

2025 Fall Conference - September 24, 2025

This year's theme is Seeking Collaborative Opportunities

Registration will begin August 4, 2025, and details will be available in the August Newsletter and on the OSURA website in early August. This year's registration fee remains \$35.00 and includes a light breakfast and lunch! Below are the sessions currently planned for the conference.

Keynote Address

Reflections - Dr. E. Gordon Gee

Having served five universities, two of them twice (The Ohio State University and West Virginia University), for 45 years, President Gee announced his retirement at the end of the academic year 2025. He will join us to talk about what he has learned over those 45 years about higher education and, more importantly, the challenges facing higher education in this tumultuous time and how public universities can not only survive but thrive. Dr. Gee always enjoys having an opportunity to hear other people's comments and answer questions from the floor. He looks forward to a lively exchange of ideas.

Breakout Sessions

Predicting Addiction: The Ethics of Genetic Testing for Opioid Use Disorder - Dana Howard, Assistant Professor, Division of Bioethics, Department of Biomedical Education and Anatomy, College of Medicine and Department of Philosophy, will discuss the ethical challenges of implementing an emerging tool to address the opioid overdose crisis in the US: the use of genetic testing for substance use disorder.

Who Are the Amish and Why Are They Growing So Fast? – Joe Donnermeyer, Professor Emeritus/Academy Professor, OSU Emeritus Academy School of Environment and Natural Resources, will discuss the Amish, one of the fastest growing religious sects, if not the fastest, in North American society. This presentation will introduce key features of the Amish associated with both their population and community growth.

The Changing Landscape of Collegiate Athletics – Ross Bjork, Senior Vice President & Wolfe Foundation – Eugene Smith Endowed Director of Athletics, will discuss how college athletics continues to undergo transformative changes, reshaping the student-athlete experience and the

industry at large. This session will explore how Ohio State has evolved and continues to lead in collegiate athletics.

Fraud Basics: The Scams Landscape: Staying Safe - Reina Sims, Associate State Director, Outreach and Advocacy, AARP Ohio, will discuss fraud. Have you ever been approached with a fraudulent offer or been a victim of identity theft? The AARP Fraud Watch Network is working to empower you in the fight, with proven resources and tools to help you spot and avoid identity theft and fraud. By taking a few practical steps, you have the power to fight against fraud. This session will arm you with the latest data on fraud trends and provide tips and resources to protect yourself and your family.

Dementia...the Latest in Diagnosis, Treatment and Research – Douglas Scharre, Director of the Division of Cognitive Neurology at The Ohio State University, Head of the Memory Disorders Research Center and Professor, Department of Neurology will share the latest in dementia diagnosis and treatment including Alzheimer's Disease research. The SAGE Cognitive Assessment Tool will also be administered to those who want to participate.

Gardening for Continual Color Year-Round – Laura Deeter, Professor of Practice – OSU Horticulture and Crop Science, Sandy and Andy Ross Endowed Director, Chadwick Arboretum and Learning Gardens will show that creating pleasing color combinations in your garden doesn't have to be difficult or overwhelming. Learn how to combine plants and color to have something interesting in your garden year-round.

Food Myths, Truth, and Misinformation – Daniel Do, Kartik Verma, Evita Maitland, Graduate Research Assistants, OSU Food Science, will highlight current hot topics concerning food (GMO, ultra processed foods and health implications, food preparation methods and their implications, etc.) They will discuss the truths and misconceptions, their concerns, and how to navigate/sift through the plethora of information from media to be best informed.

Ohio Weather – Just Wait a Minute - Ben Gelber, Storm Team 4 Meteorologist, NBC4, WCMH-TV will discuss factors that influence weather in the Heartland. The program will consider observed changes in temperature, precipitation and snowfall patterns in the past half-century.

A Century of Service: WOSU Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow - Tom Rieland and Anthony Padgett, former WOSU General Manager and current WOSU General Manager, will give a unique overview covering the past, present and future of 103-year-old WOSU Public Media. WOSU's legacy started with groundbreaking wireless experiments on the OSU campus. Today it encompasses radio, television and digital service providing exceptional content and experiences to the citizens of Central Ohio.

How to Volunteer for a Research Project at OSU - Mary Becker, Program Manager for the Recruitment and Retention Services program at The Ohio State University Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI) will discuss how scientific progress depends on successful recruitment and retention of participants in research studies. It is well established that without volunteers there will be no research. Without research, there will be no progress. If

you have a desire to contribute to the success of research by volunteering as a research study participant, join Mary Becker for an educational and informative session on how to get started.

Ohio State Kindness Initiative: Spreading Buckeye Love – Tracy L. Stuck, Assistant Vice President for The Office of Student Life, The Ohio State University will discuss the Ohio State Kindness Initiative. Ohio State is deeply committed to cultivating a culture of kindness. Led by the Office of Student Life, the Kindness Initiative offers a variety of programs and resources designed to inspire and support students, staff, faculty, alumni, and the broader community. In this session, you'll learn about the vision behind the Kindness Initiative and Buckeye Love and discover how these efforts are brought to life year-round through meaningful acts, signature events, and ongoing engagement.

Metro Schools: Scaffolding Society's Problem-Solvers - Corey Neugebauer, District Special Projects Coordinator, will discuss Metro Schools, a non-selective, cost-free open district promoting an intimate, vibrant, and highly diverse learning community. Metro was initiated in 2006 as a synergy between the Ohio State University, Battelle Memorial Institute, and the Franklin County Education Council. Using a STEM problem-solving and project-based curriculum, Metro scaffolds an early-college and professional experience via a challenging and supportive Mastery system. Starting as a High School, Metro then added a Middle School in 2013 and is very excited to start the Elementary School in August 2025 to bring the total enrollment of students being served to approximately 1250 across the Central Ohio area. Metro hopes to be a "Small School with a Big Footprint".

Leaving Your Home? Some Considerations for Next Steps - Jane Acri, Community Education Program Manager, Central Ohio Office on Aging and Emily Smith-Conlon, Director of Marketing, Friendship Village of Dublin, will be joined by 3 OSURA members who have made a move (Jerry Newsom, Diane Selby, and Meg Teaford) to discuss the many options to consider when moving out of your long time home and selecting a new home. Hear about their experiences and be better able to tackle this job.

OPERS – An OPERS representative will provide financial and statistical information for 2025. Things to keep your eye on.

STRS Ohio Member Benefits Update - Christina Elliott, MPA, STRS Ohio Deputy Executive Director – Benefits/Chief Benefits Officer will discuss the benefit structure for STRS Ohio members. This structure has been adjusted due to the Sustainable Benefit Plan. Ms. Elliott will provide an update on the benefit adjustments over the years (retirement eligibility, health care coverage/premiums, and COLAs). She will provide an update on how STRS Ohio staff are navigating supporting members through these changes and how members can utilize STRS Ohio tools to support them in their retirement and preparedness for their retirement as well. This will also cover the vision Ms. Elliott has for the member experience both during their careers and during their retirement.

Making Technology Work for You – Elizabeth Gauen, ATP Rehabilitation Engineer and Certified Assistive Technology Professional and Amy Piekosz, OTD, OTR/L Occupational Therapist, will

discuss various options of commercially available assistive technologies, such as smart home devices, 3D printing and adaptations to phones and computers. They will discuss how these technologies can help you remain independent in your current environment.

Lunch Musical Event

Men's Glee Club– Robert Ward Club, Director of Choral Studies at The Ohio State University, and conductor of the Men's Glee Club and Chorale will discuss the inner workings of the Men's Glee Club! Topics will include audition procedures (witness a live audition), structure of student leadership, and watching the Men's Glee Club process of teaching and learning a new piece of music.

Optional Conference Tours

Conference Tours are only \$10 and will depart the Fawcett Center following the end of the breakout sessions. Sessions typically fill but a waitlist will be kept for full sessions.

CFAES Department of Food Science and Technology – Learn about the exciting research and development on this tour of their facility. Food scientists are “foodies” who use chemistry, biology, and engineering, and graduates perform research, develop innovative new products, and market to the world.

Orton Geology Museum – The very popular museum tour is located in iconic Orton Hall and will include viewing fascinating rare items including dinosaurs and fossils. Early sign-up is encouraged for this popular option!

Monda Resource Center Located in the Younkin Success Center– This is an exciting new student resource that was inspired by OSU's Kindness Initiative. See the Center's support services including Buckeye Food Alliance, Reid Family Career Closet (professional interviewing attire), Emergency Financial Assistance, Support for Parenting Students, Community Resources, and Housing information.