

The Department of Management Studies & The Piper Center for Vocation and Career



Management Studies Senior Capstone Project 2023-2024

Your Senior Capstone Project will demonstrate the interrelatedness of your varied learning experiences at St. Olaf and illustrate connections between all facets of your learning. Below are the specific requirements.

THE GOALS OF THE PROJECT ARE:

- To help you articulate your vocation and career vision
- To prepare you to connect your academic learning to the world of work - to search and interview for jobs, apply to graduate school programs, connect to research, explore service learning or gap year opportunities
- To provide you with a directed means of reflecting on your academic and experiential learning as it relates to your future

All work for your capstone project must be submitted by the deadline during the fall of your senior year.

WHAT IS VOCATION AND HOW IS IT DIFFERENT FROM CAREER?

Vocation is more than a career choice. Vocation, in its broadest sense, encompasses every role that a person has in his or her life. While the origins of vocation are generally religious in nature, the term has evolved into the Your vocation is created by the roles you play and the actions you take, which can range from a job to family life, or from being active in a community to taking time for yourself. Career is often a big part of your vocational goals but it's important to consider the broader context career plays in our lives.

WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS PROJECT?

Put simply, this is what adults do who are successful in landing roles and opportunities that they want. Successful adults use and apply these skills to achieve opportunities that help them take incremental steps forward towards their overall vocational goals. These are skills that will be applied throughout your life. If you take the time to reflectively engage, the intent is that this project is useful and relevant to you.

IMPORTANT RESOURCES:

Piper Center for Vocation and Career
Tomson Hall 270 x3268
<http://wp.stolaf.edu/pipercenter/>

Management Studies
Holland Hall 317
<http://wp.stolaf.edu/management-studies/>

Due Friday, November 17th, 2023

1. **Develop a Career and Vocational Vision: In 2-3 paragraphs, write about your career/vocational vision, including the type of meaningful work you wish to do. You may have multiple goals or ideas for life after college, so for this project simply choose the one or two that you are most curious about or seem the strongest to you right now. - SUBMIT IN MOODLE**
 - a. Vocation may mean slightly different things to different people. For some people, the term "vocation" is synonymous with career; for others, it refers to the multiple roles one plays at any given time in life and the interplay between those roles.

2. **Experiential Learning Requirements Synopsis: 2-3 paragraphs (in total) including how these experiences have informed your vocational discernment process - SUBMIT IN MOODLE**
 - a. Informational Interview #1 (Start by giving the person's name, title, and organization.)
 - b. Informational Interview #2 (Start by giving the person's name, title, and organization.)
 - c. Required Internship or significant work experience. *If not yet completed, describe an internship that you are seeking to fulfill this requirement.*
 - d. Second experiential learning activity (second work experience, volunteer or leadership experience, etc.) *If not yet completed, describe an experiential learning activity that you are seeking to fulfill this requirement.*
 - e. Resource: <https://wp.stolaf.edu/pipercenter/how-to-guides/interview-guide/>
 - f. Resource: <https://wp.stolaf.edu/pipercenter/find-internships-research-opportunities/>

3. **Develop a robust, professional LinkedIn profile**
 - a. Your profile should have a professional quality head shot that is appropriate for your vocational space. Headshots can be taken in the Piper Center - schedule an appointment by emailing: piper.center@stolaf.edu.
 - b. Your profile summary presents the space to express your vocational and career vision to others. It is also an opportunity to highlight any significant experiences. Take your time to develop a summary that will stand out, capture who you are, and help the reader understand your goals.
 - c. Include details for each experience. This can be in narrative form, bullet points, or a hybrid - be complete, yet concise. Experience can be work, internships, etc.
 - d. Consider whether having additional profile sections would make sense for you.

These could include: volunteering, skills, and/or accomplishments.

- e. Upload a copy of your resume as a document.
- f. Follow at least 5 groups, companies, organizations, news sites, or other entities related to your vocational interests.
- g. Once your draft profile is complete, have it reviewed by a Peer Advisor in the Piper Center.
- h. Optional: Attend a LinkedIn workshop sponsored by the Piper Center or meet with a peer advisor if you need helping getting started.
- i. Optional: Upload videos, other photos, presentations, work products, portfolios, and other media
- j. Resource: <https://wp.stolaf.edu/pipercenter/how-to-guides/linkedin-guide/>

4. Explore Professional Interviewing Skills - SUBMIT IN MOODLE

- a. Attend an interview skills workshop presented by the Piper Center. Workshop schedule will be shared at the start of the fall semester.
-OR-
If you have an actual pending job interview, you may satisfy this requirement by completing a mock interview with a Piper Center coach. In advance of your interview, it is recommended that you email the coach a copy of your resume and a sample job or internship position description that is within your vocational interests.
- b. Write a 1-2 paragraph reflection on the experience, including how you perceived your interview skills before and after. - SUBMIT IN MOODLE
- c. Resource: <https://wp.stolaf.edu/pipercenter/how-to-guides/interview-guide/>

5. Participate in at least one Piper Center program or an off-campus career-related event (in-person or virtual): Write a 1-2 paragraph reflection on why you chose the event and how it benefited (or will benefit) you. - SUBMIT IN MOODLE

- a. Examples: Ole Suite Event (Biz, Law+Policy, Health, Arts, Social Impact, or STEM), Showcase Events, Connections Program, Service Expo, or Minnesota's Private Colleges Job and Internship Fair.
- b. Professional associations often have events and workshops. Check Handshake for opportunities hosted by employers as well.
- c. Other programs may be offered that suit your particular vocational interests.

6. Coursework and Skills Reflection - SUBMIT IN MOODLE

- a. Choose 2-3 courses in your major and 2-3 outside of your major to highlight. Provide the name of each course and a brief paragraph on how each course has helped you advance towards your vocational vision.
- b. Transferable professional skills are sought after by employers and are important to

communicating your fit for a job. List at least 5 transferable skills you have developed that are related to your vocational vision and a sentence or two about why you chose that skill and how it is relevant. Consider the broad variety of transferable skills that you have developed throughout your liberal arts career. Be sure these skills are included in your LinkedIn profile. Consider “endorsing” skills on your peer’s profiles.

c. *Resource:*

<https://wp.stolaf.edu/pipercenter/how-to-guides/resume-guide/transferable-skills/>

7. **Upload a resume** that has been reviewed by a Peer Advisor or Coach in the Piper Center.

a. Make sure your most recent resume is uploaded on LinkedIn.

b. *Resource:* <https://wp.stolaf.edu/pipercenter/how-to-guides/resume-guide/>

8. **Maintaining Connections. Reconnect with at least 2 professional contacts with whom you’ve connected in the last year. Write a 1-3 paragraph reflection focusing on how the conversation and/or relationship evolved in your second interaction. - SUBMIT IN MOODLE**

a. Reconnect with at least 2 professional contacts with whom you’ve connected this past year. You may choose to update your contacts on a job search, plans for grad school, or seek their advice on any of these topics.

b. This does not have to be from your informational interviews completed earlier for this project but can, and often is, with contacts from prior internship experience(s), on-campus jobs, or any other professional contacts you have made in the past few years.

c. This is an opportunity to practice maintaining and moving forward connections and professional relationships following your initial meeting. This is an important step to improve your networking savvy, build your credibility, and nurture a productive professional relationship.