STETSON UNIVERSITY

HATTER READY

Defining an Immersive Experience

An immersive experience centers on fostering relationship-rich student engagement. These experiences prioritize the cultivation of meaningful relationships between faculty and students that may also encompass student-to-student engagement and/or student-community connections. They also can serve as a platform offering real-world applications for student learning. While the exact nature of immersive experiences may vary widely, the underlying goal is that they contribute to enhancing the strategic commitment to Experiential, Contemporary & Integrative Learning. Specifically, these experiences should be high impact practices and intensively mentored learning experiences.

These types of high impact experiences have been defined by AAC&U as involving the following fundamental elements:

- Performance expectations set at appropriately high levels
- Significant investment of time and effort by students over an extended period of time
- Periodic, structured opportunities to reflect and integrate learning
- Opportunities to discover relevance of learning through real-world applications

All immersive experiences should clearly demonstrate their fulfillment of these core criteria.

From a structural and pragmatic angle, immersive experiences are the core program within the broader Hatter Ready initiative, which involves the reallocation of time (equivalent to one course) for participating faculty. In other words, the time that a faculty member would devote to one course—approximately 10 hours per week—would now be devoted to relationship-rich, high-impact practices. Some of these relationship-rich, high-impact practices involve more direct student-facing engagement and less grading or prep time than many traditional classroom experiences—for that reason, it may be helpful to think of an immersive experiences as involving approximately 75 hours of student-facing engagement. Immersive experiences cannot be activities that a faculty member is already specifically compensated for. These experiences may be credit bearing for students. They also may occur inside or outside of an officially listed course, but they should not require more than a unit's worth of faculty time and work.