

Beyond OSU FAQ

What is Beyond OSU?

Beyond OSU is Oregon State's signature approach to career development – it's a series of experiences that ensures every OSU student will graduate with the career skills and connections to succeed in their chosen field.

One portion of this university-wide focus on career development is a new Beyond OSU component of OSU's Core Education curriculum: the series of requirements that all students must fulfill in order to graduate.

When does this go into effect?

The university-wide career development efforts are ongoing. Students who start in Summer 2025 or later will have the Beyond OSU coursework as part of their required Core Education Curriculum.

How will students fulfill the Beyond OSU requirement?

Each college at OSU will offer courses that fulfill Beyond OSU requirements. In some colleges this might look like a single career-focused course offered in the middle of a student's time at OSU, while others might include career content in a course early on in the sequence of classes (orientation courses) and during the end of a student's time here (capstone, etc.).

What will students learn in courses that fulfill Beyond OSU requirements?

- Students will begin **exploring career possibilities during their first term at OSU**, in a Transitions course that all students will take.
- After that, the Beyond OSU courses have two phases.
 - In Phase I (Prepare), students will learn how their **college education and outside-the-classroom experiences connect to their career**, and they'll learn **how to create materials** that show employers they're prepared for the future. Depending on their major, this could look like a resume/CV, cover letter, LinkedIn profile, personal statement, portfolio or teaching philosophy.
 - Phase II of Beyond OSU (Engage) emphasizes experience: **all OSU students will participate in real-world career experiences** like site visits, career fairs, job shadowing, informational interviews, internships, undergraduate research, capstone projects, service activities, or other experiential learning opportunities that prepare them for professional life.

What are some examples of Beyond OSU activities and experiences?

- Students will have in-class **assignments that cover life-long career skills** like crafting a good cover letter or interviewing effectively; they'll create professional documents that show they are ready for the next step in their career; and they'll take part in hands-on experiences related to their intended career path.
- Career is not one-size-fits-all, so this might look different for different majors. **These are hypothetical scenarios** of experiences students might have through Beyond OSU – colleges are still in the process of finalizing their plans as we move toward implementing Beyond OSU in 2025.
 - A student interested in a career in engineering might take a course where they learn to develop a resume and cover letter showcasing their skillsets. Another course may involve completing a capstone project where they get hands-on experience managing a project from start to finish, producing prototypes, and designing a solution that solves a real-world problem.
 - A student interested in a career in design might take a course that includes developing a resume as well as a portfolio of design work in both digital and print formats. They might gain experience and further build their portfolio via an upper-division course where they complete real design jobs for clients around Oregon.
 - A student interested in a health profession might learn to create a resume and cover letter that highlights their relevant coursework and research skills. They might gain experience through a practicum course where they put their skills to use working at a local social services agency.

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Besides the curricular requirement, what else is involved in Beyond OSU?

Beyond OSU infuses career development throughout the university experience. There are four pillars to this holistic approach:

- **Career-relevant curriculum** - What students learn in the classroom has real-world connections to what employers are looking for in candidates. No matter what they're majoring in, all students will know how to talk to employers about career-readiness skills like critical thinking, leadership, and communication that they're gaining as a result of their education.
- **Tailored career support** - OSU students have access to career services that are not one-size-fits all, but are specific to their field of study; each of OSU's undergraduate colleges has dedicated career support services.
- **Relationships with employers and alumni** - During their time at OSU, students have the opportunity to build relationships with people who are already working in the fields they're dreaming of. When they graduate, they have a network of professionals they can turn to for advice and connections.
- **Connected co-curricular activities** - Research, campus jobs, and club involvement are all powerful ways for students to put their skills and abilities into practice. OSU students learn how to articulate the ways that their outside-the-classroom experiences have prepared them for professional life.

Why does this matter?

We know that students come to OSU with a purpose in mind – and for most students, that purpose is the idea that a university education will empower them to find meaningful work after graduation.

While career services have existed at OSU for many years, taking the time to stop by the Career Development Center or make an appointment with a career advisor has been an optional part of the student experience, despite studies showing that career-preparation activities in college have a strong effect on student success. This disadvantages low-income, first-generation, and students of color, who may have competing family, work, or financial obligations. Too often, the students who have the time and know-how to seek out career services are the ones who are already receiving support and guidance from family members.

Embedding career education into OSU's core curriculum is an equitable way to ensure that career preparation is not happening by opt-in or chance, and that all OSU students are graduating ready for their professional lives.

Are any other schools requiring something like this?

OSU is a national leader in this approach. Oregon State is the only university in Oregon and the only public university in the Pacific Northwest explicitly embedding career readiness into its general education curriculum.

Key links:

Beyond OSU:

beyond.oregonstate.edu

Core Education:

coreeducation.oregonstate.edu/students

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