

Bridging Diverse Bodies of Knowledge and

Practice in WIL at UVic:

Forging a UVic WIL Community of Practice

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Territory Acknowledgement



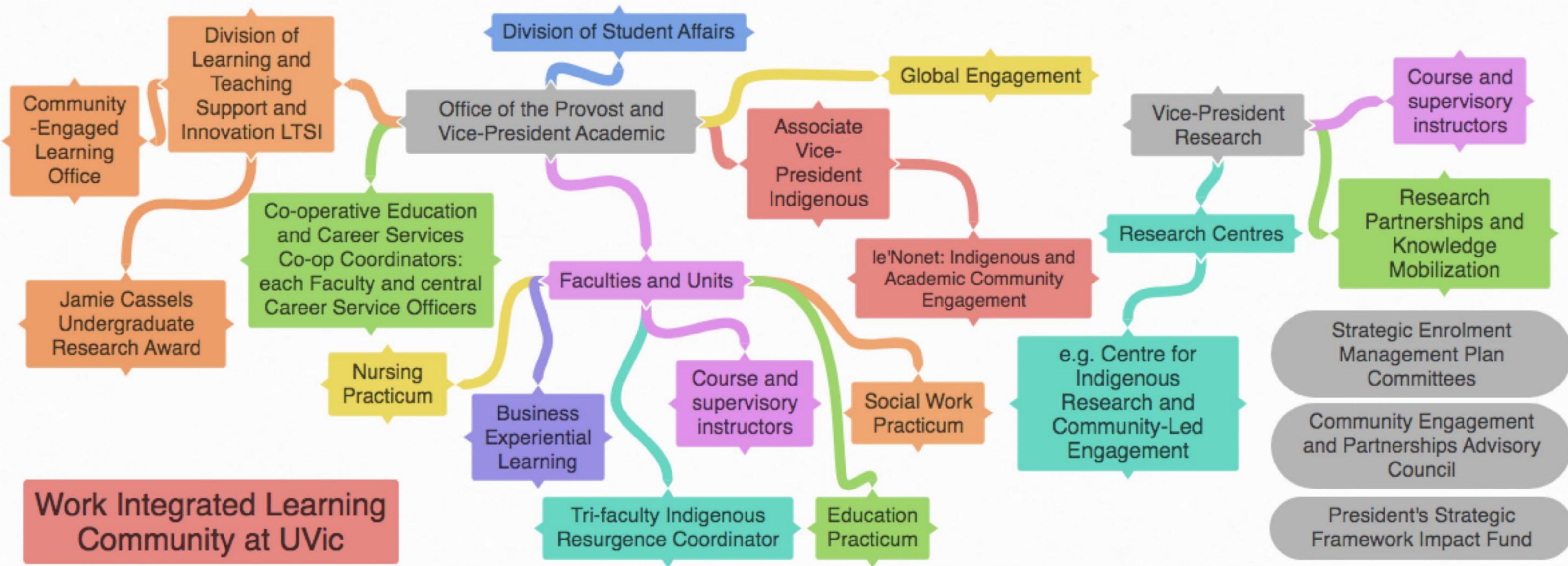
We acknowledge and respect the $l\acute{a}k^w\acute{a}\eta\eta\acute{n}$ peoples on whose traditional and unceded territory the university stands and the Songhees, Esquimalt and \underline{W} SÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

Agenda

- 1) Project Process
- 2) Data Collection & Analysis
- 3) Key Findings
- 4) Conclusion
- 5) Questions

Project Process

- Why are we pursuing this work?
- Bringing together our WIL Governance Group



Project Process (continued)

- Including community voices
- Community partner workshop

Where are the connections between different types of WIL at your institution?

Apprenticeship
Applied Research
Cooperative Education
Entrepreneurship
Field Experience
Internship
Service Learning
Work Experience
Mandatory Practicum/Clinical Placement

Who is connecting with whom?

*Using pen and paper,
map out your connections!*



Data Collection & Analysis

- Invitation to participate in the research was extended to WIL practitioners (both staff and instructors)
- Participants volunteered to be involved
- Data gathered through 3 focus groups and 3 interviews, totaling 16 participants
- Data transcribed, then coded using thematic analysis (Clarke & Braun, 2017)

Key Findings

- 1) Definitions of WIL *including how WIL functions in the UVic context*
- 2) Preparing students for WIL *including clarifying expectations, coaching students, the balance between self-efficacy and humility, and reflection*
- 3) Relationships in WIL

Key Findings

1) Definitions of WIL

- Language of “work-integrated learning” is not commonly used at UVic
- CEWIL definitions of each type of WIL: some accurate, some inaccurate
 - For example, the *internship* definition was contested due to the definition’s claim that the experience is typically 12-16 months; at UVic, internships are more likely to be 2-8 months

Distinguishing WIL Types

Are students remunerated for their work?

Is there an external accreditor or regulatory body?

How long is the WIL experience?

Is there a regulated, mandatory preparation curriculum?

What are the costs for students to participate?

Does the student receive academic credit?

Is the WIL experience embedded within a course?

Who are the key supports for students?



“I’d say that in co-op we try hard to communicate expectations to employers because **it’s not about giving the student a job, it’s about also mentoring and helping the student learn.**

So, we try to impress upon employers that these people are still learning, and that is part of your role. That is why it’s a three-way partnership, it’s not just between you and the student...and that’s where we come in.”

Why WIL Definitions Are Important

- UVic practitioners better able to learn from one another, not step on toes, and enjoy a community of practice
- Important to clarify the many ways in which students learn through community collaborations

Key Findings

2) Preparing students for their WIL experience

- Setting, clarifying, and managing expectations

“I think that one of the things we try to stress from the onset is that the experiences that they’re going to have are **more about process than they are about product**. So we try to really limit students’ expectations and their sense of what will be able to be accomplished.”

Key Findings

2) Preparing students for their WIL experience (continued)

- Coaching and mentoring students

“New this year we’ve really introduced this idea of we’re not just instructors, we’re coaches. So we’re trying to integrate a coaching philosophy into our interactions with students, which means that when we work with them to come up with goals and an action plan, **our role then is to follow up with them and hold them accountable.**”

“These are huge experiences for young people, especially the ones I’m doing where I’m sending an individual by themselves into a city like Dhaka for 6 months. That’s going to rock anyone’s world big time, so **there really needs to be that support** and kind of working with them and this development of mentorship, I think, **not just from instructor to student or program manager but peer to peer** within the organizations, within our partner organizations.”

- Fostering the twins of self-efficacy and humility
 - “For me, what I should have encouraged them to do more was to understand that **those two things are completely compatible.**”
 - “I would say that yes—those two things, we observe them. I’m not sure we support them in the sense of helping students understand them in any way.”

Key Findings

2) Preparing students for their WIL experience (continued)

- Helping students to understand how to critically reflect

“One thing that I’ve been trying to do, as I mentioned before, is really **encourage more meaningful reflection earlier in the course**, rather than all at the very end, and that’s been a priority of mine.”

“Sometimes, unless you set out really well the learning outcomes and how to reflect, they just kind of tend to give you this self-confessional stuff and then they can’t figure out why they didn’t get full marks, because they wrote so much. And so now **we’re starting to introduce frameworks that will help what kinds of things you need to be reflecting on in this particular situation and this particular practice environment.**”

Preparing Students for WIL: Community Partner Perspective

Lilaine Galway

*Community Development Coordinator,
Big Brothers Big Sisters Victoria*



Preparation Required by Student

Self-Assessment

- Competencies
- Gaps in knowledge
- Interests and values

Learning Objectives

Assignment Readiness

- \$ - Current Criminal Record Check
- Copies of certificates/training (i.e. First Aid, WHIMIS)
- \$ - Wardrobe Check
- \$ - Commuting Plan

Office Skills

- Formal versus informal writing (standard business language/case-noting)
- Computer and basics (email set-up, mail merge, mailing letters)
- Time-management tools

Community Awareness

- Build on previous volunteer experiences
- Learn from other students

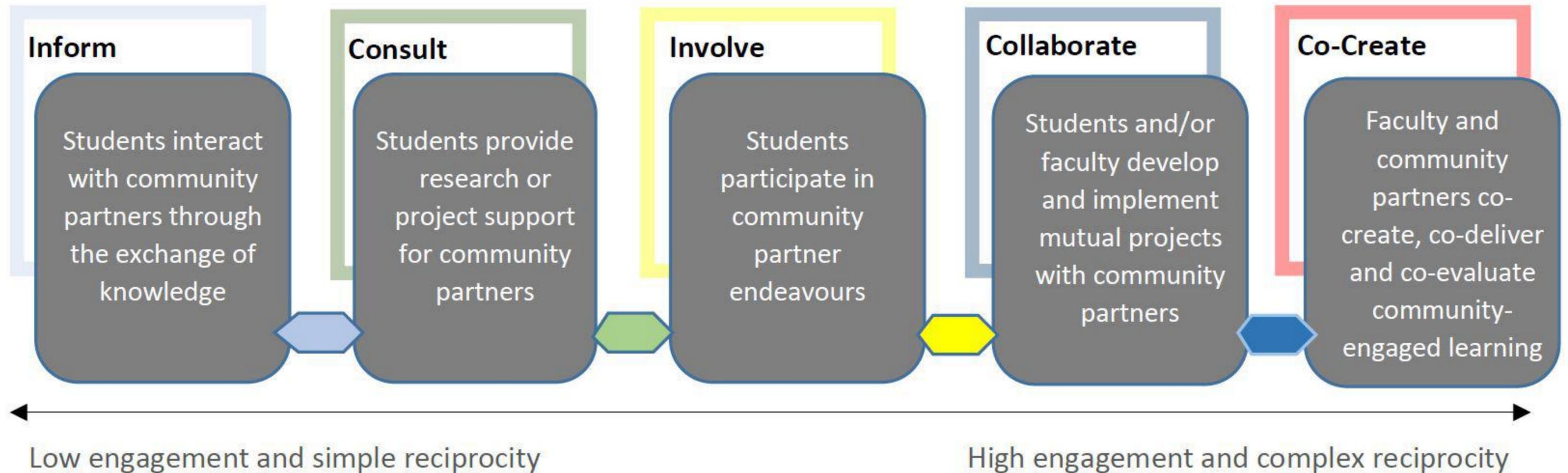
Key Findings

3) Relationships in WIL

“The other part of this work that often isn’t seen as purely academic is that we, it requires relationships. So right now I am working in public health—I have to have a relationship as the faculty member. **They have to respect me and I have to respect them in order to make it a good learning environment for the student.**”

Spectrum of Engagement

Spectrum of Engagement:



Adapted from: [Key Aspects of CEL; OCUE](#)

Relationships in WIL: Community Partner Perspective

Lisa Mort-Putland
*Executive Director,
Volunteer Victoria*



Conclusion

- Importance of creating a WIL Community of Practice, especially one that includes community involvement
- Definitions of WIL
- Preparing students for WIL
- Relationships in WIL

Research limitations:

- Only positive WIL experiences represented due to recruitment via volunteers
- Participants not selected to ensure balanced representation of gender, WIL type, discipline/faculty, etc.

Areas for further research

- What blend of WIL experiences across a degree program is ideal for the student experience? How do we scaffold learning across those experiences?

Thank you for joining us!

Questions or comments?

