



HIGHER EDUCATION

THINK OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

Look for schools that offer a broad range of learning experiences

AS you make your rounds at the college fair, there is one question you should ask each admissions representative you meet: "What learning opportunities does your school offer *outside* of the classroom?"

Experiential learning, or learning by doing, is vital for today's college students to discover workplace uses for their talents and interests.

"It's important when shopping for schools to know what is offered in the way of internships, service learning, study abroad, co-op experiences, and compelling work outside of the classroom," says Rob

Franek, senior vice president and publisher of "The Princeton Review," and author of "Colleges That Create Futures: 50 Schools That Launch Careers by Going Beyond the Classroom," (Princeton

Review, \$14.99).

New York is leading the real-world experience trend, with eight schools that made the guide's cut: Wagner College, Hunter College, Columbia University, Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Marist College, Binghamton University, St. Lawrence University and Vassar College.

At Wagner College, service learning is built into the modern languages, literatures and cultures curriculum.

"My students volunteer from the beginning of their careers through graduation," says Margarita Sánchez, chair of the department.

Undergrads can put their linguistic passion and talent to use through Port Richmond

Partnership. Within this Spanish-speaking community, many of Wagner's bilingual students teach English to immigrant children after school, says Sánchez.

Undergrads at Columbia

University's Fu Foundation School of Engineering and Applied Science are encouraged to become involved in faculty research.

"There are well over 100 students participating in research, which often leads to opportunities to publish their work," says Leora Brovman, Ed.D., associate dean of undergraduate student affairs for the school.

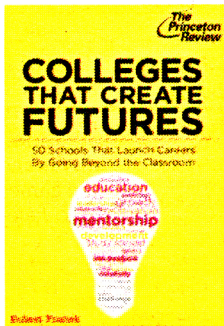
Hunter College offers the Roosevelt Scholars Program for students in public policy and civic affairs.

"Students have worked as interns in elected officials' offices and have heard from an incredible array of speakers," says Jennifer J. Raab, the school's president.

The Chinese Flagship Program, funded through the US Department of Defense's National Security Educational Program, is another immersion program.

"Our government saw the need for young Americans to be proficient in Mandarin. Our students live, study and work in China for one year after their language proficiency reaches advanced level," says Raab.

— Erika Prajfer





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How to look for colleges that think outside the classroom

By ERIKA PRAFDER

As you make your rounds at the college fair, there is one question you should ask each admissions representative you meet: “What learning opportunities does your school offer outside of the classroom?”

Experiential learning, or learning by doing, is not just a hot educational term; it’s vital for today’s college students to discover workplace uses for their talents and interests.

“If you look at college career centers five years ago, you never visited this department on a campus tour, but now you do. It’s important when shopping for schools to know what a school offers in the way of internships, service learning, study abroad, co-op experiences, and compelling work outside of the classroom that underpins your coursework,” says Rob Franek, senior vice president and publisher of “The Princeton Review,” and author of “Colleges That Create Futures: 50 Schools That Launch Careers by Going Beyond the Classroom,” (Princeton Review, \$14.99).

Fortunately, New York is one state that’s leading the real-world experience trend, with eight state-wide schools that have made the guide’s cut, including Wagner College, Hunter College, Columbia University, Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Marist College, Binghamton University, St. Lawrence University, and Vassar College.

At Wagner College, service learning is built into the modern languages, literatures and cultures curriculum.

“My students volunteer from the beginning of their careers through graduation,” says Margarita Sánchez, chair of the department.

Undergrads here have an opportunity to put their linguistic passion and talent to use through a partnership called Port Richmond Partnership. Within this Spanish-speaking community, located 20 minutes off campus, many of Wagner’s bilingual students teach English to immigrant children after school, says Sanchez.

Another structured effort involves mentoring.

“We’re creating a mentorship program with a high school there. We’re focusing on the ESL population – trying to help to prepare them for college,” says Sanchez.

The community service work is tremendously impactful on Wagner students, says the professor.

“Some of my students have gone on to work for the Peace Corps, as social workers and ESL teachers. They’re very civically engaged,” says Sanchez.

Undergrads at Columbia University’s Fu Foundation School of Engineering and Applied Science are encouraged to become involved in faculty research as freshmen.

“There are well over 100 students participating in research, which often leads to opportunities to publish their work,” says Leora Brovman, Ed.D., associate dean of undergraduate student affairs for the school.

Recently, one group of students developed a colored bleach disinfectant in response to the Ebola crisis.

“They received a grant to further their research and test it out with the New York City Fire Department,” says the dean.

As a senior year Capstone Project, “Another group of students designed a device that could reduce the impact of noise-induced hearing damage,” says the dean. “These are great examples of what undergraduate student research has led to.”

Promising engineering talent has interned at big entities nationwide, including NASA, Facebook, Google, Yahoo, Boeing and other traditional engineering firms, says Brovman.

At Hunter College, “We use New York as our classroom to connect students with experiential learning and to enhance classroom work,” says Jennifer J. Raab, the school’s president.

Through the Roosevelt Scholars Program, an honors program for students excelling in public policy and civic affairs, “Students have worked as interns in elected officials’ offices and have heard from an incredible array of speakers, including the Dalai Lama,” says Raab.

The Chinese Flagship Program, one of just 12 nationwide funded through the United States Department of Defense’s National Security Educational Program, is another immersion program worth highlighting.

“Our government recognized the need for young American people to be proficient in Mandarin. Under the terms of the grant, our students live, study and work in China for one year after their language proficiency reaches advanced level,” says Raab.

To better connect students with faculty, “I started the Presidential Initiative in Student Engagement,” says Raab. “Through this program, a faculty member may attend a lecture or exhibit with a student, or a play that relates to course material. We’ll pay for the experience and lunch. The ability [of a student and teacher] to bond with each other outside of the classroom and to talk about what they’re learning together can be life-changing.”