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## IWU Students Studying at Oxford's Pembroke College

Feb. 6, 2015

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.— What do influential economics writer Martin Wolf, the cast of the HBO series *Game of Thrones* and an 18<sup>th</sup>-century English manor once visited by John Adams and Thomas Jefferson have in common?

These are examples of the breadth of people and places three Illinois Wesleyan University students have encountered in their year abroad at Pembroke College, Oxford University. Michael Hennel '16 (Elmhurst, Ill.), Steph McAtee '16 (Papillion, Neb.) and Jonas Wightman '16 (Arlington Heights, Ill.) are studying in England through the Pembroke Visiting Student Programme.

For nearly 20 years, Illinois Wesleyan has been among a select group of 13 U.S. colleges and universities, including Brown, Columbia, Cornell, Duke, Georgetown and Vassar, sending students to the highly selective Pembroke program. Those admitted to the program receive the opportunity to spend an academic year fully integrated into independent study in the traditional English tutorial system. Students meet individually or in groups of two to four, once or twice weekly with individual faculty members, with the focus on independent study and writing. Visiting students are fully integrated into the life of the college: wearing the traditional gowns, living in Pembroke College rooms, dining in the halls and having access to the full range of extracurricular clubs and societies.

An accounting and economics double major at IWU concentrating on economics at Pembroke, Hennel said his most memorable experience thus far has been at an Oxbridge Finance Meeting. The all-day event for Oxford and Cambridge students featured high-profile speakers from the world of finance talking about their respective fields of expertise.

"I was able to meet and talk with (*Financial Times*' chief economics commentator) Martin Wolf, widely considered to be one of the world's most influential writers on economics," said Hennel. "Being able to casually talk with someone so well-known and influential was a memory I will never forget."

McAtee said Oxford's history, as one of the top universities in the world, was intimidating at first. "But the way that the university works is that you get to know your professors and classmates on both a personal and an academic level," said McAtee, who hails from a suburb of Omaha, Neb. "During the beginning of the term, we had a dinner with all the professors and I ended up talking to the dean of the college about Nebraska football, which was pretty cool." McAtee also met the *Game of Thrones* cast just after they'd given a talk at the Oxford Union.

All three Pembroke scholars attended a concert at Wotton Hall hosted by Honorary IWU Trustee the Earl of Buckinghamshire and his wife. Adams and Jefferson visited Wotton in April 1786 as they toured stately homes northwest of London. "The Wotton concert was an amazing event that I will not forget," Hennel said.

IWU's International Office coordinates the University's participation in the Pembroke program. McAtee first learned of the program while still a high school senior visiting the Illinois Wesleyan campus. "I met with Stacey Shimizu and discussed study abroad opportunities," McAtee recalled. "I was planning on majoring in economics and political science at the time, so the conversation naturally veered toward Pembroke's PPE program. It was the perfect encapsulation of the fields of study that interested me most and ended up being a large part of why I decided to attend Illinois Wesleyan."



*From left, Honorary IWU Trustee the Earl of Buckinghamshire and his wife Alison with Steph McAtee '16, Jonas Wightman '16 and Michael Hennel '16 at 18th-century Wotton Hall.*