



HOME ABOUT US NEW STUDENTS ACADEMICS STUDENT LIFE ATHLETICS ALUMNI

featured section links

Interactive
Campus Map

Olivet College
Compact

Contact Us

QUICK LINKS

THE OLIVET PLAN

Students at Olivet College engage with faculty and staff in an exciting educational program called *The Olivet Plan*. The plan's purpose is to implement the college's academic vision of *Education for Individual and Social Responsibility*.

The Olivet Plan is based on the college's historical mission of offering education to all, regardless of race or ethnicity, sex or economic status. It seeks to help students integrate learning from the full range of their experiences, engage in active learning both inside and outside the classroom, and take genuine responsibility for their own learning.

At Olivet College, we seek to place equal emphasis on engaging, challenging and supporting our students.

The Olivet Plan includes the following components:

- ▶ [Liberal Arts Concentration](#)
- ▶ [Learning Communities](#)
- ▶ [Lecture and Symposium Series](#)
- ▶ [Portfolio Assessment](#)
- ▶ [Senior Experience](#)
- ▶ [Service Learning](#)

In addition, *The Olivet Plan* includes some important changes to our academic calendar. Wednesdays have been reserved for activities that cannot be accommodated easily within regularly scheduled classes. In addition, the calendar includes a late spring three and one half (3.5) week Intensive Learning Term (ILT) during which students may enroll in only one course. The ILT allows students and faculty to pursue special projects on and off campus free of conflicts with other course obligations.

[BACK TO TOP](#) ▲

Liberal Arts Core Curriculum

Courses in the Liberal Arts Core Curriculum at Olivet College infuse the concept of individual and social responsibility to maximize student achievement of the learning outcomes. The curriculum consists of a sequence of required courses providing common learning and shared experiences for all undergraduates. Thematically linked courses are delivered through a variety of formats and teaching/learning styles including integrated, cross-disciplinary teams and collaborative teaching. Active and integrative learning are key features. The courses of the Liberal Arts Core Curriculum link skills, orientations, learning outcomes and competencies with Olivet's academic vision of Education for Individual and Social Responsibility. Liberal Arts Core courses explore the relationships between individual and social responsibility in the context of one's personal and social identities and the bonds of human similarity, as well as the wealth of human diversity.

Core courses encompass the traditional disciplines of the liberal arts: Writing and Rhetoric I and II; Civilization Studies; Self and Community; Mathematics; the Natural World; Creative Experience; and Global Diversity. Additionally, the core curriculum requires at least one course involving service learning and a senior experience course in the major, serving as a capstone course for the student. The various components of the Liberal Arts Core Curriculum are described below.

Writing and Rhetoric I and II

Developing effective writing skills is the main focus of these courses. Reading, speaking and listening are approached as skills necessary in the communication process and in the process of critical thinking from which writing is developed.

Civilization Studies

This course provides training in research and geography with the study of major ideals, events and personalities from recorded history. The examination of social institutions is designed to enhance student skills in political analysis and critical thinking in the context of the study of world civilizations.

Self and Community

In this course, students engage in self evaluation and the process of socialization. The course covers individual and social responsibility, ethical/moral character, spiritual/philosophical self-awareness, social identity groups, and the role of diversity in the world. This course assists students in becoming more sophisticated about themselves and the world.

Mathematics

Students successfully complete a course in mathematics at the 120 level or higher, or a course in another department which has a substantial quantitative component and has been pre-approved by Mathematics and Computer Science Department faculty.

The Natural World

Students enroll in a science course engaging critical thinking via the scientific method, selected from a list of courses.

Creative Experience

Students have the opportunity to participate in an experiential course, selected from a list of courses, in one of the humanistic disciplines of literature, music, theatre or visual art.

Global Diversity

The college's Global Diversity requirement reflects the Olivet commitment to provide a liberal arts education that prepares our students to effectively participate as responsible citizens in a global context. Students are able to choose any six semester hours of courses from a list which allow them to explore diversity in a global context, including cross-cultural studies, language studies, and immersion experiences in cultures beyond the predominant cultural environment of the United States, as well as explorations of diversity within our pluralistic society.



NEWS & EVENTS

▶ Olivet College set for Service Day Sept. 28 (Sep 21, 2011)

▶ Olivet College Humanities Department to host book signing (Sep 21, 2011)

▶ Olivet College's Byrd to present lecture on massacre in Norway (Sep 16, 2011)

[>>> More News](#)

BACK TO TOP 

Learning Communities

The goals of this element of *The Olivet Plan* are to encourage students to assume responsibility for their own learning and engage in active learning beyond the confines of the classroom. Learning communities are designed to allow students to explore important themes and issues through interactions with each other and with experts from beyond campus.

Course-based learning communities consist of cohorts of students who enroll concurrently in two or three different but thematically linked courses. For example, students may enroll in courses in biology, economics and art, all linked thematically to the issue of the natural environment. Work in the two or three courses is supplemented by enrichment activities that extend beyond the boundaries of the classroom into the broader community.

Enrichment activities are organized through the active participation of the students themselves with the team of faculty serving as facilitators. Participation in learning communities is optional, but many students who choose learning communities say they enjoyed and benefited from their experiences.

BACK TO TOP 

Lecture and Symposium Series

In addition to course-based Learning Communities, Olivet provides an ongoing Lecture and Symposium series to link the entire college as a learning community. This ongoing series is held on Wednesdays during the academic year to explore the many dimensions of individual and social responsibility.

Excerpts from especially noteworthy lectures and proceedings are published periodically and distributed to individuals and organizations within higher education and in the broader community.

BACK TO TOP 

Portfolio Program

The goal of the portfolio program is to assist students in taking responsibility for their education through a process of self-assessment, educational planning and goal-setting, and development of individual portfolios demonstrating learning, competency and achievement.

The portfolio program helps students develop a commitment to learning beyond individual courses and course grades. It helps them develop the ability to integrate learning from the full range of learning experiences, including involvement in co-curricular activities. The long-term involvement with a mentor and cohort group allows students to establish relationships that will help them succeed at Olivet College and in the future.

Beginning in the first year, and continuing until the student's graduation portfolio is completed, every student enrolls in a required one semester hour major seminar conducted by a faculty mentor. Unlike other courses, a failing grade in any major seminar cannot be replaced by a passing grade in any subsequent semester. In these seminars, students compile a portfolio of their best work to date that addresses each of the five broad areas of learning outcomes and work with their advisor, and participate in career and professional preparation. The portfolio serves to demonstrate that every student is progressing toward his or her educational goals and plans.

Portfolios are evaluated by faculty mentors each semester. Additionally, formal validation of student competency occurs as a student presents himself or herself for graduation.

BACK TO TOP 

Senior Experience

The Senior Experience is a culminating educational experience required of every student. Its goal is to ensure that all students will summarize and synthesize four years of undergraduate learning as they prepare for their future. The experience serves to complete a student's general education and to assist them in making the transition from college.

A part of *The Olivet Plan*, the Senior Experience advances the distinctiveness and purposefulness of the academic vision *Education for Individual and Social Responsibility*. The Senior Experience includes: 1) A clear demonstration of the link between general education and major course of study; 2) Preparation for the transition from college (student teaching and professional experience will meet this requirement); 3) Clear articulation of how the student explored the issue of individual and social responsibility during their entire college experience.

Each student will document the three Senior Experience elements in his or her portfolio. The Senior Experience is a general education requirement that is rooted in the major. It addresses both college-wide and major-specific learning objectives, and should be validated by the student's entire portfolio committee.

Each major specifies the course that meets the Senior Experience requirement.

BACK TO TOP 

Service Learning

Olivet's goal is to provide a course-based Service Learning Project that will address community needs while at the same time instilling in our students the ethic of *Education for Individual and Social Responsibility*. The college-wide Service Learning requirement combines first-hand community service experience with careful and extensive reflection on that experience.

Although community service is in itself a worthy activity, the main purpose of the Service Learning requirement is to enhance the student's learning by participating in this active, community-based pedagogy.

At least once during their undergraduate experience, students at Olivet are required to complete a three semester hour service learning course offered by an academic department. Each Service Learning course requires students to spend a minimum of 40 hours serving the needs of the community. Such service is accompanied by reflection on that experience.

Certain majors and programs have integrated the Service Learning requirement into the structure of their courses. In such cases, students meet the requirement simply by completing the major or program. Other students take at least one course designated to satisfying the Service Learning requirement.

320 S. Main St. • Olivet, MI 49076 • 1-800-456-7189