The Ohio Prison Education Exchange Project (OPEEP)
Outside Student Application & Enrollment Guide
2022-2023

Introduction
Welcome to the Ohio State Prison Education Exchange Project (OPEEP)! We are thrilled that you are interested in taking an OPEEP course. The unique nature of OPEEP courses allows for a collaborative and transformative educational experience like none other, but also requires a unique application process for prospective campus-based students. This brief guide is intended to assist students as they navigate each step of the application and enrollment process. This guide is one part of a larger set of resources which can be found under the “Student Resources” tab on the OPEEP website. We highly encourage students to take advantage of the other helpful tools available on this webpage!

OPEEP Staff Contact Information
If you have any questions or concerns regarding OPEEP courses or the application/enrollment process, please feel free to reach out to either of OPEEP’s Program Coordinators via e-mail:
→ Babette Cieskowski (cieskowski.1@osu.edu)
→ Nicole Edgerton (edgerton.31@osu.edu)
## Application & Enrollment Timeline

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<th>Timing</th>
<th>Action Items</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>1. Early-to-mid semester PRIOR to course</strong> (Autumn course --&gt; apply in Spring; Spring course --&gt; apply in Autumn)</td>
<td>Interested student completes <a href="#">online OPEEP application</a></td>
<td>Application can also be found on OPEEP website (go to “Courses” or “Student Resources”)</td>
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<td><strong>2. After submission of application (early-to-mid semester prior)</strong></td>
<td>OPEEP staff/course instructor receive notification of new application submission, reach out to student to schedule meeting*</td>
<td>Introductory/explanatory meeting entails brief discussion of student interest as well as OPEEP rules &amp; expectations</td>
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<td><strong>3. Soon after meeting with OPEEP staff/instructor (early-to-mid semester prior)</strong></td>
<td>Student obtains Instructor Permission after meeting with staff/instructor</td>
<td>Instructor Permission is required to take any OPEEP course!</td>
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<td><strong>4. Immediately after meeting/course enrollment (early-to-mid semester prior)</strong></td>
<td>Student receives required paperwork &amp; related resources from OPEEP staff/instructor</td>
<td>Can also be found through “Student Resources” page on OPEEP website</td>
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<td><strong>5. NO LATER than 8 weeks prior to following semester!</strong> (Autumn course --&gt; submit by end of June; Spring course --&gt; submit by early November)</td>
<td>Student fills out ODRC Volunteer Application COMPLETELY &amp; PROMPTLY returns to OPEEP staff</td>
<td>Critical to return completed application as promptly as possible! Can take several weeks to months for ODRC** to fully process</td>
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<td><strong>6. As soon as enrollment window opens &amp; student obtains Instructor Permission!</strong></td>
<td>Student enrolls in OPEEP course!</td>
<td>Questions or concerns? --&gt; contact academic advisor/OPEEP staff</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>7. Middle-to-end of semester prior</strong></td>
<td>Student patiently awaits the start of the next semester &amp; the beginning of their amazing OPEEP class! 😊</td>
<td></td>
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* = If a student has not heard from OPEEP staff/instructor one week after submitting their application, they should reach out directly via e-mail to either party to express interest in the course and schedule a meeting time.

** = Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction ("ODRC"/"DRC")
Instructor Permission Requirement & Pre-Enrollment Meeting

The steps involved in OPEEP’s application and enrollment processes may seem like a lot at first glance, but students need not panic! OPEEP staff and faculty are happy to provide support and have settled on this process for several key reasons. First, the project is grounded in Black feminist and abolitionist theory and praxis, with a deep commitment to practicing equity and radical inclusion. OPEEP strives to create equitable educational experiences, thus, both incarcerated students and campus students undergo similar application and interview processes prior to course enrollment. Second, by nature, OPEEP courses differ greatly from all other courses offered at OSU. Unique criteria must be met to enroll and start the semester off on the right foot: timely submission of required paperwork, knowledge of and adherence to OSU/OPEEP/ODRC rules, arrangement of transportation to the prison facility, and more. In addition to these practical details, it is just as critical that students are willing to challenge ingrained assumptions about incarcerated folks. Pre-enrollment meetings with students help OPEEP staff and faculty to make sure they are fully aware of key details such as these, setting the tone for a successful semester for everyone involved! These meetings are not intended to be formal interviews per se; rather, they are meant to introduce students to OPEEP staff/faculty, discuss the student’s interest in the course, and explain basic rules and expectations to be sure the course is a good fit for them. Further, the Instructor Permission requirement helps OPEEP staff and faculty to ensure the on-time submission of all required ODRC paperwork. For all these reasons, it is critical that students keep the details of the application/enrollment timeline in mind, and especially the importance of obtaining Instructor Permission prior to enrolling in the course.

Once a student has met with OPEEP staff/faculty and both parties have decided that the course is a good fit, they can go ahead and enroll in the course as soon as their official enrollment window opens. If a student has questions or concerns about course enrollment, they should reach out to either their Academic Advisor or an OPEEP Program Coordinator (Babette Cieskowski.1@osu.edu or Nicole Edgerton.31@osu.edu). For a list of important dates and more general resources on undergraduate enrollment at Ohio State, visit the Registrar’s website here.
Required ODRC Paperwork & Training

When a student enrolls in an OPEEP class meeting inside of an Ohio prison facility, the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (also “ODRC” or “DRC”) classifies them as a “Volunteer.” All volunteers are required to do the following: “Complete an application, submit to a background investigation and disclose all associates, friends, and relatives who are in prison or under DRC supervision. All approved applicants must satisfactorily complete required training and orientation and be aware of the following:

a. Voluntarily serve by one’s own free will without pay or other compensation.

b. Provide encouragement and support for others and be competent in the desired area of service.

c. Comply with all rules and laws governing behavior, dress and contraband.

d. DRC has a zero-tolerance policy for alcohol and drug use or conveyance.”

It is of the utmost importance that students submit their completed ODRC Volunteer Application as soon as possible once they are certain about their enrollment in the course (see Step 5 of the Admissions and Enrollment Timeline on page 2). However, it is entirely possible (and preferable!) for students who apply earlier in the semester to turn in an application before the opening of their enrollment window. A quick turnaround on this application is critical because it can take weeks to months for ODRC to successfully process this paperwork, and students cannot enter a facility for class without having completed this step. That is why students are required to submit (e-mail to OPEEP staff) completed volunteer applications NO LATER than 8 weeks prior to the following semester (i.e., student is enrolling in an Autumn course -- must submit application by end of June; Spring course -- must submit application by early November).

How to Access and Complete the ODRC Volunteer Application

Students will receive a blank PDF copy of the application from OPEEP staff/faculty after completing their initial meeting. They can also access the file on the “Student Resources” page of the OPEEP website. For guidance on completing the application, students can find an example of a correctly completed ODRC Volunteer Application here or by going to the “Student Resources” page. We HIGHLY recommend students reference this example application while completing their own paperwork.

Additionally, please see the following page for a list of common mistakes and guidelines on how to avoid them.
Common mistakes to avoid when completing the ODRC Volunteer Application:

1. The information on the application was digitally filled in by typing on a computer/tablet/phone, rather than PRINTING the application, completing it BY HAND (LEGIBLY), and SCANNING the completed copy.*
   a. ODRC does not have the technology to recognize newer software that allows for adding text/typing on a PDF. When these types of applications are submitted, they will appear as blank to ODRC and will be rejected.

2. You were born in the U.S., but not in the state of Ohio, and you provided only the first four digits of your social security number.
   a. If this is the case for you, please provide your entire social security number to avoid having your application sent back.

3. Incorrectly filling out the “Staff Nexus” page of the application.
   a. Please follow these guidelines when completing this page:
      i. “Name” at the top left of the page - print your name
      ii. “Job Title” right next to the “Name” line – write “Volunteer”
      iii. “Your OAKS Number” and “Your Current Work Location” - leave blank or write “N/A”
      iv. “I [box] NO NEXUS” right underneath the section titled “COMPLETE ONLY ONE SECTION BELOW” - check the box (provided that this is true and you have zero connections/affiliations with anyone currently incarcerated in the state of Ohio)
      v. “Print Name” box directly BELOW the word “Staff” near the bottom of the page and directly ABOVE where it says “Managing Officer Action” - print your name, provide your signature in the box to the immediate right of the “Print Name” box, then write the date in the “Date” box to the right of that
         1. DO NOT FILL OUT THE BOX TO THE IMMEDIATE RIGHT OF “STAFF” OR THE BOXES AT THE VERY BOTTOM OF THE PAGE (also titled “Print Name,” “Signature,” and “Date”); ONLY FILL IN THE LINE(S) BEGINNING WITH “PRINT NAME” BETWEEN THESE FIELDS
      vi. LEAVE BLANK ALL other fields between the “NO NEXUS” box and the “Print Name” box directly under the word “Staff”

* = We understand that printing is not easily accessible to all, so if you absolutely cannot access a printer and/or scanner, OPEEP staff can print a copy for you and then scan it for you once completed. But please keep in mind that we do not have the staff capacity to do this for every student! See the next page for information on student printing services as well.
4. Failing to write “N/A” after questions answered “No” OR failing to provide details after any questions answered “Yes” on the page titled “Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction Contractor/Volunteer/Intern Supplemental Questionnaire.”

5. Failing to list ALL former residences during the last 5 years or failing to provide 3+ personal/professional references on the page titled “Individual Application for Volunteer/Intern Services.”

6. Failing to check the correct “Volunteer Region” box relative to the prison facility your class will meet at OR failing to check the correct box under “Category of Volunteer Service” on the page titled “Volunteer Regions.”
   a. Example: class is at ORW --> check this box under the “NW Region” section
   b. Check the “Education” box for “Category of Volunteer Service”

7. PLEASE DOUBLE CHECK EVERY PAGE to be certain that you printed your name, provided your signature, wrote the date, and filled out every single required field.
   a. You will find that there are many fields irrelevant to you/intended for staff use only – if you have any questions about these, feel free to reach out to OPEEP staff for assistance! (Find contact information on the first page of this guide)

Printing and scanning services for OSU students:

- **Visit this page** on the University Libraries website for details on printing and copying services available for students at OSU libraries.
- **Visit this page** on the UniPrint website for details on “Follow Me” wireless printing at various locations around campus.
  - This PDF also provides a list of Follow Me printing locations (including some regional campus locations).