How do you define yourself? We often say our fields of study are our passions, but college gives us permission to make them extensions of ourselves. As much as our studies are about preparing for life in the world abroad, they are also about knowing our skills and ourselves. Understanding is a thing to be sought, an ideal that is not just found in the classroom, but beyond.
Q: What kind of teaching do you do?
I teach second grade, which means I’m planning all the subjects of the day, from the morning routines, which begin with the pledge of allegiance, to their intervention times, their phonics, their reading, their mathematics, their science; everything. I’ll have full control as a teacher for about eight weeks. The three teachers that we’re student teaching for all work very closely together, so we do our lesson planning together as a whole.

Q: What are you hoping to teach in the future?
Older elementary, fifth or sixth grade. I actually applied for fifth grade, but got placed in second for student teaching. I’ll be endorsed in middle school English, which would be a lot of fun if that was thrown my way.

Shae Mowry

Q: What got you interested in teaching?
My middle school history teacher was awesome. His name was Mr. Fulton. This guy, for earth day, he brought in cantaloupes and he laid mats down, and in order to demonstrate the earth’s tectonic plates, he smashed the fruit with a hammer, pieces are flying all over the place, and he would use the bits to explain how the plates work. There was one day where he was talking about Paul Revere. He grabs the broom out of his closet, runs down the Eighth Grade hallway, singing “The British are Coming!” An English Teacher comes out of her room and she looks really angry, but he doesn’t care. He always graded in green—green’s my favorite color—so I always grade in green too. I kind of model after him.

Valerie Erickson

Q: What is your favorite part about student teaching?
I love working with the kids, being that positive influence in their lives. My class is a very rough class; home life is horrible for most of them. Just being that positive influence, getting them to learn and be excited—to show God’s light to them—love on them, show that there’s an adult that can give good feedback and positive encouragement. I like seeing them learn and “get that lightbulb” too.

Tai Peachey

Q: What does a typical day look like in your classroom?
I’m in a fourth grade class at Bradley West right now, and I love it. I get up pretty early because I like to be prepared. When I get to school, there’s planning and printing that I have to do. I don’t have my own printer pass, because I’m not a teacher, so I have to do all my printing in the morning—which stinks, because I’d prefer to do it days before—but overall it’s fine, because I get there early enough. Then I get the classroom ready for the kids to come in. When the bell rings in the morning I’m there to greet them at the door. I love to see them in the morning and say their name and pat them on the back. When the day gets started, the first thing I do is social studies, and it’s like a block system, so I do P.E., library, computer, art, and then I teach social studies. Then I have a planning period, then I teach math and reading. Then they have lunch, then science, then grammar. And that’s the day!
Right: Professor Greiner demonstrated watercolor techniques for the beginning watercolor students.

Below: Vittoria Miulli drew a rough sketch of the image she wanted to paint before actually putting paint down on the paper.

Above: The beginning watercolor class started by working landscapes. Many of the students used personal photographs to help inspire their pieces.

Above: Kristy Kjell concentrated intently on editing a photograph while in Photoshop class.
Seek Inspiration

Below: Kerry Stryzewski worked on her watercolor painting by putting masking fluid down to protect the areas she wanted to preserve.

Above: Junior Lindsay Hathaway worked with oil paint, legos and newspaper on canvas to create a multicolored masterpiece.

Olivet’s art and digital media classrooms are located in lower-level Larsen and the computer labs of the Communications Department. Students can be found there working on projects in their classrooms at all hours of the day or putting away finished art work in their lockers for safe keeping. Freshman Luke Wright has brought his passion for art all the way from Delaware. “I prayed about it a lot and God just really led me here.” Macy Thomas, another freshman, has her own inspiration: her dad, Olivet’s own Professor Gary Thomas. “Both of my drawing classes are taught by him,” she said. “He’s not weird about it or anything. Growing up I would watch him draw all the time and I thought, ‘Wow, that’s really cool!’” Although her dad has been influential, Macy has made art her own with her concentration in graphic design.

Senior Taylor Cole is an example of where Olivet’s art department can lead you. With a concentration in photography, Taylor has worked for Olivet’s marketing department and hopes to get a similar job after graduation. The most important message she has taken away from her fantastic professors is what it means to be a Christian artist. “Sometimes it’s hard to associate those two together. You think of Christian artists painting crosses and Jesus fishes, but it doesn’t always have to be like that. You can glorify God without being super cliché and cheesy.” She plans to live out this message in both her personal and professional photography outside of Olivet. “There’s a lot of ways to minister to people through art, whether or not you’re making something specifically Christian.”
Dr. Veit, the advisor for Psi Chi and a Psychology professor, opened the Psi Chi with an ice breaker game. Each field of study included at Olivet has its own signature mark. The Behavioral Sciences department is marked by learning to care for the mind. “A pastor once told me that my calling was to be “a Christian cleverly disguised as a psychologist,”” said Professor Kristian Veit. “This is much deeper than simply teaching psychology from a Christian perspective. Sure, we look at psychological content through the lens of Scripture in our classes, and we are intentional in asking the Lord to guide our understanding; however, all that I do as a professor, not just the delivery of content, should be influenced by who I am in Christ.”

“I love being able to have God as the focus of things,” said senior Ryan Covarrubias. “You’re able to learn everything from both sides that way.”

“My hopes are that the students would work hard, learn much, have fun, stay humble, serve others, and ultimately realize just how much they are cared for by us professors and—more importantly—by God Himself,” shared Professor Veit. Psi Chi, the Psychology Honor Society, also keeps members of the Behavioral Sciences department active in their fields.

“We plan social events that allow psychology majors and minors to meet and build relationships with [each other],” explained senior and Treasurer Peter Jensen. “These events include things like our fall bonfire, and our Psi Chi initiation night.”

Involvement in a department’s respective honor society provides members with many opportunities on campus and within the field. “This opportunity has allowed me to work closely with my peers and professors. Through Psi Chi, I have gotten to know more about psychology, as well as the students within the major,” said junior and President Holly Billiter. “Involvement in Psi Chi has allowed me to better market myself for future employers. Also, simply speaking with peers has shown me the many opportunities in the field of psychology.”

Above: At the Psi Chi introduction event, students received a paper and had to find other students who met certain characteristics. Nadia Skrzecz and Ariel Grainger discussed which of the characteristics they fit. (photo submitted)
Dr. Pearabeau, one of the Sociology professors, discussed the topic of the
distribution of goods and services in a society in Cultural Anthropology class.

The Psi Chi students and professors posed for a silly photograph at the annual Christmas Party.

Holly Billiter, the President of the Olivet Chapter of Psi Chi, had fun while playing a friendly
game of Quelf.

Psi Chi held a game night where students gathered in the Alumni house for a night of laughter
and fellowship with other students of the same major.
Right: Dr. Veld helped students dissect a cat to reinforce the concepts and information learned in Anatomy class.

Below: Alina Holliday, Lisa Rizzo, Megan Rogann, and Evelyn Unti participated in a contest where they turned a team member into a snowman at the Biophilic Christmas party. (photo submitted)

Above: Students carefully dissected their cat in order to get a better look at the muscle structure.

Right: Mary DeMent, Amy Brenner, Lisa Rizzo, Jonathan Elliott and Drew Frey played ring toss and got into the Christmas spirit at the Biophilic party. (photo submitted)
community service within the Biology department, Olivet's campus, and surrounding area, as well as understanding biology and the environment. To Senior Biology major Amy Brenner, Biophilic isn't just for Biology majors, but for "anyone who enjoys biology." Brenner is a member of the club because she likes getting together with other students who have the same passion for life science. "It's nice to be able to spend time doing fun activities outside of class together," said Brenner.

Brenner has "gained invaluable leadership skills from being on the Biophilic council and has created lasting friendships with others who have similar interests." Brenner joined the club because she knew other students who participated. She has been a part of the club for three years and on the council for two. Brenner said, "This opportunity has given me the chance to truly serve in the community and develop closer relationships with not only my peers, but also my professors." The beginning and end-of-the-year parties seem to be popular because "it's encouraging to see how much the club grows and changes in one academic year," explained Brenner.

Several members of the Biology Club also participate in the Kankakee River Clean Up each year, which has been a great experience for those members wanting to help the environment. This year, Biophilic plans on working alongside a few other science clubs on campus in an attempt to integrate the different departments. Most science majors are required to take lower level science classes together, but once they start taking higher-level courses, the students don't have many opportunities to spend time together. By combining club events, students from all science majors will be able to spend time outside of class getting to know each other better, connecting, and joining in fellowship.

Another goal for the 2014-2015 school year is for members of the club to make "professional connections with doctors who work in nearby hospitals and clinics and focus on volunteering in the community as a club," said club President Liza Rizzo. Olivet's Biology department is turning out students who have a solid background in math, are good at critical and analytical thinking, and enjoy applying facts learned in research. The department prepares students for post-graduation, as Olivet graduates "consistently exceed the national average when it comes to acceptance rates into graduate programs and medical school."

Biology students at Olivet have the opportunity to not only learn from a highly respected department faculty, but to take some of their own white blood cells to test, grow mammalian cells to study, and learn anatomy by using cadavers. The department also offers Healthcare Job Shadowing in which students "spend time with local healthcare professionals working in many different specialties." Junior biology student Nicole Whiting says, "The biology department is wonderful. All of the students and professors are close and genuinely care for one another. It's definitely a family."
Students in Olivet’s Business Department are trained to “shake up the corporate world and serve as an ambassador for Christ as they impact people, the planet, and profit with a degree in business.” The gifted department faculty teach students the skills that they need for a successful career in business. Students of all majors are invited to join Olivet’s nationally recognized Enactus team. Enactus is a “global, nonprofit organization active in 40 countries around the world and more than 800 universities in the United States. Enactus is the second largest student body organization in the world.”

The 2014-2015 Enactus team at Olivet has focused on winning grants, both on campus and off campus. The team’s main project is the Sewing Project in Swaziland, Africa, where members continue to help grow the business and teach sustainability.

In the fall semester, the team applied for a Women’s Empowerment grant through Walmart to be used to educate and empower women in the area. With the grant money, Enactus hosted a series of three classes at the local Pregnancy Resource Center, Center of Hope, and KC-CASA. They have taught business skills and have empowered the women to provide for their families. The team believes their efforts will have “sustainable results.”

The team also applied for Sam’s Club’s Small Business Grant, and once awarded the grant money, used it to work with Rooted Beauty, a natural skin care business backed by Olivet Alumnus Lindsay Peterson. With the funds, Enactus created a promotional video for the brand, set up market research in the store, created a marketing plan, and headed up advertising.

Current Enactus Co-Presidents Alex Blakely and Rebecca Crane would like to recognize Enactus Advisor Dr. Lynda Allen for her twelve years of service with the team. According to Blakely and Crane, Dr. Allen has “focused hundreds and hundreds of hours on Enactus.” Crane explained that a student that takes Enactus as a class is required to log 50 hours, however Dr. Allen exceeds that amount substantially. Blakely also explained that at ONU’s Enactus level, they would not be able to perform without her. At competition last year, the team made the top 50, which “wouldn’t have happened without her.” The Co-Presidents also added, “She brings a small school to the same level as the huge schools.”
Above: Enactus has partnered with Rooted Beauty, a natural skin care and beauty line, and have received 2 grants for a total of $1500 for the work that is being done to empower women who own businesses. (photo submitted)

Left: Several of the business students and Dr. Lynda Allen traveled to Swaziland where they helped with the Sewing Project. This was the first sewing machine and table that were purchased with a loan that was provided by Enactus. (photo submitted)

Below: The students within the business department have won countless awards and honors, proving that it is a top-notch program. (photo submitted)

Left: Each year, Enactus holds mock interview sessions where students can come and polish up their skills. Brittany Luchene took advantage of this opportunity to strengthen her interview skills.
Above: Dr. Beth Patrick-Tripple teaches students how to “Group and Label” when organizing their speeches.

Below: Students within the Communications Department reviewed videos to see how the concepts learned in lecture apply to speeches.

Far Below: Lambda Pi Eta holds an annual Halloween event called “Commies in Costumes” where members show up decked out in their most creative Halloween gear.
Communications Senior Seminar, a mandatory course for all students majoring in Communications, requires the students to give a senior speech. The process of preparing for and giving the speech was a difficult one, but for the first time since the creation of the course, every student passed their speech on the first try.

Encompassing Corporate Communications, Radio, Film Studies, Theatre, and Journalism, the Communications Department is preparing students to enter as professionals into many different fields. The Communications Department believes in the many types of communication, and how communication is the foundation for everything else. Whether it be communication via public speaking, radio, acting, film, or writing, the Communications Department has it all.

Whether it is dressing up for Halloween or joining together for a community service project, the Communications Honor Society is filled with great opportunities for students in the major. “Lambda likes to plan events that bring communications majors together. It’s about uniting members and creating time for us to get to know one another outside of class,” says Senior and society president Jessica Ellison. Lambda Pi Eta hosts the famous “Commies in Costumes” party every year: a chance for students to get together and show off their creative sides in Halloween costumes. The honor society also puts on their annual Comm Week, “a week of communications-themed events that are informal and fun.” Through all of their efforts, Lambda Pi Eta strives to show communication majors’ strengths and create pride within the field.
The Computer Science department includes three areas of study: Business Information Systems, Computer Science, and Information Systems.

Students who graduate with a degree in the Computer Science Department have many open doors following their time at Olivet including data processing, information technology, software sales and engineering, and much more!

The fun-loving students and faculty of the Computer Science department have a knack for languages: computer programming languages, that is. Freshman Brittnay Widdowson says, “A programming class that I took in high school made me realize that I really enjoy programming, and I have always been good with computers.” Anything can happen in the Computer Science department. Whatever it is that a person may want a computer to do, the students in the Computer Science department can probably make it happen!

Despite the wide array of options that programming makes possible, “Patience is key when you are sitting in front of a screen for hours working on one problem,” Widdowson comments. She continues, “Aside from spending hours finding the one missing semi-colon, we like to have fun.” Keeping fun as a focus can easily “turn an average lecture into 50 minutes of student interaction and laughter.” Classes on programming, computer hardware, and seminars prepare students in the Computer Science department for their futures in the field.
Left: Students in the Computer Science department learn through a variety of means including lecture and hands-on experience in the computer labs.

Below: Courses in the department cover a broad array of technologically-based information including programming, software design, web development, security issues, and other topics.

Far Above: Katelynn Schurman highlighted her notes to keep her thoughts organized.

Above: Roman Enrizzi, Caleb Brewer, and James Palmer pay attention to lecture material so they can demonstrate thorough understanding in later assignments.

Left: The Computer Science department can be found in the basement of Weber where students can access computer labs and other resources.
The School of Education at Olivet has undergone quite a few changes as of late, with the welcoming of Dean Robert Hull, the introduction of the iPad initiative, and the implementation of the edTPA being just a few examples.

“It is a privilege to be selected as the new Dean for the School of Education,” said Dr. Hull. “So far I have been impressed by the excellent quality of the faculty and staff at the School of Education, the friendliness of the students, and the high standard of the overall professional program offered to student teacher candidates at ONU. I’m appreciative of Dr. Upchurch and the many excellent faculty that have laid this impressive foundation for ONU’s School of Education. I am also appreciative of ONU’s administrative leadership who continue to provide resources that enhance these learning opportunities.”

Despite the adjustments that have been made to fulfill the new requirements of the edTPA for student teaching, Dr. Hull—as well as the rest of the professors within the School of Education—are hopeful that Olivet’s teacher candidates will continue fulfilling the department’s conceptual framework. “Our goal is that our teacher candidates will continue to be Professionals that Influence Lives,” shared Dr. Thomas Knowles.

In order to continue preparing and developing professionally, the education honor society Kappa Delta Pi organizes various events, such as socials and panels with teachers and principals, throughout the year for teacher candidates to participate in.

“The purpose of Kappa Delta Pi is to equip teachers with the best strategies to teach,” stated Kappa Delta Pi President Jessica Manning. “Events like the teacher and principal panels are opportunities to gain insight from the real world. Participating in Kappa Delta Pi’s council also offers great insight into educational leadership by working together with kindred spirits towards a goal.”

Whether in class or on a council, the candidates within Olivet’s School of Education are working hard to become professionals who influence lives.
Left: Kappa Delta Pi holds a Principal Panel each year, and invites local educators to come and interact with education students, share about their experiences, and answer questions.

Below: Student teaching candidates consult with Dr. Sara Spruce during the annual Kappa Delta Pi Principal Panel.

Far Above: The leaders of Kappa Delta Pi introduce the principals of area schools to kick off the annual Principal Panel.

Above: These teacher candidates came prepared to ask questions of the principals and administrators at the Kappa Delta Pi event.

Left: Amber DeYoung, Lindsey Hamlin, and Stacey Knoderer listen intently and take notes as they listen to the principals share their experiences.
While the field of education is one of Olivet’s largest areas of study, it also happens to be incredibly diverse. With so many different grade levels and content areas, there are countless opportunities to continue learning and growing as a future educator. Organizations such as the Student Education Association (SEA), the National Association of Music Educators (NAME), and the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) allow for such growth on campus and in the community.

The Student Education Association is a group that includes opportunities for all future educators on campus to get involved in their field and complete experience hours for portfolio requirements. “SEA has prepared me to be an educator by learning how to become a better leader,” said senior and SEA President Sarah Ready. “It has really gotten me involved in the department I’m majoring in. Furthermore, it has opened my eyes to many different types of school systems. By participating in our programs, I have seen how different schools operate and it has prepared me, the best that it can, for any type of school that I will be teaching in.”

The National Science Teachers Association’s mission, as shared by senior Ellie Jolly, is “to promote excellence and innovation in science teaching and learning for all.” As the Traveling Science Circus Coordinator, Jolly has been able to get a generous amount of hands-on experience with the promotion of science. “NSTA is involved in a variety of events,” said Jolly. “During homecoming, alums can leave their children in our care and we will teach science concepts and complete hands-on science activities with them. […] We also put on a number of events during the year; we travel to the area high schools, middle schools and elementary schools to help enrich learning. We judge science fairs and often have elementary schools come to campus for different activities. We also partner with the planetarium and give students hands on emphasis on concepts taught there. We participate in volunteer opportunities at the Illinois Science Teacher’s conference where we gain valuable skills, curriculum insight and sometimes even materials for our classrooms.”

The National Association of Music Educators also provides its members with a plethora of opportunities to get involved with students and gain experience. “We do all kinds of fun music activities. We are often asked to help usher at music events on campus. We have gone to Pembroke with Compassionate Ministries to do music activities with the kids there,” said senior President Cassandra Petrie. “I have been exposed to many different ideas and theories currently circulating the music education world and have also seen many different groups perform and have developed ideas of how I want to function in my future as a music educator.”
Left: Members of the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) gathered for a group photo after working hard to teach students about the beauty of science. These future educators take their calling to teach science very seriously and take every opportunity they can get to interact with students and gain experience in their field.

Move: The Student Education Association leaders and faculty representatives bring together students pursuing all areas of education and provides field experience opportunities to career-minded students.

Above: Dr. Aggie Veld led a NSTA event by explaining the activities and principles that would be learned. (photo submitted)

Far Above: NSTA members gained some practical experience by teaching some boyscouts chemistry principles using gumdrops and toothpicks. (photo submitted)
Olivet’s Engineering Department has many qualities to be proud of. Classes are taught by outstanding faculty, the curriculum emphasizes engineering fundamentals and relevant hands-on experience, and team projects prepare students for the workplace. The department offers degrees in Computer, Electrical, Geological, and Mechanical Engineering and is currently working on developing a Civil Engineering degree. The new engineering wing of Reed Hall of Science was officially dedicated during Homecoming Weekend, and the faculty and students are currently enjoying the beautiful facility and all of its resources. Furthermore, the Engineering Department prides itself on offering life-changing missions opportunities for students to apply their classroom knowledge within developing nations with great physical and spiritual needs.

One of the ways the Engineering Department has redefined mission work within their major is through “missioneering.” The term “missioneering” was coined by the late Dr. Ken Johnson and Olivet alum Aaron Lucas on the department’s trip to Swaziland in summer 2013. The ingenious term has become a way to “identify oneself as a missions-minded engineer,” says Daniel Going, a Senior Electrical Engineering student.

Senior Mechanical Engineering major Jessie Eckerley adds, “Missioneering is a name that represents what the engineering department is striving to be and that is: Engineers who go out into the world and wherever they go, can be missionaries and living examples of God and His love while using whatever talent God has blessed them with.”

Engineering students have traveled to Swaziland in both the summer of 2013 and the summer of 2014. The department will send students to both Haiti and Arizona in the upcoming year as part of the “missioneering” movement.

The Society of Women Engineers (SWE) is a “professional organization that is dedicated to encouraging women to achieve everything they can in a successful engineering career all while demonstrating diversity and its importance in the workplace,” says SWE Chapter President Kendra Maxon. This year, Olivet’s SWE chapter has grown to over 27 members, with their starting number last year being only 12. Membership has increased due to this year’s fantastic Executive Council made up of Kendra Maxon (President), Jessie Eckerley (Vice President), Loren Crawford (Secretary), and Taylor Williams (Treasurer). The Executive Council traveled to the Annual Society of Women Engineers Conference in Los Angeles this past October and in the spring they plan to do “outreach events during Engineers Week and will be attending the Region H Conference,” says Maxon. The officer team welcomes both male and female engineers to join as well as anyone in a science, technology, or math field.

Olivet Engineering Club exists to bring together the community of Engineering students. Club events have included a potato launcher, a Rube Goldberg machine, holiday parties, among other things. The members come together to engage in friendly competition and fellowship with individuals who share the same vocational goals and interests. The students involved in Olivet Engineering Club come together to apply principles learned in classes to fun and creative projects and get to see their engineering skills put into action.
Left: Austin Hughes participated in the Missioneering trip to Swaziland during the summer of 2014. (photo submitted)

Below: During Homecoming Week, the Kenneth E. Johnson Technology Center was opened. During the open house, many Missioners gathered together to share their experiences with students and Alumni.

Above: The Olivet SWE chapter was lead by Jessie Eckerley, Kendra Maxon, Taylor Williams, and Loren Crawford. These four women have been involved in starting SWE and saw it change from an idea to an official group with over 27 members.

Left: During the Tech Center opening, Alec Denecke demonstrated one of the many projects that is being completed in the new building. The new space provided more area and tools for Engineering students to use.
Right: Rachel Hensley completed a Harry Potter themed craft at the Sigma Tau Delta event. (photo submitted)

Below: Students listen carefully to the instructions for their next assignment in Creative Writing class.

Above: The new inductees, Alex VanDehey, Carrie Leato, Kristen Coser, and Rachel Hensley, could not have been more excited to become members of Sigma Tau Delta. (photo submitted)

Above: Sigma Tau Delta held a Banned Books event where students could participate in a variety of activities. There was a Harry Potter themed photobooth where Brenda Jones, Katelyn Oprondek and Erin Stephens got into character for a snapshot. (photo submitted)
The English Department turns out students equipped with the necessary skills to work in a variety of careers. The department’s mission is to “teach students to communicate effectively, to recognize and appreciate the interplay between languages and culture, to interact critically with a wide range of texts, and to apply these skills in their lives of service to God and humanity.” The department faculty enjoys knowing students on a first name basis, as well as getting to know the students during their time at Olivet. English majors at Olivet have the opportunities to study abroad, take cultural field trips, join Sigma Tau Delta, and help create the Tygr Literary and Art Magazine.

Sarah Ready shared that the English Department provides students with the opportunity to go to Burkina Faso to help teach English to students in the country. Her favorite memory is going on that trip in May 2014. Ready explained, “While we were there we taught Sunday School to three different churches, tutored English students at the University of Ouagadougou, and taught ESL lessons to students as young as 5 years old through high school age students.” She then added that it was the most rewarding thing she has ever done. According to Ready, the professor that had the biggest impact on her was Professor Belcher-Rankin. “She was the leader of our trip to Africa,” she explained. “She not only was a wonderful professor who challenges me and pushes me to be a better student, she has also strengthened my faith by opening class with devotions, praying over us in Africa and in the classroom, and by showing me how English and faith connect.”

SigmaTau Delta may sound like a bunch of confusing Greek words, but to any English studies major (and anyone who speaks Greek) these three words represent the National English Honor Society. As Sigma Tau Delta President Shayla Hancock explained, “The purpose of the honor society is to support students in their pursuit of English excellence.” Under the supervision of the highly intelligent and inspiring Dr. Belcher-Rankin, members participate in induction ceremonies, conduct a banned book campaign on campus, attend the national convention for the society, and assist in research for the Burkina Faso missions team. Hancock shared what being a member has done for her: “I have been able to network with other students who share my same interests, gotten to know my professors better, and have a more attractive resume... My favorite part of being a member is being able to spend time with people who are also passionate about the English language.” Sigma Tau Delta is about individuals gathering in celebration of English studies and working together to spread their love of the English language from Olivet’s campus all the way to Africa and beyond.
Above: Kyle Sleik ran away from Wilbur Lovitt when he realized he was in danger of being tagged “it” during the game.

The Exercise Science Club meets bi-weekly and sometimes even more frequently in order to prepare for one of their many events that prep exercise science majors for graduate school. Mitchel Dale, President of the Exercise Science Club, shared some of the events and characteristics of the club:

Q: How would you describe the Exercise and Sports Science Club community?  
A: I believe the Exercise Science majors are ambitious and studious because graduate school is hard to get into. But they are also friendly and helpful because most of the individuals in the major are there to help others rehabilitate from injuries.

Q: What inspiration did you get to get involved in Exercise and Sports Science Club?  
A: I enjoy helping students feel more comfortable about graduate school and feel more prepared once they get there.

Q: What are this year’s goals for Exercise and Sports Science Club?  
A: Our goals include helping students feel more confident about the profession they go into, knowing and understanding what needs to be done for a competitive application to graduate schools, and feeling prepared once they get into graduate school.

Q: What activities does Exercise and Sports Science Club hold throughout the year?  
A: The activities that the Exercise Science Club run are mostly informational sessions to ensure that students are doing the things they need to do so that they can get into graduate school. Specifics include: career night where different graduate schools and professions are presented so that students are informed about the options available to them, physical therapy night about physical therapy school where actual physical therapy students talk about what graduate school is like and give advice to help Olivet students be prepared, and information sessions on how to fill out PTCAS and take the GRE.

Below: Students learned the correct technique for throwing frisbees.
Left: Meghan Houk spotted her next target, Wilbur Lovitt, during their game of tag.

Below: Haley Carroll stayed cautious during the game of tag. As she avoided her opponents, she was able to remain in the game.

Far Above: Students learn a variety of games that can be applied in a physical education setting.

Above: Sarah Stidham scooted her way through the obstacle course.

Left: Students were reminded of their childhood when playing "sharks and minnows," a beloved playground classic.
Members of the Student Dietetic Association gathered together for a time of thanksgiving during their annual Thanksgiving Dinner.

Below: Dani Martin is working on a craft during a sewing night for mothers and daughters as part of her senior service project.

Far Below: Members of the Student Dietetic Association gathered together for a time of thanksgiving during their annual Thanksgiving Dinner.

Right: Students from the FACS department prepare meal packets at Feed My Starving Children to be sent to children in Guatemala. That particular night, students packed enough food to feed 28 kids for a year!

Above: Students from the FACS department come together to plan and host an annual Fashion Show, hosted by SUFACS each year.

Right: Sabra Reichow helps a mother and daughter sew together some felt pumpkins as part of her senior service project.

208 Department of Family and Consumer Sciences, Kappa Delta Rho, SDA, and SUFACS
Within the department of Family and Consumer Sciences, there are a number of student organizations including the Student Unit Family and Consumer Sciences (SUFACS). SUFACS was designed to "unite the FACS students and give them an opportunity to serve others," says President Hannah Whittington. SUFACS hosts several different activities throughout the year including the Christmas Bazaar and ONU Fashion Show.

Kappa Delta Rho is the FACS department’s honor society that senior Hannah Moyers says “has a strong emphasis on the development of leadership, research, and scholarship in their members as they work towards developing professionals.” She also comments, “The FACS department is unique in the way that it encompasses a variety of different majors. I was originally so confused as to why majors like dietetics, interior design, child development, and fashion merchandising were grouped together, but if you look deeper you see how those majors connect to the core needs of our lives: food, clothing, shelter, and education. Even though there are people in this department who are studying completely different areas of life, we fit together and share the desire to serve others.”

The larger, national organization of Kappa Omicron Nu works to connect leaders within the department of Family and Consumer Sciences so that opportunities like conferences and research grants can be utilized and appreciated. The society is a place where students in the FACS department can be exposed to the professional world of Family and Consumer Sciences.

The Student Dietetics Association is a club that strives to “promote nutrition and a healthy lifestyle throughout Olivet’s campus and the surrounding community,” states senior Justine Myers. At monthly meetings members plan events and discuss continuing education opportunities. The club’s intriguing competitions and fundraisers excite the imagination with names such as The Amazing Race, Dump Your Plump, and the annual Chocolate Covered Strawberry fundraiser. Through the excitement, relationships are built and strengthened during the time spent studying the vast field of Dietetics. Justine Myers states, “The Family and Consumer Science department’s well-rounded academic programs, professional development units, internships, practicum hours, service projects, department portfolios, and courses on professional issues all prepare students for their future careers. The dietetics program at Olivet is one of few dietetics programs in the nation that provides practicum hours in the hospital, community nutrition settings, and foodservice operations for their students during undergraduate schooling.”

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Above: Pi Alpha Theta allows students with a passion for history to come together to learn from the past and to make a difference in the community around them.

Right: Annie Perez took lecture notes before moving into a class discussion.

Far Right: In one history class students listened attentively to a presentation about Guatemala.
Above: Dr. Claborn, a beloved professor in the Department of History and Political Science, keeps the classroom engaged through discussion and student participation.

The Department of History allows students to study the past in order to make a better future. Students within the history department learn to look at history to better understand the world and humanity. History majors have a broad range of career options working in fields such as research, archives, museums, academic settings, historian roles, and many more. The program allows the students to tailor their academic career to their professional goals.

This year Olivet’s Natural History Honor Society aimed to start new traditions and promote the love of their studies. The group, led by Justine Von Arb and Jennifer Christensen, started an event they hope to turn into an annual tradition. Students gathered together at the Kankakee Historical society, aiming to both help in the community and learn more about the area. Christensen says, “I hope we can foster a love for history in others and show people the importance of history.” Other events included a collaborated effort for a guest speaker to come in and discuss religious freedom with both Phi Alpha Theta and Pi Sigma Alpha. Von Arb says that she hopes these sponsored events will “create a meaningful experience for other members,” and continue to foster, “a passion for pursuing excellence in researching, learning, and teaching about history.”
A heart for those in need is a very common characteristic in students at Olivet, but the students pursuing degrees in political science take the desire to help to another level entirely. Political science major and Pi Sigma Alpha President Emily Davisson says, "Society needs strong, intelligent Christians to fight for what is right in court rooms, in Congress, and in all types of organizations." These aspiring politicians are committed to their goals and are strongly supported by the political science faculty. Senior Matt Reed explains the difficulty of teaching political science classes, saying, "They are not really classes that you can just lecture through but rather classes where discussion and research are the best tools to use to really learn the subject. Our professors do a great job of allowing that to happen in their classrooms." Since the department is not a large one, the students get a chance to be more involved with their classmates and professors. Jessica Putnam addresses this when she comments, "All of my professors have been intentional in reminding us that our purpose extends far beyond 'paying the mortgage' and that God is calling us to make a difference in the world."

The political science department’s honor society is Pi Sigma Alpha. Pi Sigma Alpha is a national society that is focused on networking and growing students in their political science studies. President Emily Davisson says, "Being a part of Pi Sigma Alpha gives students a step up to landing their ideal jobs." Events such as the Debate last fall on gun control that Pi Sigma Alpha co-sponsored with the Capitol Hill Gang are encouraged to build connections with other political science students.

Another political science group, Capitol Hill Gang meets once a week for open discussions about topics relevant in the political arena. Membership is far from limited to those in the political science department says senior Phillip Hill, a pastoral ministries major. He shared, "My favorite part of Capitol Hill Gang is the different opinions and views I get to experience and try to understand." Meetings sometimes become intense Putnam explains. "Some weeks meetings involve more debating than discussing and other times it’s just us asking each other questions because we don’t know as much about the topic as someone else." Those who attend Capitol Hill Gang have come to appreciate the way that opinions can be shared and respected in the meetings.

The Law and Politics Society takes an approach to political science that is unlike other clubs in the department. They strive to prepare students for careers in law or government. Topics are chosen for discussion and speakers are often invited to come and contribute to the meeting for the week. This club "seeks to show students how to be good, active citizens through speakers, movies, discussions during club meetings, and special events," says president Matt Reed.
The members of Law and Politics Society gathered together for a movie night and watched "God's Not Dead."

Above: The members of Capitol Hill Gang discussed the theory of a "just war" at one meeting.
The Math Club Council, made up of students and professors, was responsible for planning and running the club.

Below: One of the perks of a liberal arts education is that every student will have received a basic understanding of math by graduation.

"As a college student, Math Club gives me a place to belong. Not everyone understands my love of numbers, and Math Club is a safe place to express this passion. As a female mathematician-to-be, I know the challenges and complexities of working in a male-dominated environment. Math Club gives me the confidence to master the skills necessary to navigate real-world situations."

-Senior Abbey Snow

"My favorite Math event is the back-to-school picnic. It's the first event, and it's exciting to see everyone in one setting again and eat great food. Also, all the professors bring their families, so that's really fun too."

-Senior Liz Koch

Math Department and Math Club

"Join the fun! You don't have to be a math major, just a numbers-lover. Bring your brain, your calculator, and a smile," said Abbey Snow, a senior. Olivet's Math Club is open to all majors and is a fantastic way to connect with other students who have the same interests and passions involving math and numbers. Club President Ashley Coon said, "the games we play at our meetings are always something math related. The game could involve anything from statistics to a cool trick with numbers."

A popular event for the club is the Math Murder Mystery. Snow said, "Last year at the Murder Mystery, all of the participants gathered clues by competing in math games. When all of the clues were gathered, we decided which Math professor committed the murder. It was a fun and suspenseful way to combine my love of math and mystery!"

Number crunchers, mathematicians, actuarial scientists, engineers, teachers, business students, and math lovers come together to have fun doing what they do best: math. According to senior Liz Koch, Math Club is "exponentially great!"

Olivet's Math Department teaches students all of the necessary skills and knowledge one needs to enter math-related careers, especially the ones in high demand. In the department, "learning goes beyond the classroom." A Math lab is offered for those in freshman level courses and a Math Club gives students opportunities to have fun while doing what they do best.
Matthew Taber diligently worked to complete the example problem during lecture.

Below: In math classes, students take diligent notes so they can look back when completing assignments.

Above: Students worked to complete homework problems to reinforce the principles learned during class.

Left: Math students were often collaborate, work together, and learn from each other.
Right: The members of ROTC form a very tight bond as they go through classes and training. (photo submitted)

Below: Battalion members stopped for a quick photo during ROTC outdoor training. (photo submitted)

Above: The members of ROTC learn a variety of skills that will be helpful in their future military careers. These skills include using a rope to climb over obstacles. (photo submitted)

Right: Two members of the Roaring Tigers Battalion prepared their weapons before taking practice shots at the shooting range. (photo submitted)
Instructors in the department are all active duty or reserve military officers who provide students with unique opportunities to learn from “the best sources out there,” comments junior Paul Wissmiller. In the interest of training young people for futures as officers in the United States Army, ROTC programs have been changing all around the country this year. There is a greater focus on critical thinking and problem solving aspects while also addressing leadership, physical fitness, and teamwork among the Corps. “The community on campus is my favorite part of ROTC. All cadets are a part of it once they join the ROTC program, and it is a brotherhood of sorts since all of our classes develop a very tight bond,” Wissmiller says that he appreciates the fact that the instructors in the department of Military Science are “true professionals” who are willing to help any cadet with problems they may be having. He says it is “such a great support system throughout the department itself.” As the Roaring Tigers Battalion continues to grow and change along with other ROTC programs nationwide, the Olivetian cadets are preparing themselves thoroughly for their military futures.
The School of Music includes majors involving both instrumental and vocal training.

Students within the School of Music each use an iPad for various applications such as reading music during the performance of “Sounds of the Season.”

The Music Department at Olivet offers majors in Music, Music Education, Music Performance, Composition, Music Ministry, and Music Theatre. Along with numerous beneficial classes, music majors must host a thirty-minute senior recital at the end of their studies. Along with senior recitals, there are also several other student recitals throughout the year where students in each respective class are able to showcase their talents.

Q & A with Ethan McCallister

Q: What is your major?
A: I’m majoring in both Music Ministry and Music Composition.

Q: You just had your recital. What was it like?
A: I had a voice recital. It was located in Kelley Prayer Chapel and the turnout was great. There were between 60 and 70 people in attendance! I definitely felt the support of my friends, music majors or not.

Q: What did you perform?
A: I performed eight pieces, a couple in Italian, German, French, and English.

Q: What was the best part of your recital?
A: The audience’s reaction to one of my more risqué pieces was the best part. It was enjoyable and it encouraged me to play that character as truly as possible.

Q: Why did you choose to major in Music Ministry and Composition?
A: I’ve known since high school there was nothing else I could ever do but pursue music. I began as a Music Education major because that seemed to offer the most job security. God quickly showed me He had other plans. I switched to Music Ministry second semester and added composition this year after I got a taste of it and what I could do with it.

Q: Have your majors been rewarding?
A: Yes! It’s been so rewarding and gratifying to see myself grow as a musician and to become better and better at something I love and at something God wants to use me through to minister to people.

Q: What has been your favorite class pertaining to your major at Olivet?
A: Jazz Theory. It has exploded how I think about music, compose, and improvise. I love analyzing pieces of music to see how the composer composed – it gives me ideas!

Q: Which professor has had the biggest impact on your life?
A: Dr. Jeff Bell. I’ve spent a lot of time with him the past four years, and his steady, patient, Godly example and his drive to seek excellence have left a definite impression on me.
Students who play instruments are given the opportunity to practice several times a week through classes, ensembles, and performances.

It’s not very often that you get to sing with, speak with, or even HUG someone you’ve admired for years. Thank you @SandipattyP for taking the time to listen to a small bit of my story and sharing some of yours. My Heart is full. #vscocam #iphoneonly #lifeatolivet #Sandipatty #beautiful #goosebumps #blessed #onuyearbook

Jessa Hendricker @jessahend7

Far Above: The trombone section practiced a selection in order to get the intricate musical piece correct.

Above: Members of the band paused for a moment in between pieces to listen to a critique from the professor in order to improve their performance.

Left: Students who play instruments are given the opportunity to practice several times a week through classes, ensembles, and performances.
Right and Below: Human Anatomy and Physiology is a required class for students within the Nursing department. During one lab session, students had their blood drawn and then tested it for things such as blood type and Rh factor.

Far Below: Hannah Crothers, Kassandra Spinnie, Katie DeLong, Hannah Luginbill, Brittany Daugherty, and Abbie Allen, all level 3 nursing students, posed for a quick photograph before their first day of obstetrics clinicals. (Photo submitted by Abbie Allen)

Above: Lindsay Stolter and Kelsey Fisk practice an IV saline flush on a mannequin integrating skills learned in lecture as well as the Virtual Learning Center. (Photo submitted by Chelsea Risanger)

Right: Professor Mylcraine reviews injections and the proper way to administer them in the Virtual Learning Center. Students observed her review and then had the opportunity to practice in the VLC. (Photo submitted by Chelsea Risanger)
Below: NSA meets on a regular basis to build community with the department and to grow closer as they prepare for careers in the field of nursing.

Hard work and dedication are musts for those students who aspire to become nurses. A rigorous major such as nursing requires a lot both physically and mentally so that these students are prepared to go out into the world and make a difference in others’ lives through nursing. Olivet’s nursing program consists of several levels, and students must pass all the classes within that level in order to move on to the next. The first level is level 0 which consists of the basic introductory course as well as general education requirements. Students then move onto levels 1-5 which get increasingly more involved and more difficult. The program is designed to run from sophomore through senior year once being accepted into the program. In order to be accepted into the program, students must past the HESI test. The HESI consists of questions pertaining to math, science, English, and reading and tests the students’ knowledge and ability base. Students then complete an array of classes including Pediatrics, Obstetrics, Gerontology, Mental Health, Pharmacology, Community Health, Global Health, Transcultural Nursing, and much more. These classes are designed to give the students a well-rounded exposure to the field of nursing and equip them with the skills to excel in the field. Students are also required to take a math skills test before entering a new level of nursing that tests them for the knowledge necessary to move forward. Some of the skills that are tested include conversions, IV drip rates, changing medication dosages based on age, and other math concepts that are applied in the nursing field. Students must get 100% on these tests in order to move onto the next level and are only given three attempts to accomplish this task. It is obvious that Olivet’s nursing students are driven and well-equipped for this field after college because of this rigorous program.

After long hours of studying and clinicals, the nursing majors of Olivet look to come together and make a difference on campus. Every semester, the members of the Nursing Students Association host a campus-wide blood drive, raising awareness about the importance of donating blood. Kevin Osterink says, “We end up spending a lot of time together as we study in the classroom. We trust one another both there and in the hospital setting.” The group is knit together by care and consideration, both for nursing majors and the patients they work with. Osterink says, “We are dealing with what I would call the most complex piece of machinery in the world: the human body. It is something that constantly changes, and a person has a spiritual and emotional aspect as well.” The group aims to continue growing closer together as they learn and develop skills used to treat patients.
Below: The Geology Society paused at a beautiful rock outcropping to take a group photo during one of their outings. (Photo submitted)

While every department on Olivet’s campus holds something unique about its field, the Department of Chemistry and Geosciences — encompassing a broad spectrum of chemistry, geology, and earth sciences — intricately analyzes the unique details of our own natural world. “It is a good opportunity to get connected to the physical world in a way that you can’t in other departments,” explained Dr. Stephen Case.

“I want [the students’] perception of the Earth and God to expand as they mature as Christian geoscientists and pursue meaningful careers as stewards of the Earth,” shared Dr. Max Reams. “We are one of only three Christian universities providing authentic training in the geosciences. We emphasize a broad spectrum of the earth sciences with a strong sense of stewardship.”

“Our department is very tightly knit. There is a spirit of camaraderie seeing what God has created,” said senior Geology student Julia Ross.

Students and faculty agree that the time that they spend together in classes and labs allow them to bond in a way that is quite different from other departments. “My favorite times are in open labs,” said senior Forensic Chemistry major Sarah Beecher. “We’re all together for five hours goofing around and listening to Disney music, but still being serious.”

“I enjoy getting to know the students as I work with them in the laboratory setting, and watch them interact with one another,” stated Dr. Larry Ferren. “My hope for them is that they will develop at Olivet the skills that will make them the leaders of tomorrow that will go out and excel in their field. I want them to be the best that they can be in their field and to do great things for God.”

One example of the many courses offered in the department that appeals to both majors and non-majors is the Astronomy course. “I get to teach one of the best classes on campus,” shared Dr. Case. “The students who take the Astronomy course have a genuine interest in the subject. It is very engaging, and they have a lot of enthusiasm coming into the course.”

In addition to the courses offered within the department, the Chemistry Club and the Olivet Geological Society both exist to create a sense of bonding within the department, and to also invite non-majors to delve into the fields. “The biggest mission of the club is to get the Chemistry department together, to not have those class boundaries, and to have fun,” shared Chemistry Club President Sarah Beecher. “I would also say it is to get the introverted students out of their holes, to spread the awesomeness of chemistry, and to make it a bit more approachable and understandable, especially for non-chemists.”

“We do a lot of different things in the Olivet Geological Society that help us get to know everyone a lot better, like pizza and movie parties as well as pumpkin carving parties for Halloween and Pink Elephant parties for Valentine’s Day,” said senior Julia Ross. “It creates a sense of family in the department.”

Below: Caleb Lankford and Macy Muncy filtered their substance in a chemistry lab.
Left: Students in Astronomy have the opportunity to learn about the night sky through the use of a high powered telescope.

Below: Bryce Goldade recorded his observations during a Geology Society outing. (photo submitted)

Far Above: Lauren James, dressed as Ariel for the Chemistry Club Halloween party, and Emily Shelden decorated a pumpkin to celebrate the holiday. (photo submitted)

Above: The Chemistry Club held a “dress like a professor day” where Matthew Larson dressed like Dr. Larry Ferren. (photo submitted)

Left: Calvin Price used a system for heating and cooling a substance to watch the chemical reactions occur.
Below: Social Work students wrapped Christmas presents for Diakonia’s annual One Hope United Christmas party. (photo submitted)

Above: Diakonia held a welcome back event at the beginning of the school year and students came out to share conversation, food, and fun.

Above: The senior Social Work students stopped for a quick group picture. The social work department prepared them, and soon they will go out into the field and make a difference in the lives of others.
The Social Work Department is a great place to find plenty of social personalities. Christina Garza, junior, says that everyone in the department has a passion to help people. A common theme among social work majors is a desire to help and be around people, which draws them to the Social Work department here at Olivet. Garza mentions that the social work professors “refer to our department as a family and it truly feels that way” because of the department’s goal of serving the Lord. Freshman Rachael DeGraff says that Professor Amber Residori, head of the department, is a great example of how social work can be a lifestyle rather than simply a career. Social work teaches students to focus on everyone’s strengths rather than their shortcomings as well as on the “bigger picture” in all areas of life.

Diakonia, the social work club, is designed to provide a place for social work majors to hang out and prepare for careers in social work after college. Diakonia is also an opportunity for social work majors to grow together as a community. “It is a fun way for Social Work majors to get to know each other and learn about the possibilities that a social work degree offers,” Garza said.

“People who need help, need people to help them, right?” This is criminal justice major Jason Reynolds’ response when asked about his interest in criminal justice. Chrissy Michaels, co-leader of Mission Possible, a prison ministry, says that her experience with the group led her to see criminal justice as the major meant for her. In the ministry, she “fell in love with helping [the prisoners] see the light outside of the situation they are in.” Michaels adds, “I want to be a person on the front lines for some of the most desperate people in this world who need help.” Criminal justice is a place for those who have a desire to keep people safe and help them see Christ in their circumstances.
The department of Theology and Christian Ministry offers several majors for those called to ministry. Olivet students are able to major in Biblical Languages, Biblical Studies, Children's Ministry, Christian Education, Intercultural Studies, Ministerial Missions, Missions and Intercultural Studies, Pastoral Ministry, Philosophy and Religion, Religious Studies, Youth Ministry, Greek, or Hebrew.

According to the Dean of the School of Theology and Christian Ministry, Dr. Carl Leth, “The diversity of experience and preparation of our faculty makes for a rich and challenging learning environment, while our various courses of study offer a stimulating range of options from which to choose.”

According to Senior Arika Schmitt, “The Theology Department is full of broken people learning how to effectively minister to fellow broken people. We aren’t perfect, but we serve the One who is, and through Him we are learning how we can convey the message clearly to others that we are all active participants in the story of Christ.”

Arika has loved working with Dr. Blanchette from the department. “He was the professor of my two favorite classes actually!” explained Schmitt. She added, “His heart for the Lord is evident and that love and passion pours out not only into the children he pastors, but to his students as well. I admire and appreciate that he guides us through our ministry classes so that we discover together as a class what children’s ministry is and that we are given the opportunities to put into action what we have learned.”

Arika’s twin sister Ashley Schmitt shares, “I love the Theology Department because it is full of professors who seek to help you succeed in whatever God has called you to. I have grown so much from their wisdom and their loving, passionate hearts pouring into my life.”

Ashley loves her ministry classes and has learned so much from the professors on how to “live life to glorify God and strive closer to Him every day.” She specifically loved both her Christian Education and Children’s Ministry classes. “Both are taught by Dr. Blanchette,” Schmitt explained, “and he is so good at making class engaging and that really helps us become involved in the class to learn on a deeper level. I learn the best that way.”

Below: Dr. Leth, the Dean of the School of Theology and Christian Ministry, lectured about a variety of topics including sin and salvation in Theology I and II classes.

Below: Luke Kamley took notes to later reference in Dr. Blanchette’s class.
Theology and Christian Ministry students have the opportunity to attend several conferences during their college career. Below is the group that attended the Ife Conference.

Joelle Mannion  
Majoring in Psychology and Intercultural Studies

“I chose my major because it fits perfectly with what I want to do. I’ve changed my major a lot since I enrolled at Olivet because the more I’m learning and seeking the Lord, the more I’m being shaped into the person He intended me to be, and my goals and desires have changed along with that. I want to work in ministry, but not necessarily be a pastor. I love intercultural studies because I hope to do missions work someday. I love that I’m graduating with a degree that I can use for ministry and missions; however, I want to pair that up with being a licensed counselor to work with women who are rescued from human trafficking. I want to teach them about Jesus and His love that truly brings healing and resoration to those who have been deeply wounded and abused. It is amazing to see God shape my classmates along with me into what we were intended to be. I can’t wait to see where we all go post-graduation with the knowledge we’ve been given from the professors.”
Learning On Location

Truitt Murrow
- LA Film Study

Q: What was your study abroad location like? What part of LA were you living in/work ing in? What were your living arrangements like?
A: I was in the heart of Los Angeles. It was very close to downtown. All of the students lived in a gated community called Park La Brea. It’s like a small town. There are houses, and parks, and fountains, and gardens, and lots of palm trees, and lots of apartment towers. We all lived in different towers, in a 2-bedroom apartment with 4 other roommates. It was really cool living in the same place as other people who were living and working in Los Angeles. I met some really cool people there.

Q: What sort of classes did you take? How were they different from classes you have taken at ONU? Where did you work for the internship portion of the trip?
A: The classes at the Los Angeles Film Studies center were amazing. The center was a 15-minute walk away from my apartment. It was on the 16th floor of an office building. But all of the classes were focused on film. Everyone took Faith and Artistic Development, which was a film appreciation class, and it helped us all look at what we believe, and how we can continue to believe that in the self-absorbed culture of Hollywood. There were some really great guest speakers in that class, including Ralph Winter (producer of X-men, and The Giver), Doug Jones (The Faun and the Pale Man in Pan’s Labyrinth, and The Silver Surfer in the second Fantastic 4 movie), and several writers for TV shows and movies. Everyone also took Hollywood Production Workshop, which was where we had groups of 10-12 people, and we made a 12-minute short film. We each had specialized roles. I was a Director of Photography on our film Foodie. So I was in charge of planning out shots and lighting, and operating the camera. We shot the film on the RED Epic, which is the same camera that they used to shoot movies like The Hobbit, Prometheus, and the new Exodus movie. This was probably the best part of the whole experience. It has been a dream of mine to shoot something on the RED Epic for a long time. Then we had a choice of electives. We could choose, Professional Acting, Screenwriting, or Narrative Storytelling. I took Narrative Storytelling. In this class we made two 5-minute short films. The focus was on the story, not necessarily the quality of the production. I really learned a lot about storytelling from this class.

Q: What is one of your favorite memories from the trip?
A: I remember at the beginning of the semester, our pros said that the people around us would one day be our co-workers, and we would be friends for life. I hardly knew any of them, and I was skeptical. But over the course of one semester, we grew very close. After long days making films together, or spending all night editing, and doing touristy things like visiting the theater where they hold the Oscars, or hiking to the Hollywood sign, or watching John Williams conduct the LA Philharmonic, we all became best friends. So saying goodbye was hard. I also became really great friends with the professors there, and I was able to get some amazing advice from all of them. In short, my favorite memory is meeting and becoming friends with some of the most creative and talented people I’ve ever met.
Q: Why did you decide to study abroad where you did? Was it for your major or just for personal interest?
A: I want to do International Social Work, so immersing myself in another culture was a step that I felt God calling me to. It honestly wasn’t my plan to study abroad in Japan; I had originally wanted to go somewhere else but I don’t regret the decision in any way.

Q: What is one of your favorite memories from the trip?
A: I wouldn’t consider myself a dancer, but I joined the dance team while I was there, and it was a blast! We performed for an event called Zion Festival for the students and the surrounding community. We had six American students and six Japanese students coming together to create this dance. There was a language barrier, but it didn’t hinder us at all. I don’t think my experience would have been the same without the friendships I created with the team.

Q: What is one big thing you learned?
A: One of the biggest things I learned in my time abroad is to keep an open mind about differences in cultures. At TCU, there were a ton of different countries represented, which also gave us a lot of different perspectives to learn from. I had to learn that not everyone ran on the same time or felt the same about certain topics. That became a challenge when there were discussions that made it difficult for me to keep my composure. God helped me grow a lot in gaining patience with others through that.