

Mission

St. Olaf College is a community rooted in Norwegian-Lutheran heritage and the landscape of southern Minnesota, providing an education committed to the liberal arts, grounded in ecological principles, incorporating a global perspective, with a focus on spiritual inquiry. With the conviction that life is more than a livelihood, St. Olaf fosters the development of the whole person in mind, body and spirit for the renewal of humanity and the sustaining of the Earth community.

St. Olaf has a unique year-round, four-year undergraduate program that integrates place-based, experiential learning with rigorous academic study and community involvement. Through work, study, ritual and service, St. Olaf works to foster development of persons who are ecological literate, spirituality grounded, morally directed and service oriented, global aware, critically and creatively thinking, skilled for work in communities, and rooted in and committed to their places.

St. Olaf strives to be an inclusive and integrative community. Work, study, ritual, play and rest are integrated into the lives of all its members—faculty, staff, students and guests alike. The St. Olaf learning community welcomes individuals of all ages and abilities, all ethnic, racial and religious backgrounds and sexual, affectional and gender orientations. We also welcome those from a diversity of education and experiential backgrounds. Our mission is the dynamic development of the individual, community and society in the context of ecological awareness and concern.

St. Olaf is committed to working toward sustainability grounded in place-based living and global awareness. To this end the community operates its own farm, orchard, gardens and dairy, as well as works with other local farmers to provide food for the community and stimulate the local economy. The well-being of the local ecosystem is of utmost importance and is monitored and cared for through projects maintained by students, staff and faculty. The use of energy and resources, and the production of waste is reduced by the development and use of sustainable design methods and renewable sources of energy. The irreplaceable wisdom and experience of local first-nations peoples is honored and the needs of the local community are at the forefront of the work of the community.

In sum, St. Olaf College operates in accordance with the philosophy of David Orr who says:

The plain fact is that the planet does not need more successful people. But it does desperately need more peacemakers, healers, restorers, storytellers, and lovers of every kind. It needs people who live well in their places. It needs people of moral courage willing to join the fight to make the world habitable and humane. And

these qualities have little to do with success as our culture has defined it.

Academic Requirements

Entrance Requirements for Students:

- Shown through combination of work and study:
 - Concern for global human and ecological reality
 - Commitment to place, identity and origin
 - Investment in spiritual inquiry and holistic well-being
 - Committed interest to challenging and integrative approach to academics
- Identify your gifts, a desire to learn, and a willingness to make a long-term investment in the St. Olaf community
- Secondary education is required for admission. However, those who have not completed secondary education may apply for admission to our on-campus high school or adult high school completion program. Similarly, those who are not proficient in English can go through our English Proficiency Program before entering the undergraduate program.
- We strive to welcome students from a diversity of backgrounds and experiences.

General Education Requirements:

First Year Required Courses:

- Foundations in Ecological Principles: The Sustainable Paradigm
- Written and Verbal Communication

Core Studies:

- 4 Writing Intensive Courses
- 4 Courses in second language to attain proficiency
- 1 course examining United States history and society
- 1 course examining history and society on a global scale
- 1 course in practical mathematic understanding

Foundational Studies: (must include experiential component)

- Community Studies
- Creativity & the Arts
- Embodiment, Health and Wholeness
- Interdependence Studies
- Mindfulness Studies
- Mutuality Studies
- Nonviolence & Peace Studies
- Religion and Spirituality

Place-based Study in Sustainability:

- At least one three-month study/work period in place of birth/childhood home (if possible)

Life After St. Olaf:

It is very likely that you will continue working and learning with people from the wider St. Olaf community after you leave the hill. St. Olaf acts as a network and support system throughout the country and around the world for those continuing with work toward a more just, peaceful and sustainable global community, those striving to live well in their places.

Graduates continue to be a part of the community by sharing time, skills and other resources as they are able. All alumni are welcomed to return to the community for sabbaticals to share their experiences and expertise with the community as interim or permanent faculty or staff.

Academics at St. Olaf

Foundational Studies

Under these headings is a limited listing of courses that fulfill general education requirements, as well as those that fulfill requirements for majors in the different Foundation Studies. Each is designed to integrate the theoretical, analytical and practical elements of learning.

• Community Studies

- Political Process and Civic Engagement
 - Political Pluralism
 - Understanding Culture
 - Ethics of Technology
- Community Design
 - Urban Community Design
 - Co-housing
 - Redesigning Suburbia
- Community Process
 - Effective Communication
 - Decision Making and Conflict Resolution
 - Group Facilitation and Leadership
 - Practice and Ritual
- Economics of Sustainability
 - Globalization and the Current Market Economy
 - Principles of Local Economy
 - Management
 - Responsible and Effective Marketing
- Community Care and Education
 - Parenting
 - Elderly
 - Developmental

- Studies in Rural Community
- Studies in Urban and Suburban Community

• Creativity and the Arts

- Creativity: Energy and Potential
- Arts and Community
 - The Arts and Social Movements
 - Music and Revolution
 - The Arts, Ritual and Community
- Therapy and the Arts
 - Dance Therapy
 - Music Therapy
 - Art Therapy
- Writing
 - Creative Writing
 - Non-fiction
 - Nature Writing
 - Poetry
 - Political and persuasive Writing
 - Fiction
 - Children's stories
- Studio Art
 - Painting
 - Drawing
 - Sculpture
 - Ceramics
 - Print-making
- Dance
 - Modern
 - (See also: Embodiment Practices)
- Music
 - Voice
 - Instrumental
 - Ensemble

• Embodiment, Health and Wholeness

- Revaluing the Body
 - Embodied Knowing
 - Sexuality
 - Mind-Body Connection
- Embodiment Practices
 - Yoga
 - Thai Chi
 - Developmental Movement
 - Experiential Anatomy
 - Occupational Movement
- Nutrition and Food
- Health Practices and Therapy
 - Psychological
 - Massage
 - Herbal/aromatherapy
 - Music/Art/Dance (See also: Creativity & the Arts)

- Midwifery and Reproductive Health
 - Nursing
- Interdependence Studies
 - Ecological principles – design and diversity
 - The Universe Story (integrating physics, ecology, and theology)
 - Global Patterns
 - Production and Consumption
 - Food Systems and Food Security
 - Sustainable agriculture (See also Homesteading skills, nutrition, management, marketing, and occupational movement)
 - Botany
 - Animal husbandry
 - Dairy operation
 - Organic pest management
 - Seed saving and heirloom preservation
 - Low-impact cultivation
 - Soil ecology
 - Climate conditions
 - Polyculture and companion planting
 - Tools, instruments and methods of cultivation
 - Sustainable Design
 - Architecture – technology, materials, process (construction and maintenance of campus structures)
 - Straw-bale construction
 - Energy – solar, wind, (construction and maintenance and monitoring of campus energy generators)
 - Ecology (Local ecology courses offered year-round)
 - Prairie ecology and restoration
 - Forest ecology and restoration
 - River ecology and restoration
- Mindfulness Studies
 - Evolution of the human psyche
 - Childhood development (Companion course: Developmental Movement)
 - Human Behavior and Relationships
 - Awareness Practices (to be taken with one of the following)
 - Meditation, Thai Chi, Yoga
 - Mind-Body (See also: Embodiment)
 - Habit and Ritual
 - Contemporary Culture
 - Advertising and the Media
- Mutuality Studies
 - Understanding the Western Paradigm
 - Patriarchy, domination, militarization, alienation, anthropocentrism
 - Historic Foundations and Current Trends of the Sustainable Paradigm
 - Defining Power
 - Studies in Oppression and Liberation
 - Historic movements
 - Native Peoples and the American Indian Movement (See also: Native Studies)
 - Women’s Liberation Movement
 - LGBT Movement
 - Workers’ Rights (See also: Movements of Nonviolent Resistance)
 - Immigrants and Refugees
 - Methods, manifestations, embodiment
 - Developing relationships of mutuality
 - Gender studies (includes intensive group work)
 - Work with kids in school program
 - Sexuality studies (includes intensive group work)
 - Multicultural studies and Whiteness (includes intensive group work)
- Nonviolence & Peace Studies
 - Principled Nonviolence
 - Nonviolence in History
 - Leaders of Nonviolent Social Movements
 - Movements of Nonviolent Resistance (U.S.)
 - United States Civil Rights Movement (Highlander Institute)
 - Peace Movement
 - Anti-Globalization Movement
 - Movements of Nonviolent Resistance (World)
 - Chile (abroad)
 - South Africa (abroad)
 - United States Foreign Policy
 - Restorative Justice (work with on-campus RJ program)
 - Reconciliation
 - Practices of Nonviolence
- Religion and Spirituality Studies Learn from and with spiritual leaders, shamans, pastors, priests,

monks and nuns, as well as theology professors, scholars on and off campus.

- Introduction to Theology
- Introduction to Religious practice
 - Community spiritual practice
 - Ritual
- Story and Myth, Memory and Hope
- World Religious Traditions (history, foundations and practice)
 - Buddhism (on campus or abroad in monastery)
 - Hinduism
 - Islam
 - Christianity
 - Catholic Worker Movement (on Catholic Worker Farm or Hospitality House)
 - Feminist Theology
 - Liberation Theology (El Salvador)
 - Monasticism and community (off-campus, Benedictine monastery, also Iona, Scotland)
 - Indigenous Spiritualities
 - Mayan Spirituality (Guatemala)
 - Ojibwe Spirituality (White Earth Reservation)
- Spiritual Inquiry – Personal and Communal

Additional Course Offerings:

- Homesteading Skills and Crafts
 - Woodworking
 - Carpentry
 - Maple Syruping
 - Bee keeping
 - Canning and preserving
 - Weaving
 - Natural dyeing
 - Knitting
 - Ceramics
 - Bread making
 - Herb preservation (oils, vinegars, drying)
- Native Studies (Indigenous, First-Nation Peoples)

- Pre-Columbian History
- Post-Columbian History
- Ojibwa Language
- Dakota Language
- Myth
- Spiritual Belief and Practice
- Culture
- Contemporary Thought
- Contemporary Problems

Majors Offered

The following is a list of majors offered at St. Olaf. All are grounded in principles of ecology and human community and have an inherently integrative approach. Many of the requirements for majors coincide with general education requirements.

I. Integrative Studies in Sustainability:

- Community Studies
- Creativity & the Arts
- Embodiment, Health and Wholeness
- Interdependence Studies
- Mindfulness Studies
- Mutuality Studies
- Nonviolence & Peace Studies
- Religion and Spirituality

II. International, Multicultural and Linguistic Studies:

- Africa and the Americas
- Asian Studies
- Dakota/Lakota Language
- French Language
- German Language
- Hmong Language
- Immigrant & Refugee Studies
- Latin America and Latino Studies
- Linguistics
- Middle East Studies
- Native Studies
- Norwegian Language
- Ojibwe Language
- Racial & Multicultural Studies
- Somali Language
- Spanish Language
- Swahili Language

III. Natural, Social and Applied Sciences:

- Biology
- Chemistry
- Design
- Economics of Sustainability
- Education
- Food and Nutrition Studies
- Gender & Sexuality Studies
- Nursing
- Physics

- Political Science
- Psychology
- Social Work
- Sociology
- Sustainable Agriculture

IV. Humanities and The Arts:

- Dance
- History
- Music
- Philosophy
- Studio Art
- Theatre

Concentrations Offered

- Group Facilitation
- Homesteading Skills
- Indigenous Spirituality
- Management
- Restorative Justice
- Spiritual Practice and Ritual

Community Life

St. Olaf is a year-round, residential community with a four-year undergraduate program. The community also operates a variety of one-site and outreach programs, including a women's shelter, senior living, a retreat center, and a school for children of community members.

Living in Place

St. Olaf is deeply invested in its local community and landscape, and fosters such relationships of all members with this place and their respective homeplaces as well. We are about re-valuing the places we come from. For this reason, each student is required to study their own places, returning to them to engage in meaningful study and work at some time in their four years here. We also recognize that many people today are homeless, have had their homes taken from them or destroyed, or have never had permanent residence. Other meaningful options in place-based study are available in these cases.

The local ecology and agriculture is valued as central to our living and essential to our education as we move forward with humanity into uncertain times. Courses in these areas and restoration projects are on-going year-round, and the operation of campus farm, orchard, gardens and dairy

sustain the community. We are also mindful of energy and resource use. The community shares electric and fuel-efficient vehicles, and an electric trolley runs from the hill to the Northfield community. We are also in the practice of "greening" current campus structures and designing and constructing buildings with technology researched by our very own students. The campus runs on wind energy and recycles much of its own waste.

Diversity

Diversity is essential to the sustainability of living systems, including human society. As a community we recognize the profound and irreplaceable wisdom of native peoples, the elderly, and those from a variety of experiential backgrounds. The community is open and welcoming to a broad range of persons, which is encouraged through our various community programs. We also strive for a student population diverse in age, ethnicity, religious background, and sexual orientation.

Ritual

The rhythm of life at St. Olaf is marked by spiritual practice, community ritual, and a commitment to Sabbath. Each morning, and throughout the day are opportunities to participate in spiritual practices such as yoga, meditation or other forms of prayer. Throughout the day, healthy meals using local, organically grown produce are shared in small community groups. One simple Hunger Awareness meal each week serves to bring us more deeply into gratitude and supports those in need of basic sustenance. Every evening, the community is welcomed together for an ecumenical worship service that draws from a diversity of traditions. Finally, the Sabbath is honored each Sunday, set aside as a day of rest and renewal for all community members, and serves as a time for community sharing through music, storytelling and other recreational activities.

Life Integration and Mutuality

The St. Olaf community is committed to the pursuit of vocation and the revaluing of work in the context of mutually enriching environments. To this end, all members are involved in the work of the community, and all participate in learning and teaching as well. The role of students is principally to study, but experiential and work components are incorporated into virtually every course, enriching the learning experience while benefiting the community. Similarly, faculty participate in communities duties from washing dishes to helping on the farm, while staff in these areas have the opportunity to teach as they work with students, and take occasional courses.

St. Olaf is unique in that where we work is where we live is where we eat is where we play. Unique housing integrates young and old, families and singles, differently-abled persons and faculty, staff and students. This serves to foster more intimate and sustaining relationships among community members, but does not imply a complete separation from the wider community. There is a constant flow of guests through the community as they participate in the many community programs or visit for forums or other educational opportunities.

Community Programs

St. Olaf is a learning community. It is also a healing community, one of renewal and retreat for public servants, and one of healing and empowerment for the disadvantaged. Along with an undergraduate program, the community operates the following programs, which operate with the assistance of staff, faculty and students alike, who gain first-hand experience in their areas of study. These programs and their participants contribute to the invaluable enrichment and wisdom of the entire community.

Seniors and Differently-abled Persons

Along with students, faculty and staff, the St. Olaf community welcomes seniors capable of independent living, those in need of assistance, along with differently-abled persons who wish to participate in community life. The life of those in this program lead a life of rest, renewal, sharing and continued learning. Each contributes to the work of the community according to their ability and serve as teachers, sharing the wisdom of life experience and skills. Some partake in limited coursework and all members fully participate in meals and other rituals of the community. Housing is integrated with students, staff and faculty.

Women's Restorative Center

Women seeking temporary housing and those seeking freedom from abuse are welcomed to the Women's Restorative Center housed on campus. Women receive healing therapy, working with professional staff of the Center as well as students. The Center uses an integrated approach, matching the mission of the community, which may include counseling, movement, and spiritual practices. Also integral to the healing process is participation in the community. All women are expected to share in the work of the community, according to their ability. This may mean washing dishes or weeding, assisting with community ritual or caring for the elderly.

Center for Restorative Justice and Reconciliation

Women and men coming out of the prison system are welcomed to take part in intensive a community process of healing and restoration. Participants learn community and communication skills, conflict resolution, principled and embodied non-violence, and participate in community ritual and work.

Institute for the Sustaining of Indigenous Communities and First-Nations Peoples

The Institute serves as a resource center and meeting place for leaders of indigenous communities and their allies, supporting the work toward preservation and reclamation of language and tradition, land and wisdom, through education, study and community support.

Retreat Center

Guests receive spiritual guidance and holistic therapy (working with both professionals and students) and participate in the work, learning and ritual of the community.

Adult Secondary Education finishing program

This program is open for those who are accepted for the undergraduate program but need to first complete their secondary education, as well as those in our Women's Restorative program and Restorative Justice program.

English Proficiency Program

Students and staff who wish to gain proficiency in English are welcomed to this program.

Birth-age 18 School

Care and education is provided for the children of faculty, students and staff of the community. Children are integral to the life and learning of the entire community and participate in the ritual and work of the community in a variety of ways.

Sustainable Farm, Orchard, Gardens and Dairy

The sustainable farm, orchard, gardens and dairy are operated by the community and give students direct experience in the work of sustainable food production. These operations provide for a portion of the community's food needs, as well as the student-run Café and Bakery.

General Store

Through this operation, students learn skills of responsible marketing and management, while providing a market for the sale of produce, arts and crafts produced in the community. The General Store serves as an outreach to the wider community, accepting food stamps and serving as a gathering space for community groups and events.

Café and Bakery

This student-run operation also involves the important work of many of our differently-abled and elderly residents. The Café and Bakery obtains much of its organic produce and grains from the campus farm, orchard, gardens and dairy.