



## An Introduction to Creating Your Personal Olivet College Academic Plan

Welcome to Olivet College! We are eager to help you create your own personal path to success. This will include creating your own individualized academic plan. In these next few pages we will give you some basic information about the first step in creating that plan: selecting your classes for your first semester at Olivet.

### Graduation Requirements

As a new student we want you to know from the start what you need to do to become a proud graduate of Olivet College. The five graduation requirements are:

1. Complete the courses in the Liberal Arts Core
2. Complete the courses in your major
3. Complete a total of 120 credit hours
4. Submit a graduation portfolio
5. Maintain “Satisfactory Academic Progress” each semester

The following sections will describe each of these requirements in more detail.

### The Liberal Arts Core

Sometimes known as “general education,” the Liberal Arts Core is a set of courses that meet learning outcomes in a broad range of disciplines. You might think of these courses as “brain training” that helps you develop new ways of thinking. There are ten elements to the Liberal Arts Core, including courses that help you develop your writing and quantitative skills, explore your world, be creative and learn through service. Your advisor will help you navigate your way through this requirement and in the process you might even discover a new passion! The following chart summarizes the Liberal Arts Core course requirements:

| <b>Liberal Arts Core (LAC) Requirements</b><br><i>(41-43 credit hours)</i>                      |  |   |  |                  |
|---|--|---|--|------------------|
| <i>Up to 8 credits (1 credit each semester enrolled at college)</i><br><b>Seminar (IDS 499)</b> | <b>Writing &amp; Rhetoric I &amp; II</b><br><b>IDS 111 &amp; 112</b><br><i>6 credits (2 courses)</i> | <b>Self &amp; Community</b><br><b>IDS 151</b><br><i>3 credits</i>                             | <b>Civilization Studies</b><br><b>IDS 211</b><br><i>3 credits</i>                  | <b>Portfolio</b> |
|   | <b>Creative Experience</b><br><i>3 credits</i><br><i>(choose from menu)</i>                          | <b>Natural World</b><br><i>3-4 credits</i><br><i>(choose from menu)</i>                       | <b>Global Diversity</b><br><i>6 credits</i><br><i>(choose 2 courses from menu)</i> |                  |
|   | <b>Mathematics</b><br><i>3-4 credits (required course depends upon major)</i>                        | <b>Service Learning</b><br><i>3 credits</i><br><i>(recommended course depends upon major)</i> | <b>Senior Experience</b><br><i>3 credits (specific course depends upon major)</i>  |                  |

## **Your Major**

In addition to the breadth of learning you will do in the Liberal Arts Core you will focus your study in a major area. You may already know what you want your major to be or you may be still considering your options. No matter what your situation is right now, we will help you get on the path to success by helping you choose the best courses for this fall.

## **120 Total Credits**

To complete the 120 total credit hours required for graduation in four years you will need to take an average of 30 credit hours (or “credits”) each academic year, an average of 15 each fall and spring semester. “Full time” for financial aid purposes is considered to be 12 credits per semester. Your college tuition covers up to 17 credits each semester.

The majority of classes at Olivet are worth 3 credits. This means that 15 credits a semester usually consists of five classes. However, you need to take the course load that is right for you. Sometimes a lighter credit load is better, sometimes a heavier load is OK. Your academic advisor will work with you to help you determine what is right for you.

Your Liberal Arts Core and your major classes won’t add up to 120 credits. To complete your total credit requirement you may decide to complete the requirements for a minor, do an internship or cooperative work experience for credit or simply take a variety of elective courses that open you up to new ideas. This is your chance to explore!

## **Your Graduation Portfolio**

Your graduation portfolio will be a collection of your best academic work. Through it you will demonstrate your learning plus share some reflective essays and other items such as your resume. It will be a while before you have to complete your graduation portfolio but you will receive guidance on it each semester through your seminar course.

## **Satisfactory Academic Progress**

While there is more to this than can be easily summarized here, the general principle of the Satisfactory Academic Progress requirement is that on a 4-point scale you must keep your grade point average at a 2.0 or “C” level in order to graduate. See the document titled “Satisfactory Academic Progress” posted on the Orientation website for more details.

## **Seminar**

Each semester as an Olivet College student you will take a one-credit course called “seminar.” Most seminars are focused on a particular discipline or major. We also have a seminar for you if you are undecided as to your major.

We think of seminar as addressing the 3 C's: college, community and career. In seminar, you will meet weekly with your faculty advisor and a group of other students in the same major or discipline. As part of this class you will:

- create your academic plan
- do career exploration
- do team building activities with your peers
- hear guest speakers
- learn about internships
- attend career and graduate school fairs
- get advice on your portfolio
- build your resume; and
- participate in many other activities focused on helping you achieve your ultimate success.

From day one as a student at Olivet College you will have a team of people helping you navigate your college experience and prepare for your all-important next steps to graduate school, professional school or directly into your career after graduation.

### **Registering for Fall Classes**

So... what courses will you actually be taking this fall? Our goal is to get you registered for your fall semester courses *before* your Orientation session. On your Orientation day you will receive a copy of your schedule and have the opportunity to meet one-on-one with an advisor to revise or make changes in your schedule.

As a first year student you will be automatically enrolled in the following courses:

- A writing course
- A Liberal Arts Core course titled "Self and Community"
- A seminar course

We will work with your professors in your intended major area to identify entry-level courses that you should also take. We also will work with you to determine the number of total credits you wish to take and help you select other Liberal Arts Core or elective courses to add to your schedule.

Descriptions and listings for courses available for first year students are posted under the "Registering for Classes" section of the Orientation webpage. A list of courses that fulfill LAC requirements is also posted in this section. Next year's College Catalog also will be posted in this section once it is available.

### **Schedule Changes**

As a new student you will be invited to move into your residence hall room several days early and participate in the "Advance Learning Term," which is the second half of your Olivet College Orientation experience. There will be time during the ALT to meet with an advisor and change your schedule. You can also change your course schedule without penalty up to a week after the start of the fall semester.

We look forward to welcoming you to campus to begin your Olivet College adventure! See you soon!