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### Falling in love with Ouachita (all over again)

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Office of Communications & Marketing

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*Photo by Mikaela Monahan*

For immediate release

**Falling in love with Ouachita (all over again)**

*By Kaelin Clay*

March 14, 2023

For more information, contact Ouachita's Office of Communications & Marketing at [comm-mark@obu.edu](mailto:comm-mark@obu.edu) or (870) 245-5206.

Let's face it. It's still cold outside, and we're all still catching up on rest that was lost in the busyness of the first few weeks back after Christmas break. The winter is tiring, and sometimes that can lengthen the second semester.

Maybe you weren't excited to move back into your dorm or your apartment after break. Maybe you weren't excited to wake up early and go to class. Maybe you've forgotten what it felt like to step foot on Ouachita's campus for the first time. Maybe you need a reminder – a "how-to," if you will.

We all had a "why" when it came to choosing Ouachita. Whether it was a family member, a Tiger Tunes show 10 years ago, an opportunity in your major or craft or simply a feeling of warmth that hit when you saw "Arkadelphia" plastered over every business you passed when coming into town for the first time. You were called to Ouachita for a purpose, and I think we all possess a fear of losing our love for our school that we call home.

While driving around campus a couple of weeks ago, I just happened to look over at Cone-Bottoms Hall and randomly but specifically remembered meeting my admissions counselor inside those double glass doors when I toured campus during my senior year of high school. I decided to keep driving fairly slowly (I apologize if you were behind me) through campus a few times to allow myself to picture my first memory of each building.

Images of Bible Survey in Berry Chapel, Tiger Tunes practices and my first few Refuge services in JPAC, the time I got lost walking to the caf and had to call my suitemate to remind me where to find it (it was only the second day, but still) and my first Guard the Tiger experience were all flashing through my head. After reliving half of my years at Ouachita, I was slightly sentimental, to say the least.

I love Ouachita with all my heart, but I needed to be reminded of the feeling I felt when I first stepped foot on campus. So, if you're like me and you want to fall in love with Ouachita all over again, all you have to do is complete these simple steps:

1. **Stop.** Just stop. Stop stressing yourself out over the paper that you have to work ahead on, or the surprise birthday party you're striving to perfectly throw for your friend. You will never enjoy everything your college years have to offer if you're not even allowing yourself the space to breathe in the memories and feelings.
2. **Take it all in.** Notice the Tiger when you walk by it. Listen to the sound of coffee brewing in the student center. Remember the sound of worship in Tuesday Chapel. One day, all of these mundane memories will fade, and life will be much different in your workplace. Ouachita is only a season, but it is a sweet one. If you don't take it all in now, you'll never be able to look back on your years of college with gratitude.
3. **Be social.** Go to the events, laugh at the date auctions, gather a group of friends to go to TWIRP with, jump in the mud at Tiger Traks, ask a new face to coffee or sit in the stu to do your homework as people walk by. Ouachita is a place of familiarity. Put yourself out there and find a place to communicate with and encourage others. Being in the moment makes you feel alive, and you have to leave your dorm to experience that.

I hope you take these things to heart and strive to achieve the mindset of a Tiger for Life. Your heart for Ouachita can always grow because there is always something new. Be bold and unleash your love and school pride relentlessly.



*Kaelin Clay is a junior communications & media/multimedia and political science double major from Idabel, Okla.*