

INTO OSU

# CACP NEWSLETTER



## Cultural Ambassador Conversant Program

Dear Volunteers,

Hello from the INTO OSU team! We want to say **THANK YOU** to each and every one of you for registering as a CACP partner. Without your participation, enthusiasm, and dedication to our international students, this opportunity simply wouldn't exist.

This document is designed to give you some ideas for talking points. Use it as you see fit.

Please keep in touch and let me know if you have any questions, comments, and concerns.

All the best,

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## STAY CONNECTED:

Check out our  
**Activities Calendar:**  
[intoosu.oregonstate.edu/  
events](https://intoosu.oregonstate.edu/events)

## Follow us on Instagram:

Follow us on Instagram  
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announcements and  
updates.



@intooregonstate



**Oregon State**  
University

# What's your favorite ...?

## *Food & Leisure*

**Food** is incredibly important in nearly every culture around the world and is an easy conversation starter for how to share your culture. We encourage you all to think what role food plays in your life, whether it be family traditions, specific foods for cultural events, bringing together community, etc.

**Leisure** is a revealed preference of what we love! How we spend our valuable free time shows what our interests are! Knowing what your partner(s) likes to do, to learn, to see, and/or to explore will help the conversation flow better focus suggestions or ideas you can give them!



*Oregon is well-known for its fresh and locally-grown produce*

### Helpful Language Hint!

Volunteers, try using open-ended questions to naturally and conversationally check that your partner understands what you're asking.

Common follow-up questions start with *wh-* like: *who, what, when, where, and why?*

If students struggle to answer your question, rephrase and ask it more simply. Or, side-step and ask a different question to 'build' understanding to the original question.

### Food Conversation Starters:

1. Are you a fussy eater?
2. Do you care where the food you eat comes from?
3. What national dishes from your countries would you recommend?
4. How has your taste in food changed over time?
5. What food is your guilty pleasure?
6. What was the last meal you cooked?
7. What's your perfect breakfast?
8. Is anyone in your family vegetarian?
9. How healthy is your diet?
10. What food would you like to try?

### Leisure Conversation Starters:

1. What do you like to do in your free time?
2. Do you have any hobbies?
3. How did you learn or train for your hobby?
4. Who do you like to spend your free time with?
5. Do you prefer to be outside or indoors?
6. Do you think it's important to have an active social life?
7. If you could learn any new skill, what would it be and why?
8. What is your 'dream leisure day'?

# What's your favorite ...?

## *Holidays & Special Occasions*

**Holidays and special occasions** help maintain culture and shape us as individuals. Regardless of your beliefs or upbringing, many celebrations remind us of warm memories. We invite you to share these memories and traditions with your partner!



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### **Holiday & Special Occasion Conversation Starters:**

1. Are holidays or special occasions celebrated in your culture? If so, what is your favorite one?
2. Who do you spend holidays or special occasions with?
3. Are there any traditions that you like best from your culture?
4. Is there a holiday you are excited to celebrate or see celebrated in the U.S. and/or Oregon?
5. Is there a special food that goes with holidays and special occasions? If so, what is it?
6. Do you think holidays should be celebrated in schools?
7. How will you celebrate during the COVID-19 quarantine?
8. Is it important for you to celebrate holidays or special events?

# What's your favorite ...?

## Music

**Music** can be a great way to explore a culture, including many different subcultures that may listen to different types of music.

### **Does music make you smarter?**

Reports show that learning music, studying while listening to music, and singing while studying are all correlated to higher test scores because music 'lights up the whole brain'.<sup>1</sup> In fact, there's all sorts of benefits to music!

Ask your partner if they enjoy listening to music while they work and/or study and what type. Maybe it's the same as yours!



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### **Music Conversation Starters:**

1. Who is a singer that you like?
2. What kind of music do you like?
3. How has your music taste changed as you've got older?
4. Are there any types of music you don't enjoy?
5. What's the best concert you've been to?
6. What was the best decade for music?
7. What was the first single or album that you bought?
8. Do you like modern pop music? Who do you like?
9. How often do you buy music and where do you buy it from?
10. How do you discover new music? i.e., YouTube, Spotify, Apple Music, suggestions from friends & family

### **Did you know...?**

The Corvallis-OSU Symphony Orchestra was established in 1906 and remains as the longest continually-running orchestra in the state of Oregon!

Check out more at:  
<https://cosusymphony.org/>

<sup>1</sup> Suomen Akatemia (Academy of Finland). "Listening to music lights up the whole brain." ScienceDaily. ScienceDaily, 6 December 2011. <[www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2011/12/111205081731.htm](http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2011/12/111205081731.htm)>.

# How do you practice *self-care*?

**Self-care** has become a popular term in recent years to hi-lite the importance of taking care of one's mental health.

In a time where life can feel more stressful than normal, how are you and your partner staying calm and centered? What can you recommend each other? This is a great opportunity to explore cultural expectations of self-care and share opportunities within OSU and Corvallis!



*Treat yourself to a local coffee in Corvallis*

## SELF-CARE SUGGESTIONS:

Encourage your partner to utilize services on campus such as the **Dixon Recreational Center** and **CAPS (Counseling & Psychological Services)**.

These are both run by student fees that your partner(s) have already paid for!

Other self-care options to explore could be: community yoga classes,

## Self-care Conversation Starters:

1. Is the idea of self-care popular in your culture?
2. Do you think self-care is important? Why or why not?
3. How do you or how would you like to practice self-care?
4. How do you think self-care impacts mental health?
5. How have you been practicing self-care during COVID-19 and quarantine? Do you think you could improve this?
6. What are you excited to try [related to self-care] once social distancing restrictions change?
7. Do you think it's important or appropriate to put your own self-care above someone else's? Why or why not?
8. What changes would you like to make in your day-to-day life?

# What is your *dream job*?

## How a country does business

can be an interesting way to explore different parts of culture that may not as obvious. Every place has their own practices and what careers tend to look like.

Steady employment is the goal for most university students. Talk to your partner about *why* they chose the OSU to study, *what* they study, and *how* they plan to use that degree.



## Business & Career Conversation Starters:

1. What's the biggest company in your country?
2. Have you ever worked for a big company?
3. Are there any companies you would like to work for?
4. Do you have a business card?
5. Are there any state owned businesses in your country?
6. Would you like to start your own company?
7. What kinds of businesses might have trouble surviving in the future?
8. Are there any companies you don't like about which you have to use?
9. Are there any companies you wouldn't work for?
10. Do many people own stocks and shares in your country?

Check out the **OSU Career Development Center's** website for information and event updates.

<https://career.oregonstate.edu/>



# How do you spend your time *outside*?



Take your partner outside! As you know, Corvallis is known for its plethora of outdoor activities and trails that are easily accessible.

Suggestions include: Bald Hill, Chip Ross, Willamette Park trails, and Jackson Frazier Wetland.

I also recommend that students download the AllTrails app to their phone for more options and guidance.

## **Outdoor, Environmental, & About Oregon Conversation Starters:**

1. What do you like to do outside?
2. Did you play on a playground growing up? What was your favorite piece of playground equipment?
3. How do you try to save energy?
4. Are outdoor activities popular in your country? If so, what activities are popular?
5. What parks or other natural areas have you been to in Oregon?
6. When you travel on vacation, what is your favorite outdoor activity?
7. Have environmental concerns changed the way you travel?
8. How do environmental concerns influence what you buy?
9. What do you think future generations will think about how we treat the environment today?
10. Have you noticed changes in the climate in your lifetime?