

Open Learning Initiative

Student Handbook

OLive Weekend Program

February - June 2026



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Team

OLive Co-Education Leads: Júlia Füredi & Cornelious Qamar
education.budapestolive@gmail.com

Júlia, and Cornelious will be dealing with student-facing matters, teacher-facing matters as well, we help with university applications, and with any education related questions. Feel free to turn to any of us in person or via email about anything!

Faya Radynska is our Administrator. You can reach her at office.budapestolive@gmail.com Faya student emails. If you can't come, you should email her.

We all will be here every Saturday, talk to any of us about anything!

About OLive Spring 2026

All the courses take place at CEU Budapest, 1051 Nádor utca 15. between **09:15 and 15:00 every Saturday**. We are renting three classrooms every Saturday here.

You have been selected as an OLive student from a great number of applicants. You may not bring other people with you to classes: the right to study in OLive is yours, and yours only. If somebody you know wants to join OLive, they cannot join without first getting permission from the OLive-WEEKEND PROGRAM office. In general, OLive only accepts new students through the application procedures that are publicly announced online.

Important Info

Course Selection

You will select your courses at the beginning of the semester on the Course Fair. Please note that some limitations for course selection might take place depending on your English level and whether you are a returning student.

Evaluations

Feedback sessions will take place where students will have the opportunity to share their thoughts on the curriculum and wider program. We take students' views very seriously.

Certificates

When you have completed a term with OLive and have participated in your courses, you will get a Certificate of Completion. This is not a degree but can be shown to potential employers or universities. Certificates will state the courses that you have successfully completed. Course completion is at the discretion of your teacher. The conditions of which will be communicated to you by your teacher.

Student Obligations

Rules of attendance

Applying for OLive Weekend Program is voluntary, but if you accept the study place in OLive, you have to attend the workshops seriously. We at OLive are very strict about coming to workshops and being on time. Based on our attendance policy, you need to **inform the OLive team via email the latest by Friday 4pm**, if you cannot come to a class or classes on that Saturday (office.budapestolive@gmail.com). You have to have a good reason then it is acceptable to be absent (excused). If you are more than 15 minutes late, that can be considered as absent. You are still welcome to join and learn, please come even if you are occasionally late.

Policy on unexcused absences

- If you don't inform the OLive WEEKEND PROGRAM administrator by email before 4pm on Friday about your absence, you can still be absent once without sanctions
- If you skip two classes without informing the OLive WEEKEND PROGRAM administrator by email in due time, we will issue a warning
- If you skip a fourth class without informing the OLive WEEKEND PROGRAM administrator by email in due time, a fourth unexcused absence leads to your student status at OLive WEEKEND PROGRAM being terminated.

Classwork and Participation

Students should complete all tasks set by teachers by the given deadline. The success of the classes depends on student participation, and everyone is encouraged to be active in class.

Code of Conduct

OLive is a diverse and open community aiming for respectful and considerate behaviour amongst all parties towards each other. If you feel that any behaviour by a teacher, staff member or a fellow student has not been appropriate, please speak to Julia, Cornelious or Faya or email us. You can also write in complete confidence to a third party (someone who is an outsider and an unbiased professional handling such matters) at confidentialbudapestolive@gmail.com to leave a complaint.

Support

Collaboration

We want the program to be as collaborative as possible. This means you giving your input into what you want to do and how you want to do it. You can suggest courses you would like to take in the future, but also courses you would like to run. We have former OLive students among our staff and we're always looking for ways to make education as open and non-hierarchical as possible. If you have any ideas for how to grow the program, let us know!

Academic Consultations

You are encouraged to consult with Cornelious and Julia or teachers on your academic or other plans and any issues related to your academic study at OLive Weekend Program - for example plans to apply to universities.

Academic Calendar

2026 Spring Academic Calendar		
0	February 7	English placements - mandatory for all students and English teachers
0	February 14	Course Fair and Opening Day - mandatory for students and teachers (except English teachers)
1	February 21	
2	February 28	
3	March 7	
4	March 14	
5	March 21	
community day	March 28	Community Day - no teaching, mandatory for students, optional for teachers
Spring break	April 4	Spring break
Spring break	April 11	Spring break
6	April 18	
7	April 25	
break	May 2	break - Holiday
8	May 9	
9	May 16	
break	May 23	break - Holiday
10	May 30	
11	June 6	final teaching day + certificate ceremonies

Schedule

OLive Budapest Schedule Spring Term 2025/2026	
TIME	Course
9:30-11:00 BLOCK ONE <i>Choose one</i>	<i>Imaginary of the Other - Eszter Szabo & Mariam Nasr</i>
	<i>Career Skills and Enterprise Development - Timi Sofalvi & Cornelious Qamar</i>
	<i>Introduction to Literary Studies: Power, Surveillance, and the Politics through Sci-Fi - Rahmeh Abdin & Galyna Koshulap</i>
11:15-12:45 BLOCK TWO <u>Assigned groups based on placement test</u>	<i>English for Academic Purposes - Kerry Tyrrell</i>
	<i>English 2 - Julia Nemes</i>
	<i>English 1 - Sheima Zahoor</i>
12:45-13:30	LUNCH BREAK
13:30-15:00 BLOCK THREE <i>Choose one</i>	<i>Why is Housing So Expensive, and How to Make it Affordable? Introduction to Housing Studies - Kata Ámon</i>
	<i>English Communication - Ana Da Silva & Tom Popper</i>
	<i>Transforming the Ordinary into Cinematic Vision: Introduction to Documentary Filmmaking - Mansour Forouzesh</i>

Arrival time is 09:15 every Saturday.

Course Descriptions

Timi Sofalvi & Cornelious Qamar: Career development

Aims of the course: to explore the students' dream jobs, passions, and their potential career paths including being an employee or entrepreneur. Job-seeking is far more than finding a place to work: to do it in an efficient and joyful way we need a complex approach, and mentoring type of support in this adventure. The participants will work on their own dreams, identify their dream job, and draw a path how to reach it step-by-step with the help of individual tasks and group discussions.

Timi Sofalvi has both a social worker background and completed her MBA at CEU Business School in 2016. She has been working with jobseekers for more than twenty years now. She supports students to identify their goals in their life and to find a way to their dream jobs.

Cornelious Qamar is an experienced social worker and mentor based in Budapest, Hungary. He has worked in community services, refugee support, education, and administration in Hungary, Thailand, and Pakistan. He holds a Master's degree in Business Administration. He is a dedicated, hardworking team player who supports people with care, guidance, and strong communication skills.

Eszter Simongáti: Community Day Event

Eszter Simongáti has worked in the OLive program since 2021. She studied Literature, Linguistics and History at ELTE University. Her career covers several areas, e.g. museum, art, cultural management as well as education. She worked at the Museum of Fine Arts, Ludwig Museum, Hungarian Institute for Educational Research and Development, Balassi Institute. Recently, Eszter has been teaching Hungarian as a Foreign Language to elementary school children at different schools in the 8th district (Józsefváros).

Rahmeh Abdin & Galyna Koshulap: Introduction to Literary Studies: Tech Literacy Through Sci-Fi: Power, Surveillance, and the Politics of the Digital

This course utilizes science fiction as a critical lens to examine the politics of contemporary technology. Through speculative media, short stories, and theoretical texts, students will examine topics such as surveillance capitalism, algorithmic bias, social media, data privacy, and the material and social costs of technological development. Emphasizing intersections of race, gender, (dis)ability, and power, the course encourages students to analyze how digital systems shape our world, and to imagine more equitable futures.

Rahmeh Abdin is PhD candidate in American Studies at Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE). She has taught courses on the Gothic and digital culture at ELTE and currently teaches with the Open Learning Initiative (OLive). Her teaching is grounded in critical pedagogy and approaches the classroom as a collaborative space shared with students, emphasizing connections between

course material, everyday life, politics, systems of power, space, and processes of identity formation.

Galyna Koshulap holds a degree in Romance and Germanic Languages and Literature and a Diploma as an English Teacher and Translator from Ivan Franko National University in Lviv, Ukraine. She has taught senior-grade students, developing engaging lessons, introducing innovative motivational techniques, and integrating American Literature Studies into the curriculum. Her pedagogical training includes participation in the Teaching Excellence Award Program at Montana State University, U.S.A. Alongside her teaching experience, Galyna has worked for many years as a Lead Interpreter and Translator with the International Republican Institute in Kyiv, where she also coordinated programs that supported women's political participation and contributed to gender election-monitoring initiatives and policy-focused publications (within the frames of the Women's Democracy Network of the International Republican Institute).

Mariam M. Nasr & Eszter Szabó: Imaginary of the Other

We will use art and storytelling as a form of protest and self-expression. Together, we will look at folk and literary tales from different cultures and rewrite them from a different point of view, questioning power, gender roles, and who gets to speak in stories. By the end of the semester we will have a Zine by the group.

Mariam M. Nasr is a theatre artist dedicated to community-driven storytelling and inclusive performances. She believes in theatre as a space for connection, dialogue, and self-expression, using her work to engage with social issues and diverse communities. She has led and participated in storytelling and theatre projects in Egypt and Hungary, working with migrants, women, and marginalized groups. As the founder of SceneScape Art Collective, she explores home theatre and creative storytelling to foster meaningful artistic exchanges.

Eszter Szabó is an artist based in Budapest. She studied painting at the Hungarian University of Fine Arts where she graduated in 2006. She completed her postgraduate studies at Le Fresnoy École Internationale des Arts Contemporains in 2016. Her works are drawings, paintings and short, non-narrative, conceptual video loops, complemented with her recent interest in video installations and video sculptures. Eszter Szabó showed her work at numerous solo shows and took part in various group exhibitions in Hungary, Paris, New York, Brussels among others. In 2021 she was the winner of the prestigious Leopold Bloom Art Award. More info:

www.eszterszabo.hu

Kerry Tyrrell: English for Academic Purposes

Kerry Tyrrell has been teaching English as a foreign or second language since 2017. He takes a task-based approach in the classroom, with an emphasis on communication. He studied English Literature and TESOL at Victoria University, in Wellington, and in his free time enjoys reading, writing, chess and cricket.

Julia Nemes: English 2

Julia Nemes has been teaching English at Olive since spring 2020, building on a teaching career that began in 2010 after earning her degree in English studies and pedagogy at ELTE, followed by an international teaching qualification (CELTA) in 2015. She works with both private students and company-based groups, adapting her teaching to a wide range of goals and professional contexts. Her approach is communicative, even when teaching grammar, as she aims to create a dynamic and interactive learning experience. While she places strong emphasis on adapting to individual needs, she also encourages her students to develop learning autonomy, as this helps them succeed beyond the classroom.

Working with students at Olive is especially rewarding for her because they bring a strong drive and an immediate need to use English in real-life situations. Being part of the Olive team is equally fulfilling for her, as she feels consistently supported by her open-minded and warm colleagues in an exceptional professional environment.

Shaima Zahoor: English 1

Shaima Zahoor is a dedicated English educator with many years of experience working with children, teenagers, and adults from diverse cultural backgrounds. Committed to creating safe, supportive learning spaces that help learners build confidence and communication skills.

Tom Popper and Analucia Da Silva: English Communication

This course is designed to help students build confidence in their ability to communicate in English. Students work on articulating ideas and concepts through effective communication. Classes are discussion-based and students will have a chance to explore ideas, engage in debate, evaluate and build on the ideas of others. Classes typically include reading, conversation and short in-class writing. The classroom culture focuses on inclusion and participation, with a focus on building a sense of community and a safe environment for collaborative learning.

Tom Popper is a career editor and OLive volunteer teaching journalism and English Communication.

Analucia Da Silva is a poet and writer. She has a BA in Comparative Literature from Bard College and an MFA in Writing from Saint Mary's College of California. She has over 20 years' experience as a writer and editor in the fields of art and visual culture, science and intellectual property.

Mansour Forouzesh: Transforming the Ordinary into Cinematic Vision: Introduction to Documentary Filmmaking

Transforming the Ordinary into Cinematic Vision is a hands-on documentary workshop designed for beginners with little or no filmmaking experience. Using only mobile phones and simple tools, participants learn how to observe everyday life and transform ordinary moments into meaningful cinematic narratives. Over 11 sessions, the workshop focuses on attention, presence, and visual storytelling rather than technical complexity. Participants explore how real spaces, daily routines, and unscripted moments can become the foundation of a short documentary. Through guided exercises, screenings, group discussions, and individual feedback, each participant gradually develops their own film, from initial observation to a completed short documentary. By the midpoint of the course, participants will produce a rough-cut draft of their film, which will be refined through feedback and re-editing in the later sessions. The workshop concludes with a collective screening and reflection. No prior filmmaking experience is required, only curiosity, patience, and a willingness to look at the world differently.

This course introduces participants to cinematic thinking through everyday life. Focusing on observation, attention, and presence rather than technical complexity, the course explores how ordinary moments, spaces, and gestures can be transformed into meaningful cinematic narratives. By the end of the course, each participant will create a short documentary using only their phone and simple tools.

Mansour Forouzesh is an Iranian filmmaker, photographer, and interdisciplinary artist whose work spans fiction, documentary, and visual arts. Active since 2005, he has directed numerous short films, documentaries, and experimental works, with screenings at over 70 international festivals including the Fajr and Cork International Film Festivals. His film *Lost Whispers in the Distance* was named one of the top 10 Iranian documentaries of 2021, and *When I Killed the Cat* was produced in collaboration with Mythberg Films and Bart Film. His latest short, *The Elephant's Tango*, a Mongolian-language film exploring how reality is shaped through fictional narrative, is currently in post-production. He is also developing his first feature film, *JACKSTONES*, with Bart Films (UK). Mansour is a doctoral researcher at the Hungarian University of Fine Arts. His doctoral research examines metaphor and perception in visual storytelling. In parallel, he has been developing (IN)VISIBLE MEANING, an independent, long-term photography and artistic research project initiated in 2020, which explores how narrative and meaning emerge through visibility, absence, and lived experience, and has been presented through multiple exhibitions and publications internationally. His curated exhibition *The Ordinary Moment* was part of the 2025 Budapest Photo Festival. He has taught masterclasses in Iran, Hungary, and the UK, and served as a jury member at FEST, Fajr, Malta, and Parvaz film festivals. He also translated *Batman and Philosophy: The Dark Knight of the Soul* into Persian, to be published by Soureh Cinema.

Kata Ámon: Why is Housing So Expensive, and How to Make it Affordable?

Introduction to Housing Studies

Housing is the foundation of our everyday lives. A secure, affordable home of adequate quality is essential to a healthy and dignified life. Housing is also one of the most fundamental elements of modern financial capitalism: an asset and a site of investment. It is also a field of social, political, and policy studies, and a site of advocacy and political participation for social movements. The course will explore all these aspects of housing through three types of activities. In the classroom, we will focus on academic studies of housing (the financialization of housing, housing policy, housing poverty, housing movements, and intersectional perspectives on housing) through class discussions and a policy role-play. We will have a 3-hour field trip to Józsefváros to discuss gentrification, housing poverty, and municipal housing services. We will also co-create research on the housing problems and needs of people with a refugee or immigrant background in Budapest, as well as housing policy recommendations.

Kata Ámon is a Hungarian political scientist at the Centre for Minority Research at the ELTE Centre for Social Sciences, conducting research on solidary social groups, social and political transformation, and housing. She has also worked on developing victim support services for women and children affected by gender-based violence at the Municipality of Józsefváros. Over the past 3 years, she prepared the housing affordability chapters for Habitat for Humanity Hungary's Annual Report on Housing Poverty. She has taught several courses on Public Policy, Research Methods, and Political Economy at the Eötvös Loránd University, the Central European University, and the International Business School in Budapest. She earned her PhD in Political Science at the Central European University in 2025. Her thesis explored the co-constructions of citizen imaginaries and housing in Hungary and Spain. She also holds an MA in Gender Studies and an MA in International Studies. For six years, she was a member of The City is for All, a grassroots advocacy group of people affected by housing poverty.