

Career Integrated Learning: A grassroots approach to creating awareness of graduating student competencies

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Quebec City, Quebec

Your learning facilitators for this session

- Rhonda Joy
- Rob Shea
- Karen Youden – Walsh

Thank you for choosing this session

Tell us what you hope to gain from this session we will endeavor to make that a reality !

Overview of the Session

The CIL project
how it came about
Theory / research component
Results/feedback

- **Why Career Integrated learning?
(CIL)**

Project origins

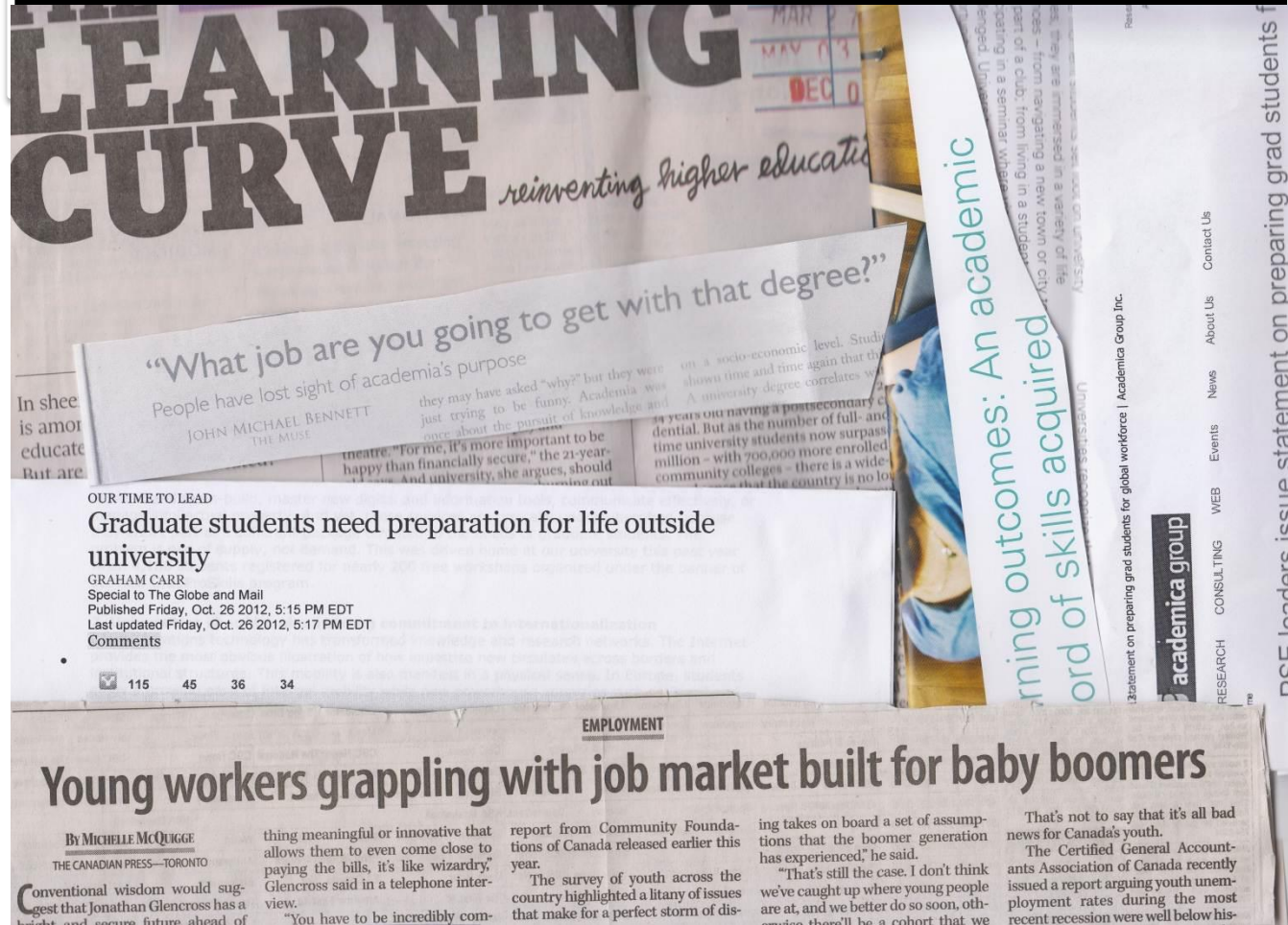
This five year project was born from:

- **Experience and research in career development at post secondary**
- **Recognizing that students need more opportunity to reflect on their post secondary experiences**
- **Student engagement and persistence**
- **Awareness of the need to integrate the career issue and reduce silos**

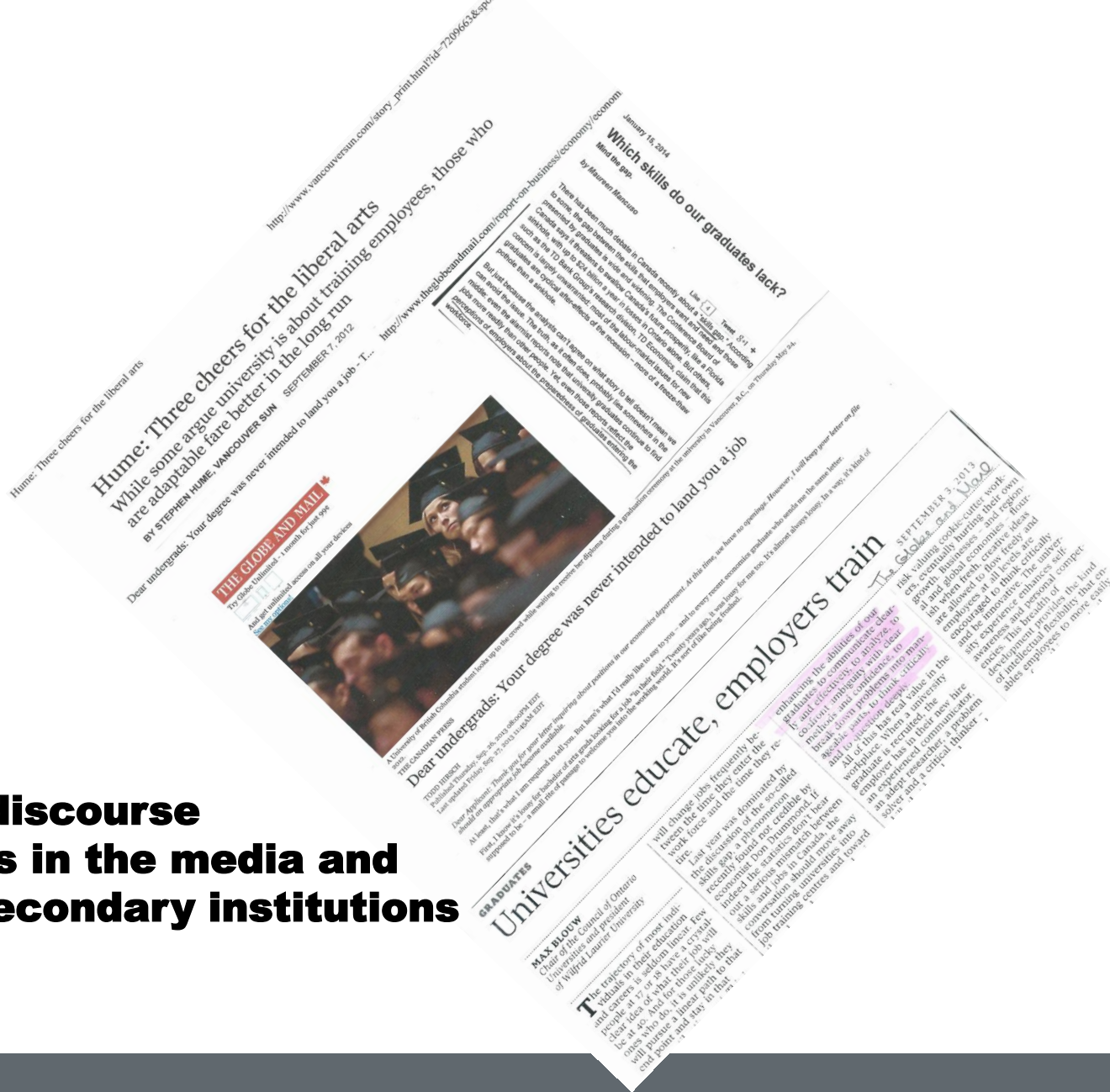
Memorial University Teaching and Learning Framework, 2011

- **Critical and practical thinkers**
- **Responsible citizens**
- **Creative and responsible problem solvers**
- **Commitment to lifelong learning**
- **Communicate effectively**
- **Passionate and industrious individuals**
- **Ethical and moral integrity**

Current Discourse in Media



And the discourse continues in the media and in post-secondary institutions



University Affairs Magazine

January 15, 2014

“It is in the interest of the arts, humanities and social sciences departments to develop better ways to demonstrate the skills they impart to students and graduates. If skills are the new currency, then we need to ensure that we are not leaving transactions off the ledger.”

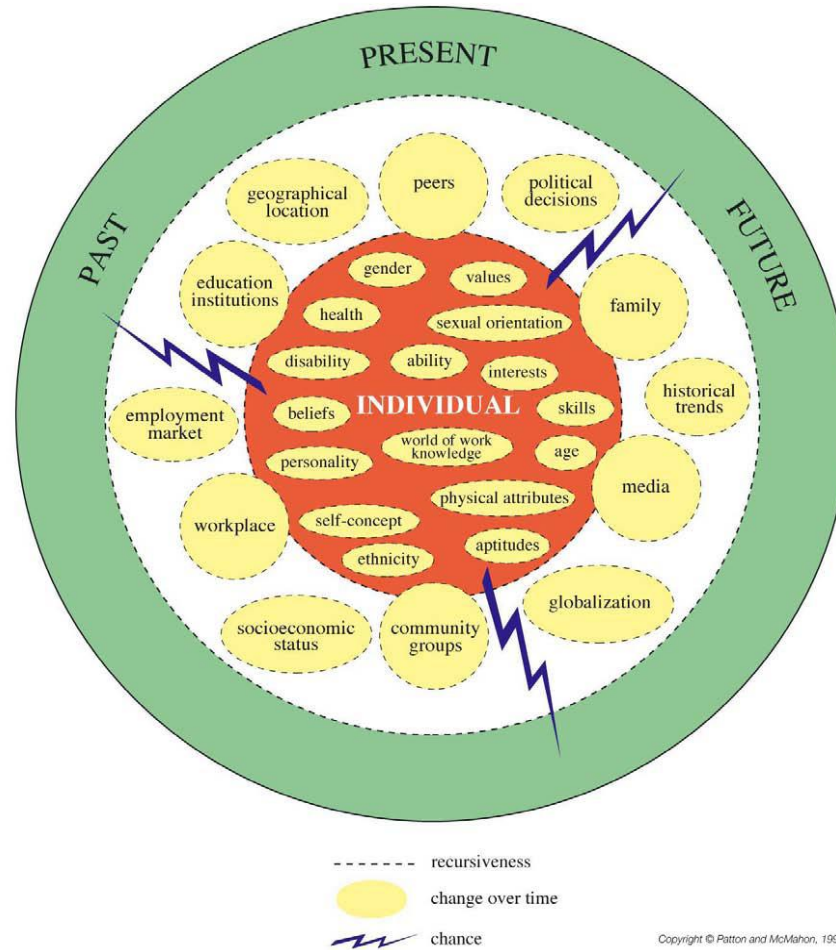
Dr. Maureen Mancuso VP (A) at U of Guelph

Career Integrated Learning

“Learning a living” (Hall, 1996)

- **Learner focus**
- **Creating awareness of skills and attributes to navigate life/leisure and work**
- **Learning embedded in experience**

Situated in other theory & research



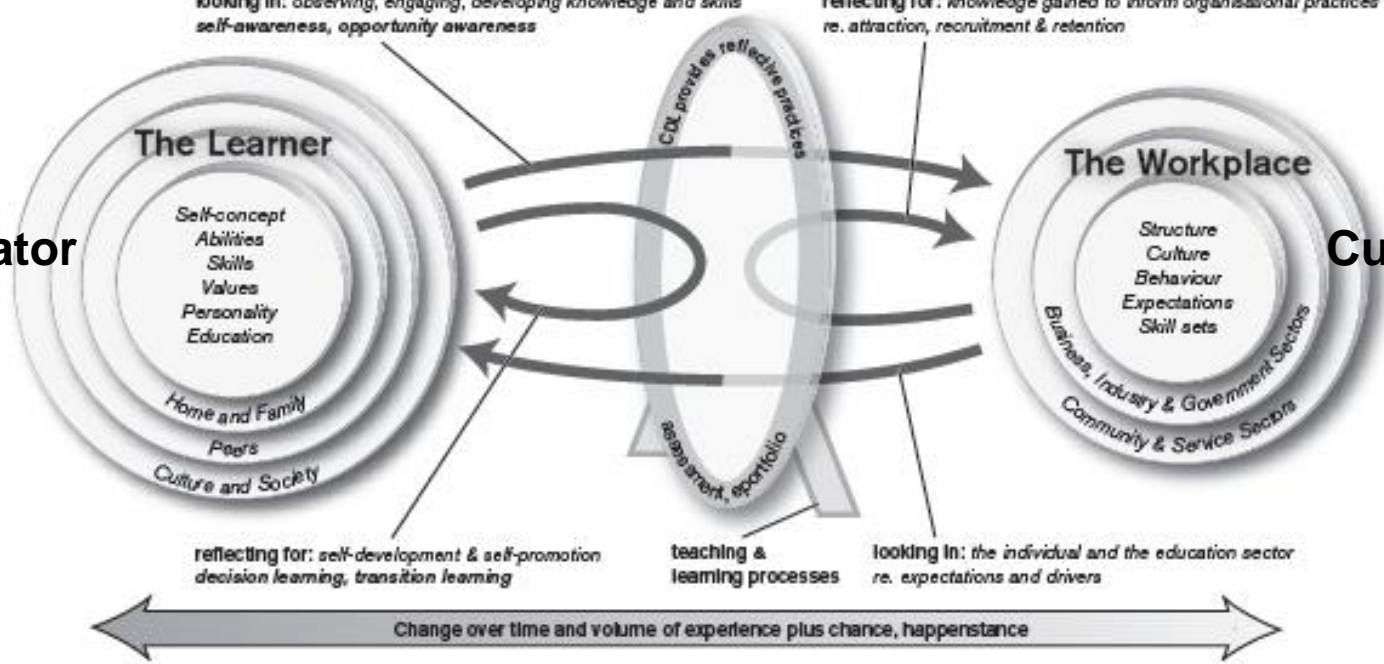
CDL & WiL: Looking from both sides of the two-way mirror

looking in: observing, engaging, developing knowledge and skills
self-awareness, opportunity awareness

reflecting for: knowledge gained to inform organisational practices
re. attraction, recruitment & retention

Facilitator

Curriculum



reflecting for: self-development & self-promotion
decision learning, transition learning

teaching & learning processes

looking in: the individual and the education sector
re. expectations and drivers

Change over time and volume of experience plus chance, happenstance

Smith et al. 2009

Experiences in Implementation

Literature review

Ethics process

Implementation

- ***Interviews with faculty and staff***
- ***Classroom pilot program***
- ***Collaborated with champions***

Steps involved

- **Meeting with faculty - champions**
- **Review existing course syllabi**
- **Add Graduating Student competencies (GSC) for each evaluation activity**
- **Three classroom visits per semester**

Course Requirements and Evaluation

Class Participation - Value 10%

Students are expected to attend and be prepared for classes and to actively participate in discussions and activities.



Graduating Student Competencies Practiced

- Interpersonal Skills
- Research skills
- Leadership Skills
- Ability to work within a time frame
- Accepting responsibility for your role in a group
- Summary, integration and assimilation skills
- Application of knowledge to practice
- Decision-making
- Critical thinking skills

Course Requirements and Evaluation

Presentation - Value 30%

Students are expected to form small group and present to the class on a theory. The group will have 60 minutes to present – as part of presentation there should be an experiential component/role play/ or demonstration.



Graduating Student Competencies Practiced

- **Interpersonal Skills**
- **Working within the dynamic of a group**
- **Research skills**
- **Oral presentation skills**
- **Leadership Skills**
- **Ability to work within a time frame**
- **Accepting responsibility for your role in a group**
- **Summary, integration and assimilation skills**
- **Application of knowledge to practice**
- **Practicing creativity**
- **Critical thinking skills**

Classroom experiences

- **Grassroots: Focus on students**
- **Survey students throughout semester**

Results

- **Project to date:**
- **Surveyed over 437 students after the pilot.**
- **Administered questionnaires 3 times per course**
- **First year to Master level**
- **Ages range from 18-64**

Results

- **72 % of survey respondents indicated that becoming aware of GSC's was helpful to them**

Let's listen to our students.....

**How has this reflection on
competencies been helpful to you?**



I have been finishing my grad school applications and the GSC have helped me write more thorough statements about myself my interests and my future

2013



Becoming aware of my GSC's has become so beneficial to me as it has given me the knowledge and confidence to understand what skills and competencies I have and how these can help me grow and develop. I feel confident that I have a greater understanding of who I am, where I want to go, and how I am going to get there.

2013



I like having the GSC's attached to the course syllabus.... I have always been focused on getting good grades in projects and assignments but not what skills are learned by completing them. 2014



It enriched the way I approach and interact
with a lot of the course material

2014



It made me pay more attention to the actual skills and knowledge I am taking from every course ... especially this stats course

2014



Excellent idea, it gave me an opportunity to think about the variety of skills I've cultivated throughout my degree. It gave me a new outlook on how I should integrate skills learned throughout my degree into marketing myself, and how to incorporate these into interview scenarios.



I thought it was a really helpful example of how you can talk about your course experience to apply it to a work setting. I actually used it to help write a cover letter applying for a summer job.



I found it very helpful to know I am not restricted to careers in my specific field since they are hard to find. My post secondary education won't be wasted.

'They help me realize how literature is applicable to everyday life as well. I also often have students from other faculties ask me why I study literature and what I will be able to do with my degree. Now I know that I can mention all these competencies and explain what I am doing in a convincing way.'

When asked what they learned about their own skills...

'I discovered I had more skills than previously thought! Sometimes you know how to do something but don't always realize it's a skill or competency for example, good spelling, good writing or note taking'



I received three job offers after handing [employers] my resume... all of them commented that my listed skills is what peaked their interest.... I never would have thought that critical thinking was a skill.
2013



I have definitely been thinking about the interviewing and writing skills I have learned. As a folklore major these skills will certainly be used in future courses when I have to conduct primary research. 2014



I've improved a number of competencies through this class, especially in terms of professionalizing my research work. This has to do both with polishing work and with moving through professional spheres. I've discovered that I can and should make that bridge between 'student' work and 'professional' work 2013



Through introduction to GSC's I approach employment differently. I discovered that I have qualifications that I didn't really put value to, for example, life experience in areas of supporting other adults now in the country

2013



Suggestions?

It would be great if GSC's were listed on course syllabus for each course so students could immediately get an idea of (some of) the practical skills they will learn in a class

2013



Having every professor not only talk about jobs that one may gain with the degree they are doing but also re-iterate the QSC's every semester with every class

2013

Another Grassroots project

Creating a meaningful career fair experience for students

- **Over 50 students**
- **Visit 8 employers**
 - ❖ 4 highlighting degree
 - ❖ 4 highlighting competencies

Preparing students for the new career equation ...

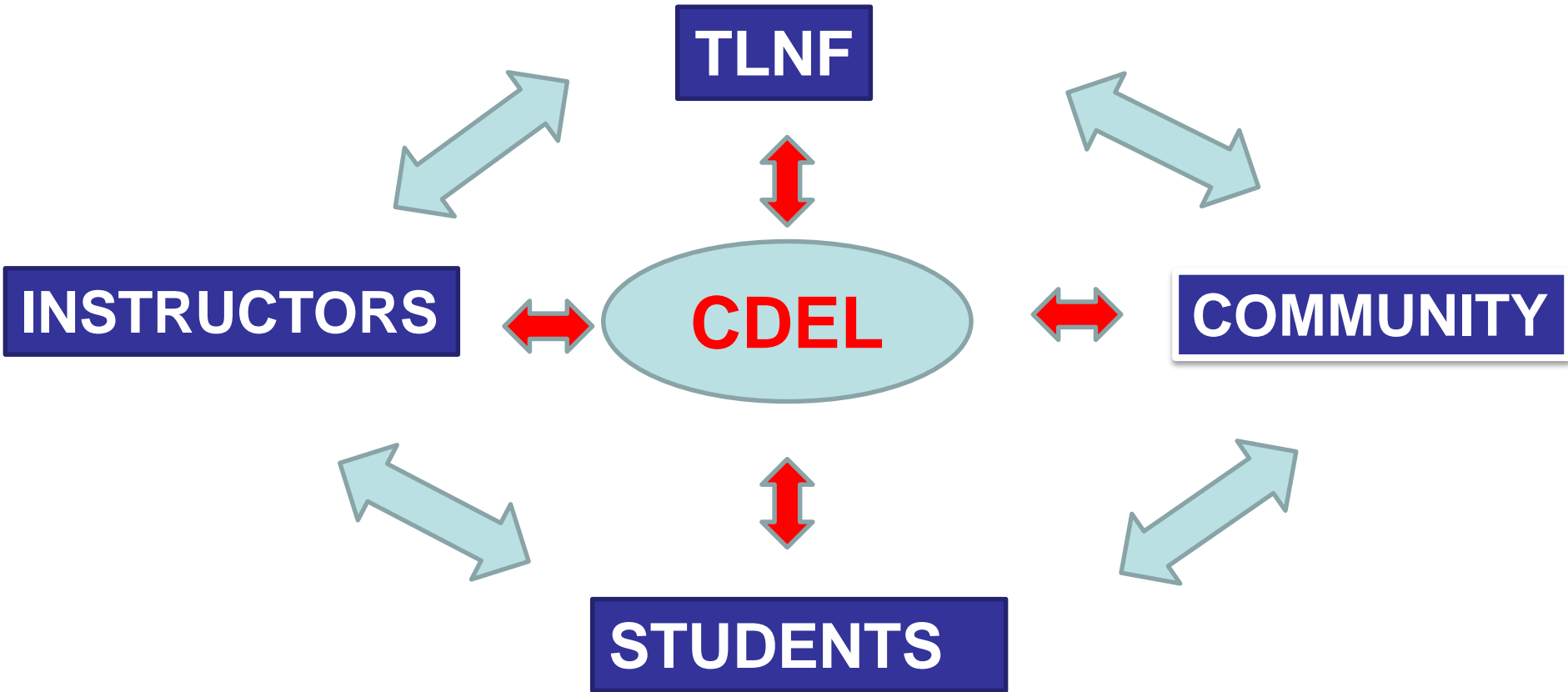
**Education + Work experience + Volunteer
Work + Reflection = A Career (maybe)**

Many GSC's are infused in curriculum

The key in Career Integrated learning is:

**Focus on the students' ability to reflect
and articulate skills**

WHERE TO FROM HERE



Video

"University... was never intended to land you a job. It was intended to make you a more complete thinker. ... to absorb complex information and make reasoned arguments. It was, quite simply, intended to teach you how to learn. Those are skills that you will use in any field of work"

Todd Hirsch, Sep 26, 2013, Globe and Mail

Thank You

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Alex Usher

Skills Shortage:

“The real shortage is quality not quantity”

Alex Usher

Top six skills named by Council of Chief Executives:

- people skills;
- communication skills;
- problem solving ;
- analytical;
- leadership; and sixth.....
- industry specific (knowledge)

Next Steps....

- **There needs to be a national conversation on competencies and what we want from our post secondary institutions – should include all stakeholders**
- **There needs to be a movement to reflect on GSC within Post-secondary;**

Nurturing....

- **Need to help employers focus on competencies not degrees**
- **Need to create Career Centre advisory committees on our campuses to show value of a post secondary education to the community**
- **Need to lead the connection of studies to the world of work (Research)**
- **Need community engagement**

Who is involved?

- **Career development centres**
- **Instructors**
- **Students**
- **Policy Developers**
- **Employers**
- **Marketers**

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Web Links

- **National Association of graduate
Careers Advisory Services**
nagcas.org.au/ALTC
- **The Higher Education Academy**
www.heacademy.ac.uk