# College2Career Forum: OU College of Law

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## Essential Question(s)

- What steps do I need to take to reach my future goals?
- How can I apply career information gained in this campus visit to my current post-secondary plans and academic opportunities?

## Summary

The College2Career Forum: The University of Oklahoma College of Law (OU Law) educator resource focuses on career exploration in law and criminal justice. While visiting this PSI (Post Secondary Institution) campus, students will tour OU Law's facilities, hear career talks from lawyers and college professors, perform a mock trial in an actual courtroom, and speak with current law students about their experiences. Students will also gain information on different law practices and pathways, degree plans, and the application process for the program.

## Learning Goals

- Explore a PSI (OU College of Law).
- Connect career information to current academic opportunities and plans for post-secondary education.
- Collaborate with career professionals while completing hands-on activities.

## Attachments

- Road Map to Success—College2Career Forum (1).docx
- Road Map to Success—College2Career Forum (1).pdf
- Road Map to Success—College2Career Forum - Spanish docx.docx
- Road Map to Success—College2Career Forum - Spanish docx.pdf
- Visualize Your Career—College2Career Forum - Spanish .docx
- Visualize Your Career—College2Career Forum - Spanish .pdf
- Visualize Your Career—College2Career Forum.docx
- Visualize Your Career—College2Career Forum.pdf

## Materials

- Road Map to Success handout (attached; one per student)
- Visualize Your Career handout (attached; one per student)
- Name badges (optional)
- T-shirts (optional)
- Pens/pencils
- Electronic devices (optional)

10 minutes

# Engage

**Facilitator Note: Disclaimer**

The following description of what to expect from this OU College of Law forum event reflects a common structure but may be subject to change based on availability and/or the professional(s) leading your event. For example, professional slide shows may change and/or activities may differ. Prior to facilitating any forum event, see our College2Career Forum: How to Guide for more information on how to set up a specific forum.

Once you have arrived on site, be sure to check that your mode of transportation has the appropriate parking pass or availability as needed. Walk with your students to the site and meet your career professional(s).

Before students hear from the professional(s), provide a brief welcome and overview of the day. This overview can include "housekeeping items" such as restroom locations, where to store bags, and electronic device policies.

Next, have students use the Fist to Five strategy to gauge what they already know about the careers, institution, and/or degree field they will explore during this visit. Tell students to hold up:

- 0 fingers (a fist) if they know nothing at all
- 1 finger if they have a little understanding
- 2 fingers if they know something but need clarification
- 3 fingers if they have basic knowledge
- 4 fingers if they have an advanced understanding
- 5 fingers if they are an expert and can teach others

Have students share-out their prior knowledge if they are a 3 to 5 and things they want to learn if they are a 0 to 2. Repeat the sharing- out process as often as needed.

Once students have shared their experiences, move on to introducing the career professional(s).

90 minutes

# Explore

**Facilitator Note: Location**

Drivers of buses and vans should arrive at the south side of the OU Law building, off J. Willis Stovall Drive. Small buses can park in the oval driveway on the south side of the building. Larger buses can park in the northeast corner of the Sam Noble parking lot, just west of the OU Law building.

**What to expect:**

A collection of professionals, professors, and administrators will help facilitate your OU Law College2Career Forum. Students begin their day with introductions to these facilitators and their roles at the college and previous law backgrounds. From there, they visit the active courtroom housed at OU Law where facilitators have participants assume different roles and professions that are present at court. Some of these include judge, jury, bailiff, witness, defense attorney, etc. While students actively rotate and sit in these different positions in the courtroom, the facilitator helps explain the different roles in court and engages students in role-play. After the rotations, students typically stay in the courtroom to hear from different college representatives on the logistics of law school, how to apply, how to get admitted, etc.

After their time in the courtroom, students hear from practicing and retired lawyers about different types of law, life as a lawyer, and the pros and cons of the profession. Students are encouraged to ask questions and talk with the speakers.

Towards the end of the visit, students will tour OU's College of Law with a current law student, seeing different classrooms, courtrooms, libraries, and study centers. They end the day in a lecture style classroom for lunch. While eating, students hear from a panel of current OU Law students about their specific field of study, experiences, and goals.

15 minutes

# Explain

**What to expect:**

Have students use the instructional strategy Think-Pair-Share with someone who has participated in a different aspect of the activity than they have. Invite students to talk to their neighbors about the part of the activity they just engaged in. Students also have the opportunity to ask questions about the degree program and/or career.

20 minutes

# Extend

Usually, professionals give a recruiting pitch about how students can attend their PSI (i.e. cost, housing, scholarships, etc.) or pursue job opportunities (i.e. internships, “on the job training,” etc.) while students eat lunch. Provide a space for students to ask any clarifying questions.

If time and resources permit, pass out the attached **Road Map to Success** handout to each student. Direct them to the https://www.mynextmove.org/ website or the K20 career clusters resource (https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/search?type=student-resources) and have them follow the directions on their handout to find what they need. Explain that they should complete the handout based on their individual searches. If students need help, encourage them to research careers similar to those of the presenting professional(s) or those within the same career cluster.

**Facilitator Note: Road Map to Success Activity**

If time does not permit, or students don’t have electronic devices available, consider completing this activity when they return to campus.

20 minutes

# Evaluate

On returning to your campus and after participating in the College2Career Forum event, use the Mirror, Microscope, and Binoculars strategy to have students reflect on the experience. Pass out the attached **Visualize Your Career** handout to each student and allow them time to reflect on what they learned. Explain the following in as much detail as needed:

- **Mirror** (self-reflection): *How do I feel about the career(s) I experienced today? Has this experience helped me think about what I want to do after high school?*
- **Microscope** (close inspection/details): *What are some of the smaller details of the career(s) I experienced today that I hadn't thought about before? How do my skills fit with this/these position(s)?*
- **Binoculars** (bigger picture): *Can I see myself in this career field later in life? How does this field play a role in the bigger world?*

# Research Rationale

Research and experience shows that it is becoming increasingly evident that simply telling students about PSI opportunities or career fields isn't enough. Teachers need to give students impactful, relatable, and engaging experiences so that they can actively explore these options. Not only do these experiences help students explore future opportunities, but they can also lead to career success later in life. Research shows a strong correlation between career success later in life and job shadowing and workplace visits as a teen. One study found that Canadian students who made a workplace visit by age 15 were 4% less likely to be NEET (Not being in Education, Employment, or Training) than their peers at age 25 (Covacevich et al. 2021). The same study found that Korean students who made the same type of workplace visits were 1.23 times more likely not to be NEET than those who did not take a visit.

**Work-Based Learning**

In making college and career decisions, Work-Based Learning (WBL) opportunities can provide secondary students with experience, clarity, and increased self-efficacy. Field-based learning is a powerful tool in helping students to better understand the core concepts and to raise their enthusiasm (Janovy & Major, 2009; Manzanal et al., 1999, as cited in Pereira & Gheisari, 2017). These experiences also enable students to interact with professionals and perceive fieldwork in a way that is not available in a traditional school setting. Pereira and Gheisari (2017) examined faculty perceptions of the effectiveness of construction site visits during construction courses. The researchers found that faculty members believe that observing the construction environment is critical for the students (Pereira & Gheisari, 2017). With student benefits and faculty acknowledgment, WBL can provide a compelling experience for students.

Another WBL study of eleven low-income ethnic minority secondary students aimed to gauge the impact of a school's WBL program. Through data analysis of student interviews, the study revealed that the WBL program promoted hope for their future academic and career success as well as support and mentorship through workplace supervisors within the program (Medvide et al.; M. E., 2020). This hope, support, and mentorship give students—especially low-income students whose backgrounds and lived experiences may hinder them—the self-efficacy to reach their full potential.

**Hands-on Educational Experiences**

Several research projects prove that hands-on educational experiences can positively impact students' academic and work-related outcomes. One such study followed a group of Australian secondary school students through a year-long science program. This program was designed to strengthen students' science skills in data analysis, experimentation, and scientific writing through current, hands-on research within the context of a significant worldwide health issue (Puslednik & Brennan, 2020). The research team found that the intervention reflected in students' mean score of knowledge growth—per a self-assessment survey—rose considerably. They also found, through VALID 10 testing, that 84% of intervention students would have scored lower on their tested science knowledge, problem-solving, communication, and planning skills than the control group's mean score (Puslednik & Brennan, 2020).

Another similar study evaluated the effectiveness of a hands-on learning experience in cancer research for 20 secondary students. After a two-week science summer camp at The University of the Pacific, the researcher found that 83.33% of the students were interested in participating in another hands-on science learning experience, and the same number reported increased interest in attending The University of the Pacific as their Post-Secondary Institution (PSI) (Argueta et al, 2020). These results showcased the impact and importance of hands-on learning for high school-aged students when considering their future academic and career endeavors.

## Resources


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- Medvide, M. B., & Kenny, M. E. (2020). Hope in the lives of low-income students of color: A qualitative study of experiences in a work-based learning program. *Journal of Career Development*, 089484532093743. https://doi.org/10.1177/0894845320937430
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