



Center for Career and Professional Success

2025 - 2028 Strategic Plan



THE OHIO STATE
UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF ARTS
AND SCIENCES

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Introduction

Earlier this summer, a recent Data Analytics graduate walked into our office - after never engaging with any of our services. They had a resume and cover letter and had been applying for jobs for two years, with no success. Despite following every piece of advice from advisors and peers, they wondered: “I’ve done everything right. Why do I still feel unprepared?”

This story isn’t unique. Across the country, students are facing the same disconnect. Employers want graduates who are not only knowledgeable, but ready - adaptable, communicative and confident from day one.

That’s why we’re reimagining career services. Our new strategic plan embeds career development into every student’s academic journey, making the path from classroom to career clear, intentional, and empowering.

Let’s build a future where no Buckeye has to ask, “What now?”

Summary

The Center for Career and Professional Success respectfully submits its 2025–2028 Strategic Plan. This plan outlines a clear, student-centered vision to prepare Arts and Sciences students for meaningful career outcomes in a rapidly changing world.

Developed over months of planning and research, the plan reflects extensive collaboration across our team and is informed by data and feedback from students, faculty, staff, employers, alumni, and university leaders. Grounded in stakeholder insights and institutional goals, it identifies three strategic priorities: Student Success, Curricular Integration, and Experiential Learning, that will enhance career readiness, deepen partnerships, and elevate post-graduate outcomes.

Why Now?

This strategic plan marks the close of our current planning cycle and comes at a pivotal moment for career development in higher education.

As technology continues to reshape the job market and employer expectations shift - particularly around soft skills and early preparation - students face a competitive landscape where career confidence and readiness are critical. We've observed a growing trend of delayed career engagement, with many students waiting until their final year or after graduation to seek support.

At the same time, artificial intelligence and automation are transforming job application processes and increasing competition for every role. While Arts and Sciences students are often well-prepared in technical skills, we must ensure they're equally equipped in areas like communication, adaptability, and problem solving.

This plan is our response: a renewed, strategic effort to meet students earlier, support them consistently, and connect them meaningfully to their future goals.

Development Process

In April 2025, we surveyed seven key stakeholder groups to gather insights that would inform and validate our direction:

- Students
- Faculty, Deans, and Department Chairs
- Staff and Career Services Peers
- Admissions and Enrollment Management Staff
- Employers
- Alumni and Donors
- Advancement Staff

Key findings from this feedback include:

All of the stakeholders emphasized the need to integrate career development more visibly across Ohio State, particularly within the academic curriculum. Several advocated for an institutional strategy that defines and measures career success.

A majority of stakeholders recommended more programming focused on networking and mentoring, and called for expanded opportunities to connect students with professionals.

A majority of stakeholders highlighted the need to build student confidence and proficiency in soft skills, including communication, critical thinking, and job navigation.



Strategic Priority 1: Student Success

Goal: Ensure every student has access to meaningful support, tailored resources, and transformative experiences that build confidence and prepare them for life after college.

Objectives:

- Increase early and ongoing student engagement with career services
- Deliver customized support for first-generation, international, and graduate students
- Embed career development throughout the student lifecycle - from recruitment to post-graduation

Key Metrics:

- Participation rates in first-year outreach and Career Studio visits
- Event attendance and satisfaction among high-priority student groups
- Career readiness assessments and Match Mentor networking engagement

Supported by: Student Success Committee

Charged with advancing student development and post-graduate outcomes by strengthening career-related support systems and addressing access across diverse student populations.



Strategic Priority 2: Curricular Integration

Goal: Connect academic learning to career development so every student can link their education to future opportunities with clarity and confidence.

Objectives:

- Collaborate with faculty to embed career content across course levels
- Expand access to high-quality career development resources in all departments
- Help students connect their coursework to real-world career paths

Key Metrics:

- Number of departments using embedded career modules and workshops
- Faculty engagement and feedback
- Student evaluations on the career relevance of academic experiences

Supported by: Curricular Integration Committee

Focused on embedding career development across academic programs by partnering with faculty and aligning curricula with in-demand skills and competencies.



Strategic Priority 3: Experiential Learning

Goal: Grow participation in high-impact experiences such as internships, research, and project-based learning that help students apply what they've learned and build professional confidence.

Objectives:

- Expand access to hands-on experiences, especially for students facing financial or logistical barriers
- Strengthen alumni and employer engagement to support exploration and skill development
- Increase funding opportunities to support participation in unpaid or underpaid roles

Key Metrics:

- Student participation in Treks, Immersions, and internships
- Alumni volunteer engagement and event attendance
- Career Accelerator Fund utilization and student impact stories
- Post-graduation outcomes

Supported by: Experiential Learning Committee

Works to expand student access to hands-on learning opportunities that connect classroom knowledge with real-world experience.

Implementation Timeline

2025

2026

Experiential Learning	Expand CAF Outreach and Access	NACE Competency Workshops	Low-Barrier Programs
Curricular Integration	Launch Faculty Champions	Promote CarmenCanvas Tools	Embed Academic Career Content
Student Success	Employer Advisory Board	Where to Start Marketing	High Priority Student Pilot Programs

In 2025–2026, [Career Success](#) will expand experiential learning through increased access to the [Career Accelerator Fund](#) and new low-barrier programs. Professionalization workshops will integrate [NACE competencies](#), and alumni engagement will grow via [Treks](#) and [Match Mentor](#).

We will launch an Employer Advisory Board, enhance early student engagement with targeted messaging and the “Where to Start” campaign, and expand [Career Studio](#) services, including for graduate and priority student groups.

2026

2027

Experiential Learning	Scale Low-Barrier Programming	Implement NACE Competencies	Launch Alumni Coaching Models
Curricular Integration	Career Modules in 20% of Departments	CarmenCanvas Incentive Program	Expand Faculty Champions
Student Success	Year-by-Year Career Roadmaps	Strengthen & Promote Career Studio Services	Expand Support for High-Priority Students

In 2026–2027, Career Success will expand experiential learning, deepen industry engagement, and enhance student guidance. Career modules will reach 20% of departments, supported by faculty incentives and the growing Faculty Champions initiative.

2027

2028

Experiential Learning	Refine Career Accelerator Fund	Sustain Alumni Coaching Initiatives	Increase Participation in Low-Barrier Programs
Curricular Integration	Career Module Integration in 30% of Departments	Continue Scaling CarmenCanvas Tools	Institutionalize Faculty Champions
Student Success	Employer Advisory Board Review	Institutionalize HPS Outreach	Scale Integrated Career Messaging Channels

In our final strategic year, Career Success will expand experiential learning, deepen career readiness integration, and launch full-scale alumni coaching. We will align with workforce needs, grow student engagement, and embed career modules in 30% of academic programs. Key initiatives like “Where to Start” and Faculty Champions will scale for lasting impact.



The future of career development of Arts and Sciences students is not a solo endeavor - it's a shared responsibility. This strategic plan lays the foundation, but its success depends on the collective commitment of our entire community.

To our faculty and academic leaders: Partner with us to embed career development into the curriculum. Your influence in the classroom is key to helping students connect their learning to life beyond college.

To our staff and campus collaborators: Help us reach students earlier and more often. Whether through advising, programming, or mentorship, your engagement can make career readiness a visible and integrated part of the student experience.

To our alumni and employer partners: Join us in shaping the next generation of Buckeye talent. Your stories, networks, and opportunities are powerful tools for student growth and exploration.

To our students: Your journey is at the heart of this plan. Engage early, explore boldly, and know that you are not alone. We are here to support you - every step of the way.

Together, we can ensure that every Arts and Sciences student graduates not only with knowledge, but with confidence, clarity, and a strong sense of purpose.

**Let's build a future where no Buckeye has to ask, "WhatA now?"
- because they already know where they're going.**



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