APRIL 2022

Work-based Learning Requirement

The passage of House Bill 110 resulted in several changes to the Choose Ohio First (COF) program, effective September 30, 2021. The most notable change is that work-based learning (WBL) is now required for all Choose Ohio First Scholars, as indicated in [ORC 3333.64](#), "All students receiving a Choose Ohio First scholarship shall be involved in work-based learning through a co-op; internship; experience in a university, college, or private laboratory; or other work-based learning experience." The legislation requires work-based learning not only for future COF Scholars, but also for current Scholars receiving funding through previously awarded grants, including the FY21 Grant, the FY19 Computer Science Grant, and continuing students in the FY16 Completion Grants.

The inclusion of **other work-based learning experiences** as eligible experiences affords institutions the flexibility to devise WBL experiences that complement the Scholar's academic program and professional experience. Work-based learning can be described as interactions with industry or community professionals in real workplace settings or simulated environments at an educational institution that foster in-depth, firsthand engagement with a given career field. The Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE) recognizes the work-based experiences will vary by institution and program, and possibly by student. COF WBL experiences should be:

- Distinct – A specific activity with outcomes
- Complementary – Helps students build on their coursework and move toward a career
- Supplementary – Occurs outside regular coursework and assignments
- Documented – Grantee documents the experience

A work-based learning experience is required one time during a student's time as a COF Scholar. Upon completion, these experiences are documented in HEI through the CO and/or CC files. Currently, HEI tracks internships, co-ops, and research experiences. We are developing a way to track other work-based learning in HEI and will provide guidance at a later date.

Expanded Opportunities – Clinicals and Work-based Learning Experiences

Due to current workforce demands and an effort to assist institutions with meeting the work-based learning requirement, we are happy to announce that ODHE has recently expanded the types of allowable work-based learning experiences to include clinical experiences in healthcare fields as well as student teaching.

Programs that intend to use clinical experiences to satisfy the work-based learning requirement are encouraged to also provide Scholars with opportunities that can occur prior to clinicals. Examples include:

- Volunteering in a healthcare setting
- Part-time employment during academic breaks in a variety of healthcare settings
- Multiple informational interviews of professionals in the chosen field
- Job shadowing administrative functions within a healthcare system or a school

Achieving COF Goals through Work-based Learning

Work-based learning is a crucial component to achieving a core goal of Choose Ohio First to develop Ohio's economic strength by ensuring a ready workforce for Ohio's STEM-related industries. Work-based learning connects the classroom with employment experiences and may provide students early insight into their academic interests and professional opportunities. We thank our institutional partners for the vital roles they play in achieving this goal, from providing students career preparation to building relationships with businesses to documenting participation.

The work-based learning requirement and other changes to the COF program created by the passage of House Bill 110 can be found in the Ohio Revised Code provided on the [COF webpage](). Questions can be directed to [COF@highered.ohio.gov]() or any of the COF staff members.

Save the Date: Choose Ohio First Grantee Webinar - Friday, April 29th at 1:00PM | [Register Here]()

This webinar will focus on the FY22 Grant, but many topics are broadly applicable to other COF grant cycles, so all grantees are welcome to attend. This webinar will be recorded and shared.