

# England study abroad captures ‘history in motion’



Pictured from left: Students Mina Wassef, Victoria Ochs, Nathan Edwards, Mikayla McCarthy, Alexandra Lillie and Professor Randall Engle (seated) at Lambeth Palace. The group viewed the original manuscripts of the first authorized translation of the Bible into English.

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A group of Oakland University students immersed themselves in history this summer when they spent 10 days in England as part of a study abroad. The course, "[Tudors of England](#)," focused on the lives of the highly influential family of monarchs who ruled England from 1485 to 1603.

"It would be difficult to overstate the impact of the Tudors," said Randall Engle, course instructor and adjunct professor in OU's Religious Studies program. "They broke religious ties with Rome, warred against France and Spain, literally rebuilt England, thus the preponderance of Tudor architecture, and paved the way for the great Elizabethan era under the last Tudor, Elizabeth I."

Lasting from 1558 -1603,  
The Elizabethan period  
produced some of the

world's most celebrated literary figures, including William Shakespeare. During their time in London, Engle and the students attended a performance of one of The Bard's comedies, "The Merry Wives of Windsor" at the iconic Globe Theatre, where many of his plays debuted.



*Hampton Court Palace*

The group also toured the Tower of London, Windsor Castle, Buckingham Palace and Hampton Court Palace, which, incidentally, was the architectural inspiration for OU's historic landmark Meadow Brook Hall.

They visited Westminster Abbey, the final resting place of famed writers such as Charles Dickens and Geoffrey Chaucer, as well as pioneering scientists like Charles Darwin and Isaac Newton.



*Windsor Castle*

The study abroad was preceded by two weeks of classroom lectures led by Engle, who received his Ph.D. in England and thereafter became an "all-out Anglophile." The lectures provided historical context and prepared students for the experience of life across the north Atlantic.



*OU group in front of St. Paul's Cathedral*

"It sounds dry when reading in an academic course offering catalog," said Engle. "But with this knowledge in hand, all of England comes alive – the buildings, the statues, the portraits, the topography – it's unforgettable and endlessly intriguing."

Perhaps the most unforgettable moment of the trip was when the group examined the original

manuscripts of the first authorized translation of the Bible into English, at Lambeth Palace.

“We could see, in the far-left column, the Bible in Hebrew, in the next column, the Septuagint (Greek translation of the Hebrew), the next column the Vulgate (Latin), and then the proposed English,” Engle explained. “Different scholars would scratch out proposed language, and initial their better suggestions. Some difficult sentences were skipped. We were examining a work in progress, one of the world's most priceless artifacts.”

It was one of many highlights of the trip for students Mikayla McCarthy and Mina Wassef.

Wassef described it as “history in motion,” while McCarthy marveled at the exclusivity of the experience. She noted that the students had to wait while palace officials vetted Engle before letting the group enter the archive.

“They were super serious,” McCarthy said. “We waited for about 45 minutes while they made sure that Dr. Engle was who he said he was and had the proper credentials.”

For Wassef, a native of Egypt, the trip was a perfect blend of the historical and contemporary. He enjoyed visiting the British Museum, which featured exhibits of ancient Egyptian mummies and the Rosetta Stone, which helped scholars decipher the ancient



*Queen Elizabeth II Birthday Parade*

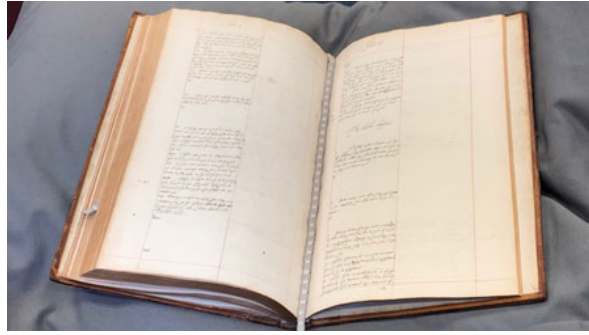


*Royal Family at Buckingham Palace*



*View from the London Eye*

Egyptian language of hieroglyphics. His favorite part of the trip was seeing the Trooping of the Colour, otherwise known as the Queen's Birthday Parade.



*King James Bible translation manuscript*

“We saw hundreds of soldiers marching, many of them playing instruments, as well as all of the royals we hear about in the news, including Prince Harry, Meghan, Kate, Prince William, Prince Charles, and most importantly, Queen Elizabeth II,” he said.

Beyond history and pageantry, Wassef said studying abroad gave him a new appreciation for people and cultures.

“I’ve heard many people say that studying abroad was one of the best experiences of their lives, but I never knew how accurate they were until I experienced it myself,” he said. “Seeing how people live in other countries exposes you to diverse cultures and opens your eyes to the rest of the world.”

While “Tudors of England” is an [Honors College](#) course, Engle also leads a study abroad class titled [“Cross and Crown,”](#) which is open to all students. Both classes are coordinated through OU’s [Office of International Education](#).