

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT:

Andrew Rudolf '21 (Religion and Philosophy, minor in Biblical Languages)



Where are you from?

I am from Burnt Hills, NY in Saratoga County!

With regards to your academic coursework at Roberts, what do you feel will be most helpful after you graduate?

I believe the variety of perspectives that I was exposed to in my coursework will be the most helpful after leaving campus. Too often, we tend to approach matters from the framework in which we were raised. While there is nothing inherently wrong with this, it has the potential to isolate us from those who have different points of view. Especially with regards to religious and moral issues, this risks creating an "us vs. them" dichotomy; there are those who are for us and those who are against us. Fortunately, over the past three years, the Religion and Philosophy department has helped me engage and apprehend different frameworks. By learning other languages, worldviews and religious systems, I have grown in my ability to step outside of my limited perspective. While this process certainly takes a lifetime, Roberts has helped me greatly in this pursuit.

What stands out from your experience here at Roberts?

Roberts' ability to integrate faith and academics stands out the most. Counter to what many assume, worship expands far beyond the church pew on Sunday morning. As Christians, we can glorify God in nearly everything we do, including academics. I believe this is something that Roberts does exceptionally well. Many members of our community see academics as a form of worship. By cultivating new ideas and thoughts to serve God and others, we are fulfilling the call God has placed upon humanity. While at Roberts, I have experienced worship in the classroom and the church pew alike.

What are your plans after graduation?

After graduation, I will be pursuing a Master of Arts (Theological Studies) at Princeton Theological Seminary in New Jersey. Following my master's program, I hope to earn a PhD in Systematic Theology. I intend to work towards integrating academic theology back into the Church in an ecumenical manner.

How do you plan on financing your master's program?

Truth be told, I still haven't fully wrapped my head around the financial package I was offered for my master's program. Receiving a full scholarship and stipend is perhaps the most conspicuous of the many blessings I have received from God in my theological education. Among other things, this scholarship will allow me to dedicate more focus and effort to my academics than what would have otherwise been possible.

How has being a Staff Assistant at the Golisano Library helped you grow while being at Roberts?

Beyond fueling my love for books, working at the library has helped me move beyond the ever-present moment. Our culture has shifted its attention to the immediate 'now' due to phones, computers and search engines. However, assisting students in researching and navigating our volumes has taught me to step out of the present moment and see my place in the immense breadth of humanity. At the library, thousands of years of thought, narratives, and systems stand before us: not as individual bits of information that come and go in an instant, but as an immovable, cohesive collection. It is one of the few places left that makes this reality apparent.

What's your favorite spot on campus?

My favorite spot on campus is definitely the trees by Cox Hall. On warm days, I love to hammock there with friends and relax.

What course (so far) has been your favorite and why?

This is a tough question, but I would have to say Christology with Dr. Jeffrey McPherson. In this class, we explored and engaged a variety of theological perspectives on the person and nature of Christ. By looking beyond my contemporary Protestant view of Christ, I encountered a much richer presentation of the Risen One. There are numerous contexts in which the Church has sought to articulate and understand Christ, each with its unique insight. For example, feminist Christologies profoundly express Christ as Incarnate Wisdom in a manner unmatched by other Christologies.

What is your favorite food to eat in Rochester?

My favorite food in Rochester is the garbage plate. Admittedly, it took me several attempts as a freshman to fully enjoy this Rochester 'cuisine.' But, now that my digestive system has adapted to it, there is no food I crave as badly as a garbage plate on late nights.

Can you share about your work as a teaching assistant?

I am a teaching assistant for Elementary Greek. In this position, I have the opportunity to work with students as a class and one-on-one. I believe this has allowed me to help students gain a richer understanding of the ancient language and find more confidence in their ability to learn it. As a student of Greek myself, I hope to demonstrate that learning the language is not an impossible task. All that is required is patience, diligence, and focus on the One who is guiding.

What advice would you give to a student considering Roberts for their college education?

I would encourage them to seize every opportunity. The most formative aspects of my education at Roberts cannot be found on a program check sheet. Rather, by pursuing my aspirations as a student, these opportunities were presented before me. In fact, Attic Greek, one of the languages I learned here, isn't even officially offered by the college. There are countless possibilities latent at Roberts. Seek wonder in all that you do here and never back down from an unexpected offer; you won't regret it! And, of course, take as many Religion and Philosophy courses as possible. Finally, let all that you do be to the glory of God.



Andrew was awarded the President's Citation for Academic Achievement at Commencement 2021



Faculty Feedback

I have had the privilege of being Andrew's professor for seven courses and for four independent studies. I watched him teach himself Attic Greek (the hardest Greek dialect to learn) over the course of three semesters, and he currently serves as my T.A. for Biblical Greek. He has been the type of student whom a professor almost does not even have to teach. He thirsts to know more and learning is a hobby for him. Beyond his academics, though, I have also watched him care for his peers and seek God sincerely. He currently serves as the Student Chaplain, which is a fitting role. He has been a tremendous blessing to the Roberts community.

Dr. Kristen Helms
Associate Professor of Biblical Studies