

# Winter Term

Winter Term (January) is a time when Oberlin students can explore in greater depth areas of special interest. Regular course offerings are suspended, and in their place, students may select from a variety of intensive courses (many of which are offered only during Winter Term) or they may propose an educational project of their own. Winter Term is an opportunity for experimentation and creativity, with an emphasis on intellectual independence and personal responsibility.

Winter Term projects are offered both on and off campus, and individual projects may likewise be conducted in any suitable location. The atmosphere on campus during Winter Term is relaxed, yet active; concerts, films, theatrical productions, and invited speakers all combine to make the Winter Term calendar a lively one. Students enjoy discussion groups and forums and often participate in one or more of the many available student organizations. Some students use this month to leave their regular dining hall and cook for themselves, or to discover what life is like in one of the student-run dining cooperatives. Group projects regularly offered on campus include intensive language courses, computer applications, journalism, theater and dance workshops, musical ensembles, aikido, film criticism, historical research, field biology, and various science laboratory projects. The range of individually-designed projects is as varied as the student body: studio art, heritage crafts such as weaving or pottery, musical instrument making and playing, intensive reading of a favorite author, hospital internships, and community service involvement.

Where significant learning opportunities exist away from campus, they can be made into projects. Some common off-campus projects are internships in the US Congress, the Library of Congress, and other business and social organizations, and projects in research labs or geological field locations. A celebrated project in African-American history included retracing the steps of those who once sought refuge along the Underground Railroad.

A Winter Term Handbook is available on-line to all students within the first few weeks of the Fall term. It includes a checklist of dates and gives guidelines and suggestions for preparing a successful and rewarding project. Later in the term a supplement to the catalog is created, listing Winter Term projects that have been publicized by that time. Some departments also list the specific interests of their faculty and the projects that they might sponsor. The Office of Career Development and Placement also maintains a library of guides and indexes that can be helpful in securing rewarding off-campus Winter Term internships.

Winter Term projects are not graded. Instead, one receives credit for successful participation. Projects are rated as full or half credit. In any given Winter Term a student may enroll in one half project, two half projects, or one full project (but not one and a half). For graduation, one must have earned, in whatever combination, three full Winter Term credits. Since extra tuition is not charged for Winter Term, many students elect to do a fourth as well.

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