

# THE OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM CURRICULUM

“The University of Pittsburgh is committed to providing our students with the comprehensive environment to develop their talents. We are devoted to educating the whole student, determined that every graduate, regardless of degree earned, should leave the University with four key attributes: communication skills, a sense of motivation, a sense of responsibility, and a sense of self.”

*Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor James V. Maher*

## EDUCATING THE WHOLE STUDENT

The Outside the Classroom Curriculum (OCC) provides a way for students to navigate their collegiate experience—to develop their own unique Pitt Pathway—by engaging in a wide range of activities that can be life changing. OCC is a University-wide initiative designed to educate the whole student through the completion of a series of programs, activities, and experiences that complement each student’s academic success.

## WHAT IS OCC?

OCC was designed to help Pitt students develop holistically and gain a competitive edge when they apply to graduate or professional schools and when seeking internships and employment.

OCC is simply a collection of programs, activities, and experiences at Pitt that will help students make the most of their collegiate experience. Students who participate fully in OCC report that they feel more connected to the University and their peers, are more knowledgeable about resources and services, and are more engaged in campus life. Derived from the provost’s goals for University of Pittsburgh graduates, the curriculum provides an opportunity for students to grow and develop in nine key areas each year by completing a host of learning experiences outside the classroom. OCC helps students grow in the following areas:

- Leadership development
- Sense of self
- Career preparation
- University participation
- Communication skills
- Global and cultural awareness
- Wellness
- Service to others
- Appreciation of the arts

## OCC IS FOR EVERYONE

OCC was developed for all Pitt students, regardless of major or career path, and helps students develop highly desirable character traits and life skills. Students who fulfill the OCC requirements will receive a green cord of distinction to wear during graduation ceremonies and will be honored at a special awards presentation along with their parents. These distinguished students will confidently be able to articulate and demonstrate tangible accomplishments that were achieved during their undergraduate careers to graduate schools, professional schools, and prospective employers. The cord is green because it represents our school colors blended together to symbolize the education of the whole student.

## OCC IS WIDE RANGING

Pitt offers many quality activities, events, and programs each week to help students fulfill the OCC requirements, and students choose which ones they want to attend. The OCC Web site, accessible through the student portal at [my.pitt.edu](http://my.pitt.edu), will display the many programs available and enable students to view what they have attended, what parts of the curriculum they have completed, and what events they can attend in the future.

## OCC IS FUN YET CHALLENGING

OCC is designed to give students recognition for participating in programs and activities that they normally attend—like football games, concerts, various cultural activities, or a meeting of a student organization—yet the program also encourages students to get out of their comfort zones and experience new things that will be beneficial, like engaging in new cultural activities or attending a lecture on an unfamiliar topic.



By completing various types of activities, students will demonstrate a commitment to developing a second transcript that will illustrate greater involvement and learning outside the classroom environment. The OCC transcript of extracurricular activities can fully represent their undergraduate experiences and be an asset in job or internship interviews.

## STAYING ON TRACK

The key to maximizing the benefits of OCC, and to completing the program, is planning and documenting participation. Pitt has made navigation easy through a custom software package available through the student portal, where students can log in and track their progress by using a checklist for each goal category. A swipe-card system automatically tracks participation at most major events, and students can add experiential learning activities to their OCC program if they choose. If a student participates in a community service project in his or her hometown, for example, or attends an educational conference that is not listed on the OCC schedule, the student can add these activities by completing a simple form and receive recognition for completion.

## OCC IMPACT

The impact of OCC has been extremely positive. Students are participating in programs and activities in record numbers, deans and faculty members are developing ways to use OCC to support classroom learning, and parents are engaged and appreciate knowing about OCC activities. Employers have said that the experiences and skills students acquire make them more attractive candidates for internships and jobs. Participation in OCC clearly adds value to applications for graduate and professional schools. OCC is quickly becoming a vital part of the student experience and Pitt culture.



## Outside the Classroom Curriculum

Your Pitt Pathway

[www.occ.pitt.edu](http://www.occ.pitt.edu)

### OCC GOALS OVERVIEW



#### LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Learning Outcome: Student has the knowledge, skills, and experience to lead others in achieving a common goal

- Participate in training that develops leadership skills, abilities, and tools
- Engage in experiences that develop leadership



#### CAREER PREPARATION

Learning Outcome: Student has the knowledge, skills, and experience to be competitive in gaining employment or acceptance into graduate or professional school

- Develop career tools
- Explore careers
- Execute a career plan



#### COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Learning Outcome: Student is effective and confident in oral, interpersonal, and written communication

- Develop oral communication skills
- Develop written communication skills
- Develop interpersonal communication skills



#### GLOBAL AND CULTURAL AWARENESS

Learning Outcome: Student understands diverse cultures and functions as a global citizen informed about issues that impact people, society, and nations

- Understand diverse cultures
- Function as a global citizen



#### SENSE OF SELF

Learning Outcome: Student integrates an awareness of personal skills, abilities, values, and beliefs into the development of identity, a sense of purpose, and management of self

- Identify skills, abilities, and values
- Develop self-management skills
- Develop a sense of purpose



#### SERVICE TO OTHERS

Learning Outcome: Student is conscious of the needs of others and committed to civic engagement and community service

- Serve the campus community
- Serve the greater community



#### UNIVERSITY PARTICIPATION

Learning Outcome: Student has a sense of belonging to the University and is engaged in the spirit and purpose of the community

- Support the standards and traditions of the community
- Get involved with student groups and organizations
- Participate in programs and activities



#### WELLNESS

Learning Outcome: Student has the knowledge, skills, and habits conducive to health and financial wellness

- Manage health
- Manage finances



#### APPRECIATION OF THE ARTS

Learning Outcome: Student has a personal definition of art derived from knowledge about and experience with a variety of art forms

- Experience the arts
- Learn about the arts
- Create, perform, or support the arts