

Sweet Briar Students Experience Oxford-Style Learning in England This Summer

Seven students joined peers from across Virginia in the six-week Virginia Program at Oxford, gaining insight into research, writing, and British culture.

AMHERST, VA, UNITED STATES, November 19, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- For six weeks this summer, seven Sweet Briar students and recent graduates participated in the long-standing Virginia Program at Oxford alongside their peers from five other Commonwealth colleges.

During the program, Ren Aldridge '25, Evelyn Anderson '27, Sarah Katz '25, Adele Lenz '25, Annora Melton '27, Margaret Rife '26, and Ray Sparks '27 experienced the Oxford system, which is based on the tutorial method consisting of weekly small-group lessons accompanied by readings and a paper on each subject. The rigorous coursework is complemented by daily lectures from renowned professors from various universities and diverse areas of expertise.

["The Virginia at Oxford Program"](#) was one of the most impactful educational experiences I've ever had. From the additional cultural experiences to the small group tutorials with Oxford-level professors, this summer made up the most memorable six weeks," noted Annora, who has designed her own major in medieval studies at Sweet Briar.

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Annora Melton '27

“Within the tutorials, I was challenged academically more than I have ever been in my life...and I loved it. The entire VPO experience has expanded my view of the purpose of education and how I view my own abilities as a student and essay-writer.”

Students also get to live on grounds at [Oxford's St. Anne's College](#) and explore England through excursions, including



Seven Sweet Briar students experience a summer in Oxford as a part of a long-standing study abroad program.

traveling to London and Stratford-Upon-Avon for theatre productions of Shakespeare's work and venturing into the Bodleian Libraries, some of the best in the world. Other excursions include near-daily socializing locally at pubs or late-night kebab truck runs with their peers, allowing students to meet and study with others from all over the world who are visiting for other programs.

The program was established in 1981 by six Virginia institutions, including a variety of different types of schools, from military to co-ed to single-gender. Open to students studying in any discipline, this year's cohort was one of the largest groups of Sweet Briar students to attend the program in its history.

"Coming from a women's college, this experience allowed me to compare a co-ed university-level experience," said Evelyn, a philosophy major. "After having new professors and friends give feedback on my assignments, I've definitely become a better and more thoughtful writer. I have gained a new understanding of the importance of extensive research, particularly in considering contrasting opinions. I think it has made me even more grateful for the education I have access to and the environments I have the privilege of participating in."

[Sweet Briar College offers opportunities](#) that extend far beyond the classroom. Whether studying abroad at Oxford or conducting hands-on research, our students receive the mentorship, academic rigor, and real-world experience that prepare them to lead confidently. If you're ready to unleash your bold side, visit sbc.edu/admissions or contact admissions@sbc.edu to learn how you can make Sweet Briar part of your journey.



Sweet Briar students enjoy time in England.

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