

2013-2014 EDITION

COLLEGES  
THAT CHANGE  
LIVES

40 SCHOOLS THAT WILL  
CHANGE THE WAY YOU  
THINK ABOUT COLLEGES

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OH-WOOD

*Money Magazine* names OWU one of the nation's

**“2016 BEST VALUE COLLEGES,”** a list of schools that provide “a great education, at an affordable price, that prepares students for rewarding careers.”

At large universities, professors are frequently isolated, holed up in their respective departments with little opportunity to learn from and collaborate with one another. It's the nature of the beast. And only the very best students get to team up with their professors on research—if any do at all.

Universities would do well to look closely at Ohio Wesleyan. The small university of 1,850 students thirty miles north of Columbus is a shining beacon of what happens when a campus embraces collaboration in the context of liberal learning. All types of students are engaged. Professors are invigorated. As one student says, “We're all about the exchange of ideas here. You come here, and you start having all these ideas, and then you can actually act on them and people listen. It's an amazing place.”

OWU (pronounced “oh-WOO”) approved a new curricular plan in 2010 that formalizes this spirit of collaboration and adds a shot of adventure. The goal: teach students how to connect theory—everything they're learning in class—to practice, also known as the real world.

One element of the new plan is Course Connections, networks of courses that give students multiple perspectives on one topic of global importance. Imaginative faculty across departments put their heads together to develop six networks, which launched in the 2011-2012 year. Among these first Course Connections are “Crime, Responsibility, and Punishment”—with classes in politics and government, sociology, history, philosophy, psychology, microbiology, and neuroscience—and “Food: How Production and Consumption Shape Our Bodies and Our Culture.” Students choose from courses in botany, microbiology, English, physical education, psychology, and zoology.

The spring before Course Connections' launch, professors were almost giddy about the possibilities—another rarity on college campuses. Professors tend

**THE OWU CONNECTION PROGRAM** helps students integrate knowledge across disciplines, build a diverse and global perspective, and apply their knowledge in real-world settings. OWU is the Home for Hungry Minds!

to be accomplished skeptics, but at Ohio Wesleyan they believe they've come upon an idea that delivers the best kind of liberal arts education. "The problems in the world are going to be solved by people looking at them from a variety of perspectives," says Dr. Laurie Anderson, a botanist and microbiologist. "It's exciting to be able to help students practice and refine those ways of thinking. I absolutely believe it will have an impact not just on the student but also on our world. And that's not overstating anything."

Dr. Rock Jones, OWU's president, puts it this way: "Never has the world had more need for liberal arts education. The world is more polarized than ever; people are tempted to be narrow-minded, to embrace ideology instead of considering possibility and seeking solutions. Citizens educated in liberal arts colleges know how to listen to and analyze different viewpoints, identify sound reasoning, problem-solve, and then communicate those solutions. Our world needs desperately the benefit of citizens who can do these things." Clearly, the plan is more like a mission, built on OWU's best resources: talented professors and visionary administrators.

That spirit of innovation has also led to a surge of new travel-learning courses, each of which includes a short off-campus experience. For example, a class studying the history of the 1960s traveled to Vietnam for two weeks at the end of the spring course. The group's tour guide had served in the South Vietnamese air force during the Vietnam War and had spent time in a reeducation camp; the students stayed with former Viet Cong members for a few nights. "No matter how talented the teacher, you cannot inspire the depth of learning that happened on our trip," says Dr. Joan McLean, a professor of politics. "The cross-fertilization of ideas amazed me."

Students and professors in other travel-learning courses trekked to Bangladesh to examine how microfinance addresses issues of extreme poverty; to the

Competitive **THEORY-TO-PRACTICE GRANTS** provide University funding for individual research, internships, service, and cultural immersion anywhere in the world.

Galapagos Islands to study island biology, to Brazil to explore the Amazon's ecology; to Japan to follow up on their study of how literature and film depict war; and, in an act of selfless scholarship, to Italy to study the connection between food and behavior. Donations from alumni cover about 50 percent of expenses, putting these opportunities within reach for students who need financial support.

And OWU even has a plan for sowing the seeds of curiosity planted by any of its classes. New Theory into Practice into Theory (TiPiT) grants support students and professors as they delve deeply into academic interests, often in the summer and almost always in far-flung places. TiPiT grants are for work outside of class, underscoring a tenet that all colleges should uphold: The purpose of education is to learn, even if nobody is going to give you a grade or credit. Learning is the means *and* the end.

In that spirit, music professor Jason Hiester took seven students to Salzburg, Austria, for one of the world's premier classical music festivals, where students attended performances and took master classes. TiPiT grants have paid for students to study remnants of the Holocaust in Europe, learn about Minoan culture in Crete, and study how Pakistanis perceived the Americans in Afghanistan during the Afghan war.

As you might expect, the campus buzzes with excitement. Everyone is dreaming big, and the college has the structure to support those dreams. "You can make this school whatever you want," says a senior zoology major from Boston who is heading to Michigan State to earn his Ph.D. "I've given oral presentations, attended academic conferences, copublished [in academic journals] with the ornithologist on campus. I'm going to the Bahamas in a few weeks to study birds there. I feel like I came here with an interest in birds and I'm leaving with experience and book knowledge

**TRAVEL-LEARNING COURSES** send students and professors throughout the world to gain an up-close understanding of international issues they've researched in class.

that have turned me into a real scholar. This school did that for me." After a few seconds' reflection, he adds, "Or maybe it taught me how to do it for myself."

These formal programs are important, but they reveal something more organic: OWU's ethos, an asset that no amount of programming could build. OWU's culture is defined by warmth and helpfulness. It doesn't have the hurry-up pace of competitive places or the small-fish-big-pond vibe of large universities. Dean of students Kimberlie Goldsberry gives perhaps the most compelling example of OWU's personality. In the middle of a fall semester, she began to think about how to help about fifty international students find homes for Thanksgiving break. But all of them already had plans, thanks to generous students and professors. "I shouldn't have been surprised," she says. "We are that kind of place. We take care of each other."

Ideas are welcome here, and the freewheeling exchange of them makes it a satisfying place for students and professors. So does the obvious mutual affection between students and faculty.

Students are eager to one-up each other with stories of teachers' kindness and mentorship: "A philosophy professor took me out after my final paper was done and graded to discuss my ideas," a senior says. Another senior says her Swahili professor arranged the final oral exam at an East African restaurant in Columbus. A freshman, near the end of her first year, can barely contain her zeal: "In high school, your teachers aren't really friends. Here, they are. They treat me like an adult. What I have to say is legitimate, like it's worth their time to talk to me. I think our professors really like spending time with students."

The university's collaborative spirit extends to the school's governance. The Student Government Association meets with university administrators once

*Forbes Magazine* ranks Ohio Wesleyan at

**NO. 17 NATIONALLY AND NO. 1 IN OHIO AMONG**

**“AMERICA’S MOST ENTREPRENEURIAL COLLEGES 2015”** for  
graduating high numbers of business founders and owners.

a month, and the SGA sets the agenda. It’s a real meeting where students and administrators act as peers and students have power to influence their campus. “The university is unbelievably receptive. All you have to do is e-mail senior administrators with your ideas. That’s the culture here,” says the president of the student body, a junior from Washington, D.C.

All this magnanimity inspires service to others. About 80 percent of students volunteer for nonprofits, either during a service trip or as part of an ongoing commitment to a local organization. An example: For more than two decades, Ohio Wesleyan students have traveled to the most economically depressed areas of Columbus to tutor and mentor students there, raise money for books, pack and unpack classrooms when the schools move into new buildings, and chaperone field trips. The program has inspired more than a few students to take jobs with Teach for America or pursue careers in education, nonprofit work, or advocacy.

As in their academic work, students thrive on possibility; they believe that they can, in fact, improve the world. Case in point: Two Ghanaian students founded a nongovernmental organization that raises money to help talented and needy students pay tuition at high-quality primary and secondary schools in Ghana. Five years after its founding, it is going strong, sponsoring nationwide meetings in Ghana about the public education system. For its hard work, in 2010 Ohio Wesleyan won one of six President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll awards, the highest federal award for civic engagement.

The character development that accompanies intellectual growth is exceptional. Few places pay so much attention to the whole person. Egos are small here, and hearts are big.

OWU's accomplished faculty are **FULBRIGHT, MELLON, AND GUGGENHEIM AWARD-WINNERS.** They're researchers with the NSF, NIH, NEH, and NASA.

It's a desirable place to spend four years, and if you agree, you have a good shot at getting in. The university accepts about 70 percent of its applicants; the average high-school GPA of enrolled students is 3.4. The middle 50 percent scored between 1080 and 1300 on the SAT (critical reading and math) and between 23 and 29 on the ACT. About 30 percent were in the top 10 percent of their high-school classes, and 85 percent of freshman return for sophomore year, up from 80 percent just a few years ago.

Ohio Wesleyan strives to make its education affordable. It awards scholarships not just for academic achievement but also for women who demonstrate leadership, legacies (children, stepchildren, grandchildren, and stepgrandchildren of alumni), ethnic minorities, children of Methodist ministers (a nod to its founders), and siblings of current students or alumni. Individual departments, including fine arts and economics, also give scholarships.

In total, 95 percent of OWU students get financial aid, merit awards or a combination of both. The university meets 83 percent of demonstrated need, and the average need-based aid award for the 2010-2011 year was \$32,000, less than a quarter of which was loans.

What do you get for your time and money? Students here feel they're getting a better deal than their friends who went to brand-name schools. (Let's not forget that some of those schools' reputations were made by magazine editors.) They laud all of the things that make a collage powerful: access to caring and gifted professors, a variety of well-developed courses and a strong curriculum, opportunities to use their passion and talents to help others, resources to support their ideas, and a residential community of people who genuinely like one another, even if they don't have much in common.



OWU Battling Bishops have **CELEBRATED HUNDREDS OF CONFERENCE CHAMPIONSHIPS** including five in the past year.

Many of them describe being “inspired” or, as one sophomore puts it, “activated, like someone flipped my ‘on’ button.” The life of the mind matters on this campus. Unlike so many universities, OWU invests its resources in learning. (What a concept!) Consider this: Every year since the mid-1980s, the university has put on a major lecture-discussion series called the Sagan National Colloquium to explore a public issue. The program brings in noted speakers—best-selling authors, Nobel laureates, corporate and international leaders, and elected officials—who talk about the issue from their perspectives. Workshops and discussion groups with the speaker follow the keynote address, and during the fall semester, a series of speakers, most of them professors and researchers from other schools, present on the colloquium topic. Students can earn academic credit for their participation and related research and analysis. *This* is the stuff of higher education.

Students and professors at OWU cringe at the phrase “hidden gem” to describe their university. In their view, Ohio Wesleyan is doing the work more colleges should, with its cross-curricular learning and openness to collaboration among faculty and students. There’s nothing hidden about what’s happening here: It’s progressive and thoughtful, a fine example of a university that didn’t just assume that it was good enough—or that it should just do what thousands of other schools in the country do.

The president of the student government is an able spokesman: “I spent half my life in Egypt. I thought life would be so dull in small-town Ohio. But I was wrong: The world is here, through international experiences and people. The world is absolutely here.”

U.S. News & World Report ranks Ohio Wesleyan as

## ONE OF THE TOP 100 “BEST NATIONAL LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES”

“America’s Best Colleges” (2017 edition)

### What You Need To Know

Ohio Wesleyan is a private, coeducational, residential university with students from nearly every U.S. state and more than 30 countries.

### Campus Culture

Visit [owu.edu/admission](http://owu.edu/admission) to learn more about Ohio Wesleyan’s powerful program of liberal arts for the 21st century.

### Academics

- Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Fine Arts, Bachelor of Music, and Bachelor of Science.
- OWU offers more than 90 majors—far more than most schools our size. Double majors are common, often in widely disparate fields.
- 146 professors; all full-time tenure-track faculty hold a Ph.D. or equivalent.
- 11:1 student/faculty ratio

### Student Life

Nearly 100 clubs and organizations (including marching band!) and more than 100 yearly events keep students busy; most stay on campus on the weekends. Students live in residence halls, themed small living units, and fraternity houses. Sororities are non-residential.

### Athletics

Member of NCAA Division III and the North Coast Athletic Conference; 25 varsity sports, 13 for women, 12 for men. Club and intramural sports are popular. OWU students are active!

### Facilities

A 200-acre campus; new “Home of The OWU Connection” building; two nature preserves; two observatories; new fitness center and dance studio; LEED-certified aquatics and recreation center; and new and newly renovated student housing, including an Honors House. A state-of-the-art science center including a scanning transmission electron microscope. Upgraded athletics facilities including iconic Selby Stadium, with lighting for night games and an interactive scoreboard.

# LOCATION

Delaware, Ohio, offers the friendliness of a small town only 20 miles from Columbus, the nation's 14th-largest city. Both Delaware, the county seat, and Columbus, the state capital, provide great opportunities for internships in virtually every field of study.

## APPROX. TRAVEL TIMES BY PLANE

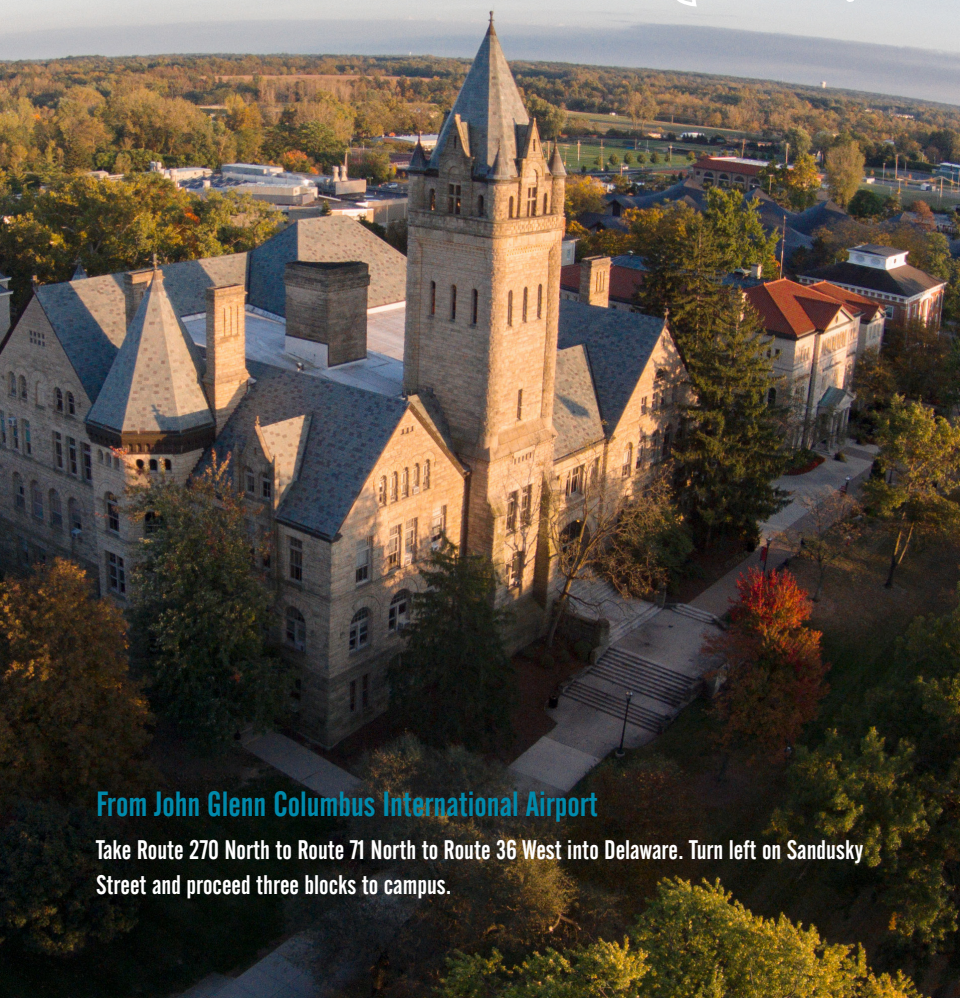
To Chicago: 1 hour

To New York City: 1 hour, 45 minutes

To Miami: 2 hours, 45 minutes

To San Francisco: 4 hours, 30 minutes

To Los Angeles: 4 hours, 30 minutes



## From John Glenn Columbus International Airport

Take Route 270 North to Route 71 North to Route 36 West into Delaware. Turn left on Sandusky Street and proceed three blocks to campus.

**OHIO WESLEYAN:  
A NATIONAL  
LIBERAL ARTS UNIVERSITY  
WITH A MAJOR  
INTERNATIONAL PRESENCE.**

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