U-Engage Application FAQs

Q: What is the selection committee looking for in applications?

A: Strong applications contain a clear, well defined compelling question or real world issue that will be of interest to first-year students. Applicants with strong academic and/or personal backgrounds to support students in their exploration of the topic are also considered highly. Demonstrated knowledge of and commitment to working with and on behalf of first-year students also makes for a strong application.

Q: What makes for a compelling question or real-world problem?

A: Strong questions and problems are generally ones new students, or at least a small population of them, have been confronted with time and time again in their personal lives, the media, and other venues. If you are able, ask high school or first-year students what compelling questions they think about often or would be interested in pursuing more in-depth. Also, feel free to check out the list of previously accepted courses for guidance.

Q: Does my class need to be appealing to all new students?

A: No it does not. The U-Engage selection committee is always looking to provide a wide variety of topics within our U-Engage offerings in order to reach a diverse audience of students. While your course does not need to be universally appealing, it should be something that more than a handful of students would be interested in.

Q: Can I teach a U-Engage class designed for a specific student population (ex. international students, first-generation students, students in the College of Business, etc.)?

A: U-Engage sections cannot be restricted to students based on any specific demographic or academic factors. Instructors can design a course that may be of particular interest to specific student populations, but they must be prepared to teach the course with a wide variety of students.

Q: Can my course’s compelling question be “How can I be successful in college?” or “How can I learn about all the great resources at OSU?” or “How can I choose the best career for me?”

A: The short answer is no. Each U-Engage course invariably contains material that helps students to investigate this question and learn about campus resources and support systems, but it should not be the central question upon which your course is based. ALS 116 is a course offered at OSU that focuses specifically on academic success strategies and ALS 114 focused on career exploration, thus it is not the goal of U-Engage to duplicate these efforts.

Q. What resources or specialized training will I receive (if any) as a U-Engage instructor?

A. New U-Engage instructors receive training to assist them in working with and on behalf of first-year students. This includes some basic student development theory, specifically around the transition to college and also an introduction
of many of the resources and support services first-year students need most often. Additional training focused on course design is provided during late spring term and/or summer.

Q. Is preference given to returning instructors or courses?

A. Preference is given towards strong course applications. Previous experience working with first-year students, through U-Engage or other experiences helps strengthen an application, but is not absolutely required. Applications are blindly reviewed to further give preference to strong applications.