

# Experiential Learning Checklist

Experiential learning, or “learning by doing,” is a powerful way for you to better understand yourself and explore the world. The Center for Experiential Learning is eager to work with you in your process of discovery, exploration, experimentation and implementation. Visit us both on our website and in person and use this checklist to guide your planning.

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## Discover

- Explore your academic interests by being **intentional in choosing classes** to fulfill general education requirements.
- Browse course descriptions in the **online Academic Catalog** and talk to professors in various departments about majors and opportunities.
- Attend a **Choosing a Major workshop** through the CEL to learn strategies for exploring various majors.
- Check out the CEL’s **Majors and Careers web links**. While you’re there, check out other resources that are relevant to you.
- Research majors or career interest areas using the **CEL resource library**; CEL peer advisors are available from 9-5 Monday-Friday to you get started.
- Sign up to be included on the **CEL\_Yourself email alias** to stay updated about workshops, fairs, scholarships, internships, jobs and other opportunities from the CEL.
- Join a **student organization** that relates to your interests.
- Meet with a CEL advisor to talk about ideas for your future. Make sure to discuss plans for a **productive summer** that might include employment, an internship, informational interviews, volunteering and more.

## Investigate and Explore

- Attend an **Identifying Vocational Interests workshop** to learn how your interests, personality, values and strengths are related to your academic goals and career options.
- Discover how your interests and skills apply to the world of work; use the **Assessing and Exploring Careers web links** on the CEL’s student page.
- Meet one-on-one with a CEL advisor to create an **Experiential Learning Plan** that complements your academic program.
- Expand your experience by participating in civic engagement initiatives in Northfield, the surrounding area or the broader global community.
- Find a **work study** opportunity that relates to your interests and goals.
- Conduct **informational interviews** with alumni, relatives, family friends, etc. to learn about career areas that interest you. You can use the **Online Alumni Directory** to locate and contact former Oles who work in your field of interest.
- Engage in **job shadowing** opportunities.
- Attend **career panels** and forums related to your major or interests.
- Plan for an international or domestic **off-campus program** that will complement your academic program.
- Enhance your experience** by selecting a summer job, internship, research, or volunteer opportunity related to your interests.

# Experiential Learning Checklist

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## Experiment & Evaluate

- Explore internship opportunities using **OleRecruiting** and other links on the CEL website.
- Complete an **internship**, possibly for academic credit. Evaluate the internship by reflecting on the skills you've acquired and how the internship has impacted your plans.
- Test your entrepreneurial skills by applying for a **Finstad grant** to start a nonprofit or for-profit venture.
- Engage in **independent study or research** to enhance your experience in your field (highly recommended if you are planning on graduate study).
- Seek **leadership** opportunities within student organizations, clubs and/or student government.
- Research multiple **career options** to find the best fit by engaging in focused informational interviewing. Develop a network of alumni contacts in a field of interest to you by using the **Online Alumni Directory**.
- Identify education and/or additional skills necessary to your field of interest; begin to research **graduate school options**.
- Practice articulating** what you're studying and why, and the skills you've developed through your academic and experiential learning.
- Find a **summer job, internship, research or volunteer experience** directly related to your career goals.

## Implement

- Define your **post-graduation goals** and create an **action plan** for your senior year.
- Attend CEL **workshops** relevant to your future plans.
- Create a **resume** and **cover letter** and have them critiqued by a CEL peer advisor or professional staff member.
- Write a **personal statement** and a **curriculum vita** for graduate school applications.
- Create your personal calendar of **job, volunteer, and graduate school fairs** and recruiting events.
- Research employment, post-graduate volunteer, or grad school options and **start applying**.
- Utilize your **network** in seeking opportunities.
- Understand what employers and graduate/professional schools seek in an applicant. Be able to **convey how your knowledge, skills and experiences** will be an asset to the organizations to which you apply.
- Conduct a **practice interview** with a CEL staff member to enhance your self-presentation skills.
- Remain open** to possibilities; be proactive and continue to assess your options.

## Experience Matters!

No matter where you are in the process of discovering your vocation and identifying your place in the world, be **intentional** and **strategic** about choosing experiential learning opportunities. Choose experiences related to your academic interests – engage in activities that will build your skill set and assist in your vocational exploration. The **four programs of the CEL** provide a wide variety of experiential learning opportunities. Use our resources to enrich your education.

St. Olaf College – Center for Experiential Learning

Career Connections

Phone: (507) 786-3268

Internships

Fax: (507) 786-3626

Civic Engagements

[www.stolaf.edu/services/cel](http://www.stolaf.edu/services/cel)

Entrepreneurship