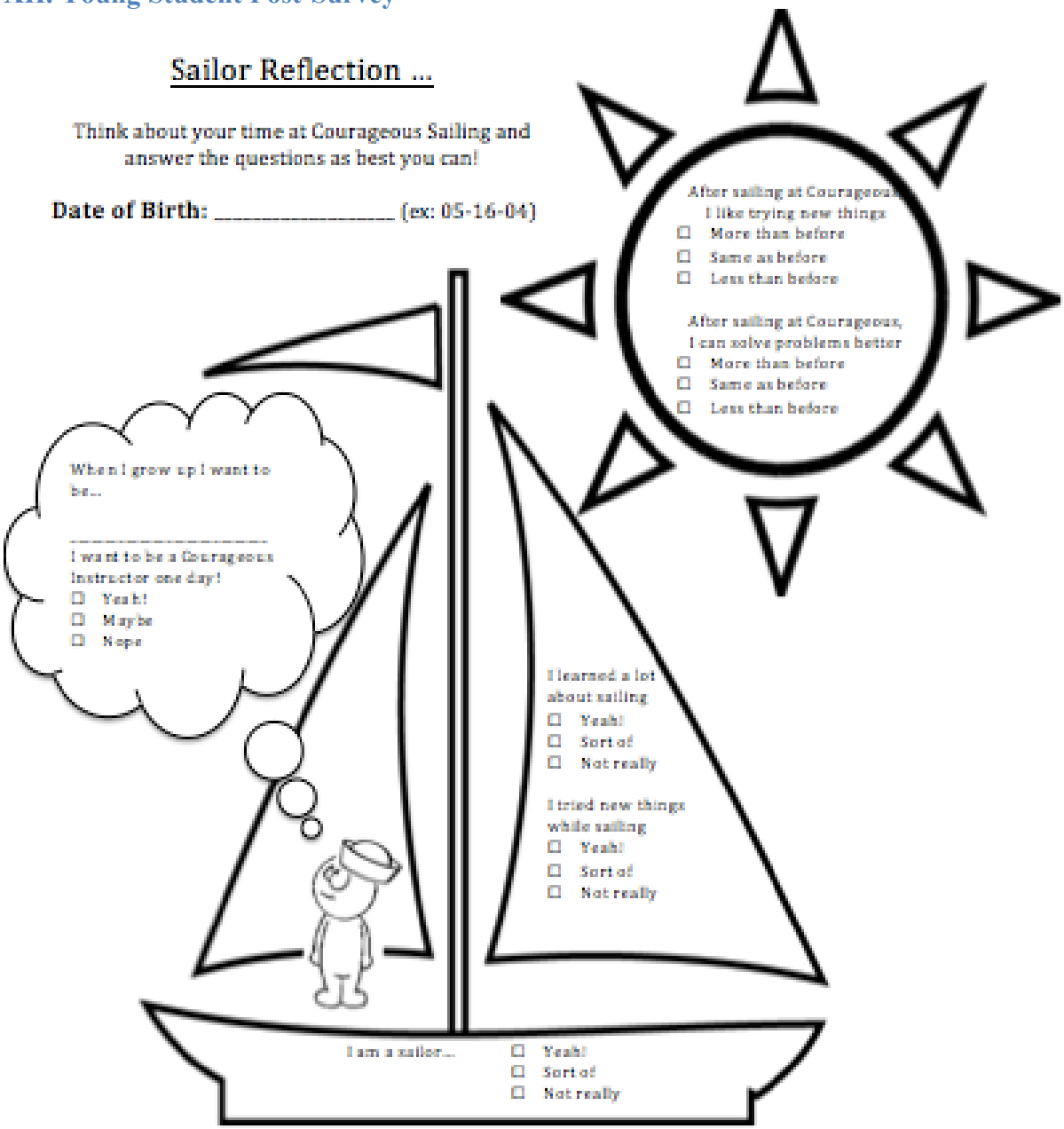
Leadership	• Take initiative to lead peers and students • Leads with humility and is respectful of other opinions • Dedication and follow-through to complete the task as hand • Capacity to lead other sailors (students and peers) ○ Capacity to work well in a team and as a team player	• Describe two or more things you have learned about leadership in this work experience. • Describe two strengths that you have as a leader. • Describe an experience in which you acted in a formal or informal leadership role. • How do you think you can improve as a leader?

Problem Solving	• Real-time problem solving when sailing
	  ○ Ex: Your boat comes untied on a tow; a "ring-ding" bucks but you still have to get home
	• Engaging with peers, supervisors and students to solve problems and contribute to CS
	  ○ Respect other people's opinions
		• Describe a situation in which you have used logical thinking or problem solving skills. Can you describe the steps you used when approaching that problem?
		• How do you think problem solving applies to sailing?

	• Creative when approaching problems • Willingness to tackle new challenges • Take initiative to solve problems	• How do you think problem solving applies to Courageous? • What are some areas of your problem solving skills that you can improve on? How will you improve them?

Teaching & Instructing	• Successfully prepare and implement lesson plans
	  ○ Explain complex topics/concepts in innovative and different ways
	  ○ Engage with each student to ensure their understanding of sailing concepts
	  ○ Effective presentations for students
	  ▪ Ex: Chalk Talk
	  ○ Show enthusiasm for sailing and skills lessons
	  ▪ Including for tasks like de-rigging
	  ○ Effective time management when teaching a lesson
	• Kind, respectful, fair and open to students while maintaining professionalism
	  ○ Encourage questions
	  ○ Be aware and respect diverse backgrounds
		• Describe a successful teaching experience.
		• Describe a challenging teaching experience.
		• What are your successes as a teacher/instructor?
		• What can you improve on as a teacher/instructor?

XII. Young Student Post-Survey



I learned a lot about the environment
- ☐ Yeah!
- ☐ Sort of
- ☐ Not really

I care about the environment
- ☐ Yeah!
- ☐ Sort of
- ☐ Not really

One thing I can do to keep the environment clean is…

_____

It is important to keep the environment clean because…

_____

"Leave no Trace" means …

_____

XIII. Older Student Post-Survey

Date of Birth: _____ (ex: 05-21-1991)

Please mark the responses that reflect how much these statements apply to you	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I was challenged by an instructor to try something new	☐	☐	☐	☐
I felt supported by my classmates and instructors when trying something new	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because of what I learned at Courageous, I am more comfortable with trying new things	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel better prepared to overcome obstacles or adversity as a result of my experiences at Courageous	☐	☐	☐	☐
I was involved with pre- and post sail safety checklists/used the boat check-out log	☐	☐	☐	☐
My instructors this summer taught me a lot about the environment	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because of my experiences at Courageous, I feel more confident (in myself, in my sailing skills,)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because of my experiences at Courageous, I feel more responsible (for myself, for those around me and for the environment)	☐	☐	☐	☐
At Courageous, I met students from different neighborhoods and schools	☐	☐	☐	☐
At Courageous, I learned how to work through disagreements with other students	☐	☐	☐	☐
I want to be a Courageous Instructor one day	☐	☐	☐	☐
I believe that I will get a good job someday	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am a sailor	☐	☐	☐	☐

Before next summer I want to (choose all that apply):

- ☐ Do something to make the environment cleaner
- ☐ Get to the next grade in school
- ☐ Apply to high school (exam school, charter school, preparatory school)
- ☐ No Plan
- ☐ Find a way to sail during the school year
- ☐ Participate in a community service project

When I grow up I want to be a… _____ (fill in your dream job)

- ☐ Have not thought about it/Do not know

Name one reason why it is important to keep the waterways and environment at Boston Harbor or Jamaica Pond clean:	
Name one thing you can do to help keep Boston Harbor or Jamaica Pond waterways clean and healthy:	
"Leave No Trace" means…	

XIV. Young Leader Post-Survey

Date of Birth: _____ (ex: 05-21-1991)

Please mark the responses that reflect how much you agree with the statements below	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
I was challenged by an supervisor to try something new or to take a positive risk	☐	☐	☐	☐
I felt supported by my community of peers, and supervisors, especially when taking positive risks	☐	☐	☐	☐
I had the opportunity to design and implement lesson plans and float plans	☐	☐	☐	☐
I received instruction and opportunity to speak in front of groups during the summer	☐	☐	☐	☐
I worked with others to develop lessons, keep students safe, handle boats, etc.	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel the workplace orientation fostered a sense of unity	☐	☐	☐	☐
I worked with individuals with different backgrounds from my own	☐	☐	☐	☐
Workplace orientation set clear expectations in regards to: - Attendance & Punctuality - Workplace Appearance - Workplace Culture & Safety Policies	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel better equipped to overcome obstacles or adversity as a result of my experiences at Courageous	☐	☐	☐	☐
I was involved with rigging and de-rigging boats, dock walks and anchor safety	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because of my experiences at Courageous, I feel more confident (in myself, in my sailing abilities, in my professional skills, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Because of my experiences at Courageous, I feel more responsible (for myself, for those around me and for the environment)	☐	☐	☐	☐
I believe that I will get a good job someday	☐	☐	☐	☐
I was able to successfully manage my students behavior during lessons and on the boat	☐	☐	☐	☐
A training session on behavior management would make me more confident in my ability to manage behavior	☐	☐	☐	☐
I successfully implemented my lesson plans and assessed students learning (blue books)	☐	☐	☐	☐
A training session on teaching and instructing would make me more confident in my teaching abilities	☐	☐	☐	☐
I spoke to my students about moral values such as responsibility, confidence, respect, teamwork and fairness	☐	☐	☐	☐

What is an "Active Listener"?	

Do you think you are an "Active Listener"?	☐ Yes ☐ No

Did you choose a Specific Workplace & Career Skill to work on this summer?		☐ Yes	☐ No
If "Yes", which one?	☐ Interacting with Students ☐ Leadership ☐ Problem Solving ☐ Teaching & Instructing		
If "Yes", did you receive support and feedback from your supervisor that helped you develop your specific skill?		☐ Yes	☐ No
Did you find the Performance reviews with your supervisor constructive and helpful?		☐ Yes	☐ No

What was your position this summer?

☐ Instructor ☐ Step Leader ☐ Assistant Step Leader ☐ IIT

☐ 1st year

Step # (optional): ____ ☐ 2nd year

Who was your immediate supervisor(s)? _____

Do you have any specific constructive criticisms or suggestions for your supervisor to improve upon his/her leadership skills?

In your own words, what do you think is the mission of Courageous Sailing?

How do you think you contributed to that mission this summer?

How did you find the evaluation system this summer in regards to the time commitment, effectiveness, training, implementation, etc.?
Do you have any suggestions or critiques to improve upon the system for next year?

If you could change one thing about Courageous, what would it be?

Do you have any other comments? *If you need additional space please use the back of the paper*

XV. Evaluation Report Summer 2012

YOUTH PROGRAM EVALUATION REPORT *SUMMER 2012*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This data report details the evaluation outcomes of the 2012 Courageous Sailing Summer Youth Program. Comprehensive overviews of the Youth Programs' three locations as well as the survey methods and strategies used to assess the programs' impact on the students are provided for foundational knowledge. The assessment data for each of the four metrics of impact – Diversity, Confidence, Responsibility and Preparedness for the Future – is summarized and evaluated.

YOUTH PROGRAM OVERVIEW

In 2012, 357 students participated in the Courageous Sailing Summer Youth Program (SLP) at three locations across Boston.

CHARLESTOWN

The Charlestown location operates the primary youth program from mid-July through mid-August. There are four Steps through which a student progresses as they learning sailing skills.

Step 1: Introduction to Sailing
Step 2: Beginner Sailing
Step 3: Intermediate Sailing
Step 4: Advanced Sailing

Through out the summer there are six 1-week sessions for Step 1 students and two 3-week sessions for students in Steps 2-4. After the fourth step, students can apply to the Instructor-in-Training (IIT) program that introduces them to being a Courageous staff member. The IITs are an integral part of the Courageous community and a great opportunity for further character development for former students.

JAMAICA POND

Jamaica Pond, located in the Jamaica Plain community, serves students of various ages and sailing skill levels in six 1-week sessions. Courageous operates the youth program and boat-house rentals on behalf of Boston Parks and Recreation.

CAMP HARBORVIEW

The third Courageous community is part of Camp Harborview – a Boston city sponsored camp for inner-city youth located on Long Island in the harbor. All campers have the opportunity to sail for about three hours during their two-week session. Additionally, campers can choose sailing at their "club-time" activity to spend more time

on the water. The Courageous program is an important additional to the dynamic learning community at Camp Harborview.

INSPIRE CONSULTATION OVERVIEW

In the Fall of 2011, Courageous partnered with Inspire, a non-profit consulting group sponsored by the consulting firm Monitor, to assess the current impact of the youth sailing programs on the students as well as the young adults on staff. Through a series of assessments including 40 interviews with stakeholders – students, parents, staff and board members – Inspire produced a list of four metrics of change that represent the social value and impact of the Courageous youth program:

CONFIDENCE	RESPONSIBILITY
PREPAREDNESS FOR THE FUTURE	DIVERSITY

The Inspire consultants used these four metrics of change to construct possible vision statements that represented the current Courageous approach to creating change:

> ***To prepare Boston's diverse youth for responsible and confident futures through active discovery of sailing on their city's harbor.***

SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT METHODS

To determine the impact of the 2012 summer Youth Program on its students, Courageous developed assessment strategies to measure the four metrics of impact – Confidence, Responsibility, Diversity and Preparedness for the future. Each survey method was adapted to be accessible for the various ages of Courageous students: a young student version, Step 1, Step 2 and Jamaica Pond students, and an older student version for Step 3, Step 4 and Camp Harborview students. Surveys were also adapted for a staff version. The initial versions were further modified and improved at a mid-term review 3-weeks into SLP. The review took into consideration preliminary results, staff feedback and instructor feedback.

INDIVIDUAL & TEAM CHARACTER IN SPORT QUESTIONNAIRE

The Individual and Team Character in Sport Questionnaire (ITCSQ) is a comprehensive survey designed to measure character development through youth sports. Independent consultants originally developed the questionnaire for MetroLacrosse, a highly regarded sports-based youth development program headquartered in Boston. The ITCSQ was administered as a post-test to older students in Steps 3 and 4 as well as at Camp Harborview. At the midterm assessment review, the ITCSQ was further revised. The number of questions was reduced to make it a more

manageable length. Additionally, the language was change to make it more accessible for students.

ROSENBERG SELF ESTEEM SCALE

The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) is a well-respected psychological survey that measures progress in self-esteem through ten very simple questions. This survey method was implemented as a pre and post test allowing Courageous to measure their direct impact on students' self-esteem. The original format and language of the RSES is very complex; therefore, to make it accessible for the young and older students, the evaluation team developed a modified version.

MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGE STORIES

Courageous adapted the Most Significant Change (MSC) theory of assessment to gather qualitative data about student experiences and growth. MSC is centered around posing the open ended question "what is the most significant change that you experienced." This allows the respondent to identify any intended or unintended impact that the program had on them. Similar to other methods, MSC methods were adapted to each group of students and staff. Instructors were asked to provide stories about their students: "what was the most significant change that you saw in your students?" The MSC questions for younger and older students prompted them to reflect on their time at Courageous:

- What is the best part of Courageous?
- What have you learned at Courageous?
- How have you grown (learned about yourself) at Courageous?
- How did Courageous help you grow?

The MSC method provided a vital insight into each students experience and growth. Responses were coded by themes, such as "teamwork", and each theme was categorized under one of the four metrics of impact. This method of analysis provides a quantitative representation of the frequency of each theme and metric of impact within the MSC stories.

MASSACHUSETTS WORK-BASED LEARNING PROGRAM (MWBLP)

The Massachusetts Work Based Learning Program (MWBLP) is a "diagnostic, goal setting and assessment tool designed to drive leaning and productivity on the job." The MWBLP was developed by a group of employers, educators and workforce development professionals and is used by over ten thousand people each year in a variety of work experiences for students and youth across Massachusetts.

The MWBLP benefits both employers and young workers by:

4. Setting clear expectations
5. Opening up conversations about goals
6. Providing a structured opportunity for reflection and growth

Courageous Sailing used the MWBLP to encourage and monitor the professional development of the youth staff. Each staff member and their supervisor set and assessed goals at two sessions during the third and seventh week of employment.

PRE & POST SURVEYS

In addition to the survey methods described above, the evaluation team designed and implemented pre and post surveys to collect additional data to determine impact. Surveys were modified for younger students, Steps 1 and 2 as well as Jamaica Pond, and for older students, Steps 3 and 4 as well as Camp Harborview. The surveys were similarly adapted to assess Young Leaders on the youth staff.

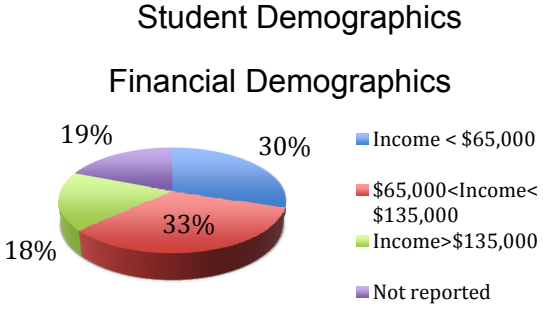
During staff orientation, Senior Staff received an additional training about the survey methods and were responsible for implementing them at the beginning and end of each of their sessions. Across the three locations, 79% of students successfully completed the pre and post surveys. This is higher than the benchmark goal of 75%. Challenges to successful completion included student absence on survey days as well as incomplete surveys that did not provide valid data. At the midterm review, the evaluation team brainstormed and implemented solutions to these primary challenges. Surveys were administered on the third to last day of the session as instead of the last day when more students were absent. Additionally, the post surveys for the older students, which had proved a challenge to implement, was shortened in length and the language was revised to be more accessible.

METRIC OF CHANGE
DIVERSITY

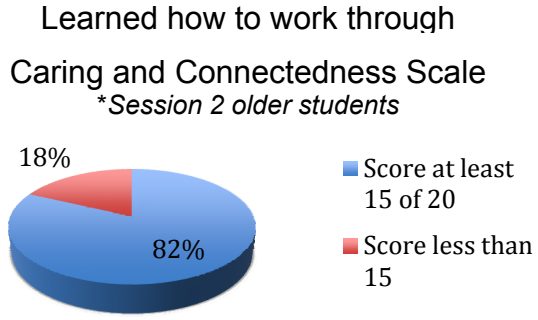
Since its foundation in 1987, Courageous has been committed to providing the *diverse* youth of Boston the opportunity to learn how to sail on their harbor. The Diversity metric includes the following components:

- Program is representative of the diverse youth in the city of Boston
- Students are able to communicate and work effectively with those who are different from themselves
- Students are open minded and respect those who are different from themselves

STUDENT PROFILE:



STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS:



QUALITATIVE DATA

In addition to the quantitative data above, 35% of students' most significant change stories reflected themes of Diversity including meeting new friends, tolerance, open mindedness and teamwork. The following MSC quotes are reflect the Diversity themes:

What is the best part about Courageous?

"Making new friends" age 12, Step 1

"You get to meet new people" Shannon, age 13, Step 2

What have you learned at Courageous?

"How to learn about new people" age 9, Step 2

How have you grown at Courageous?

"I realized I like sailing. I am more open to people and I made more friends" Brittany, age 15, Jamaica Pond

"I found out that I am pretty good at being with different people and at sailing, I also learned that sailing is a great way to start conversations" Step 3

How did Courageous help you grow?

"It helped me socialize with different ages and learn how to cooperate better"

Step 3

DIVERSITY METRIC CONCLUSIONS:

Students come from over 31 different neighborhoods throughout the greater Boston area. Their families' household incomes range widely across the sliding pay scale from less than $35,000 to more than $135,000. The sliding pay scale subsidizes families through scholarships to ensure that no student is turned away due to tuition costs:

Household Income	***Scholarship***	***Tuition Fees***
Income < $65,000	Full	$10
$65,000< Income < $135,000	Half	$225
Income > $135,000	None	$525

Students felt that they met other students from different backgrounds indicating that they acknowledged the diversity of their peers. A significant majority learned more about how to resolve disagreements with people different from themselves.

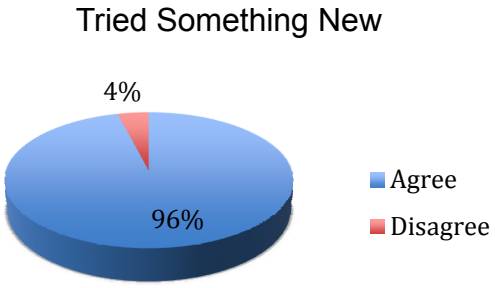
Although the survey demographics show that the student population across the three Courageous locations is fairly diverse in terms of ethnicity, when each location is considered individually, there is room for improvement. The students at the Charlestown location are 79% white. This is concerning because the diversity of the students is not only one of the target metrics, it is also vital to the social impact of the program. Without a diverse population, students will not have the opportunity to engage with other youth from different backgrounds than their own. Courageous is more than a sailing center; it is a community that needs to reflect the population of Boston.

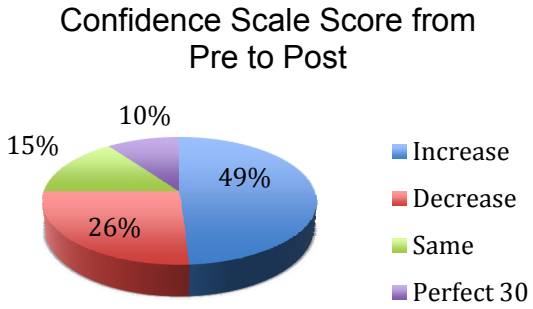
METRIC OF CHANGE

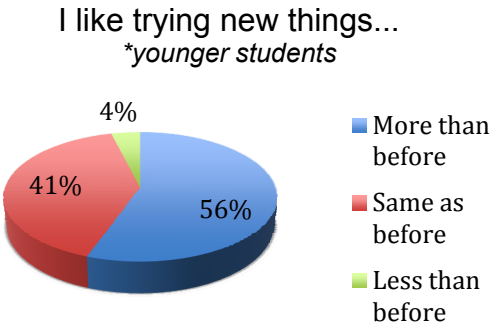
CONFIDENCE

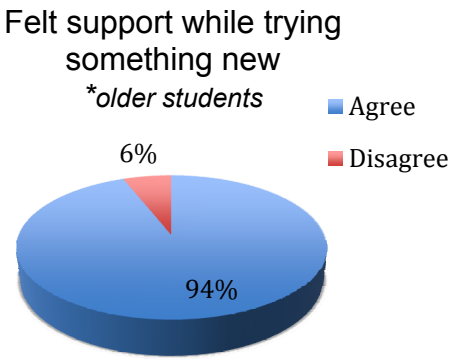
Confidence is a vital skill in both sailing and in life. The Courageous program provides students the opportunity to try new, challenging and exciting things in a safe and supportive learning environment. Through these experiences, students gain confidence that will carry with them beyond the water. The Confidence metric includes the following components:

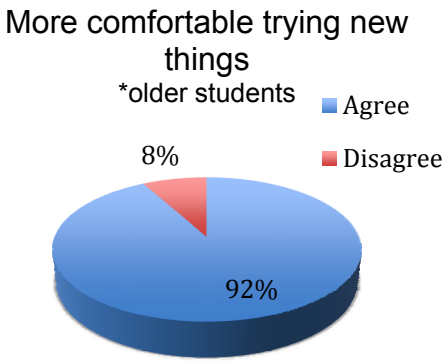
- Able to complete tasks, make the right choices in a resolute manner with the knowledge that they can do that effectively
- Convinced of the value that they bring to the their crew, to their relationships, to the workplace, etc.





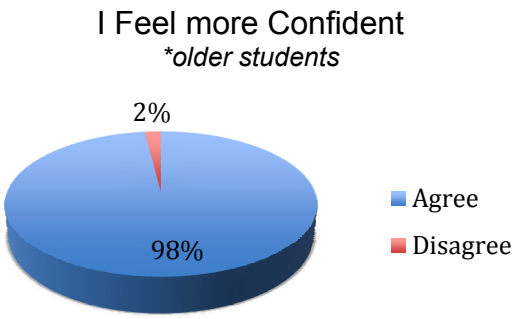






QUALITATIVE DATA:

Student MSC stories reflected a wide variety of confidence themes including steering and the main



sheet, a sense of control, confidence, overcoming fears, leadership, trying new things, feeling accomplished, and a sense of independence. 67% of stories reflected confidence, the highest frequency of the four metrics of change. The most prevalent themes were trying new things, steering, overcoming fear and a sense of confidence. The following MSC quotes are reflect the Confidence themes:

What is the best part about Courageous?
"Controlling the main sheet, I feel more in control" age 11, Step 1
What have you learned at Courageous?
"I learned a new skill, I learned that trying new things is fun!" Annie, age 11, Step 2
"Im more comfortable in my surroundings. I got to try new things" age 10, Jamaica
"I was scared that the boat was going to flip over, now I know that it is very unlikely" Madeline, Jamaica Pond
How have you grown at Courageous (What have you learned about yourself)?
"I'm not scared of the water anymore" age 10, Step 1
"I learned I can accomplish many things, I have met new friends, I have learned how to take better care of the environment" Kingston Herbert, age 11 Step 3
"I have grown to realize that it is good to try new stuff, that even though you think you know something is good to have ideas on how to do it better." age 13, Step 4
How did Courageous Help you grow?
"They encouraged me to try new things and get better at sailing" Karina, age 14 Step 4

CONFIDENCE METRIC CONCLUSIONS:

At Courageous, students have the opportunity to try new things in a supportive environment. This develops their confidence in their own abilities and capacity to try something new and succeed.

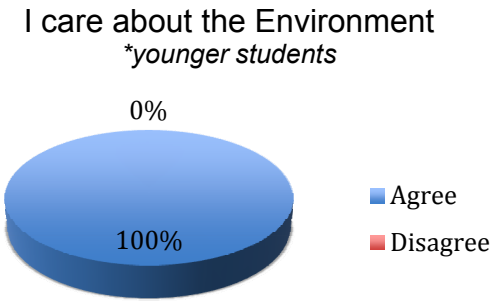
Almost half of the students scored higher on the Rosenberg Confidence survey post-test indicating that their experiences at Courageous boosted their confidence. Many students' scores stayed the same, either as a perfect score of 30 or another score, while some declined. Of the scores that decreased, however, the majority was only by a point or two. A significant challenge to success of the pre and post score comparison is whether or not the student takes the post survey as seriously they did the pre survey. The post Rosenberg Confidence scale was part of a larger post survey, the length of which proved difficult for some students. Due to the length, students may have taken the second survey less seriously accounting for a 1 or 2 point drop in their score. After the midterm review, the post survey was shortened in the hopes that students would be able to stay focused.

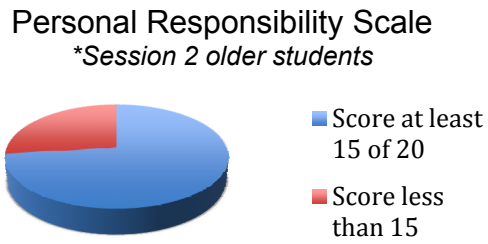
METRIC OF CHANGE
RESPONSIBILITY

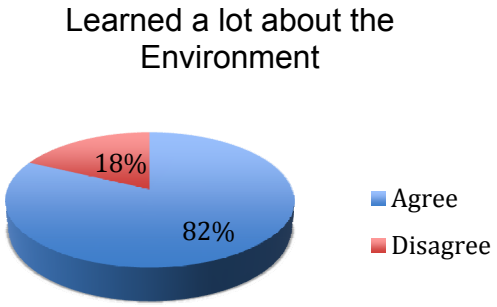
Responsible behavior is a vital part of being a sailor, a successful adult and an active member of a community. Courageous seeks to foster a dynamic sense of responsibility in its students:

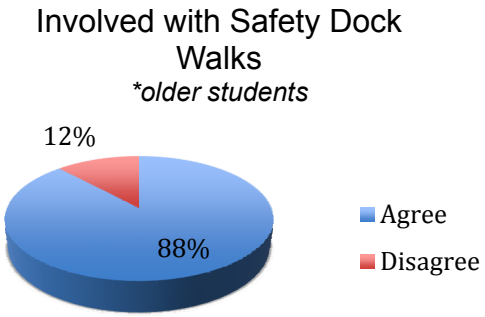
- Responsible for themselves and other crewmembers

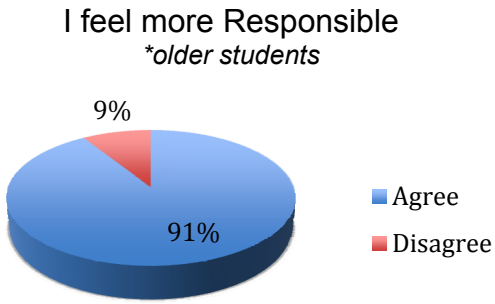
- Care for a feel a responsibility to help others including their team, community and environment



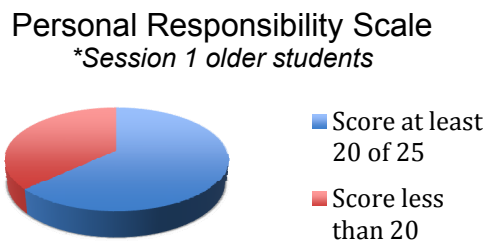








QUALITATIVE DATA:



Students' most significant change stories reflected Responsibility themes such as the environment, safety, personal responsibility and respect. Only 25% of stories reflected responsibility themes indicating that values of responsibility did not

resonate as much with students as the other metrics of impact. The following MSC quotes are reflect the Responsibility themes:

What is the best part about Courageous?
"How everyone helps each other and learn new things" age 13 Step 4
What have you learned at Courageous?
"How to anchor quickly, efficiently and to fix anchoring problems, to capsize and right a laser, to take compass headings" age 13 Step 4
"I learned how to clean up the trash and to not leave trash" Shannon,age 13,Step 2
"I learned I can accomplish many things, I have met new friends, I have learned how to take better care of the environment" Kingston Herbert, age 11, Step 3
How have you grown at Courageous (What have you learned about yourself)?
"My confidence, to be careful on the boat, to be respectful" Victoria, age 11 Step 2
"More confident, don't litter and be careful of the boom" Jolie, age 10 Step 2
How did Courageous help you grow?
"By being able to be alone and mature in Step 3" age 12, Step 4
"I have learned and accomplished many things [at Courageous] and learned how to clean the Boston harbor" Kingston Herbert, age 11, Step 3

RESPONSIBILITY METRIC CONCLUSIONS:

As students get older and progress through the four steps they take on more active roles on their boats and more responsibility. They rig and de-rig their boats and participate in safety dock walks. As crewmembers they must take responsibility for their individual role on the boat while participating in the crew's collective responsibility for the boat. The data suggests that older students gained a sense of responsibility at Courageous. There is a lack of assessment of the personal and collective responsibility of younger students. This is both because younger students do not have as much responsibility on the boat as older students and due to challenges in assessing their growth in this area in young children. The survey method used to assess responsibility was far too long to give to the younger students. Next summer, Courageous should incorporate more responsibility into both the curriculum and the assessment strategies for younger students.

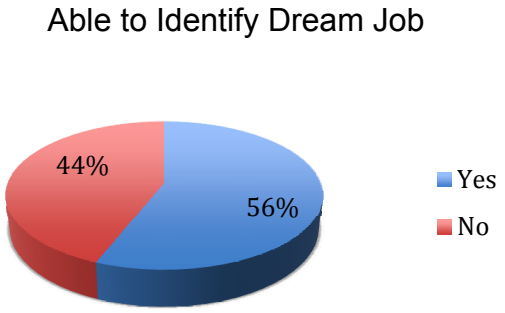
It is clear that students care about the environment; Courageous fosters students' sense of responsibility by educating them about the environment and how they can help protect it. On the post surveys, 86% of students were able to provide a reason why it is important to keep the waterways of Boston clean AND 95% of students were able to provide one activity that they can do to help keep the waterways clean.

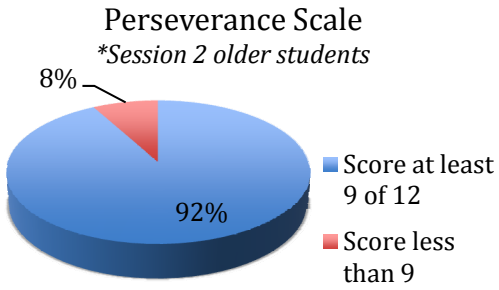
METRIC OF CHANGE
PREPAREDNESS FOR THE FUTURE

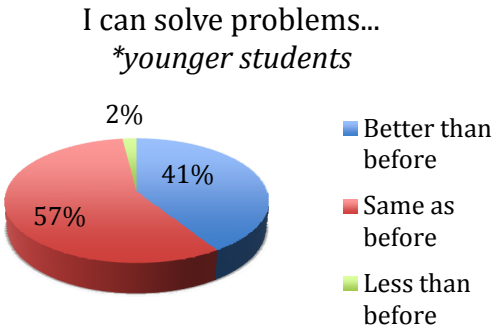
Courageous seeks to help prepare both their students and staff for the future by encouraging their aspirations and developing their character. In addition to Confidence and Responsibility, Preparedness for the Future incorporates the following components:

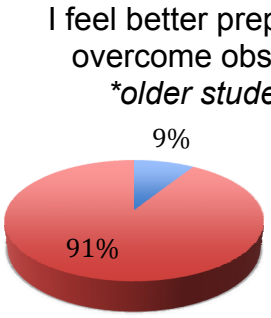
- Understand consequences of actions

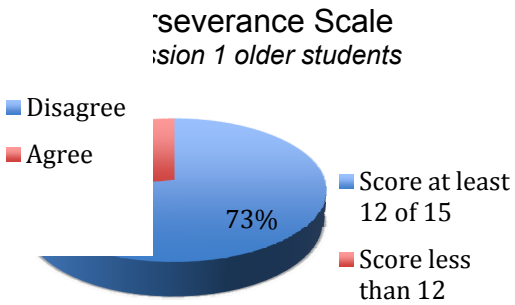
- Motivated to plan for the future, able to execute plans towards a specific goal
- Ready to be a functional, contributing member of society
- Flexibility and adaptability in challenging situations











QUALITATIVE DATA:
There was a wide variety of themes coded under Preparedness for the Future including social skills, patience, staff role models, persistence, listening skills, fun learning environment, maturity, teamwork, communication, and problem solving. Of all MSC stories, 41% reflected Preparedness for the future themes. The themes with the most frequency were social skills, staff role models and a fun learning environment. The following MSC quotes are reflect the Preparedness for the Future themes:

What is the best part about Courageous?
"Making new friends and trying new things" age 11, Step 1
"Developing my skills while using them in the moment" age 15, Step 3
What have you learned at Courageous?
"I gained some leadership skills. I found out how to better work with others" age 15, Step 1
How have you grown at Courageous (What have you learned about yourself)?
"I learned that I am a good listener, I have matured, I have learned to face my fear of tipping" Step 3
"In being open to ideas, solving problems, inventing ideas" age 12, Step 3
"My skills have become more develop, I have made friends, I have been able to focus on my own goals" age 15, Step 3
"I learned to try hard things again." Age 11, Jamaica Pond
"I am less shy, now I know how to make friends" Ryan, age 11, Jamaica Pond
How did Courageous help you grow?
"By placing me in smaller groups I have been able to develop my own skills" age 15, Step 3
"The instructors helped me a lot" Step 3
"By putting me in situations where I need to learn how to overcome obstacles" age 13 Step 4

PREPAREDNESS FOR THE FUTURE METRIC CONCLUSIONS:

Students at Courageous, through sailing and engaging with staff and students, learn important skills that prepare them for the future. 56% of students identified a dream job indicating that they are thinking ahead to, and hopefully engaging with, their future. The data for older students reflects that they feel better prepared to overcome obstacles and have the skill of perseverance. The data for younger students indicates that, for 57% of students, their problem solving skills didn't improve from their time at Courageous. This suggests that younger students are not being challenged like older students, which makes sense because older students are given much more independence and responsibility. In order to encourage younger student growth, Courageous should development of an explicit skills curriculum and assessment strategy would structure students learning.

Proposed Assessment Tools

XVI. Facilitator Assessment Survey

Facilitator Name: _____ Date: _____

Please rate the facilitator on a scale of 1-10 on the following principles of facilitation. In addition to the numerical rating please provide one positive observation and one constructive observation for each of the principles - describe a specific situation from the discussion and your positive or constructive feedback on that situation.

Your answers will be shared with the facilitator as feedback.

Positive Attitude

- *Facilitator sets a positive tone, and demonstrates a commitment to the reflection process*
- *Facilitator creates and maintains a safe space for students to participate (reiterates the rules of the reflection activity, stops negative comments, etc.)*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Positive Observation: Constructive Observation:

Effective Communication

- *Facilitator actively listened to each student*
- *Facilitator comments were constructive and guided students toward deeper reflection and learning but did not dominate the discussion*
- *Facilitator encouraged participation by every student while respecting each students choice to participate*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Positive Observation: Constructive Observation:

Guided Students through Reflection

- *Facilitator guides students through the three phases of reflection: Description, Reflection and Application of lessons learned to future situations*

- *Reflection exercise was age appropriate; facilitator made reflection exercise accessible to younger students or applicable for older students*
- *Facilitator provides a good wrap-up of reflection (synthesizes group's ideas, thanks students for their contributions, etc.)*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Positive Observation: Constructive Observation:

Overall, how do you think the reflection group went?

- *Majority of students were engaged, most participated in partner and/or group discussions*
- *There were little to no behavioral issues*
- *Students made substantive observations, identified lessons learned and how them might apply those lessons in the future*
- *Enough time was set aside for reflection activity and time was not taken from another necessary activity*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Positive Observation: Constructive Observation:

Sailor Log

Name: _____

Step #: _____

What does it mean to be a **Sailor?**

Communication Skills

Teamwork

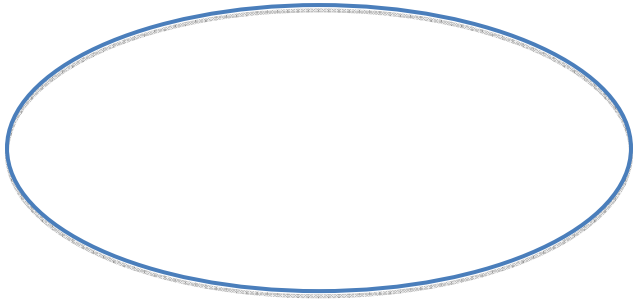
Respect

Responsibility

Confidence

Why do you want to work on that Sailor Skill?

Which Sailor Skill do you want to work on at Courageous?



How will you know if you have improved on that skill?

DATE:

Describe an exciting experience or a challenging experience that you had today?

What did you learn from this experience?

How do you think you can use what you learned today in the future?

Describe a challenging experience that you have had at Courageous:

How did they help you overcome that challenge?

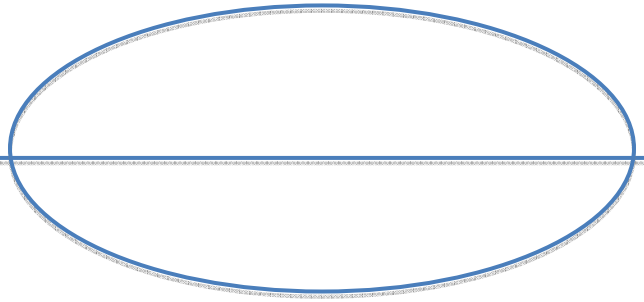
Who helped you overcome that challenge?

- A staff member?
- Another student?

What do these Sailor Skills mean to you?

Communication Skills

Which Sailor Skill did you want to work on at Courageous?



How do you think you can use what you learned at Courageous the future?

Teamwork

Respect

Confidence

Responsibility

What

experiences helped you improve on this skill?

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