

# FRANKLY SPEAKING

Olin's unofficial,  
student-run news  
source.

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 2

MARCH 2012

FREE, AS IN BEER

## Take a Leave of Absence

**Trevor Hooton**

*Foreign Correspondent*

In July, my internship in Mumbai wrapped up and I spent the next three and a half months touring India. By mid November, I was in Nepal. For Christmas, I joined my family in Peru, followed by a trek through Argentina, Chile, and Ecuador. At the time of writing, I am staying over in Olin while my visa for China processes, and by publishing time I'll be in Shanghai to live, work and learn Mandarin.

Olin allows—no, encourages—its students to take time away from school. Your scholarship is valid for eight semesters in five years. That's an implicit invitation that many students ignore, but that is a mistake. Taking a leave of absence makes you a better, more rounded person, makes you appreciate what you have here at Olin, and opens your eyes to a world of new experiences.

I can hardly put into words how my LOA has changed me. It doesn't translate well on paper, but come find me when I'm back on campus in the fall. I can't wait to talk to you about my adventures and

lessons, the people I met, and the person my year abroad has helped me become.

This is the only time in your lives that you can take risks with hardly any repercussions. No matter what happens, you can come back to Olin next semester.

So take your time away. Start a business. Challenge yourself to learn to live in a new environment. Figure out what you want to do with your life, up to and after graduation. You'll grow as a person and learn many lessons you can't find in school, all for far less than the cost of a semester of tuition, room and board at Olin.

I didn't take an LOA because I was sick of Olin—I wasn't. But now, ten months later, I realize that my time away has made me love Olin even more. You probably don't expect to miss the stress of racing through assignments against the sunrise... As they say, you don't know what you've got 'til it's gone.

Now, taking an LOA is not unreservedly good. There are a few less savory elements that you should know about. If you take a fall semester off, you miss meeting the new freshmen. If you

LOA during the spring you miss graduation. If you do both, like I have, you'll get to play a game called: "sophomore, freshman, or Babby?"

Next, it's going to be hard. you what the problem is, and you have resources available to help you solve it. The problems you face during your LOA will vary greatly, but one thing is true: nobody is going to hold your hand like the Olin community does.

I've spent nights riding luggage racks and still been the most comfortable person on the train, witnessed a head-on motorcycle collision because my Belgian friend didn't remember to drive on the left side of the road. I've been picked out by international gem smugglers, but had the wherewithal to reject their advances. And I wouldn't trade any of it away, except the chance to do more.

If you are able to go, I strongly urge you to take a leave of absence. The LOA form can be found on the StAR website and is only due around registration – but make your plans and book your tickets soon!

I look forward to hearing about all of your adventures.

# Olin's Endowment: A Guide

**Kelsey Breseman**

*Editor-in-Chief*

Olin received its initial endowment of over \$400 million from the F. W. Olin Foundation, and has since been using these funds to found and grow Olin- with a vision towards Olin as the recognized leader in the transformation of undergraduate education in America and throughout the world.

As part of its plan to attract top engineering students, Olin has offered the Olin Scholarship, an eight-semester merit scholarship, to all of its students since the college's beginning. Until 2006, this scholarship included room, board, and full tuition; until 2011, Olin students received full tuition scholarships. The initial reduction in scholarship was planned; the more recent re-

duction was due to a sudden value reduction on endowment investments.

The endowment is the total value of Olin's investments. Thus, the percentage drawn annually must be sustainable so that the endowment continues to grow. 2009's percentage draw from the endowment was the highest in Olin's history at around 8%. It was funding four classes' full tuition on an endowment the same size as it was in 2004 (Olin had only two classes of students in 2004). Since then, due to incoming tuition and a recovering economy, the endowment has been growing- ing steadily.

The endowment grows when investments do well. Investment growth has been as much as 17.42% in 2007, and in 2011 it was again above 17%, but in poorer years, the endowment can

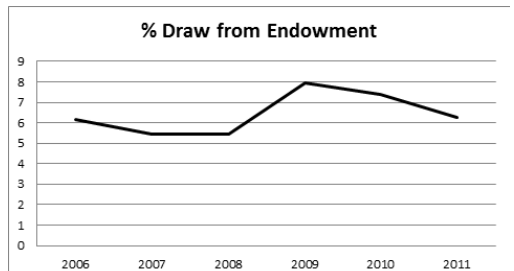
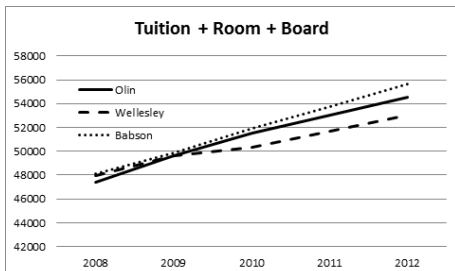
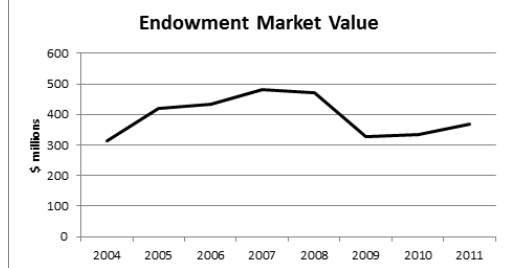
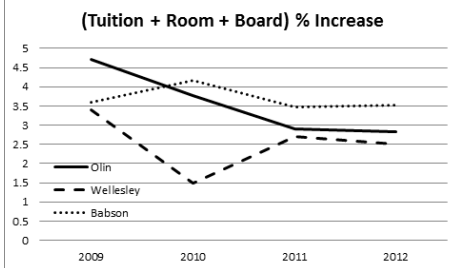
diminish from an investing downfall, as it did in 2008 (-0.25%) and 2009 (-22.74%).

The college also seeks money through contribution. Much of this money comes from grants, such as the Clare Luce grant recently received by Olin to support female student researchers.

It also receives money from within the Olin community. Often these contributions are earmarked for specific usage. The Class of 2006 Gift, for example, established Olin's Summer Book Program. The Class of 2011 Gift contributes toward Olin's Passionate Pursuit program.

The cost of attending Olin increases every year. However, these cost increases are normal in higher education, and are comparable with those of other colleges, as shown below.

Data Source: [olin.edu/fin\\_affairs](http://olin.edu/fin_affairs)



# Popping the Olin Bubble: February Edition

**2/1** Susan G. Komen Foundation cuts funding to Planned Parenthood.

**2/2** Empirical groundhog study shows that the US will have six more weeks of winter.

**2/3** Susan G. Komen Foundation reverses its decision to cut funding to Planned Parenthood.

**2/4** Tunisia withdraws recognition of the Syrian government; Obama calls for Syrian President Assad to step down.

**2/5** Mitt Romney wins Nevada caucuses.

**2/6** The U.S. withdraws all diplomats from Syria, citing safety concerns. The U.N. estimates that over 7,500 people have died in Syria since the uprising began in January of last year.

**2/7** Burmese leader Aung San Suu Kyi allowed to leave her hometown for the first time in 20 years to begin campaigning for Burma's April elections.

**2/8** Mashco-Piro tribe, an out-of-contact people living in Peru, raids an illegal logging site using bows and arrows.

**2/9** Tibetan monk sets himself on fire in western China in protest of policies on Tibet.

**2/10** Almost 40kg of cocaine found in diplomatic mails sent from Ecuador to Italy.

**2/12** Hamza Kashgari, a Saudi blogger who in-

sulted the Prophet Mohammed on Twitter, deported by Malaysian authorities back to Saudi Arabia, where he may be executed for blasphemy.

**2/13** Bombs targeting Israeli diplomats placed in New Delhi and Tbilisi, Georgia. 2 injured.

Washington State legalizes gay marriage.

**2/14** Three bombs accidentally set off in Bangkok. Four Iranians detained for questioning.

**2/15** The Columbian Prosecutor's Office reveals that two Columbian priests who were gunned down in Bogota last year had paid to be assassinated. Shortly before death, one of the priests had been diagnosed with AIDS.

**2/16** Honduras confirms : 358 people were killed in a massive prison fire.

**2/18** WHO decides that the research detailing how to mutate the H5N1 flu virus into a strain more deadly than anything that walks this earth will be kept secret until a full risk assessment takes place.

**2/19** Somali leaders decide on basic structure for the country's new parliament and government.

**2/20** At least 30 people killed by a bombing in a Nigerian market.

**2/21** NATO troops stationed in Afghanistan burn several copies of the Quran, sparking protests

in which more than 30 civilians and two US military advisors have been killed.

Greece receives a 130 billion-euro bailout from the Eurozone.

**2/22** Virginia governor Bob McDonnell blocks the passing of a bill which would require women wanting an abortion to undergo and fund a medically unnecessary transvaginal ultrasound.

**2/23** The researchers of CERN discovered that the faster-than-the-speed-of-light neutrinos were probably due to a loose cable. War journalist Marie Colvin killed by (speculated) targeted shelling in Homs, Syria.

**2/24** Average price of gas per gallon in California jumps 10 cents overnight, mainly in reaction to a fire at a refinery in Washington.

**2/25** Nelson Mandela admitted to hospital with an abdominal complaint.

**2/26** Fire at the Brazilian Antarctic research station kills two sailors.

**2/27** One student killed and four injured in school shooting in Chardon, Ohio. (2 die next day)

**2/28** 18 Shiite males die after Taliban attack on passenger buses in Pakistan.

---

**Jackie Rose**  
*Staff Writer*

# How to Succeed In Business

**Ben Smith**

*Guest Writer*

The careers of many successful individuals are represented in some regard by the following paradigm: Go to high school. Work hard in high school to get into a most respectable college. Work hard in college to land esteemed internships. Using well-built resume, land esteemed job or entrance into esteemed graduate school. If job, work. If graduate school, graduate, then work. This pattern succeeds in that with the proper inputs of ambition, work ethic, and luck, it outputs a well-rounded engineer with a respectable salary and a bright future.

This paradigm is deeply flawed. Students in this system waste their time always pushing towards future, socially mainstream goals rather than pursuing their own dreams. Striving for distant plans often requires us to meet others' expectations rather than our own. Though often the path of least resistance, appeasing others produces unsatisfied individuals who make tangible sacrifices for little gain in areas they find meaningful.

I can't criticize others without first acknowledging my own guilt. My high school branch of National Honor Society could have been named "Volunteer or your resume won't look good enough to get into college". I volunteered, and here I am, but the resume-building

didn't stop there.

Last summer, I was offered an internship position at an esteemed company. The only caveats were that I'd have to program computer graphics in a language nobody uses, and I'd have to turn down a position at a summer camp that I was excited about.

At the time, the decision was obvious: I worked for Westinghouse Electric, the largest technical employer in the United States.

Nobody would care if I worked at a summer camp for two years in a row, but if I had a manager that could say I was a respectable worker, I'd be worth something. I valued my resume and recommendations over my own interests, passions, and desires. This is fundamentally wrong. This flawed reasoning, and the realization that I never wanted to repeat it, is the most valuable bit of knowledge I've taken from my experience as an intern.

Searching for jobs this summer, I took an entirely different approach. I first pointed myself in a direction that excited me, then picked a subset that I thought had worth to society: the sustainable agriculture movement.

Next came the hard part, finding a job. Internships are most often sought through supply side economics, which play out as follows in students' heads. "It's time to find a job. Let me see what is available and apply to the most interesting options. I'll

accept the offer that excites me most." At times, interests align and happy employees result. Alternatively, applicants will take an undesired position "because it is a job", setting the stage for minimal satisfaction.

Finding work on a farm was fundamentally different. Because no farms came to me actively seeking help, and because there were no social expectations in this field of work, I had the freedom to find my ideal position.

It was far simpler to let someone come to me offering employment. However, working harder to find a job that excited me has been well worth the effort.

I will be working as a farmer in the mountains of Colorado this summer. I couldn't be more thrilled, and I'd love to tell you about it.

And what's more, I'd love to tell future employers of how my experiences give me insight that sets me apart from all other applicants.

Aligning my work with my passions seems to be the ultimate resume-builder for employment down the road after all. And even if I'm wrong, even if it doesn't land me a dream job later on, I will have spent three months passionately working towards admirable goals in an exciting field.

---

*What do you think?*

*Email submit@frankly-speakingnews.com.*

# Choose Wisely: Embrace Fear

**Kendall Pletcher**

Editor

So you want to study away. You're stoked, but where should you go? The world is full of choices, and it's overwhelming. I'll narrow the field for you: you should study away in a developing country.

First, be fearless. Think of all of the places you've been to or would want to go on vacation. Now, cross them all out.

Chances are, most of the "first world" is now off your list. When I chose my study away location, I circled the parts of the world that were so foreign that I would almost certainly never visit them on my own, and I chose from those countries.

Study away is your chance to spend some seri-

ous time somewhere. Don't waste that opportunity on a tourist town. If you could show up in a country and treat it just like home, cross it off the list. Don't go somewhere easy.

Don't spend your four months on vacation, that's a cop-out and not worthy of you.

Choose without fear, in spite of fear, perhaps because of fear.

Traveling in a developing country is hard, especially if you are purposely avoiding the tourist-track. I once stood for the entirety of a six hour, un-air conditioned train ride. You will almost certainly get sick, but you're young and (presumably) healthy.

When you're older, climbing into a bus with a third more passengers than seats will not just be an in-

convenience, it may be a deterrent.

You should study away in a developing country because it is a chance you may not be able to take advantage of in the future.

There's only one way to understand what it's like to live in poverty, and that is to live in it yourself for at least a few months. Visiting a poor community for a week to build a library, while admirable, is not going to teach you much about what true powerlessness is like.

Live in the community, don't visit it. Go to a part of the world where you are not privileged. And don't let yourself be a spectator.

Experience oppression, become familiar with disenfranchisement. Learn what it is like to live in a country where you are officially second class based on your gender, race, or age. Live in a place where your religion is a minority---even a widely mistrusted one.

The insights that you will have cannot be gleaned in two weeks or even two months, but a semester can help show you experiences without which true understanding is impossible. This will make you more aware; some forms of oppression are much easier to recognize having experienced them first hand.

Study abroad, but don't go somewhere easy. Study someplace frightening and strange. Be fearless; Europe can wait.

## Skydiving

**Kelsey Breseman**

Editor-in-Chief

*I said Skydiving  
hoping to start them talking  
not a one blinked their  
hands on steering wheels  
and books, the littlest listless  
in the backwards seat the leather car  
seats 'why don't we  
put on some' Beethoven  
electric fiddle anything guitar  
too spaced sounds sift out  
Let me at least be Daedalus  
was left behind unuttered  
already on our way forward  
in space at least.*



# Review: *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern*

**Tom Pandolfo**  
Staff Writer

The lights come up on a formless landscape; two men sit, one flipping coins into the air, the other catching them. So begins the Franklin W. Olin Players' magnificent production of Tom Stoppard's absurdist comedy, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*.

Most of us are familiar with Shakespeare's Hamlet – a tale of treachery and royal intrigue which examines such themes as suicide, misogyny, and tragic uncertainty – and many of us likely remember Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, two peripheral characters who appear in three scenes, deliver a handful of lines, and are parenthetically killed off in the final act (oh yes, spoiler alert: at the end of Hamlet, EVERYONE DIES).

Well, that's not the whole story. *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* examines the brief existence of two characters whose demise at the end of Hamlet warrants no more than the curt announcement from which Stoppard's play gets its name.

From their humble beginnings pushing the limits of the laws of probability, to an encounter with a troupe of actors led by a cryptic and mischievous Player, to their confrontations with Hamlet's title character, our unsung heroes stumble from scene to scene, knowing only what they are told and

no more. Perpetually confused, they shuffle around their mortal coil in a (possibly futile) attempt to make sense of it all, as the events of Hamlet unfold around them.

Rachel Nagin (Wellesley '12) plays the oft-bewildered, occasionally manic-depressive Rosencrantz. Her portrayal is a vibrant reimagining of the character with which one can't help but sympathize as Rosencrantz' state of mind swings from helpless confusion to cheerful optimism and back.

Rosencrantz's counterpart, Guildenstern, is played by Molly Grossman (Olin '13), a familiar face to tri-college theatergoers. She masterfully conveys both intellectual charm and the existential fury of a character on the brink.

First-year Claire Barnes (Olin '15) brings extraordinary versatility to the role of The Player, donning the character's many masks with ease and flitting effortlessly between them.

The ensemble drives the show with impeccably choreographed physical comedy and rapid-fire role-swapping. On occasion, they make the audience forget that it isn't Shakespeare's Hamlet we're watching- before everyone is jerked back into the realm of tragic absurdity.

This cacophony of comedy and philosophy is imparted order by the uncommon genius of director Harold Jaffe (Olin '12), capping his senior year at Olin with a di-

rectorial debut that will not soon be forgotten.

The humor bounces back and forth between goofy slapstick and subtle jokes that hit you two or three seconds later – and let us not forget the odd pun.

And yet, amid the laughter, introspection and uncertainty manifests itself in chilling ways; the absolutely convincing deaths acted out by the troupe of players foreshadow the real bloodshed that is to come, and one cannot forget the show's startlingly heartrending conclusion.

In the end, I cannot praise this production highly enough. The cast and crew have come together to create an experience that will make you laugh, then gasp, then rethink your life, then laugh some more. I recommend seeing it twice, so as to catch all of the jokes.

**Showtimes: 8–10pm,  
Friday, 3/2; Saturday, 3/3.  
Sorensen Theater. Tickets:  
\$3/students, \$5/general.**

**\$2 ADS!  
/col-in**

*Help defray  
printing costs...*

**Frankly Speaking  
sells ad space!**

**\$2 per column inch  
\$20 per half-page**



# Thank you Jesus! Tro-Tro.

**James Regulinski**

*Foreign Correspondent*

The door of the 15-seater van nearly falls off as it scratches along its track. The Mate hangs out and yells,

“ADUM-adum-adum-adum,”

A mass of bodies push into the Tro-Tro: Men in business suits, women in brightly colored swaths of cloth, a mechanic with half a transmission, kids in school uniforms. Before I, too, am swept into the van, I notice the bright yellow decal on the back window, “Thank you Jesus!” The door slams shut.

I slide into my seat and look in vain for a contiguous section of van that is not welded back together. As we putter up to speed, plumes of smoke come up through the holes in the floor. I stick my head out the window, trying to catch some fresh air and a little cool.

We stop at a light and the street comes alive.

“N-suo!”

“Peer-watda!”

“Meat pies!”

Girls carrying metal

bowls of filled water sachets and men with boxes of frozen yogurt weave in-between the immobile cars. Apples, chocolate, toilet papers, calculators, flags, plantain chips, and toothpaste all ride atop a sea of people like so many boats. Each item is called out by name as their salesperson rushes from car to car, summoned by little more than a glance. There is a woman next to a wheelbarrow that is filled with coconuts. She is swinging a machete in one hand and is spinning a coconut in the other. Green coconut husk is flying off. With a decisive WACK, she cuts the top off the coconut and hands it to her thirsty customer, who drinks deeply.

I trade a coin for a chilled bag of water and bite it open as we start to move forward. The sudden jerking causes the water to spray my unsuspecting neighbors and me.

“I-ayeee”

I look apologetic towards the women next me and the baby wrapped to her back. The baby gapes.

“She has not seen an Ob-

ronie before.” The woman says in slow, West African English. The accent suggests a large smile and hint of laughter. The woman leans forward, so as not to crush the child, and I smile with something I hope is a knowing or at least not-dumb-founded look. The baby’s mouth is still hanging open, and she pokes me as if to see if I am real. Her mother laughs.

We swerve to avoid a pothole and then another and another. We seem to be driving through the aftermath of a meteor shower. The Tro-Tro is bouncing to new heights as the pavement gives way to the ubiquitous red dirt road and we start driving down the left lane. I hold tighter to my seat.

Just as it all seems like a little too much, the engine dies. My legs shake a little as I alight. I mutter an involuntary prayer. I am at my destination, in one piece. “Thank you, Thank You Jesus!...Tro-Tro.”

*Note from the author:*

*The story is 100% true, which means the facts can’t be trusted.*

# DOCTOR · LIU

*Wise Dr.,*

*I'm terribly unfortunate in the realm of dating. I'm irrevocably in love with my suitemate, but I don't think he has any idea. He's also dating a Wellesley chick, and I'm kind of in love with her too. What should I do?*

*- Confused in Canada*

Dear Confused,

You should devise an elaborate scheme where you have one of your friends convince your suitemate that he is gay. He will break up with the Wellesley chick, who will find solace in your loving arms. Afterwards, your suitemate will realize that he is not in fact gay, feel dejected and forever alone, and also come seek sweet, sticky love in your room. You should also purchase a strap-on.

No, but really: this isn't a serious question, is it? People don't actually live in Canada, do they?

*Honorable Dr. Liu:*

*So say that hypothetically, I was to be making out with a hypothetical boyfriend. Fun, I know. Now say that my non-hypothetical roommate walks in. Clearly, we disentangle our tongues, but besides that what's the protocol? Avoid eye contact at all cost? "Hey... sorry about that"?*

*Trying Not To Be A Bad Roommate*

*Dear Bad Roommate,*

Well, it depends on where you're located at the time of perpetration. If you're on the bed, you should probably just hide underneath the covers until your roommate goes

away. That way, he/she/it doesn't have to look at your disgraceful, hideous face. If you're making out on top of your roommate's desk...there's not much I can say that'll help you in that situation. But hey, at least you have a boyfriend.

*Dear Dr. Liu,*

*I hear that you're always scrambling for submissions to your advice column. Is this true?*

*Dr. Liu.*

Dear Dr. Liu.

Yes, this is true. People, Y U NO SEND ME YOUR PROBLEMS? They don't even have to be real. I will even answer them for real if they're actually legitimate questions. I am disappoint.

ಠ\_ಠ

<3, Dr. Liu

## Want to write for Frankly Speaking?

Send us your articles at

SUBMIT@FRANKLYSPEAKINGNEWS.COM

Follow us on Twitter

@FRANKSPEAKNEWS

Or check out the website at

HTTP://FRANKLYSPEAKINGNEWS.COM

Olin College of Engineering does not endorse, and is not affiliated with Frankly Speaking. Frankly Speaking is entirely run by, and funded by, Olin students.

**Editor-in-Chief:** Kelsey Breseman

**Editors:** Kendall Pletcher, Tim Ryan

**Staff Writers:** Jackie Rose, Dr. Liu

**Contributors:** Trevor Hooton, Tom Pandolfo, James Regulinski, Ben Smith

Special thanks to Michael Maloney!