A. Introduction
In an effort to maintain and improve the quality and content of instruction and services given to students at Niagara College, all faculty members may be asked to complete a work experience opportunity in a service/business/industry relevant to their teaching or service areas. Work experiences should provide the participant with an opportunity to gain exposure to new service/industrial/business environments, methods, technologies or information relevant to the teaching or service area of the staff member.

Alternative work experiences may be scheduled once every three years to ensure updating opportunities occur on a regular and recurring basis.

To ensure alternative work experience opportunities are relevant and tailored to individual jobs, needs and interests, participants will be asked to assume an active role in identifying, selecting and planning their alternative work experience.

B. Practice on Niagara Plan

1. Typically, alternative work experience for faculty will occur for periods of 6 to 8 weeks during a time of the year when a faculty member is not scheduled to teach, or at other times as may be appropriate.

2. All alternative work experience participants will be given the opportunity to indicate the type of activities they would like to pursue for their work experience, their objectives and their preferred location(s) and date(s). These arrangements will then be discussed with the respective Director/Manager and Vice-President.

3. Following initial discussions with the College, contacts with potential work experience sponsors may be initiated by College participants. The objectives of the experience, length and time of work experience should be discussed with possible sponsors during this initial planning period.
4. Upon selection of a sponsor, the applicant should complete a copy of the Alternative Work Experience Plan. The form will serve as the formal record of the Alternative Work Experience Plan and should be signed by the College participant, Director/Manager and appropriate Vice-President and forwarded to the President’s Office.

5. Based on information contained in the Alternative Work Experience Form, the President will forward a letter to the identified employer:

(a) confirming the details and objectives of the work experience as identified in the form;
(b) thanking the employer for assisting our employee in gaining this experience; and
(c) requesting that the work experience sponsor questionnaire be completed and returned to the President upon completion of the experience.

6. College participants will be expected to adhere to the conditions of employment at the sponsoring site and to work with the sponsor for the identified period(s). While on alternative work experience, College participants will continue to receive their College salary, but will not be reimbursed for travel expenses. The College does not expect sponsors to provide such reimbursements; however, in the event that expense costs are voluntarily provided by the sponsor, participants may retain these payments. The Director, Financial Services, shall be advised of any other monies, donations or materials which a sponsor may forward to a staff member on work experience. All donated resources, financial or otherwise, shall be retained for use in the College participant’s home program or department/division. This will enable others within the department to benefit from the work experience of their colleagues.

7. At the conclusion of the work experience, an alternative work experience report will be completed and submitted by the College participant to the Supervisor and Vice-President with a copy to the Human Resources Development Consultant. The report should address three areas:

(a) what the participant did during the alternative work experience;

(b) what the benefits and limitations were during this alternative work experience;

(c) a proposed plan to share the knowledge learned during the alternative work experience in a variety of forums within the College community.
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8. At the conclusion of the alternative work experience:

(a) a letter of appreciation will be sent to the sponsor by the President;

(b) the sponsor will be asked to complete the Work Experience Sponsor Questionnaire.

Forms are available from Human Resources, the Human Resource Development Consultant’s office and the office of the Vice-President, Academic