Sophomore Opportunities & Academic Resources (SOAR) Program

OCTOBER 2021 RE-ORIENTATION

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Dear Students,

Sophomore year, in many ways, is defined by the process of decision-making. During this year, you will declare a major, a path that will shape the rest of your time at Oberlin, and pursue new opportunities outside of the classroom. These decisions prepare you for life after Oberlin. And although they are exciting, we know that these decisions can also be challenging — even in the best of circumstances.

Persevering within constraints became a defining theme of your first year at Oberlin: while you enrolled in classes and immersed yourself in the academic experience, educational opportunities outside the classroom were limited as a result of COVID-19. You were able to flourish within a specific dimension of the Oberlin experience, but a holistic Oberlin education is marked by its multidimensionality.

This academic year is a time to embrace the breadth and depth of academic and experiential learning opportunities available to you here and now. We are eager to begin your sophomore year together by helping you navigate your options and launch into the process of integrating experiences inside and outside the classroom. Through this integrative process, your sense of purpose will come into sharper focus — and, as you deepen your understanding of your future direction, we also want to help you cultivate a community of peers and mentors who will support you along the way.

In short, through the Sophomore Opportunities and Academic Resources (SOAR) program, we intend to reorient you to the holistic Oberlin experience. SOAR is about connecting to and articulating your sense of purpose. It is also about exploring expanded possibilities within a community of peers and with the support of faculty and professional staff who are eager to help you connect your learning to the world beyond campus. We are eager to see where your next steps will take you.

Laura Baudot, *Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences*
Tania Boster, *Director of Experiential Learning*
Nathan Carpenter, *Director of Academic Peer Advising*

COVER PHOTO: MIKE CRUPI; THIS PAGE: TANYA ROSEN-JONES '97

General Information

The October component of this year's **Sophomore Opportunities & Academic Resources (SOAR) program** comprises three programming tracks: core sessions, skill-building workshops, and social events. These tracks come together to support sophomores in navigating their second year at Oberlin and making the most of opportunities inside and outside the classroom. In February, students will reconvene to focus on academic planning and major declaration; information about the February retreat (which will be offered in a hybrid, remote-accessible format) will be included in future program materials. The structure of the October program is explained in greater detail below.

Core Sessions

For the first four Sunday afternoons of the fall semester, beginning October 10, we will meet from 1–3 p.m. for a series of panels, workshops, and community-building activities. Through these sessions, you will grapple with complex problems, build skills that you will apply in experiential learning opportunities, begin to craft plans for upcoming semesters, and make lasting connections with your peers. Each session is required for all participating students and will be followed by social mixers organized in collaboration with the Office of Student Involvement.

- **Week One:** The program begins with meetings in "home groups" — cohorts of 15–20 sophomores organized around the complex problems and paired with a Peer Mentor. Students will continue to meet with their home groups throughout the program. During this initial session, students will take stock of their first year on campus and reflect on the significant experiences they are bringing into their sophomore year. They will also begin to engage with the complex problem framework.

- **Week Two:** We are delighted to welcome Peter Baker, chief White House correspondent for *The New York Times*, and Susan Glasser, staff writer for *The New Yorker* and founder of POLITICO magazine, who will kick off our second core session with a keynote about how to identify, break apart, and address complex problems. Following this keynote, students will meet in their home groups to debrief the lectures, led by their Peer Mentor and a local professional who works to address complex problems in Northeast Ohio.

- **Week Three:** In a series of "lightning round" presentations, staff from experiential learning offices across campus will demonstrate how to identify and develop skills that are vital for success in experiential learning opportunities. In large groups, students will explore transferable skills, building strong mentoring relationships, and engaging in local and global community partnerships.

- **Week Four:** In grappling with complex problems and mapping out academic and experiential learning opportunities, it is important to be primed not only for reflection but for action. What can support or impede your progress on the work that you care about? How will you identify strategies for success, given your own goals and interests? This session will prime students for future opportunities inside and outside the classroom as well as the February SOAR retreat, which will focus on academic planning.

Skill-Building Workshops

In addition to the core sessions, experiential learning offices from across campus will offer a series of skill-based workshops throughout October to ensure you are ready to dive into opportunities that were restricted during your first year on campus. Topics will include community-based learning and research, individual Winter Term projects, study away opportunities, and more. These workshops will also prepare you to dive into internships and/or undergraduate research opportunities. Students will be required to attend at least three of these workshops, which will be offered at a range of times throughout the month (you can pick the ones that work best for your schedule and interests). The full schedule of skill-building workshops is available in this booklet.

Social Events

In collaboration with the Office of Student Involvement, SOAR participants are provided with a robust calendar of community-building events beginning from the moment you return to campus and continuing through the month of October. Some events have been organized specifically for SOAR participants; others are open to the entire campus community. These events are completely optional but strongly encouraged, and will allow students to continue building relationships developed during the SOAR core programming.

Peer Mentors

Throughout SOAR, participating students will be supported by a dedicated team of SOAR Peer Mentors. The Peer Mentors are juniors and seniors with a demonstrated track record of success inside and outside the classroom and across a range of academic majors and career interests. All are also trained as Peer Advising Leaders (PALs). Each Peer Mentor will lead one "home group" of 15–20 students. Home groups will meet throughout the program to engage in a series of workshops and discussions that will help students to make the most of their SOAR experience.

LEAD 130

SOAR participants will receive co-curricular credit for their participation in the program through LEAD 130. LEAD 130 is assessed on a pass/no-pass basis; in order to receive credit, students are expected to attend all four core sessions and at least three of the skill-building workshops. Any questions about LEAD 130 or the course requirements can be directed to soar@oberlin.edu.

Investigating Alternatives to Complex Problems

Throughout SOAR, students will explore a range of "complex problems"—sweeping, global challenges that will require interdisciplinary solutions. This exploration will begin with a keynote by Peter Baker, chief White House correspondent for *The New York Times*, and Susan Glasser, staff writer for *The New Yorker* and founder of POLITICO magazine, who will discuss how to identify, break apart, and address complex problems.

Following the keynote, students will dive deeper in their home groups by applying this framework to their complex problem of interest: climate change, public health, immigration, or education. Students will be guided in this exploration by community partners and local employers working to address these complex problems in Northeast Ohio. Through these conversations, students will gain an understanding of the different opportunities and challenges that compose a complex problem, and what can be done to affect meaningful change in our local community and beyond.

More information about the keynote speakers and discussion group facilitators is on the next page.

PHOTO: YVONNE GAY

Keynote Speakers

Peter Baker and Susan Glasser are longtime Washington journalists who have written for years about the intersection of politics and the world. They are authors most recently of *The Man Who Ran Washington: The Life and Times of James A. Baker III*, a *New York Times* bestseller that was named one of the books of the year by *The New York Times Book Review*, *The Washington Post*, *The Financial Times*, *Fortune* magazine, and Bloomberg News.

Baker is the chief White House correspondent for *The New York Times* and an MSNBC political analyst. He has covered the last five presidents for *The Times* and *The Washington Post* and is the author or co-author of six books, including *Days of Fire: Bush and Cheney in the White House*, selected as one of the Top Ten Books of 2013 by *The New York Times Book Review*, and *The Breach: Inside the Impeachment and Trial of William Jefferson Clinton*, a *New York Times* bestseller. He attended Oberlin College in Ohio.

Glasser is a staff writer for *The New Yorker* and author of the weekly "Letter from Biden's Washington" as well as a global affairs analyst for CNN. She previously was the editor of POLITICO and founder of POLITICO Magazine. Before that, she was editor-in-chief of *Foreign Policy* magazine following a long stint at *The Post*, where she was assistant managing editor for national news and editor of the paper's Outlook section. Publications she has edited have won multiple National Magazine Awards. She graduated from Harvard University.

Together Baker and Glasser were Moscow Bureau Chiefs for *The Post* and authors of *Kremlin Rising: Vladimir Putin's Russia and the End of Revolution*. They live in Washington with their son and are currently at work on a book on the Trump presidency.

Discussion Facilitators

Additional names may be added by Oct. 17.

PUBLIC HEALTH

Ja'Nitta Marbury | *Founder, Marbury & Associates*
William Tarter | *Fellow of Public Policy and External Affairs, The Center for Community Solutions*
Vivian Taylor | *Health Education Specialist, Lorain County Public Health*

CLIMATE CHANGE

Brett Joseph | *Sustainable Agriculture Special Projects Coordinator & Adjunct Faculty, Lorain County Community College*
Rosemary Mudry | *Executive Director, West Park Kamm's Neighborhood Development*
Sharon Pearson | *Mobility Manager, United Way of Greater Lorain County*

EDUCATION

Thea Derosa Cerra | *Executive Director, Cleveland Kids' Book Bank*
Jeff Haynes | *Manager of Family Partnerships & Community Engagement, Breakthrough Schools*
Christian Sanders | *Assistant Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Saint Ignatius High School*

IMMIGRATION

Victor Leandry | *Executive Director, El Centro de Servicios Sociales, Inc.*
Jeff Stewart | *Director, IWP Centro San Jose*

Innovation Bootcamp

Are you passionate about tackling complex problems? Are you ready to put your ideas into action? Do you have an entrepreneurial and team-building spirit? If you answered yes to these questions, you have the opportunity to continue your SOAR experience through participating in the Innovation Bootcamp following the conclusion of the October re-orientation. Through the Innovation Bootcamp you will learn core tools for ideation and identifying your value proposition. Emphasis is placed on applying these tools for sustainable impact. Over the following month you will work in teams to further refine your proposed solutions, culminating in a pitch presentation in December to a panel of live judges.

More information about the Bootcamp will be shared during the October program.

About the Facilitator

Jesse Gerstin is a co-founder and angel impact investor. After graduating from Oberlin College in 2007, he worked internationally in the climate change and clean energy space for 12 years. He was most recently director of sustainability at SimpliPhi Power, working on access to energy for underserved communities, and was previously head of the Clinton Climate Initiative. He began his career as an Oberlin Shansi fellow, and subsequently working for an impact investor in Indonesia and funding social entrepreneurs at Echoing Green. In addition to Oberlin, Jesse earned degrees in environmental economics from the University of London, and an MBA in Sustainability from Bard College.

PHOTO: YEVHEN GULENKO

Schedule at a Glance*

The schedule-at-a-glance is broken into two sections. The first contains information about the required SOAR core sessions and skill-building workshops, as well as social events that have been organized specifically for SOAR participants. The second section contains an extensive calendar of social programming happening across campus during the month of October, including Welcome Week activities; students are encouraged to participate in as many of these community-building events as they can!

* Please note that this schedule is subject to change. Any changes will be updated on the SOAR Google Calendar.

SOAR CALENDAR

Below is a schedule of SOAR events throughout the month of October. Please note that there are three different types of events:

- **Core Sessions:** Students are required to attend all four Core Sessions, which are included in purple text below.
- **Mix-and-Match Workshops:** Students are required to attend at least three of these workshops throughout the month.
- **SOAR Social Mixers:** These are optional but strongly encouraged community-building events organized specifically for SOAR participants!

Any updates to this schedule will be made on the program Google Calendar and communicated to students.

SUNDAY, OCT. 10

1:00–3:00 pm
CORE SESSION: INTRODUCTION & REFLECTION
Location: Classrooms Assigned by Group
Meeting Type: Core, Required

3:00–4:30 pm
SPEED-FRIENDING & BERRIES AND CREAM SOCIAL
Location: North Fields
Meeting Type: SOAR Social Mixer

TUESDAY, OCT. 12

4:30–5:30 pm
DESIGNING YOUR WINTER TERM PROJECT EXPERIENCE
Location: Wilder 101
Facilitator: Office of Winter Term
Meeting Type: Mix-and-Match Workshop

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 13

12:00–1:00 pm
DESIGNING YOUR WINTER TERM PROJECT EXPERIENCE
Location: Wilder 101
Facilitator: Office of Winter Term
Meeting Type: Mix-and-Match Workshop

THURSDAY, OCT. 14

12:00–1:00 pm
RESUMES & COVER LETTERS: GOOD TO GREAT
Location: Zoom (Link will be provided)
Facilitator: Career Development Center
Meeting Type: Mix-and-Match Workshop

FRIDAY, OCT. 15

12:00–1:00 pm
INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNITY & GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT
Location: Wilder 101
Facilitator: Bonner Center & Office of Study Away
Meeting Type: Mix-and-Match Workshop

SUNDAY, OCT. 17

1:00–3:00 pm
CORE SESSION: COMPLEX PROBLEMS
Location: Classrooms Assigned by Group
Meeting Type: Core, Required

3:00–4:30 pm
PUMPKIN CARVING
Location: North Fields
Meeting Type: SOAR Social Mixer

MONDAY, OCT. 18

12:00–1:00 pm
STORYTELLING & THE PERSONAL STATEMENT
Location: Wilder 101
Facilitator: Office of Fellowships & Awards
Meeting Type: Mix-and-Match Workshop

TUESDAY, OCT. 19

12:00–1:00 pm
USING ART TO CONVEY COMPLEXITY, COMMUNICATE WITH CLARITY
Location: Allen Memorial Art Museum
Facilitator: Allen Memorial Art Museum
Meeting Type: Mix-and-Match Workshop

7:00–8:30 pm
WINTER TERM FAIR
Location: Science Center Atrium
Facilitator: Office of Winter Term
Meeting Type: Optional

SOAR CALENDAR (CON'T)

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 20

4:45–5:45 pm
PANEL: UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH ACROSS THE DISCIPLINES
Location: TBA
Facilitator: Office of Undergraduate Research
Meeting Type: Mix-and-Match Workshop

THURSDAY, OCT. 21

4:30–5:30 pm
PANEL: UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH & ACADEMIC PLANNING
Location: TBA
Facilitator: Office of Undergraduate Research
Meeting Type: Mix-and-Match Workshop

FRIDAY, OCT. 22

12:00–1:00 pm
PLANNING FOR A PRODUCTIVE INTERNSHIP
Location: Zoom (Link will be provided)
Facilitator: Career Development Center
Meeting Type: Mix-and-Match Workshop

SUNDAY, OCT. 24

1:00–3:00 pm
CORE SESSION: EXPERIENTIAL SKILL-BUILDING
Location: Classrooms Assigned by Group
Meeting Type: Core, Required

3:00–4:30 pm
FACULTY MIXER
Location: Wilder Bowl
Meeting Type: SOAR Social Mixer

MONDAY, OCT. 25

12:00–1:00 pm
LEADERSHIP: OBERLIN STYLE
Location: Wilder 101
Facilitator: Office of Fellowships & Awards
Meeting Type: Mix-and-Match Workshop

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 27

12:00–1:00 pm
SOPHOMORE SPIRIT NIGHT (MEN'S SOCCER VS. KENYON)
Location: Bailey Field
Meeting Type: SOAR Social Mixer

SUNDAY, OCT. 31

1:00–3:00 pm
CORE SESSION: ACTION PLANNING
Location: Classrooms Assigned by Group
Meeting Type: Core, Required

3:00–4:30 pm
SOPHOMORE HALLOWEEN HALES TAKEOVER
Location: Hales Gymnasium
Meeting Type: SOAR Social Mixer

DATE & TIME TBA

INFORMATION LITERACY FOR CHANGE
Location: TBA
Facilitator: Oberlin College Libraries
Meeting Type: Mix-and-Match Workshop

OCTOBER COMMUNITY EVENTS

This next calendar is just a sample of the campus events taking place throughout the first month of the Fall semester, to give you a sense of the many ways you can dive back in and build community with your peers. SOAR-specific social events are included in purple; all other events are in blue. Please note that many campus departments and student organizations will host events that are not currently listed below!

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 6

4:30–6:30 pm
TASTE OF OBERLIN
Presenter: Welcome Week
Location: Wilder Bowl

6:30–8:30 pm
EXCO FAIR
Presenter: Experimental College
Location: Root Room

7:00 pm
WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL VS. WITTENBERG UNIVERSITY
Presenter: OC Athletics
Location: Philips Gymnasium

7:00 pm
FIELD HOCKEY VS. WASHINGTON AND JEFFERSON COLLEGE
Presenter: OC Athletics
Location: Bailey Field

THURSDAY, OCT. 7

11:30 am–1:30 pm
FIRE SAFETY FAIR
Presenter: Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards
Location: Science Center

FRIDAY, OCT. 8

4:30–6:00 pm
TGIF
Presenter: Office of Student Involvement
Location: Science Center Bowl

SATURDAY, OCT. 9

10:00 am
MEN'S TENNIS VS. UNIVERSITY OF FINDLAY
Presenter: OC Athletics
Location: Hunsinger Courts

11:00 am
FIELD HOCKEY VS. DEPAUW UNIVERSITY
Presenter: OC Athletics
Location: Bailey Field

1:30 pm
MEN'S TENNIS VS. CASE WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY
Presenter: OC Athletics
Location: Hunsinger Courts

3:00 pm
OCIRCUS OPEN JAM!
Presenter: OCircus
Location: Hales Lawn

3:00 pm
WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL VS. SAINT VINCENT COLLEGE
Presenter: OC Athletics
Location: Philips Gymnasium

4:00 pm
WOMEN'S SOCCER VS. WITTENBERG UNIVERSITY
Presenter: OC Athletics
Location: Shults Field

7:00 pm
MEN'S SOCCER VS. WITTENBERG UNIVERSITY
Presenter: OC Athletics
Location: Shults Field

8:00 pm
OSLAM BACK TO SCHOOL PERFORMANCE
Presenter: OSLAM
Location: Cat in the Cream

OCTOBER COMMUNITY EVENTS (CON'T)

SUNDAY, OCT. 10

3:00–4:30 pm
SOAR SPEED-FRIENDING
Presenter: Office of Student Involvement
Location: North Fields

TUESDAY, OCT. 12

4:30–6:00 pm
CONNECTIONS FAIR
Presenter: Office of Student Involvement
Location: Science Center Bowl

FRIDAY, OCT. 15

6:00 pm
FIELD HOCKEY VS. WITTENBERG UNIVERSITY
Presenter: OC Athletics
Location: Bailey Field

7:00 pm
WOMEN'S SOCCER VS. HIRAM COLLEGE
Presenter: OC Athletics
Location: Shults Field

8:00 pm
CONCERT: ABRA W/ SQUIRREL FLOWER
Presenter: Student Union Programming Committee & Cat in the Cream
Location: Wilder Bowl

SATURDAY, OCT. 16

10:30 am
CROSS-COUNTRY INTER-REGIONAL RUMBLE
Presenter: OC Athletics
Location: North Fields

1:00 pm
WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL VS. DEPAUW UNIVERSITY
Presenter: OC Athletics
Location: Philips Gymnasium

3:00 pm
WOMEN'S TENNIS VS. UNIVERSITY OF FINDLAY
Presenter: OC Athletics
Location: Hunsinger Courts

SATURDAY, OCT. 16 (CON'T)

3:30 pm
FOOTBALL VS. WITTENBERG UNIVERSITY
Presenter: OC Athletics
Location: Bailey Field

8:30 pm
HOMECOMING FIREWORKS
Presenter: Program Board & Office of Student Involvement
Location: Athletic Fields

SUNDAY, OCT. 17

3:00–4:30 pm
SOAR PUMPKIN CARVING
Presenter: Office of Student Involvement
Location: North Fields

MONDAY, OCT. 18

9:00 pm
CONCERT: SHANNON AND THE CLAMS
Presenter: Student Union Programming Committee
Location: Wilder Bowl

TUESDAY, OCT. 19

7:00 pm
FIELD HOCKEY VS. ALLEGHENY COLLEGE
Presenter: OC Athletics
Location: Bailey Field

7:00 pm
WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL VS. DENISON UNIVERSITY
Presenter: OC Athletics
Location: Philips Gymnasium

7:00 pm
MEN'S SOCCER VS. DENISON UNIVERSITY
Presenter: OC Athletics
Location: Shults Field

Schedule

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 20

8:00 pm
CONCERT: JACKIE HAYES
Presenter: Cat in the Cream
Location: Cat in the Cream

FRIDAY, OCT. 22

8:00 pm
CONCERT: NORELLE
Presenter: Cat in the Cream
Location: Cat in the Cream

10:00 pm
CONCERT: CO CO AND CLARE CLARE
Presenter: Student Union Programming Committee
Location: 'Sco

SATURDAY, OCT. 23

1:00 pm
SWIM VS. UNIVERSITY OF MOUNT UNION
Presenter: OC Athletics
Location: Carr Pool

4:00 pm
WOMEN'S SOCCER VS. THE COLLEGE OF WOOSTER
Presenter: OC Athletics
Location: Shults Field

6:00 pm
FIELD HOCKEY VS. MEDAILLE COLLEGE
Presenter: OC Athletics
Location: Bailey Field

7:00 pm
MEN'S SOCCER VS. THE COLLEGE OF WOOSTER (SENIOR NIGHT)
Presenter: OC Athletics
Location: Shults Field

8:00 pm
CONCERT: QUAY DASH
Presenter: Cat in the Cream
Location: Cat in the Cream

SUNDAY, OCT. 24

3:00–4:30 pm
SOAR FACULTY MIXER
Presenter: Office of the Dean of Arts and Sciences
Location: Wilder Bowl

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 27

7:00 pm
MEN'S SOCCER VS. KENYON COLLEGE (SOAR SPIRIT NIGHT)
Presenter: OC Athletics
Location: Shults Field

FRIDAY, OCT. 29

8:00 pm
CONCERT: BARRIE
Presenter: Cat in the Cream
Location: Cat in the Cream

SUNDAY, OCT. 31

3:00–4:30 pm
SOPHOMORE HALES TAKEOVER
Presenter: Office of Student Involvement
Location: Hales Gymnasium

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