

# ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP, B.A.

**Begin Campus:** Any Penn State Campus

**End Campus:** University Park, World Campus

## Program Description

The degree draws on many of the disciplines of the liberal arts, as well as business and science, to illuminate the issues that all leaders face regarding work and employment issues in the 21st Century, as well as in other aspects of organizational life more generally. Students select courses in crime, law, and justice, political science, sociology, labor and employment relations, communication arts and sciences, management, and psychology. The goal is to provide a broad education that introduces methods of analysis used in the disciplines of the liberal arts and prepares students to understand the complex social, cultural, and organizational issues that they will confront in leadership positions in the modern world.

## What is Organizational Leadership?

A rapidly growing global environment creates demand for professionals who are schooled in leadership. Employers prefer individuals who exhibit strengths in problem solving, teamwork, critical thinking, decision-making, listening, and conflict management. Courses in psychology, sociology, communication, philosophy, management, and labor and employment relations can prepare you for a change in career or help you to advance into leadership positions. The Bachelor of Arts in Organizational Leadership includes a curriculum immersed in the social sciences, humanities, and language, in addition to prescribed organizational leadership courses. It can help you explore the role of leadership from a relationship-based perspective.

## You Might Like This Program If...

You are interested in studying with world-class faculty, to expand your employment opportunities or obtain a degree for professional advancement. An education in organizational leadership can provide you with a broad perspective to prepare for today's complex social, cultural, and professional issues that you are likely to encounter in positions of leadership.

## Entrance to Major

In order to be eligible for entrance to this major, a student must:

1. attain at least a C (2.00) cumulative grade-point average for all courses taken at the University; and
2. have at least third-semester classification (<https://www.registrar.psu.edu/enrollment/semester-classification.cfm>).

READ SENATE POLICY 37-30: ENTRANCE TO AND CHANGES IN MAJOR PROGRAMS OF STUDY (<https://senate.psu.edu/students/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/37-00-entrance-to-a-college-or-major/>)

## World Campus

### Direct Admission to the Major

Incoming first-year students who meet the program admission requirements are admitted directly into the major. Admission restrictions may apply for change-of-major and/or change-of-campus students.

For more information about the admission process for this major, please send a request to the college, campus, or program contact (listed in the Contact tab).

## Degree Requirements

**For the Bachelor of Arts degree in Organizational Leadership, a minimum of 120 credits is required:**

Requirement	Credits
General Education	45
Electives	24-30
Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirements	24
Requirements for the Major	33

**6-12 of the 45 credits for General Education are included in the Requirements for the Major. This includes: 0-6 credits of GH courses; 6 credits of GS courses.**

**0-12 of the 24 credits for Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirements are included in Electives if world language proficiency is demonstrated by examination.**

### Requirements for the Major

A grade of C or better is required for all courses in the major. To graduate, a student enrolled in the major must earn at least a C grade in each course designated by the major as a C-required course, as specified by Senate Policy 82-44 (<https://senate.psu.edu/students/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/>).

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Prescribed Courses</b>		
<i>Prescribed Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
OLEAD 100	Introduction to Leadership	3
OLEAD 201	Organizational Theory and Functions for Leaders	3
OLEAD 210	Evidence-Based Leadership	3
OLEAD/LHR 464	Communication Skills for Leaders in Groups and Organizations	3
OLEAD/LHR 465	Collective Decision Making	3
PSYCH 100	Introductory Psychology	3
PSYCH 484	Work Attitudes and Motivation	3
<b>Additional Courses</b>		
<i>Additional Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
Select one course from each area:		12
<i>a) Critical Thinking</i>		
IST 110	Information, People and Technology	
PHIL 10	Critical Thinking	
<i>b) Organizational Behavior</i>		
LHR 202	Understanding Employee Behavior	
PSYCH 281	Introduction to Industrial-Organizational Psychology	

*c) Conflict Management*

CAS 404	Conflict Resolution and Negotiation
LHR 312	Research Methods in Labor and Employment Relations
LHR 437	Workplace Dispute Resolution
SOC 207	Research Methods in Sociology

*d) Ethics*

LHR 460	Ethics in the Workplace
PHIL 119	Ethical Leadership

## General Education

Connecting career and curiosity, the General Education curriculum provides the opportunity for students to acquire transferable skills necessary to be successful in the future and to thrive while living in interconnected contexts. General Education aids students in developing intellectual curiosity, a strengthened ability to think, and a deeper sense of aesthetic appreciation. These are requirements for all baccalaureate students and are often partially incorporated into the requirements of a program. For additional information, see the General Education Requirements (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/baccalaureate-degree-general-education-program/>) section of the Bulletin and consult your academic adviser.

The keystone symbol appears next to the title of any course that is designated as a General Education course. Program requirements may also satisfy General Education requirements and vary for each program.

### Foundations (grade of C or better is required and Inter-Domain courses do not meet this requirement.)

- **Quantification (GQ):** 6 credits
- **Writing and Speaking (GWS):** 9 credits

### Breadth in the Knowledge Domains (Inter-Domain courses do not meet this requirement.)

- **Arts (GA):** 3 credits
- **Health and Wellness (GHW):** 3 credits
- **Humanities (GH):** 3 credits
- **Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS):** 3 credits
- **Natural Sciences (GN):** 3 credits

### Integrative Studies

- **Inter-Domain Courses (Inter-Domain):** 6 credits

### Exploration

- **GN**, may be completed with Inter-Domain courses: 3 credits
- **GA, GH, GN, GS, Inter-Domain courses.** This may include 3 credits of World Language course work beyond the 12th credit level or the requirements for the student's degree program, whichever is higher: 6 credits

## University Degree Requirements

### First Year Engagement

All students enrolled in a college or the Division of Undergraduate Studies at University Park, and the World Campus are required to take 1 to 3 credits of the First-Year Seminar, as specified by their college First-Year Engagement Plan.

Other Penn State colleges and campuses may require the First-Year Seminar; colleges and campuses that do not require a First-Year Seminar provide students with a first-year engagement experience.

First-year baccalaureate students entering Penn State should consult their academic adviser for these requirements.

### Cultures Requirement

6 credits are required and may satisfy other requirements

- United States Cultures: 3 credits
- International Cultures: 3 credits

### Writing Across the Curriculum

3 credits required from the college of graduation and likely prescribed as part of major requirements.

### Total Minimum Credits

A minimum of 120 degree credits must be earned for a baccalaureate degree. The requirements for some programs may exceed 120 credits. Students should consult with their college or department adviser for information on specific credit requirements.

### Quality of Work

Candidates must complete the degree requirements for their major and earn at least a 2.00 grade-point average for all courses completed within their degree program.

### Limitations on Source and Time for Credit Acquisition

The college dean or campus chancellor and program faculty may require up to 24 credits of course work in the major to be taken at the location or in the college or program where the degree is earned. Credit used toward degree programs may need to be earned from a particular source or within time constraints (see Senate Policy 83-80 (<https://senate.psu.edu/students/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/>)). For more information, check the Suggested Academic Plan for your intended program.

## B.A. Degree Requirements

**World Language** (0-12 credits): Student must attain 12th credit level of proficiency in one world language in addition to English. This proficiency must be demonstrated by either examination or course work. See the Placement Policy for Penn State World Language Courses (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/academic-information/advising-planning-degree-program/course-placements/placement-policy-world-language-courses/>).

**B.A. Fields** (9 credits): Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences, Arts, World Languages, Natural Sciences, Quantification (may not be taken in the area of the student's primary major; world language credits in this category must be in a second world language in addition to English or beyond the 12th credit level of proficiency in the first language). Credits must be selected from the list of approved courses.

**World Cultures** (0-3 credits): Select 3 credits from approved list. Students may count courses in this category in order to meet other major, minor, elective, or General Education requirements, except for the University Cultural Diversity (US/IL) requirement.

## Program Learning Objectives

- **Roles and Functions of Leadership:** Understand the roles and the major functions of leadership in contemporary organizations;
- **Leadership Foundations:** Articulate the theoretical and empirical foundations for different approaches to the exercise of leadership;
- **Strategy:** Detect, accurately frame, and select appropriate strategies for overcoming obstacles to effective organizational performance that leaders face;

- **Organizational Tasks and Relationship Management:** Exhibit intellectual and behavioral competencies useful in the successful execution of critical organizational tasks and the management of relationships;
- **Organizational Structure:** Recognize the internal structures of organizations and their impact on members' performance;
- **Social Processes:** Appreciate the social processes operative in the exercise of influence, as well as how to improve them;
- **Upward Mobility:** Draw on their knowledge of leadership in transitioning from lower-level to higher-level positions of responsibility and authority in organizations;
- **Global Perspective:** Bring a global perspective to the exercise of leadership;
- **Ethics:** Grasp the importance of enacting leadership responsibly and in an ethically defensible manner.

## Academic Advising

The objectives of the university's academic advising program are to help advisees identify and achieve their academic goals, to promote their intellectual discovery, and to encourage students to take advantage of both in-and out-of class educational opportunities in order that they become self-directed learners and decision makers.

Both advisers and advisees share responsibility for making the advising relationship succeed. By encouraging their advisees to become engaged in their education, to meet their educational goals, and to develop the habit of learning, advisers assume a significant educational role. The advisee's unit of enrollment will provide each advisee with a primary academic adviser, the information needed to plan the chosen program of study, and referrals to other specialized resources.

READ SENATE POLICY 32-00: ADVISING POLICY (<https://senate.psu.edu/students/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/32-00-advising-policy/>)

## University Park

### Liberal Arts Academic Advising

814-865-2545

Use the Liberal Arts Meet the Academic Advisers web page (<https://la.psu.edu/student-services/academic-advising/meet-the-academic-advisers/>) to see the contact information for the specific adviser(s) of this program

## World Campus

### Undergraduate Academic Advising

100 Innovation Blvd

Suite 225

University Park, PA 16803

814-863-3283

[advising@worldcampus.psu.edu](mailto:advising@worldcampus.psu.edu)

## Suggested Academic Plan

The suggested academic plan(s) listed on this page are the plan(s) that are in effect during the 2025-26 academic year. To access previous years' suggested academic plans, please visit the archive (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/archive/>) to view the appropriate Undergraduate Bulletin edition.

## Organizational Leadership, B.A. at University Park Campus and World Campus

The course series listed below provides **only one** of the many possible ways to move through this curriculum. The University may make changes in policies, procedures, educational offerings, and requirements at any time. This plan should be used in conjunction with your degree audit (accessible in LionPATH as either an **Academic Requirements** or **What If** report). Please consult with a Penn State academic adviser on a regular basis to develop and refine an academic plan that is appropriate for you.

### First Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
ENGL 15, 30H, or 137H <sup>‡</sup>	3 CAS 100A, 100B, 100C, 138T, or ENGL 138T <sup>‡</sup>	3
OLEAD 100*	3 OLEAD 201	3
PSYCH 100 (GS) <sup>**†</sup>	3 PSYCH 281 or LHR 202 (GS) <sup>**†</sup>	3
LA 83	1.5 World Language Level 2	4
World Language Level 1	4 General Education Course (GQ) <sup>‡</sup>	3
First-Year Seminar/ General Education Course (Exploration)	3	
	<b>17.5</b>	<b>16</b>

### Second Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
IST 110 or PHIL 10*	3 LHR 312, SOC 207, LHR 437, or CAS 404*	3
OLEAD 210*	3 LA 283	1.5
General Education Course (GA)	3 BA Fields Course	3
General Education Course (GQ) <sup>‡</sup>	3 General Education Course (GH)	3
World Language Level 3	4 General Education Course (GN)	3
	Elective (US)	3
	<b>16</b>	<b>16.5</b>

### Third Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
OLEAD 464*	3 PSYCH 484*	3
BA Fields Course	3 BA Fields Course	3
General Education Course (GN)	3 General Education Course (Inter-Domain)	3
Elective (IL)	3 Elective/World Cultures Course	3
Elective	3 Elective	3
	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>

### Fourth Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
PHIL 119 or LHR 460*	3 ENGL 202A, 202B, 202C, or 202D <sup>‡</sup>	3
Writing Across the Curriculum Course (LHR 458Y suggested)	3 OLEAD 465*	3
General Education Course (GHW)	1.5 General Education Course (GHW)	1.5

General Education Course (Inter-Domain)	3 Elective	3
Elective	3 Elective	3
<b>13.5</b>		<b>13.5</b>

**Total Credits 123**

- \* Course requires a grade of C or better for the major
- ‡ Course requires a grade of C or better for General Education
- # Course is an Entrance to Major requirement
- † Course satisfies General Education and degree requirement

**University Requirements and General Education Notes:**

US and IL are abbreviations used to designate courses that satisfy Cultural Diversity Requirements (United States and International Cultures).

W, M, X, and Y are the suffixes at the end of a course number used to designate courses that satisfy University Writing Across the Curriculum requirement.

General Education includes Foundations (GWS and GQ), Knowledge Domains (GHW, GN, GA, GH, GS) and Integrative Studies (Inter-domain) requirements. N or Q (Honors) is the suffix at the end of a course number used to help identify an Inter-domain course, but the inter-domain attribute is used to fill audit requirements. Foundations courses (GWS and GQ) require a grade of 'C' or better.

All incoming Schreyer Honors College first-year students at University Park will take ENGL 137H/CAS 137H in the fall semester and ENGL 138T/CAS 138T in the spring semester. These courses carry the GWS designation and satisfy a portion of that General Education requirement. If the student's program prescribes GWS these courses will replace both ENGL 15/ENGL 30H and CAS 100A/CAS 100B/CAS 100C. Each course is 3 credits.

**Bachelor of Arts Requirements:**

Bachelor of Arts students must take 9 credits in Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) Fields (Humanities; Social and Behavioral Sciences; Arts; World Languages [2nd language or beyond the 12th credit level of proficiency in the 1st]; Natural Sciences; Quantification). The B.A. Fields courses may not be taken in the area of the student's primary major. See your adviser and the Degree Requirements section (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/academic-information/>) of this Bulletin.

Bachelor of Arts students must take 3 credits in World Cultures. See your adviser and the full list of courses approved as World Cultures courses (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/course-lists/ba-world-cultures/>).

**Advising Notes:**

- 24 credits within the major must be completed at University Park (policy 83-80). Talk with your academic adviser for additional details.
- Elective courses are free-choice classes, and students may select any course of interest to satisfy them. A course which satisfies a requirement for an academic minor or certificate may, for example, be used as an elective. Courses completed through studying abroad may also be used to satisfy electives.
- Students who opt to take PHIL 10 (rather than IST 110) or who choose to take PHIL 119 (rather than LHR 460) to satisfy the Critical

Thinking and Ethics requirements in the OLEAD major may "double count" PHIL 10 **or** PHIL 119 as a General Education Humanities (GH). Doing so requires students to take an additional elective course.

- Any Liberal Arts course with a W or a Y after the course number (e.g. LHR 458Y, PHIL 103W, PLSC 17W, or PSYCH 301W) may be used to satisfy the Writing Across the Curriculum requirement.
- Although some courses are approved as US, IL, and World Cultures courses, students pursuing the Bachelor of Arts in OLEAD must complete three separate courses to satisfy **each** of these University requirements. One course may not be used to complete more than one of these requirements.
- Students must complete two Inter-Domain General Education courses; approved Inter-Domain courses have an N after the course number (e.g., AFAM 100N, SOC 119N, and ENT 202N).
- 3 credits of GHW (General Health & Wellness) are required; students have the option of completing one 3-credit health course or two 1.5 credit activity-based courses.
- Bachelor of Arts students are required to complete the 12<sup>th</sup> credit **level** of a world language, which is level 3. (e.g., FR 3, GER 3, SPAN 3). Students whose language preparation and proficiency allows them to begin above level I of a world language in working to reach the 12<sup>th</sup> credit level will replace the skipped level(s) with additional elective credits.

## Career Paths

A Bachelor of Arts in Organizational Leadership can prepare you to work in a range of relationship-focused careers in which you can showcase your ability to manage and nurture business and professional relationships through motivational strategies, conflict management, and other forms of interpersonal and social influence. The degree will benefit any career in which leadership skills are necessary for the advancement of the overall business climate through interpersonal interactions.

## Careers

The degree is perfect for collaborative work environments in manufacturing, service industries, government, communications, charitable and nonprofit organizations, and multinational organizations. Graduates of Penn State's School of Labor and Employment Relations, of which the OLEAD program is a part, have found employment in such companies as Google, Ernst and Young, GE, Amazon, Lockheed Martin, Samsung Electronics, PriceWaterHouseCoopers Consulting, government agencies such as the U. S. Department of Labor, and in labor unions such as the AFL-CIO, American Federation of Teachers, and the Service Employees International Union.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT POTENTIAL CAREER OPTIONS FOR GRADUATES OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAM (<https://ler.la.psu.edu/careers/where-are-they-now/>)

## Opportunities for Graduate Studies

Penn State World Campus offers a Master of Human Resources and Employment Relations (HRER) in which the curriculum balances advanced theory with practical knowledge. After receiving strong fundamental knowledge, the program focuses on the complex personal, legal and organizational issues inherent in the relationship between employers, employees, unions, and government. As in the undergraduate OLEAD program, students in the M.HRER program have the opportunity to study with highly regarded faculty from Penn State's College of the Liberal Arts, one of the premier institutions in the world to study and work in the liberal arts disciplines.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OPPORTUNITIES FOR GRADUATE STUDIES  
(<https://www.worldcampus.psu.edu/degrees-and-certificates/>)

## Professional Resources

- International Leadership Association (<https://ilaglobalnetwork.org/>)
- Society for Human Resource Management (<https://www.shrm.org>)
- Penn State World Campus (<https://www.worldcampus.psu.edu/degrees-and-certificates/penn-state-online-organizational-leadership-bachelor-of-science-degree/>)
- The LABOR School at Penn State (<https://ler.la.psu.edu/outreach/labor-school/>)
- International Brotherhood of Teamsters (<https://teamster.org>)
- American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) (<https://aflcio.org/>)

## Contact

### University Park

SCHOOL OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS  
506 Keller Building  
University Park, PA 16802  
814-865-5425  
[lerpsu@psu.edu](mailto:lerpsu@psu.edu)

<https://ler.la.psu.edu>

### World Campus

SCHOOL OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS  
506 Keller Building  
University Park, PA 16802  
814-865-5425  
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<https://www.worldcampus.psu.edu/degrees-and-certificates/penn-state-online-organizational-leadership-bachelor-of-arts-degree> (<https://www.worldcampus.psu.edu/degrees-and-certificates/penn-state-online-organizational-leadership-bachelor-of-arts-degree/>)