

## Chapter 4

### "Olivet Nazarene University . . . career and professional readiness . . ."

The purpose of this section is to . . .

- (1) present criteria for preparing for an academic specialization
- (2) explain academic advising and requirements for majors
- (3) explore career options

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this portion of your Introduction to College Studies course is to prepare you to make the transition from college to career. This may seem strange since you have just begun your freshman year. As noted in the University catalog, some things in life may be repeated, but you have only one first year in college. "Many educators agree that the freshman year is the most important for choosing personal values, study and work habits, making social adjustments and commitments, and claiming the promises of God for your life" (Catalog, 1998, p. 3). Planning for your future began the moment you set foot on this campus for the first day of your freshman year and continues each time you read the catalog, meet with your adviser, schedule and complete your courses, and add additional experiences to your resume and portfolio.

Olivet's first-quality academic programs combine a foundation of liberal arts study with a variety of career-focused majors, concentrations, and minors. Our emphasis on career preparation through 62 academic programs equips young men and women for a lifetime of effective and satisfying living. The faculty are carefully chosen for their proficiency in teaching, character-building influence, and Christian dedication. They are your partners in pursuing an education with a Christian purpose. The professors can become your close friends as you work to integrate and organize your life and career with Christ in first place. The Christian perspective on learning encourages you to look beyond the facts in your studies to the deeper meanings in life (Catalog, 1998 ).

In this section of the course, you will learn about the University catalog, academic advising, academic requirements, majors, and career options. Some specific requirements regarding grade point averages, good standing, probation and financial aid are included at the end of the section that addresses the University catalog. You are encouraged to contact the Career Planning and Placement Center for career information, assistance with resumes and portfolios, and questions regarding career options.

## **University Catalog**

The University catalog is your guide to the undergraduate courses of study, activities and opportunities at ONU. It is crucial that you read, comprehend, and use the catalog as you plan your years of study. "Teachers and counselors are ready to assist the student in planning his or her program, but the student has primary responsibility for meeting requirements for graduation, licensing, certification, and graduate school admission" (Catalog, 1998, p. 18 ). Other important facts that you should consider include:

- The catalog remains in force for the period for which it is issued.
- The material contained in the catalog is for information only and does not constitute a contract between the student and the University.
- The University reserves the right to revise policies, amend rules, alter regulations, and change financial charges at any time in accordance with the best interest of the institution.
- Candidates for graduation are expected to meet the requirements for graduation of the catalog in force at the time of that graduation.
- The University publishes special bulletins about semester course offerings. Changes to the catalog, programs of study, etc., are published in the front of each bulletin.
- Several divisions and/or departments (e.g., Teacher Education) have manuals and/or guides that give specific directions for completing the degree program and professional certification within the field. Consult your adviser to obtain information regarding these documents.
- Several divisions and/or departments have Web pages. Students should consult these for the latest in major requirements, curriculum changes, and information regarding professional opportunities in various fields.
- Start a file. It is highly recommended that you start a file for your catalog and other documents such as your grade reports, advisement forms, fee payment receipts, schedule change forms, and other proof of financial and academic dealings (Gardner & Jewler, 1998). Keep this file until graduation.

Attention to these items will help you maintain satisfactory scholastic standing.

## **Satisfactory Scholastic Standing**

To be considered in satisfactory scholastic standing, students must maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average according to the following schedule:

**Semester Hours Attempted****Minimum Cumulative GPA**

1-18	1.5
19-29	1.7
30-45	1.8
46-59	1.9
60 or more	2.0

Students who fall below these minimum standards are not making satisfactory progress and will be placed on academic probation. In addition, students may be considered to be on academic probation for failure to attain a 1.000 grade point average in any given semester, or for failure to pass at least 50 percent of the credits registered at the end of the initial drop/add period (second week of the semester).

Only students in satisfactory scholastic standing may participate in ASC offices, class presidencies, intercollegiate athletics, drama, public relations groups, off-campus spiritual life groups, or tour off-campus with music ensembles. This policy does not apply to intramural activities.

If, after one semester on probation, the cumulative grade point average is not improved; or, after two successive semesters on probation, the grade point average does not meet minimum standards for satisfactory progress (as outlined above); or at any time it falls below a 1.0 average, a student may be academically suspended by the Vice President for Academic Affairs. In addition, a student placed on probation for failure to meet the 1.000 semester grade point requirement or 50 percent progress requirement may be suspended if significant progress is not made during the probationary semester. In such cases the student may appeal to the committee on Academic Standards for a review of such a decision.

For transfer students, academic standing in the first semester of attendance at Olivet is based on the cumulative grade point average at the previous institutions. After one semester of attendance at ONU, the academic standing of transfer students will be based on the grade point average for all course work accepted toward a degree and included on the Olivet transcript.

**Satisfactory Progress Requirements for State or Federally Funded Financial Aid Programs**

In order to maintain eligibility for federal and state financial aid, a student must meet the satisfactory progress requirements established by Olivet Nazarene University in compliance with federal regulations, including the following:

1. A student must complete degree requirements within the time-frame listed below:

<b>Degree Program</b>	<b>Full-time Student</b>	<b>Half-time Student</b>
Associate Degree	3 years	6 years
Baccalaureate Degree	6 years	12 years
Master's Degree	3-4 1/2 years	6-9 years

A student requiring remedial courses will be allowed an additional 24 hours attempted.

2. A student must maintain a cumulative grade point average according to the following schedule:

<b>Cumulative Hours Attempted</b>	<b>GPA Required</b>
1-18	1.5
19-29	1.7
30-45	1.8
45-59	1.9
60 or more	2.0

3. Each semester a student must satisfactorily complete 67 percent of the hours registered at the end of the initial drop/add period (second week of the semester). Grades of F, W, WP, WF, I, X, U, and H are considered unsatisfactory but will be included as hours attempted in determining satisfactory program completion rate.

4. Cumulative hours must be satisfactorily completed according to the following schedule:

<b>Academic Year</b>	<b>Cumulative Hours Satisfactorily Completed</b>	<b>Cumulative GPA Required</b>
1	21	1.70
2	43	1.85
3	64	2.00
4	86	2.00
5	107	2.00
6	128	2.00

Summer credit hours or transfer credits taken subsequent to enrollment at Olivet Nazarene University may be used to make-up a deficiency in cumulative hours completed during an academic year.

**Financial Aid Probation** - A student will be placed on financial aid probation for failing to meet any of the above standards of progress. A student placed on financial aid probation may continue to receive federal and state aid during the probationary semester. However, such a student must meet all of the satisfactory progress requirements by the end of the probationary semester or be placed on financial aid suspension. Students will also be placed on financial aid suspension

when, having attempted 64 or more semester hours, the cumulative grade point average falls below 2.00.

**Financial Aid Suspension** - Financial Aid Suspension will result in the loss of all state and federal financial aid until a student returns to good standing by meeting all the satisfactory progress requirements. Suspension from financial aid does not prevent a student from enrolling at ONU with his/her own financial resources, if he or she is eligible to re-enroll.

**Appeals** - In the event that extenuating circumstances are experienced, appeals, for exceptions to the above requirements will be considered by the Financial Aid Committee no later than the first day of classes of the semester (Catalog, 1998, pp. 70-71).

### **Academic Advising**

"You will have two guides designed to help you through the maze of college life. One is the most important book you will have in all of your college years: your college catalog. The other indispensable guide is your academic adviser, one of the most important persons with whom you will interact throughout your college experience" (Gerow & Gerow, 1997, p. 24). At ONU, you were randomly assigned to your freshman adviser without regard to major or career plans. During the Freshman Advising course, you will have an opportunity to meet several advisers, hear about different majors, and discuss career options. It will be to your advantage to talk with several professors before connecting with an adviser in your field. In the middle of the spring semester, students are allowed to request an adviser by completing a form in the Office of the Registrar. Often, departments assign students to an adviser. Check with the department head in your major field to see what the procedure is for that particular department. When interacting with your adviser, keep the following suggestions in mind:

- Meet with your adviser frequently. Do not wait until time to sign up for classes. It is an extremely busy time for each adviser.
- You must complete an official preregistration form and have the adviser's signature each time you wish to register. Advisers will not sign blank preregistration forms.
- Adviser signatures also are required to add, drop or change class schedules.
- Advisers are often one of the best sources of career advice, connections, and are the most frequently contacted individuals for job references.
- It is important to maintain a good relationship with your adviser. If a problem arises you should discuss it with the adviser, then the department head and division head. In some cases, students will then be allowed to change advisers.
- Advisers will assist you in every way possible to succeed in classes and at ONU.

While your faculty adviser is critical to your academic success remember: **YOU** and **only YOU** are ultimately responsible for planning your schedule and meeting all requirements for graduation.

### **Matching Olivet Courses and Career Plans**

Olivet Nazarene University is committed to academic excellence. The University is accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools as a four-year bachelor's degree-granting institution. Several areas of study have been granted accreditation by specific professional organization (Catalog, 1998, p. 17 ).

The courses of study in the University are organized in 23 departments, which are grouped in seven divisions of study (Catalog, 1998, p. 7 ). A chart of majors, concentrations within majors, and minors offered at Olivet can be found on page 24 of the Catalog. A genuine encounter with the traditional liberal arts is felt to be the best way to assure the development of the whole person and to give balance in making the judgments required in a world of rapid change. Accordingly, ONU offers the student a variety of opportunities for growth according to his/her aptitude and interests. Some career choices have specific course requirements.

Key pieces of advice in this area include:

- Take basic required courses as early as possible, conserving electives to be studied later. Electives from a broad range of subject matter are available, even within general education requirements.
- Carefully review the general education requirements (Catalog, 1998, pp. 18-22) and discuss them with your adviser. Certain majors (e.g., education, nursing) have specific general education requirements that must be followed.
- Certain majors have specific requirements regarding internships, student teaching, and other professional experiences.
- Students planning to pursue one of the pre-professional programs are advised to ask the registrar for assignment to the appropriate pre-professional faculty adviser.

### **Planning for Your Future**

"Majors = Careers? Not Always" (Gardner & Jewler, 1998, p. 190).

Some of you have been certain since childhood what you wanted to have as a major in college. Others remain uncertain. Before you actively begin planning your major or career, consider several truths about majors and their effect on careers (Gardner & Jewler, 1998).

-- Some careers have set majors; for example, if you want to be a nurse, you must major in nursing.

-- Most career fields don't require a specific major.

-- People with specific majors don't have to use them in traditional ways. For example, if you major in nursing, history, or English, you may still choose to become an administrator, lawyer, or any number of other things.

Students are encouraged to explore not only various majors and minors, but also to ask themselves the question, "What do I really want to do?" Never underestimate the value of internships, part-time jobs, and other school activities in assisting you to make career decisions and gain needed experience. Numerous ONU alumni live and work in the surrounding communities. Most are willing to discuss career options with you and even let you "shadow" them for a day at work.

As you learn more about various career opportunities, broaden your curricular and work experiences. Explore your options with the counselors in the Counseling and Career Center and discuss them with your academic adviser. Neither of the writers of this section are working directly in his or her major field. Each took varied paths to reach his/her current position.

When planning for your future, Gardner and Jewler (1998) recommend that you consider the following:

As you attempt to determine what you want to do, the choice of an academic major will take on new meaning. You'll no longer be so concerned with what the prescribed route of certain majors allows you to do. Instead you'll use your career goals as a basis for academic decisions about your major, your minor, elective courses, internships, and co-curricular activities. . . . Don't confine yourself to a short list of jobs directly related to your major; think more broadly about your goals (p. 191).

Suggestions for planning for your future include:

-- Never underestimate the value of professional contact. Your adviser and all of the professors maintain professional contacts that can assist you in making career decisions and in obtaining employment. Most advisers are more than willing to help you make contacts early in your college career.

-- Begin your resume and portfolio of professional experiences today. Collect letters from internship supervisors, practicum experiences and part-time jobs. Videotape presentations in class or other presentations you give throughout your college years. Each of these are valuable additions to a resume and/or professional portfolio.

-- Join professional associations and attend their conferences. Most professional associations have student rates for publications and conferences.

Present papers for publication or give presentations whenever possible.

-- Obtain letters of reference from a variety of sources beginning your freshman year.

### **Your Future and Your Grade Point Average**

A case can be made that grades are not everything. Competition for jobs and graduate schools is stiff. A poor first semester as a freshman can have significant long-term ramifications. Some students have come to the awful realization that their failure to study and achieve during their freshman year, especially first semester, cost them admission to a program of study, a job, and/or admission to graduate school.

Students must maintain certain grade point averages to keep financial aid, avoid academic probation, and maintain extracurricular and athletic eligibility. Students have been suspended from ONU for failure to maintain academic standards. Some majors have specific GPA requirements for admission to the program (e.g., Teacher Education) and students have had to alter career plans for failing to meet program admission standards.

At Olivet, we want everyone to achieve and reach academic goals. We have established several programs that target students who have difficulty learning, fail to attend classes, and struggle to maintain a respectable GPA. Your adviser is notified of your grades, and he or she will work with you to obtain the counseling and/or help you may require.

Suggestions in this area include:

-- Maintain class attendance. Being in class and actively engaged is one of the best ways to achieve. Each professor sets his or her own policy regarding absences. Unlike high school, there are no excused absences from the Dean's Office for family emergencies, deaths, illnesses, or any other problem that prevents you from attending class. Do not run the risk of having your grade lowered due to absences.

-- Discuss any difficulties with the course professor early in the semester. Communication is essential. All of the faculty want you to succeed and are willing to help you help yourself.

-- Read and follow the course syllabus. Some professors will not accept late work. It is your responsibility to meet deadlines and due dates.

-- Read the catalog and keep drop dates in mind. Some students have received failing grades for classes that were not dropped in a timely manner.

-- Work hard all semester. Do not ask for extra credit to "bail you out" when you have failed to maintain a consistent work ethic during the semester.



-- Realize that the professor has the right to withdraw you from class for failure to attend and/or for failure on your part to participate in an appropriate manner.

-- If you have a question or a problem regarding a class, the order for seeking assistance is as follows: (a) course professor, (b) department head, (c) division head, and (d) associate academic dean and/or registrar. Do not "skip around" individuals to seek assistance. You will always be instructed to return to any person that you have missed in the sequence.

### *Activity*

At this time you should plan a four-year academic schedule for a major in which you are interested. You will need the current catalog, advising guide, and schedule book. Carefully review the schedule noting classes that have prerequisites and those that only are offered in the spring or fall semesters or every other year. It is important for you to plan your schedule in advance since some courses that you want to take may be scheduled at the same time. Courses are numbered according to level and/or classification. See page 77 of the catalog for a description of the course numbering system.

### **Conclusion**

Typically, 50 percent of the first-time freshmen complete graduation requirements within six years of their initial enrollment at Olivet. Assuming responsibility for your time, planning ahead, and being proactive about your future career are some of the best habits that you can develop as a freshman. The professors and staff at ONU are willing to help you help yourself to succeed. We look forward to working with you in the coming years.

## References

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