Assessing Experiential Learning to Promote Students' Diversity Engagement

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This article describes a faculty response to two challenges of online education: diversity engagement and professional socialization. Reviewing the literature, we develop a rubric to help assess the potential of new assignments for meeting these challenges. Using that rubric, we assess several assignments and projects that students evaluated positively, to better articulate the efficacy of the assignment in meeting our diversity education goals and future barriers to access. We conclude by discussing the strengths and weaknesses of our model for assessing diversity awareness and professional socialization in the LIS curriculum.

Keywords: active learning, curriculum, diversity, equity, experiential learning, inclusion, pedagogy, professional socialization

One of the challenges we face as educators in programs producing information professionals, such as practicing librarians and archivists, is to socialize students effectively into professional practice. Online education can be completed in relative isolation, with little exposure to people outside of a student's previous social circles. The debate about the quality of online education has long since passed, but there is one aspect of face-to-face learning that is not easily replicated in the online classroom: co-presence with people outside of the student's social group. Students in online classrooms can be as isolated as they wish to be. In asynchronous classes, students may interact only through text; in synchronous classes without activities, they may be in listen-only mode, or in synchronous classes with activities, they may not have a working microphone or webcam. Depending on the platform and their personal technology, as well as their geographic location and choice(s) of internet service provider and bandwidth for data, they might not be able to interact as intended.

Students are motivated to join the information professions for a variety of reasons. Many enter the field with prior exposure to practical work in libraries or other information

KEY POINTS:

- LIS students benefit from instructors planning professional socialization and awareness of user diversity into the curriculum in multiple areas.

- Taking advantage of diversity levers and the involvement of LIS professionals can help students meet these needs.

- LIS programs can benefit from the same rubric-style systematic evaluation of their curriculum as they use for their assignments.

institutions as student workers or in a para-professional capacity. Other students are at-tracted to information work from seeing or hearing about it from peers, elders, or advisors (Lee, Chancellor, Chu, Rodriguez-Mori, & Roy, 2015; Oguz, Chu, & Chow, 2015). No mat-ter the background and current work environment, students must learn how to behave as professionals, given the new role they are preparing to accept after graduation. Professional socialization, therefore, can be a challenge for students who are changing careers and who by day find themselves in a completely different environment, or for students in information settings but working without professional status.

Another challenge is a lack of demographic diversity in the students we enroll, which is connected to the overall library and information science (LIS) professions (Jaeger et al., 2015). Despite continued discussion and efforts to diversify, librarianship in the United States is 87% white and 81% female (ALA, 2017a). An online program can also lead to students being isolated from the diversity support they might otherwise find on a univer-sity campus, such as multicultural centers, resources for diversity and equity, programs and speakers presenting a wide range of viewpoints, and the mix of people who make up a multicultural and ideologically diverse campus community.

As faculty in an LIS program situated at a large public research university, we strive daily to ensure that our students are prepared to work with diverse clientele in a way that is coherent with professional values. However, it is difficult to quantify their preparation. This project arose from attempts to build direct interventions into our curriculum that expand students' opportunities to connect with diverse populations and professionals in the context of information work. The impetus to measure curricular efficacy initially came from the university's own recent investments in enacting a number of diversity initiatives that are geared toward local, on-campus students. It is challenging to offer distance students such opportunities, but experiential learning assignments and events can be leveraged to give those students challenging and interactive learning opportunities that directly connect to LIS values, including diversity. In this paper, we mobilize literature on professional so-cialization, diversity, and experiential learning to create a rubric that articulates identified strategies that facilitate authentic student engagement in projects, regardless of location. We conclude by discussing the strengths and weaknesses of this approach for both professional socialization and learning about diversity.

Rationale

Respect for difference and a commitment to inclusive services are foundational values gen-erated and upheld by LIS practitioners. For example, the ALA Strategic Plan emphasizes diversity as a key action area (ALA, 2017b). Respect for diversity was stated as a Core Value of Librarianship in 2004 (ALA, 2019, p. 5), and diversity and anti-racism policies were in-cluded in the ALA Policy Manual in 1986 (ALA, 2019, p. 23). Likewise, diversity is centrally located as a core value of both the Society of American Archivists and individual archivists (Society of American Archivists, 2018, 2019). Because our external clientele (patrons) come from a rapidly diversifying population (Devine, 2017), our students need to internalize a toolkit for working with clients from multiple cultures and experiences, each of whom has individual needs and desires. For students who may be relatively isolated, though, this can

be a difficult or seemingly irrelevant process that may seem imposed by their professors rather than reflective of their burgeoning professional identity.

We describe and evaluate four projects that faculty coordinated with local information agencies and for study-abroad classes as means of building diversity and professional socialization into the MLIS curriculum: building a digital library for a local cultural research center; cataloging a collection of African-American books for the Black Archives of Mid-America (BAMA); processing archival collections there; and completing a service-learning project in students' own neighborhood or city. Each project broadened students' exposure to people they will work with as information professionals, as well as their sense of being a professional.

Our goal in providing experiential learning opportunities was to provide small and scalable opportunities for students to gain the expertise of "experienced practitioners" and to work on practical professional problems, even if those students did not have the financial means or opportunity to spend extended time away from their homes, families, or communities. Experienced practitioners can provide models for these students to help expand their ability to work with others and provide motivations and strategies for working with different populations. However, students who are isolated from diversity are also less likely to have mentors or communities of practice who can support their diversity awareness.

Review of the literature

Professional education and professional socialization

Models of professional socialization emphasize social interaction between novices and experienced practitioners from a variety of experience levels. Such interaction occurs largely in the workplace, and several authors have discussed how a professional education differs from general education. Kolb (2014, p. 261) notes that "the process of socialization into a profession becomes an intense experience that instills not only knowledge and skills but also a fundamental reorientation of one's identity." Definitions of professional education include multiple phases wherein the novice goes from acquiring professional knowledge to developing competencies and being socialized into the profession (Dinman, 2000). Professional socialization involves adopting professional behaviors and value systems, as well as learning how to adapt to and manage organizational structures in light of professional norms—often resulting in students seeing themselves *in* a profession and, as a consequence, developing a community of practice—a reference community with whom they might compare their knowledge and achievements (Freeburg, 2018; Lave & Wenger, 1991). According to Smith and Hatmaker (2014, p. 546), "Socialization involves developing the skills and acquiring the knowledge associated with being a member of an organization or profession, as well as adopting the values, norms, and culture of that profession or organization."

In the communities of practice model, learning is a social process in which knowledge and meaning are co-constructed through interactions between a master and an apprentice (Wenger, 1998). Our memberships in communities of practice show us what is implicit and expected of us in the various roles we take up. A community of practice

is composed of "the informal social systems that develop over time as people engage in a shared enterprise" (Lewis & Ketter, 2004, p. 118). When people belong to a group that has shared goals and interests, the participants learn through interaction with each other and develop practices that help them achieve those goals. Individuals' identities are shaped and changed by their participation in a community of practice (Lewis, Enciso, & Moje, 2007). It is this kind of professional socialization that transforms theory into practice for many students.

Multi-phase models of professional socialization emphasis students' growth as agents within a profession. MacLellan, Lordly, and Gingras (2011, p. 39) suggest three stages of professional socialization: pre-socialization, in which new students' beliefs about their new career come primarily from observations and experience; formal socialization, in which students learn technical skills, recognize other stakeholders in the profession, and internalize professional values; and post-socialization, during which graduates begin practice, realize the limitations of their training, and work to increase their skills. Black and Leysen (2016) discuss a four-stage model. In the first stage, "unilateral dependence," the student depends on rigid rules and guidelines of authority figures to make decisions. In the second stage, "negativity/independence," students begin to criticize authority and develop critical thinking skills. In the third stage, "dependence/ mutuality," students begin integrating facts and opinions and using data to make decisions. Finally, in the fourth stage, "interdependence," students learn to make their own decisions within the context of their profession and think of themselves as professionals. Both models involve students seeing the limitations of formal education and learning to depend on themselves and their colleagues to develop professional practices (Black & Leysen, 2016, p. 95).

Graduate-student socialization factors include acquiring profession-specific knowledge, becoming invested in being a member of the profession, and becoming involved in professional issues (Weidman, Twale, & Stein, 2001). Holley and Taylor (2009) found a deep sense of isolation in online nursing students, with interaction linked to specific tasks and assignments and limited engagement in even interactive tasks. Those who were employed often relied on workmates and co-located classmates for socialization, developing a work-based community of practice. Similarly, Kazmer (2007) found that students in a cohort-model program with a residency component had a stronger sense of community with fellow students, but that programs without such a model can adopt practices to increase a sense of community, such as "online community environment, peer advising, and including online students in student sections of professional associations" (p. 377). Importantly, she found that students in online programs tend to find support from their local professional colleagues rather than classmates, and "close local networks may provide a long-term benefit for libraries and communities" (p. 380). Croxton (2015) concludes that prior work experience helps some students build a sense of professional identity before they enter an LIS program, but experiences of group project work and connectedness with peers and faculty may also help build a sense of professional identity. Black and Leysen (2002), though, suggest that there is not enough time in the general LIS education program to fully socialize new librarians into the profession.

Kolb's experiential learning theory and professional socialization

Experiential learning requires students to engage in a concrete experience and then reflect on that experience, build abstract concepts from the experience and from reflection, and then experiment to see what holds true. Building on a long line of educational reformers, such as John Dewey and Paolo Freire, David Kolb describes conceptualizing the generation of new knowledge "as a transformation process, being continuously created and recreated, not an independent entity to be acquired or transmitted" (Kolb, 2014, p. 49). Kolb notes that experiential learning focuses on the process of knowledge creation rather than the process of information acquisition. The new practitioner needs to know specific facts but also needs to have appropriate perspectives and approaches. "They must learn to think like a mathematician or feel like a poet or make decisions like an executive" (Kolb, 2014, p. 282). Moreover, they must be prepared to direct their own learning after they leave the formal educational setting so that they can navigate inevitable changes within their profession.

Experiential learning does not divorce the learner from the environment, or from the learner's lived experience: "Dimensions of learning space include physical, cultural, institutional, social, and psychological aspects. In experiential learning theory these dimensions of learning space all come together in the experience of the learner" (Kolb, 2014, p. 288). Experiential learning thus embodies some of the elements of professional socialization models discussed previously, including the acknowledgment that professional practice is constantly being developed and refined, that professional practice is based on both knowledge and interaction, and that the problems of the workplace do not have black-and-white answers.

Expanding diversity awareness

Theoretical research on incorporating diversity in students' curricular experiences speaks of connections between diverse populations, and also of intellectual connections between students' knowledge base and professional challenges. Our approach to designing our class projects was informed by three specific theories: contact theory, diversity levers, and the inclusive excellence framework.

Contact theory (originally "contact hypothesis") emphasizes the idea that contact between members of different groups helps improve people's diversity-related attitudes. This is dependent upon several factors: all participants should have equal status; they should work interdependently toward a common goal; in their work, they should interact with each other; and in their work, they should be supported by their superiors (Allport, 1954). Other researchers note the potential for negative contact to increase intolerance (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006), and that prejudice reduction may not be as effective as collective action (McKeown & Dixon, 2017). Despite these caveats, contact theory provided a good starting place for students who had very little contact with people outside their social groups.

Kumasi and Manlove (2015) identify diversity levers as "pedagogical access points or topical areas in the course that open up avenues for discussing and learning about the intersections of diversity and social justice within the existing curriculum context" (p. 427). These are areas where the LIS curriculum naturally lends itself to discussions of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Kumasi and Manlove suggest several areas in the core LIS curriculum where diversity discussions are appropriate. These include topics such as "(e)thics in

cataloging practice" (p. 433), "(c)lassification of particular individuals and groups" (p. 437), "(s)ervices for diverse populations" and "equity of access for all users" (p. 434). Diversity levers provide ways of thinking of the LIS curriculum regarding its potential to increase inclusion and opportunities to think about users different from oneself and one's social group.

The inclusive excellence framework (Schmidt & MacWilliams, 2015) emphasizes student intellectual and social development, along with attention to the cultural differences each learner brings, realized in a welcoming community where organizational resources are developed and deployed to enhance student learning. Similar to Kumasi and Manlove (2015), Schmidt and MacWilliams (2015) suggest that curricular strategies should ensure a wide range of opportunities to learn about diversity, equity, and inclusion, to reflect on professional and personal values related to diversity, as well as to promote a sense of community among students and encourage their feelings of inclusion.

Experiential learning and diversity awareness

Experiential learning approaches have been used to support diversity. Rainey and Kolb (1995) discussed the application of experiential learning to learning about diversity. The authors maintain that experiential learning provides not only content but also a process and framework for supporting learning about diversity, allowing students to learn about an emotionally charged topic within a psychologically safe environment. LIS scholars affirm their argument by documenting students' increased learning after experiences that involved contact with diverse clientele, experience in authentic work settings and authentic work problems, and mentorship or work experience with experienced professionals. Fleischmann, Robbins, and Wallace (2009) documented the use of intercultural case studies which simulated authentic ethical questions in the workplace, the kinds of questions that lack a clear black-and-white answer. Students were required to act in a certain role in the case study and make professional decisions. The case studies allowed students to explore ethical beliefs and values with students whose values differed from their own, and to increase their understanding of decision making in a pluralistic environment. Roy (2001) documented students working with experienced professionals and diverse clientele through the creation of a virtual reality museum for Native American content (a project in collaboration with the National Museum of the American Indian, part of the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C.), and through projects working with school and public librarians in tribal areas. Montiel-Overall (2010) used service learning in authentic work settings with students pursuing school librarianship, in which they spent at least 30 hours in school libraries that served Latino students and compared that to their experiences in better funded libraries serving dominant clientele. Results from the study indicated that students' awareness of diversity and equity issues increased, and students had an expanded understanding of issues that might affect their professional practice.

The above-described projects are dependent upon students having access to diverse information environments to visit, diverse classmates with whom to engage, and means and opportunity to make extended service-learning visits. Roy (2001, p. 224) notes that LIS students need incentives to become involved in such projects, and LIS faculty need to contact "funding sources, potential clients, and students." For such reasons, extended

service-learning opportunities may ultimately be most accessible to financially secure, geographically urban, and suburban students, as students who are working or caring for family on a full-time basis or who live in rural areas cannot always take advantage of these opportunities.

In conclusion, there are three actionable theories regarding the integration of diversity in experiential learning as part of curricula, including online learning, which might expand students' feelings of connectedness with their program and the profession, writ large. There are also many specific activities that can increase their exposure to diverse ethnicities, socio-economic statuses, languages, and ideologies. However, the assignments must be authentic and relevant (Swaggerty & Broemmel, 2017). Instructors' involvement in discussion boards can help or hinder students' independence and bonding, which is related to professional development (Ouyang & Scharber, 2017). Blogging and communicating outwardly with professionals can also improve students' perceptions of learning (Stephens, 2016) while increasing their visibility within the profession. Can such professional learning activities be measured, though?

Methods

Based on the literature review, we identified several factors we could use to assess assignments structured to provide professional socialization and experience with diversity. Our Professional Socialization factor builds on of the need for students to develop a professional reference community (Smith & Hatmaker, 2014) and develop a sense of professional identity (Black & Leysen, 2002; Croxton, 2015). Our Service Orientation factor is based on the LIS value of service, which forms part of the profession's identity (Black & Leysen, 2002; Croxton, 2015) and is crucial to helping students learn to think like LIS professionals (Kolb, 2014). The Values Orientation factor asks students to engage intellectually, in discussion and reflection, with LIS values (Smith & Hatmaker, 2014) and builds from the tenets of the inclusive excellence framework by focusing on students' intellectual and social development (Schmidt & MacWilliams, 2015). The Diversity & Inclusion factor is based on LIS values of diversity and inclusion, the attention to which helps students to develop professional values (Smith & Hatmaker, 2014) and encourages engagement with people different from themselves, as does contact theory (Allport, 1954). The focus on Diversity Levers builds from Kumasi and Manlove (2015), and the focus on discussion and reflection also builds from the inclusive excellence framework (Schmidt & MacWilliams, 2015). Finally, we added three original criteria regarding accessibility—here meaning criteria that explicitly accommodate distance students who may have limited time due to work or family commitments, preference for low-cost activities, or a lack of geographic mobility, specifically because we see that such concerns are the most pressing and decisive from the student perspective. For those criteria, we distinguish accessibility as something different from desirability because the same desirability criteria are not necessarily useful when determining one's time, money, or mobility available to complete an assignment.

Using these factors, we designed a rubric-style assessment grid to provide information about the impact of current and potential assignments, weighing in students' expressed limitations and constraints (see Table 1). We then used the rubric to assess several experiential

Table 1: Rubric for assessing assignments for diversity, professional socialization, and accessibility for online students

Area of influence	Least desirable (1)	Intermediate (2)	Most desirable (3)
Professional Socialization	Student does not interact with LIS professionals, does work at home or in classroom setting, and does not engage in realistic workplace practices.	Student either engages in authentic workplace setting or engages with experienced LIS professional or engages in realistic workplace practices, but not all three.	Student engages in an authentic workplace setting, under the supervision of an experienced practitioner, engaged in realistic workplace practices.
Service Orientation	Student does not work with authentic clientele and does not engage with authentic information needs.	Student experiences authentic clientele or report of authentic information needs, but does not do both, or does not have a deep experience with both.	Student works with an authentic clientele experiencing authentic information-related needs.
Values Orientation	Student does not directly engage with LIS values, is not asked to incorporate values into practice.	Student engages with values but is not called upon to change or affect practice.	Student directly engages with and reflects on LIS values and incorporates those values into practice.
Diversity & Inclusion	Student does not experience diverse population and is not asked to ensure that practices are inclusive of all.	Student is exposed to diverse populations but does not engage with them; student is exposed to concepts and ideas of inclusivity but does not engage with them.	Student engages with diverse populations, including clientele, colleagues, and professional role models, and works to include multiple backgrounds.
Diversity Levers	Instructor has not identified diversity levers and does not include related activities into the curriculum.	Instructor identifies diversity levers as areas for further exploration but leaves exploration to students, without providing guidance or structure.	Instructor has identified one or more diversity levers and incorporated activities, discussion, and reflection into the class experience.
Financially Accessible	Intervention requires significant investment of funds (e.g., for passport, airfare, lodging, other expenses).	Intervention requires limited investment of funds (e.g., commuting costs or one night of hotel).	Project requires no money to be spent by student or professor beyond regular course fees/tuition
Geographically Accessible	Project/program requires travel of long duration (five days or more).	Project/program is locally accessible or requires limited travel.	Project/program can be done online; requires no fixed location.

(*Continued*)

Area of influence	Least desirable (1)	Intermediate (2)	Most desirable (3)
Durationally Accessible	Project/program requires extensive dedicated and/or focused time, without interruptions.	Project/program requires regular periods of dedicated and focused time, usually four hours or less per week.	Project/program does not require regular periods of focused time and can be completed at any time.

learning projects offered as part of our curriculum. Projects each involved one or more of the criteria we had identified from the literature: working with experienced professionals, working in an authentic workplace, working with an authentic problem of practice, and/or working with diverse clientele. To meet the needs of our online student population, projects needed to be easily accessible, have a relatively low opportunity cost in terms of time and money, fit within the academic calendar, and be incentivized through grades or course credit. Related to diversity, these projects provided contact with diverse groups of users and professionals under supervised conditions, they deployed authentic diversity levers within the profession, and they provided an opportunity to reflect on diversity as a personal and/or professional goal. Finally, we reflected on assignments and how to revise those assignments for future success.

Project assessments

After co-creating the rubric, participating faculty members were asked to use the rubric to assess experiential learning projects from their own classes. Following the individual self-evaluation, the group came to a consensus about each project's strengths and weaknesses regarding values, diversity, professional socialization, and service orientation (impact), as well as the practical limitations for participation (accessibility). In this section, we identify and briefly describe each of these projects and assess their impact on our distance students.

Cataloging the William Lamont Jones collection at the Black Archives of Mid-America (fall semester, 2016)

An opportune project arose when the director of the Black Archives of Mid-America (BAMA), Geri Sanders, contacted a faculty member to report that the Archives had received a donation of materials from the estate of a community church elder. William Lamont Jones had collected books related to the African-American experience, from best-selling novels to community-specific pamphlets. The challenge for Sanders was that she had neither the time nor the expertise to handle this collection; she was operating an Archives as the only staff member and had archival training rather than cataloging training. With a class of eight students, faculty created an active "working weekend" which five of the students spent in Kansas City, using an app and their labor to import basic bibliographic data for all the collection. The remaining three students determined how to merge those records into BAMA's PastPerfect archival access system. While this project was more practical in nature, one can consider its diversity lever [2] as integrating culturally relevant materials into a local collection, while remaining mindful of budgetary limitations of that local collection.

The project involved working with an experienced archives professional, working in an authentic workplace with culturally significant materials, and working with an authentic problem of practice. Sanders, a practicing archivist, provided an additional degree of professional socialization [3] in this role. While she acknowledged having not previously worked as a professional cataloger, she nonetheless taught students how to use PastPerfect, provided guidelines as to local practice in terms of cataloging terms [Service Orientation, 1], and engaged students in a conversation about how to deal with sensitive materials within the context of the larger collection [Values Orientation, 2]. In sum, the cataloging experience provided students with an authentic experience organizing information in a professional context (see Table 2).

Spring break archival field experience at *BAMA* (spring semester 2017)

Based on the previous relationship with BAMA, and driven by students' desire for archival coursework, we developed a one-credit class project that took place over spring break, in which six students gained hands-on experience with processing. The class began with an all-day archival instruction session taught by a faculty member on campus. Archivist Sanders and her intern, Bridget Haney, attended the session and brought example items from BAMA's collections, discussing acquisition, description, and other practices in place. Students then traveled to Kansas City, where they stayed with friends, relatives, or a classmate, and spent their week in BAMA, working in teams to process and rehouse three collections of materials. Sanders and Haney introduced the students to the archives and to area landmarks and restaurants, allowing them a deeper experience of the historic 18th and Vine neighborhood, which also houses the Jazz District and the Negro Leagues Baseball Hall of Fame [Diversity & Inclusion, 3]. In this process, students not only worked on processing materials but also learned about the creators of those materials and the culture that shaped them. Materials included printed matter such as insurance records and realia such as hats and ceremonial

Table 2: Assessment for cataloging the William Lamont Jones collection

Area of Influence	Result
Professional Socialization	3
Service Orientation	1
Values Orientation	2
Diversity & Inclusion	2
Diversity Levers	2
Financially Accessible	2
Geographically Accessible	2
Durationally Accessible	2
TOTAL	**16/24**

Table 3: Assessment for spring break field experience

Area of Influence	Result
Professional Socialization	3
Service Orientation	1
Values Orientation	3
Diversity & Inclusion	3
Diversity Levers	2
Financially Accessible	2
Geographically Accessible	2
Durationally Accessible	1
TOTAL	**17/24**

regalia. Similar to the previous project, its diversity lever [2] could be integrating culturally relevant materials into a local collection, while remaining mindful of budgetary limitations of that local collection. The students also had the opportunity to learn more about community history and record keeping related to issues of discrimination and prejudice.

Professional socialization [3] in this instance came from Sanders, who took time to discuss relationships and relationship building within the local community—from working with potential donors and other area libraries and archives, to working with BAMA's board of directors, as well as promotional placements to ensure that BAMA remained visible to the community. The experience involved working with an experienced professional (Sanders), working in an authentic workplace, and working with an authentic problem of practice (collections processing) [Values Orientation, 3]. Sanders and Haney also supported contact between our students and other community members of color by providing exposure to cultural sites that students may not have otherwise seen (see Table 3).

Community leadership in public libraries course (spring semesters, 2015, 2016, 2017)
As part of an IMLS-funded grant project (Public Library Leadership, https://libraryleaders. missouri.edu/), a course was created to encourage students to think about their communities holistically by getting outside their libraries and into their communities, specifically by engaging in service learning. The service-learning experience was intended to be an opportunity to help students link their libraries to other community-based organizations that share similar goals, learn new perspectives for advocacy, and develop empathy and listening skills to develop their leadership potential. In 2015 and 2016, students set up their own service-learning opportunities; in 2017, the instructor worked with the university's Office of Service-Learning to identify places for students to participate. Because many students are located at a distance, we asked them to work with organizations within their own locale. Students worked with a variety of types of organizations, including a Women, Infants, and

Children office for distributing food assistance, a local thrift store that supported a charitable organization, a food pantry for pets, a community garden, and a citizenship center. A goal for the experience was that they learn about the information needs of people who might not visit libraries. In the project, students worked with diverse clientele and experienced an authentic problem of practice [Diversity & Inclusion, 2; Service Orientation, 3], learning to advocate for people's needs and learning to identify information needs of people different from themselves. In this case, the main source of professional socialization [1] for students was through guest lectures offered by public librarians to the class. The diversity levers [3] of this project are community needs assessment, advocacy, and outreach (see Table 4).

Building a digital library for a cultural organization on campus (spring semester, 2017)
The Digital Libraries class offered by our school is an advanced Master's-level class with online synchronous meetings every other week, and the major project for this class was to build a digital library for the Cambio Center, an organization on campus that supports research into changing immigration patterns in the Midwest. Most of the research collected by this center supports Latinx immigration and migration to the Midwest, but it also includes information about refugee populations resettled in the Midwest. In particular, the center wished to organize proceedings of the local conference that it had been hosting, and staff had recently had the contents of the paper versions scanned for digital access; what was needed, however, was for the files to be organized, stored, and made available to researchers, and a plan made for working with future proceedings. Students in class thought about the functional requirements needed for access, virtually met with Cambio Center staff to discuss needs, and explored the information needs of migration scholars and immigrant service providers, both potential user groups of the digital library. Students worked with the Cambio Center to meet their needs in terms of access, while also working with the Head of Digital Services at the university library to include the content into the library's institutional

Table 4: Results of analysis for community leadership service-learning class

Area of Influence	Result
Professional Socialization	1
Service Orientation	3
Values Orientation	2
Diversity & Inclusion	2
Diversity Levers	3
Financially Accessible	3
Geographically Accessible	3
Durationally Accessible	2
TOTAL	**19/24**

repository for long-term access. In teams, students created white papers explaining their decisions in the context of the suite of options they faced. Teams also created manuals so that the Cambio Center would be able to continue contributing content to the institutional repository going forward. Its diversity lever [3] might be understanding the research needs of an organization devoted to researching culture-specific problems, along with the subject analysis of the proceedings and application of descriptors to support retrieval.

Professional socialization [2] for this project came from students' interactions with the university library's Head of Digital Services, Felicity Dykas. Dykas provided guest lectures during the class and ended up working closely with students as they completed their projects and needed additional guidance on practical aspects of using the university's institutional repository. Given her understanding of the limitations and features of the systems in play, Dykas helped students think like professionals in making decisions both technical and social. This project involved working with experienced professionals (the Head of Digital Services) and diverse clientele (staff and potential contributors to the Cambio Center digital library) [Diversity & Inclusion, 2], and working with an authentic problem of practice (the need to create a repository for a growing collection of topical materials) [Service Orientation, 2] (see Table 5).

Summer study-abroad experiences (summer sessions, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2016, 2017).
Over five summers, students attended study-abroad courses in South Africa, the United Kingdom, and St. Lucia. Each of the study-abroad programs was individually planned, but with the common intention of expanding students' awareness of cultural differences in library standards and in the definitions of "minority" and "majority" cultures in non-local locations. The sessions emphasized diversity learning more than service learning. When taken out of their familiar contexts, students identified issues of prejudice and racism that they could then apply to their own culture. For instance, students who attended the South

Table 5: Results of analysis for developing Cambio Center digital library

Area of Influence	Result
Professional Socialization	2
Service Orientation	2
Values Orientation	1
Diversity & Inclusion	2
Diversity Levers	3
Financially Accessible	3
Geographically Accessible	3
Durationally Accessible	2
TOTAL	**18/24**

Africa program worked with the Mayibuye Archives, which document the apartheid struggles in a nation still dealing with racial tension. Here students worked with experienced professionals, both black and white South African librarians, in an authentic workplace (University of Western Cape-Robben Island Museum Mayibuye Archives, http://mayibuye-earchives.org/) and engaged in an authentic problem of practice (creating finding aids for collections). A second program took place in the United Kingdom, which included several days in Northern Ireland, where students were able to see continued evidence of cultural divisions and the legacy of the violence of the Troubles. The program included visits to several archives and museums where students heard from people who lived through the Troubles and studied the artifacts and documents kept from the time. Trips to libraries and discussions with librarians in some of London's most ethnically diverse neighborhoods gave students new perspectives on current political topics in immigration, culture, and language. The study-abroad trip to St. Lucia involved students designing and then spending a week running a reading camp for elementary school students in a small island town. The LIS students involved in the reading camp engaged in library-style youth programming in a high-poverty and low-literacy community. The experience involved working with a diverse clientele, St. Lucian children of African descent, some of whom were adherents of Rastafarianism and therefore subject to intra-community discrimination. The workplace was authentic in that the program took place at a school. The diversity lever [3] for all of the study-abroad courses is related to social justice, access to information, and critique of power—challenging mainstream historical perspectives.

Professional socialization [2] in each of these sessions was mixed. In some sessions, students worked directly with librarians on authentic problems, such as working with archivists to create finding aids for Project Mayibuye and working with librarians to evaluate services to new immigrants [Service Orientation, 3]. In other sessions, professional archivists and librarians merely delivered lectures or provided tours. A weakness of study-abroad programs is the significant monetary and time commitment [Financially, Durationally Accessible, 1]. They are less accessible to students with families, and some of the students who would most enjoy or benefit from international experiences may not be able to take advantage of them. Additionally, while scholarships were available for undergraduate study-abroad experiences, graduate students did not have similar support, and most had to pay full tuition plus fees and expenses. (Those with assistantships that covered tuition ended up paying only fees and expenses.) If graduate-level travel scholarships were available, that would change the financial accessibility of the study abroad experience (see Table 6).

Using the rubric for a new class (Cultural Heritage, spring 2020)

One of the authors, Alston, used the rubric to revise an assignment for an online Cultural Heritage course, taught for the first time in spring 2020. In the assignment, students are asked to visit a cultural heritage site or institution in person, at their own location. For the purposes of this assignment, many things qualified as cultural heritage sites: libraries, archives, museums, monuments, cemeteries, churches or religious venues, plantations, and other locations listed on a historic registry. After visiting that site, the students are asked to write a brief reflection paper on that experience. Students must answer specific questions

Table 6: Results of analysis for study-abroad sessions.

Area of Influence	Result
Professional Socialization	2
Service Orientation	3
Values Orientation	2
Diversity & Inclusion	3
Diversity Levers	3
Financially Accessible	1
Geographically Accessible	1
Durationally Accessible	1
TOTAL	16/24

in the assignment prompt, as they explain what makes the place they visit a cultural heritage entity and what value the place provides to the heritage and identity of constituent communities.

After reviewing the rubric and previous course evaluations using that rubric, Alston looked at potential access concerns for students and evaluated modifications to the assignment to help distance students succeed. Online course delivery meant that students would need to locate and travel to culture heritage sites or institutions, in addition to finding time in their schedules to visit these places and costs for admission fees, if needed. To increase Geographic Accessibility, students who cannot travel to a local cultural heritage location are permitted to visit a virtual museum or similar online resource. This assignment also increases Financial and Durational Accessibilty, because while students always have the option to visit free cultural heritage sites, visiting virtual museums and online resources reduces travel and time costs.

However, using a virtual cultural heritage site runs the risk of reducing Professional Socialization and Values Orientation. To overcome these challenges, the assignment was modified to ask students to interact with the cultural heritage workers responsible for the sites or institutions they visited. Students engage with these professionals by phone, Skype, or other virtual communication modes. These student interactions with cultural heritage workers are guided by an interview prompt so that students can focus on issues of diversity and inclusion.

Discussion and conclusion

On-campus students with assistantships in university libraries seem to have the ideal situation of financial support, professional interaction and identification, and authentic work experiences, in a moderately diverse and inclusive campus environment. Over the past five years, however, changing university budget models have reduced the number of assistantships

available to graduate students, including LIS graduate students, on our campus. Off-campus students who are already employed in a library setting or other information agency also have a degree of financial support, some work experience, and a network of professional colleagues they can interact with. However, our program has experienced an increasing number of distance students who have no LIS-related work experience and may have limited experience with diversity and inclusion. Through careful lesson planning, we are able to restore some components of the educational experience necessary for successful professional socialization in the information fields. It is possible to enable a community of practice in an online learning environment. One method is to encourage students to create a community via discussion boards designed for the purpose of professional discourse among class members with varying degrees of professional experience. This has worked well for our faculty. Another approach is to offer students with more library expertise opportunities to lead their colleagues in class in synchronous conversations about real-life work experiences. This helps take the theoretical into the real world. It is also very helpful to bring experts in the field, such as information agency directors and managers, in to speak to the class synchronously. Students can hear about the speakers' issues and responses to problems that have actually occurred.

The development and application of the project assessment rubric can benefit faculty who are considering how best to support their students' professional socialization through experiential learning by focusing instructor attention on not only professional interaction but also potential student limitations, and allowing instructors to add reasonable and short-term opportunities for interaction within the structure of a class, rather than depending on students gaining this instruction through practicum, internship, assistantship, or work experience. Moreover, while adding one more form of assessment increases the faculty workload, these kinds of faculty-wide exercises may help programs articulate ongoing curricular focus with accrediting bodies.

The assessment focuses on the nature and structure of a curricular experience rather than on the learning achieved therefrom, and that is a limitation of this study. One avenue for future work would be to evaluate students' end-of-program portfolios after engaging in experiences across their program to determine which assignments were more memorable or otherwise noteworthy for the students. Another avenue for further investigation might involve asking students to complete an assessment of their cultural competence and professional preparation before and after such experiences, to determine if a change had occurred that could be attributed to the activities in the course.

While we believe that we are making progress, measuring the impact of curricular activities is difficult, and consensus regarding diversity education and professional socialization remains elusive. Experiential learning is complex; the assignments engage students with diversity throughout the curriculum, but students desire short time durations per project. Furthermore, connecting the students with multiple nearby LIS professionals with free supervisory time can be a tall order in certain geographic locations. In sum, measuring a program's effectiveness through assessment of curricular activities remains a moving target, and one that likely will require continuous work due to an ever-changing profession, curriculum, and student body. A logical time to incorporate the exercise would be during annual curriculum or strategic planning summits. We plan to use the rubric to evaluate both class projects that

have been and could be offered to ensure that our program is offering a variety of experiential learning options emphasizing diversity and professional immersion across the LIS curriculum. Incorporating the evaluations into curricular planning processes also provides an opportunity to test and modify the rubric as needed, as projects arise serendipitously.

The process of assessing assignments or projects using this rubric (or a modified version of the rubric) could be undertaken by an entire faculty as part of the formal planning process, or even by an individual faculty member as part of an informal self-evaluation. For the head of school, it offers a formal method of communicating diversity efforts to their university or their accreditors. For the instructor, it could be used when planning new projects or classes, or as part of describing efforts in the promotion and tenure process. In exploring several theoretical bases and a way to practically measure course activities for diversity engagement and professional socialization, this paper establishes key success factors for future course activities and provides a model for content assessment that can be adopted and adapted by other faculty.

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