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honors in practice

HITIP



2008

Vol. 4

IN THIS ISSUE

- KATHERINE E. BRUCE
- ROSALIE C. OTERO
- CRAIG T. COBANE
- RICHARD IRA SCOTT AND PHILIP L. FRANA
- BERNICE BRAID
- SARA E. QUAY AND AMY M. DAMICO
- KATERYNA A. R. SCHRAY
- MARA PARKER
- TODD TIMMONS
- PATRICIA L. POWELL
- LUKE VASSILIOU
- GAYLE A. LEVY
- CRAIG T. COBANE AND DERICK B. STRODE
- JIM LACEY
- LINDA L. VILA
- JOYCE W. FIELDS
- LAUREN C. POUCHAK, MAUREEN E. KELLEHER, AND MELISSA A. LULAY
- LINDSAY ROBERTS AND JESSIE SALMON
- SAM SCHUMAN
- PAUL STRONG
- ROBERT SPURRIER



HONORS IN PRACTICE

VOLUME 4

honors in practice

Honors Program

University of Alabama at Birmingham

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JOURNAL EDITORS

ADA LONG

DAIL MULLINS

UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Editorial Policy	5
Submission Guidelines	5
Dedication to Elizabeth C. Beck	7
<i>Editor's Introduction</i>	
Ada Long	9

2007 CONFERENCE PLENARY ADDRESSES

<i>Determining the Significance of Honors</i>	
Katherine E. Bruce	17
<i>Portable Widgets and Techie Tattoos: Honors of the Future</i>	
Rosalie C. Otero	21
<i>Honors in 2025: Becoming What You Emulate</i>	
Craig T. Cobane	25
<i>Honors 2025: The Future of the Honors College</i>	
Richard Ira Scott and Philip L. Frana	29

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

<i>Majoring in the Minor: A Closer Look at Experiential Learning</i>	
Bernice Braid	37
<i>Cultural Studies as the Foundation for an Honors Program: Documenting Students' Academic and Personal Growth</i>	
Sara E. Quay and Amy M. Damico	43

INNOVATIVE COURSES

<i>Literary Ornithology: Bird-Watching across Academic Disciplines with Honors Students</i>	
Kateryna A. R. Schray	61
<i>The American Musical as an Honors Course: Obstacles and Possibilities</i>	
Mara Parker	79
<i>Honors Calculus: An Historical Approach</i>	
Todd Timmons	87
<i>Honored to be a Part of Service-Learning</i>	
Patricia L. Powell	97
<i>Learning by Leading and Leading by Teaching: A Student-Led Honors Seminar</i>	
Luke Vassiliou	111

STUDY ABROAD AND AT HOME

- Sweden in the Summer: Developing an Honors Study-Abroad Program*
Gayle A. Levy121
- Literary New England: Planning and Implementing Domestic Travel Study*
Craig T. Cobane and Derick B. Strode127

SENIOR THESES AND PROJECTS

- The Senior Honors Thesis: From Millstone to Capstone*
Jim Lacey143
- Mentoring Honors Thesis Students: A Lawyer's Perspective*
Linda L. Vila145
- Using External Review in the Honors Project Process*
Joyce W. Fields155

CREATING COMMUNITY

- Creating Community: Honors Welcome Week Programming*
Lauren C. Pouchak, Maureen E. Kelleher, and Melissa A. Lulay165
- Creating Faculty-Student Interaction*
Lindsay Roberts and Jessie Salmon177

BOOK NOTES

- Wholly Spirit: Searching for a Plausible God* by C. Grey Austin
Sam Schuman183
- A Dangerous Thing: A Memoir of Learning and Teaching* by Betty Krasne
Paul Strong185

NEW INFORMATION FROM NCHC

- The Newest "Basic Characteristic" of a Fully Developed Honors Program*
Robert Spurrier191
- About the Authors 199
- NCHC Publication Order Forms 206

The cover design of *Honors in Practice* was created by Patrick Aeivoli of Long Island University: C. W. Post Campus.

The cover photo was taken at the the Student Poster Session of the 2007 NCHC conference in Denver.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Honors in Practice (HIP) accommodates the need and desire for articles about nuts-and-bolts issues, innovative practices in individual honors programs, and other honors topics of concern to the membership. *HIP* complements the semi-annual scholarly journal of the NCHC, *Journal of the National Collegiate Honors Council (JNCHC)*. Both journals employ a double-blind review system. *JNCHC* publishes scholarly essays that stress research in and on honors education. *HIP* publishes practical and descriptive essays: descriptions of successful honors courses, suggestions for out-of-class experiences, administrative issues, and other matters of use and/or interest to honors faculty, administrators, and students. Submissions and inquiries should be directed to Ada Long at adalong@uab.edu or, if necessary, 850.927.3776.

DEADLINE

HIP is published annually. The deadline for submissions is January 1.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

1. We will accept material by e-mail attachment (preferred) or disk. We will not accept material by fax or hard copy.
2. If documentation is used, the documentation style can be whatever is appropriate to the author's primary discipline or approach (MLA, APA, etc.), but please avoid footnotes. Internal citation to a list of references (bibliography) is preferred; endnotes are acceptable.
3. There are no minimum or maximum length requirements; the length should be dictated by the topic and its most effective presentation.
4. Accepted essays will be edited for grammatical and typographical errors and for infelicities of style or presentation. Authors will have ample opportunity to review and approve edited manuscripts before publication.
5. All submissions and inquiries should be directed to Ada Long at adalong@uab.edu or, if necessary, 850.927.3776.

DEDICATION



Elizabeth C. Beck

A proper expression of gratitude to Liz Beck would take far more space than is available on this page. Individually and collectively, the members of the National Collegiate Honors Council have Liz to thank for the smooth sailing of the Ship of Honors through the tumultuous waters of change during this millennium. From 2003 to 2005 and from mid-2007 forward, she has served as Interim Executive Director of NCHC, with “Interim” in this case indicating her willingness to take over at the helm when she was urgently needed. Liz had ample background as well as talent for taking on this responsibility: she had already served as Executive Secretary of NCHC; she has served on nine NCHC committees starting in 1984, including the Executive Committee; she was Executive Secretary/Treasurer and President, among other positions, of the Upper Midwest Honors Council throughout most of the 1980s and 90s; she has served as an NCHC Site Visitor and as a facilitator at institutes that train site visitors; she has sponsored an Honors Semester and has another in the works; and almost without interruption she has served as Director of the University Honors Program at Iowa State University since 1977. At Iowa State as well as NCHC, she keeps trying to retire and getting called back into service when people simply cannot go forward without her, and her service has always extended beyond these organizations to include a wide range of campus and community organizations in Ames. The recurrence of “serve” and “service” in this Dedication is unavoidable, bespeaking the quantity and quality of her contributions to honors, higher education, and the public good. Smart, wise, knowledgeable, efficient, respectful, and fun, Liz Beck is always there when she is needed. Thank you, Liz, from all of us.

ADA LONG

Editor's Introduction

ADA LONG

UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM

The 2008 volume of *Honors in Practice* covers a broad range of topics useful to honors administrators, teachers, and students. It begins with essays based on plenary presentations at the 2007 NCHC conference in Denver; next come essays on experiential learning, innovative courses, study abroad and at home, senior theses and projects, and methods of creating community; following these essays are book notes; and the volume concludes with an item of information about a new (seventeenth) NCHC-Approved Basic Characteristic of a Fully Developed Honors Program.

Katherine E. Bruce leads off this volume with a revised version of her presidential address. In a clever and illuminating play on the concept of "significance" in both her academic discipline of psychology and the interdisciplinary context of honors, she defines as significant those experiments that produce important, nonrandom, unexpected, and often controversial, unsettling results. Evidence that a gorilla or sea-lion or parrot can understand and communicate abstract concepts is significant, disrupting our long-held assumption that only humans are rational animals. The task of honors, Bruce argues, is also to stretch our boundaries—between disciplines and between the sites of learning—and to contradict our assumptions about what questions to ask and how to seek the answers. In this way, both the process and results of honors education are significant.

The next three essays are versions of presentations at the open forum on "Honors in 2025: The Future of Higher Education" in Denver. Rosalie C. Otero's essay echoes the themes of Kate Bruce's presidential address and projects them into the future. In "Portable Widgets and Techie Tattoos: Honors of the Future," Otero evokes in compelling detail a future that is simultaneously exciting and dizzying, scary and reassuring. Her lists of technological gizmos that will transform honors education may send some older honors administrators scurrying to their landlines and phoning their grandchildren to find out what all that stuff is, but even they should find comfort and hope in Otero's assumption that honors educators will continue to encourage integrative, empowering, responsible, and significant learning in a Star Trek setting.

Craig T. Cobane takes a more structural approach to the future of honors in "Honors in 2025: Becoming What You Emulate." He focuses on a set of interrelated structural changes that have already started: the transformation of honors programs to honors colleges; the establishment of accreditation standards and agencies for honors; and increasing similarities between tomorrow's

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

honors colleges and today's elite private colleges. Bucking the waves of the future, however, honors curricula will, according to Cobane's predictions, resemble the pre-AP, pre-online, and pre-accelerated coursework of the past, which was and will be again traditional, time-consuming, and strenuous in contrast to trends in non-honors curricula.

Like Cobane, Richard Ira Scott and Philip L. Frana assume that honors colleges will become the norm in the decades ahead and that more rigorous assessment and accreditation will result from this trend. In "Honors 2025: The Future of the Honors College," Scott and Frana predict that future honors colleges will require and standardize various practices that have heretofore been associated with honors education in a more sporadic way: collaborative teaching and learning; project-based coursework; shifts of authority and responsibility from teacher to student; experiential and service-based learning; extramural education; study abroad; online communities; and broad-based, diversity-sensitive recruitment.

Bernice Braid's essay overlaps categories, as she herself usually does. "Majoring in the Minor: A Closer Look at Experiential Learning" is both a plenary address, like the ones before it in this issue, and a description of experiential learning as Braid has practiced it for some four decades now. For those unfamiliar with her work, or for those who have taken part in some of the many City as Text™ experiences, honors semesters, or honors institutes she has organized, this essay will provide a theoretical perspective and overview of experiential learning as Braid has developed and promulgated it throughout her career.

The subsequent essay provides a recent example of experiential and applied-learning strategies rooted in the field of cultural studies. Sara E. Quay and Amy Damico, in "Cultural Studies as the Foundation for an Honors Program: Documenting Students' Academic and Personal Growth," give an account of the rationale, development, implementation, and challenges of a new honors program at Endicott College that combines the theory and practice of cultural studies. The essay describes in detail the program's seven learning objectives and the means of assessing them, primarily through students' self-reflective writing during and after their honors course sequence.

The next section of this issue of *Honors in Practice* includes five examples of innovative honors courses, starting with "Literary Ornithology: Bird-Watching across Academic Disciplines with Honors Students." Kateryna A. R. Schray of Marshall University presents a model of honors education at its best: team teaching; interdisciplinary study that includes the sciences, humanities, arts, popular culture, and marketing; experiential fieldwork; individual and collaborative learning; online discussion; and innovative assignments that range from scientific research to creative writing—in short, a course that incorporates virtually all the strategies described in the previous essays. In addition to being inspired to develop such a course, many *HIP* readers will no doubt wish they could take this one.

ADA LONG

Also tantalizing is the subject of Mara Parker's essay, "The American Musical as an Honors Course: Obstacles and Possibilities." Parker describes the content, structure, and pedagogy of this successful course that she developed at Widener University. She details the methods she used during the progress of the semester to lead her students from seeing a musical as mere entertainment to analyzing all its components—especially song and dance—as elements of an artistic whole, including themes, modes of characterization, and underlying social concepts that students had not known to look for.

As any honors administrator knows, mathematics presents a special challenge in terms of both accessibility and interest to a wide range of students. Todd Timmons meets this challenge with an historical approach to teaching calculus that might serve as an excellent model for math teachers in honors. "Honors Calculus: An Historical Approach" describes the course structure, readings, and projects of the course he has developed at the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith. The course culminates in a debate that divides the class into two sides—the Newtonians and the Leibnizians—each arguing for their man as the father of calculus. This kind of debate might inspire not just mathematicians but teachers in any discipline.

Service-learning has become a component of many college curricula, and in "Honored to be a Part of Service-Learning," Patricia Powell describes the course she developed for honors students at Trinity Christian College in suburban Chicago. Each of the six students in the course developed and implemented an ambitious, semester-long service-learning project. The structural elements of the course were literature review, preparation, action, reflection, and celebration. The essay describes in detail each of these elements and concludes with synopses of three of the students' projects.

The final essay in this section—"Learning by Leading and Leading by Teaching: A Student-Led Honors Seminar" by Luke Vassiliou—describes an innovative pedagogical approach in a sequence of two one-hour honors seminars at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College. After providing some preparation for the approach during the first semester and part of the second, Vassiliou entrusts pairs of students with leading each class session. He provides a detailed account of the rationale, planning, implementation, and outcomes of this pedagogy. The outcomes for the students include increased involvement in the honors program, greater success beyond the college, heightened sophistication about teaching, and deeper scrutiny of teachers, all of which have not only benefited the honors program and its students but transformed the campus culture.

Along with service-learning, study abroad has experienced rapid growth on college campuses during the past decade or two; both are trends that Otero, Scott, and others predicted will continue in their "Honors in 2025" essays that appear in this issue of *HIP*. In "Sweden in the Summer: Developing an Honors Study-Abroad Program," Gayle A. Levy accomplishes two major objectives: (1) an account of the origin and evolution of an honors summer-abroad experience in Uppsala sponsored by the University of Missouri-Kansas City, and (2) an

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

argument that the goals of honors and study abroad are not only compatible but perhaps identical. She suggests that any study abroad is an honors experience and that any honors experience should ideally include study abroad.

Craig T. Cobane and Derick B. Strode of Western Kentucky University describe a way of accomplishing the objectives of study abroad within the United States. "Literary New England: Planning and Implementing Domestic Travel Study" is an account of the rationale, planning, implementation, and aftermath of a course designed to provide a study-abroad experience in New (rather than Old) England. The course began with reading Melville, Hawthorne, Emerson, Thoreau, and other writers from New England; it culminated in a two-week trip to sites associated with their lives and works. Cobane and Strode describe the course from the earliest planning stages to the final evaluation of its success.

Three essays in this issue focus on senior honors projects and theses. Jim Lacey leads off with "The Senior Honors Thesis: From Millstone to Capstone," which is a clear, brief, and straightforward account of how in two years he turned a moribund thesis component of his honors program into a viable and rigorous capstone experience for all honors students at Eastern Connecticut State University.

In "Mentoring Honors Thesis Students: A Lawyer's Perspective," Linda L. Vila, of Long Island University, C. W. Post Campus, explains how she has applied her legal background to helping honors students succeed in not only writing their theses but preparing for their post-baccalaureate studies and careers. Her approach to mentoring includes four broad components: "think like a lawyer"; "build an argument"; "communicate effectively"; and "act professionally." She includes detailed teaching tips within each category as well as examples of her success. The strategies described here, although they derive from Vila's legal background, can serve thesis mentors in any discipline.

Joyce W. Fields examines another possibility for strengthening the thesis experience for honors students in "Using External Review in the Honors Project Process." She suggests that a useful way to distinguish honors from non-honors capstone projects is to incorporate a requirement for external review. This kind of review can be accomplished by requiring that students submit their work for publication, for conference presentation, or for a grant. Fields describes the design, execution, and success of such a requirement at Columbia College in South Carolina.

The next two essays provide ideas for creating community in honors. Lauren C. Pouchak, Maureen E. Kelleher, and Melissa A. Lulay of Northeastern University describe such an initiative in "Creating Community: Honors Welcome Week Programming." The essay details the conception, goals, implementation, and results of the orientation week, including a day-by-day schedule of activities. Although Welcome Week is expensive—\$76,000, or \$230 per student—the authors also suggest ways to reduce the costs.

In "Creating Faculty-Student Interaction," Lindsay Roberts and Jessica Salmon describe student-initiated events in the Towson University Honors

ADA LONG

College that are designed to increase the connections between students and faculty. At Seminar Night, honors teachers describe the courses they will be offering the next semester. Generation Jeopardy is an evening event that pits teams of students against teams of faculty. Both of these events are organized by members of the Honors College Student Council in order to encourage fun and educational interactions between students and teachers.

A new feature in this issue of *HIP* is a section called "Book Notes," providing commentary on new books by members of NCHC. Sam Schuman discusses C. Grey Austin's new book, *Wholly Spirit: Searching for a Plausible God*, and Paul Strong describes *A Dangerous Thing: A Memoir of Learning and Teaching* by Betty Krasne. Both Schuman and Strong have done an outstanding job not only of describing the books but inspiring us to buy them. We will happily include book notes in future issues of *HIP* and encourage NCHC members to submit them.

We conclude this issue with an essay by Robert Spurrier entitled "The Newest 'Basic Characteristic' of a Fully Developed Honors Program." Spurrier cites the new (seventeenth) characteristic, approved by the NCHC Executive Committee on November 23, 2007, which states that a fully developed honors program provides priority enrollment for active honors students. Spurrier discusses the reasons for adding this new characteristic. He concludes, and thus this issue of *HIP* concludes, with the amended Basic Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors Program as well as Basic Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors College.

2007 Conference Plenary Addresses

KATHERINE E. BRUCE

Determining the Significance of Honors

KATHERINE E. BRUCE

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA WILMINGTON

(What follows is a somewhat revised version of the presidential address that Kate Bruce delivered on November 3, 2007, at the annual NCHC conference in Denver, Colorado.)

The title of my address is “Determining the Significance of Honors.” That’s a hefty title. This summer I was reading the “numbers” issue of the *JNCHC* and thinking about how we measure impact and effects related to honors education when Hallie Savage asked me what the title of my presidential address would be. Given my academic discipline and my current thoughts about assessment centered on that *JNCHC* issue, I thought that the title *Determining the Significance of Honors* would be illustrative of my interests and focus.

I don’t presume for a minute to have a complete answer to this question, but I do have some thoughts I want to share with you about what appear to be some of the critical elements of significance and how they may apply to honors.

To do this, I would like to tell you a bit about what I study. We all come to honors with unique interests, experiences, skills and talents—especially those related to our own academic disciplines. Our academic interests shape who we are, and in almost all cases our academic interests are the reasons that we are in honors in the first place; we are teachers of honors classes in chemistry or literature, for example, or we are students enrolled in honors classes or participating in independent scholarship in those disciplines.

By academic training, I am a psychologist; no, not one of *those* psychologists, but an experimental psychologist. Experimental psychologists study behavior, as all psychologists do, and focus on conducting research to gather data to understand causes of behavior. Personally, I have studied mostly non-human animal behavior—social interactions and mate choice—in rodents, primates, and fish, but more recently I have turned to researching the effects of evolutionary constraints on non-human animal cognition.

While this may not be your area of academic interest, it is a subject close to many people’s hearts. You may have wondered about how your old dog learns new tricks; you may have even wondered if your pet thinks the same way you do. You may recall one of our former NCHC speakers, Sally Boysen from Ohio State, who gave a plenary address on this general topic. This past September, you probably heard that Alex the famous African gray parrot died at

DETERMINING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF HONORS

the age of thirty-one. His obituary was in the *New York Times*, no less! Although I don't have a famous parrot named Alex, I do have rats with names such as J6 and I24. Even though they have not been featured in the *New York Times*, they do have a spot on YouTube.

What my students, my colleague Mark Galizio, and I study with these rats is whether they show us with their behavior that they can form associations and concepts. Much like the research with Alex the parrot, we are finding that even rats seem to be able to show us complex learning, and we are testing to see how far this goes. Does their behavior show us that they can form abstractions? Experiments such as those conducted in my lab and the ones with Alex are critical because the ability to form complex abstractions can lead to the use of symbols and is vital for language. The combination of symbol use and language is thought to be the hallmark of what is unique about human animals.

In our lab, we are finding that rats show some types of concept learning, but only if we know how to ask them what they know. We ask them to demonstrate what they know with odor detection using common household spices, which is an innovative approach since most previous work on concept learning in non-humans has used visual cues; after all, since that's what humans usually use, it seemed the way to go.

For example, Alex the parrot demonstrated counting, shape and color recognition, and an understanding of what objects are made of. He could even explain associations between objects. For example, if presented with four blue objects all of different shapes and asked "what's the same?" he could answer "color." But Irene Pepperberg, his trainer, found that he needed to touch or mouth the objects before he could vocalize the answer to a problem; that was part of the learning process.

Animal behaviorist Robert Bolles described this phenomenon when he noted that animals are "prepared"—biologically, instinctively—to be able to learn certain associations and that, if we allow them to show us what they know in a "prepared" environment, we will see a depth to their learning. For example, having Alex the parrot "say" an answer related to visual cues is a prepared response but asking my rat I24 to "say" or even "squeak" a response is not a prepared behavior. In fact, Bolles would say that I24 is contra-prepared to do this. A rat squeaks when in danger or running away! This behavior would be contrary to our experimental setup; typically we ask the rat to make a response to obtain a preferred food reward, a little sugar pellet, based on his recognition of a spicy smell; we don't want him to vocalize and run away. To learn about behavior that leads to a treat, rats are prepared to do something like "dig" (not squeak), so that's what we ask the rats to do. They dig in scented sand, and we ask them to learn about odors, not visual cues. Odors are to rats what colors and shapes are to parrots and humans. These are examples of evolutionary constraints.

Back to significance. Most psychologists and, I assume, those of you who know about him think that Alex the parrot was remarkable. Many people went

so far as to attribute human emotions to the words that Irene Pepperberg taught Alex. That “I love you” was one of Alex’s last phrases to his trainer was mentioned in his *NYT* obituary. Maybe Alex meant “I love you” the same way you mean it when you say it to a parent or friend, but maybe not. That is hard to test.

Yet, Alex and even I24 are remarkable. What they show us is significant. “Significant” is a term we use in special ways in psychology, one that has a myriad of meanings. In psychology, as in many of your disciplines, when we set up an experiment, we have a hypothesis about what the results will be. We collect data and use statistics to help us determine whether the results we find in our study are significant. In this statistical sense, “significant” means that what was observed was unlikely to have just happened by chance and that, if we repeated our study, we’d be likely to find the same results, not some other random answer.

Significant—not random, not by chance, but something unique. Something that is different from the norm. And that is part of the significance of honors: that honors education looks different from other types of education.

There is another level to significance, though. Sometimes we find statistically significant results—that is, we are confident that the results did not occur by chance—but also need to ask whether the results are theoretically significant. Do they mean anything? Do they make a difference? Are they important with a capital “I”?

Back to Alex the parrot. Why is what Alex was capable of learning and “telling” us significant? Why do we find it important?

One answer is that we did not think it possible that a non-human could show this level of problem solving, that the kind of learning Alex showed is something we thought only humans, *Homo sapiens sapiens*, could do.

We learned something we did not expect. But, in fact, symbolic communication has now been demonstrated in several species beside humans: by Alex; by Koko the gorilla, who uses sign language to communicate and show some abstract concepts; by several chimps, such as the famous Washoe, who was taught sign language back in the 1960s to communicate as well (Washoe died four days ago, and her obituary also made the *NYT* this past week) and also Lana, Austin, and Sherman, chimps who use a computer to answer questions about what they’ve learned; by Rocky, the sea-lion who appears to be able to learn to categorize new symbols and organize them into groups that we label “numbers” and “letters”; and maybe even by I24, who behaves as if he can understand abstract concepts like “sameness.”

All these results were unexpected. They remain controversial. They are exciting. They push our comfort zone.

They are *significant*, something that we know does not happen by chance, something that is important.

Again, how can we relate this to honors? I would argue that some of these very features are what we define as significant or meaningful about honors.

We find that an honors experience can change us in ways that we did not anticipate and the effect feels meaningful. Honors classes and independent

DETERMINING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF HONORS

scholarship push us to test limits and to stretch our selves creatively and to learn how to ask the right questions, whether we are teachers or students. Honors pushes our comfort zones, and that is certainly not by chance; that's exactly what honors pedagogy is about.

Part of the significance of honors is that we look for ways to stretch our boundaries. Honors challenges us to learn in unexpected places, to learn in unexpected ways. My comments echo those made by our plenary speaker Ellen Winner yesterday, and they reflect what *City as Text*TM is about and what *Partners in the Parks* is about. Honors challenges us to find the significance in those experiences, to see connections we never thought of, to be open to new ideas.

And that relates to one other hallmark of what we value about honors education, which is interdisciplinary learning. I think we sometimes forget that when we come to the annual conference, we all bring our disciplinary perspectives. These perspectives about the topics we love to study can bring fresh insights when we discuss ideas with one another. All around us, we have a remarkable group of individuals—students of physics, math, psychology, literature, geology, business, biology, education, the arts, just to name a few. When we speak to each other about—and from the perspectives of—our academic disciplines, we are open to the fresh ideas and connections all around us.

Unexpected, unanticipated, interdisciplinary: these features, once we have homed in on how to ask a question correctly, help us determine the significance of honors.

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ROSALIE C. OTERO

Portable Widgets and Techie Tattoos: Honors of the Future

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Just twenty-five years ago, in 1982, Gray Austin from Ohio State was the NCHC President. William Daniel from Winthrop College was the program chair for the NCHC conference that was held in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The conference fee was \$46 and a room at the Hilton cost \$37 a night. Writing Across the Curriculum was big news, and interdisciplinary seminars centered on the Great Books concept were a major component of honors programs. Today, there are honors programs and colleges at large and small universities, colleges, and community colleges. Service Learning is big news as is Outcomes Assessment. Honors curricula are much broader, incorporating many fields and emphasizing research. Given the importance of honors education at many institutions, especially public colleges and universities, and given the changes that have taken place in honors over the last twenty-five years, what can we speculate about its future?

Traditionally institutions have organized content into disciplines and further divided these disciplines into smaller sub-fields, each to be mastered by the student in a prescribed curriculum. Honors programs, however, have encouraged students to examine the links between disciplines. Instead of fragmenting knowledge into subjects and segregating learners by majors, most honors programs have developed curricula that allow students to look at problems and topics from a variety of disciplines and perspectives.

In addition, honors education has always been at the forefront of experimentation and innovation. NCHC's Honors Semesters, City as Text™, Partners in the Park, and Satellite Seminars are a few examples. Honors programs have invented and designed pioneering programs and curricula intended to enhance the education of students and offer more than they would get in a "regular" course. This trend will continue in the future where learning will be continuous, relevant, and adaptive.

We live in a diverse world, a fact complicated by the emergence of a young wired generation that is rebelling against passive listening to teachers. Their experience with technology—using mobile phones, instant messaging, podcasting, search engines, virtual tours, blogs, clickers, computer-and-video games, iTunes, e-portfolios, message boards, streaming video, online newsgroups, and wikis—gives students the capacity to do more things at once, to shift rapidly from one context to another, to be more literate in images and

PORTABLE WIDGETS AND TECHIE TATTOOS: HONORS OF THE FUTURE

multi-media than in reading text. They respond to hands-on, interactive, collaborative project-based learning. They are consummate multi-taskers. Students today are accustomed to being fully engaged and will become even more so in twenty-five years when even their tattoos and body piercings might be technologized.

Graphic tees of today will be elevated to another dimension. Students of the future will walk into a classroom wearing outfits made not of cloth but of digital fabric displaying images and text for all to see. Already we have computer-generated camouflage uniforms worn by the military that can avoid detection from satellites. Learning resources such as textbooks and computers will be much more immediate and available. Surfaces such as desks and even paper will be used to display information. We will be able to touch certain parts of digital paper or books to activate sounds and see 3-D images of historical figures or characters in a novel, for example.

Classes of the future will depend on wireless technology—information will be pod cast, streamed, downloaded, shared, and available on half-inch to 200-inch screens. Today we have mobile phones that can send email, browse the Web, and stay in touch. Future technology will produce multi-core processors that can morph into televisions, game consoles, or credit cards.

Typical honors learning environments will include technical infrastructure and adaptable classrooms. They will be Interactive Learning Centers made of pre-fabricated materials that can be dismantled and reassembled to meet changing needs. They will contain such options as virtual-reality pods in which students can experience the class topic in a more immediate way. If studying biology, for example, students will be able through a pod to enter the circulatory system and see first-hand how it works. If studying history, a student might be among the throngs of revolutionaries who called for the head of Marie Antoinette. Many classes will be more like “The Magic School Bus” that my granddaughter watches on television.

Although dynamic discussion, spirited debate, and meaningful mentorship will remain the basis for honors interaction, the delivery of information will be different. Honors educators will have to teach students how to filter information, how to reason and make judgments, and how to form ethical value systems for themselves. Instructors will help students demystify subject matter through more direct academic encounters.

Honors programs will continue to work with students to encourage analysis, application, inquiry, comparison, synthesis, and research. Objective tests and rote memorization will be passé. Assignments will be sequenced so that for each assignment students will apply previous knowledge to new ideas and thus become increasingly sophisticated learners and knowers. Rather than acquiring knowledge outside the context in which it will be used, students in honors will be asked to complete assignments designed around real-world issues and problems. Honors instructors will continue to serve as coaches or facilitators rather than the sole authorities or experts; they will allow students to help set the pace

and direction of learning and will guide them to come up with their own questions and answers.

Thomas Friedman writes that the latest world revolution is found in the fact that the power of the Internet makes it possible for individuals to collaborate and compete globally. In twenty-five years, this free flow of information will blur current national boundaries as they are replaced by city-states, corporation-based cultural groupings, and/or other geographically diverse and reconfigured human organizations tied together by global networks.

Sophisticated online search engines will lead learners to specific details, discarded after their use and resurrected when necessary. Unlike the one-right-answer problems that students solve in today's textbooks, future learners will engage in problems that are context-dependent, complicated, messy, and that recurrent in diverse guises. Motivation will change, and rates of comprehension and retention will increase as well. Emphasis will be on learning *how* rather than learning *what*.

Unbounded by geography, through simulated virtual world sights, sounds and sensations of actually being there, honors programs will be linked so that students can study anywhere. Virtual tools, personal intelligent tutors, and digital libraries and museums will be common. The Perseus Project at Tufts University, a digital library in the humanities, links materials in ancient languages, translations, commentary, and multi-media for the study of ancient Greek culture. The Valley of the Shadows at the University of Virginia is a digital archive that includes thousands of original letters and diaries, newspapers and speeches, census and church records from the Civil War era. Both of these are good examples of what will become the norm.

What we have been doing is trying to adapt our computer and web-based systems to a model of education consistent with a bygone era, complete with central control, standardization, and top-down administration of courses, tests, and degrees. This strategy will not work in the future. We will have to adjust our ways of teaching and learning to new tools and techniques.

I see large-scale collaboration whereby students will work with colleagues and professors all around the world. Students will be able to visit museums, exhibitions, libraries, historic archives, and virtual galleries, where they can converse with famous/infamous people via digital holograms. Honors students interested in Arab poetry, for instance, can collaborate with Middle Eastern professors and students. They will be able to look at images from a space telescope in order to study active geysers on Enceladus or explore the oceans of slush on Europa. They will be able to study first hand Spain's Rio Tinto where creatures that never see sunlight feed on acid and rocks.

In a bewildering array of information and resources, we will be confronted with more information than we can handle, and much of it, unfortunately, will continue to be of poor quality. "We must redesign learning to do much more than deal with subjects. We need to know the sources of our information and of our beliefs and do reality checks" (Ayres). We have to be careful

PORTABLE WIDGETS AND TECHIE TATTOOS: HONORS OF THE FUTURE

not to distort priorities or be lulled into believing that gadgets can fix all of our problems.

Peter and Trudy Johnson-Lenz (1989) have insisted that information-age technology presented society with enormous risks as well as possibilities. After a decade of creating groupware to help people work together on-line, they no longer believed in simple visions of connectivity. "Connecting people without clear purposes, processes, and norms to guide their interactions, results in scattered and sporadic activity." To address their concerns, they began to explore new ways of incorporating "active listening, explicit group processes and activities, emotional safety, mutual encouragement and reminders of the sacred." Honors programs must become the providers of learning spaces, whether formal or informal, virtual or real, which will be safe environments for experimentation and failure.

In twenty-five years, there will be less use of productivity tools and more use of cognitive tools for conversation, analysis, prototype construction, scenarios, simulation, reflection, and insight. These new tools will lead to ethical debates and to the development of personal standards and evaluation criteria in building team norms. Students will be encouraged to become participants in many varied learning environments like international study and collaborative organizations such as the current Model United Nations Program with students from around the world.

Honors programs and colleges will continue to prepare students for successful careers, enriched lives, and active engagement as U.S. and global citizens. They will continue to develop self-directed, integrative, intentional learners who are empowered, informed, responsible, and thoughtfully reflective about their education. The new modes of accomplishing these goals, though, might look more like Star Trek than today's predominant lectures, tutorials, and seminar discussions.

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Honors in 2025: Becoming What You Emulate

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INTRODUCTION

Predicting the future is always difficult and fraught with many dangers; just ask your local weather forecaster. The process of looking into the future, even if the predictions are in error, is nevertheless an important tool for honors faculty, staff, and administrators; it is part of the strategic planning process that helps develop new and interesting ideas. The goal of this essay is to look over the horizon, make some predictions about what honors education will look like in the year 2025, and encourage people to think about the future of honors. My predictions will most likely seem naive to a reader in 2025, but thinking about the future provides value today.

Out of numerous possible topics related to what the future of honors education might look like, this essay examines three: the transformation of most honors programs into honors colleges, leading to honors accreditation systems; the future similarities between honors colleges and private colleges; and the greater ownership and control honors colleges will have over their curricula and faculty.

PREDOMINANCE OF HONORS COLLEGES

Over the past decade we have seen an accelerating evolution from honors programs to honors colleges. Research compiled for a companion essay in this forum, by Rick Scott University of Central Arkansas, found that the number of honors colleges is increasing. In the *Peterson's Guide* 3rd edition (2002), there were 68 self-identified honors colleges; in *Peterson's Guide* 4th edition (2005), they have increased to 86, and in his review of the NCHC membership (2007), 90 institutions claimed an honors college. During the 2007 NCHC conference, I helped facilitate a "Developing in Honors" session where over twenty honors directors stated that they were planning on making the transition to an honors college in the next two to four years. By 2025, we can expect that most university honors experiences will be within honors colleges. The focus will be not on colleges vs. programs but on which honors colleges are most fully developed.

Among the many reasons to move toward an honors college, the ones that dominate are institutional prestige, recruitment, and fundraising. Having an honors college is a mark of institutional pride and might assist in elevating a university to a higher tier (or the next *U. S. News & World Report* ranking) in

HONORS IN 2025: BECOMING WHAT YOU EMULATE

much the same way as nations have increased their prestige by accumulating colonies in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, joining the nuclear club, or putting a man on the moon. An institution's strategic thinking is typically that the creation of an honors college will increase the university's reputation, help the institution attract more and better students, and thus lead to more donations (especially naming gifts). Some universities create and resource robust honors colleges while others simply change the name on the letterhead from Honors Program to Honors College. The latter institutions desire the advantages of an honors college without the investments in staff and budget necessary to create a well developed honors college. Given this trend, there will likely be a bifurcation of honors colleges over the next decades: those that are nominal honors colleges created primarily for marketing purposes and those that are robust, well developed, and worthy of the name. Therefore, institutions that have made substantial investments in their honors colleges and believe the label is being abused by other institutions will work toward an accreditation standard for honors colleges. Because of the controversy that will surround the accrediting debate, multiple accrediting entities might emerge in the same way as the various college and university accreditation agencies.

HONORS COLLEGES AND PRIVATE COLLEGES

By 2025, after honors programs have evolved into honors colleges, the standard of evaluation and probably accreditation will be how well the honors college compares to the model of elite private colleges. Most honors colleges are created so that a large university can provide a small private school experience for high-achieving students. The typical slogan is "the experience of the small private school with all the amenities of a large university." If the university is state-supported, then one can add "and the price tag of a public institution" to the end of the statement. The future standard of what makes an honors college will be a version of the "duck test" ("if it acts like a duck..."). What will be the criteria that will make up an honors college duck test?

Some of the traits that define private colleges include: granting degrees; having an independent faculty; granting promotion and tenure; negotiating partnership agreements with other entities such as foundations, academic institutions abroad, or the Washington Center; having a board of trustees or the equivalent; and employing a substantial staff to conduct responsibilities such as recruitment, development, and financial aid/scholarships. The list is not exclusive, but it includes many of the characteristics one finds in a private college.

By 2025, most "fully developed honors colleges" will have all (or nearly all) of the attributes listed. At present, nearly fifteen honors colleges grant some kind of degree or its equivalent, and this will increasingly become the norm across the nation. Similar numbers of honors colleges are organized in a department model, where they "own" most if not all of the faculty who teach the honors core classes. Additionally, many of these honors colleges have their own promotion and tenure process.

The size and level of specialization of professional staff is on the increase among honors colleges. Although many honors programs have had in-house advisors and recruiters for many years, traditionally they have been part-time or shared positions. Increasingly the norm is that honors programs and colleges have full-time dedicated honors advisors and recruitment staff. Most of today's high-end honors colleges have increasingly independent admission procedures, substantial advising offices, and other specialized support staff for service learning, programming, research, study abroad, and instructional technology. Additionally, more and more honors colleges have a full-time development officer who, in cooperation with the dean, works closely with an external board, which often functions like a board of trustees rather than an advisory board.

The hiring and resourcing of a specialized staff will increasingly allow honors colleges to look and behave like independent private colleges within the larger institutional system. While the organizational structure and behavior of the honors college will chart new territory, the curriculum in some respects will look back at tradition for a model.

THE HONORS COLLEGE CURRICULUM: BACK TO THE FUTURE

Today's college students and parents are often more focused on the speed of a university education than its quality or the educational experience itself. Increasingly, high-achieving students are coming to campus with a large number of Advance Placement, International Baccalaureate, and dual enrollment credit (often thirty credits or more). Parents discover that these credits cost less than those taken as a residential student at a college or university and that a student can graduate earlier by taking advantage of these pre-college opportunities (thus saving even more money). Many students talk about graduating in two or three years and then heading to their next educational experience. We have all heard the eager, well meaning student say, "the law school will be really impressed that I graduated in four semesters."

This situation is further aggravated when students and parents discover CLEP credit, bi-term classes, online opportunities, and accelerated/weekend executive courses which allow students to race through their education. Over time, students and parents are conditioned to think a university education is like a steeplechase: the faster you navigate around the educational obstacles and check off all the boxes on your degree application, the more successful you are as a student and the more desirable you will appear to an employer or professional school.

By 2025, honors colleges will be much more stringent than they are now on how many pre-college credits they will accept. Some will not accept them at all. Graduating in less than four years will become the exception, not the norm, because honors colleges will increase the number of honors-only core requirements that cannot be fulfilled by pre-college credit. Honors courses will less frequently be taught in accelerated fashion through, for instance, bi-terms

HONORS IN 2025: BECOMING WHAT YOU EMULATE

or online options. An honors college education will be more in tune with a traditional private-college experience than today's assembly-line university process that is increasingly dominated by accelerated learning, pre-college credits, credit for life experience, ITV, online, and weekend courses.

At the same time, honors colleges will not be technophobic. They will use technology to enhance the educational experience, but it will not be the primary medium for transfer of knowledge. Technology will be a key component in making an honors experience relevant in a fast-changing high-tech world. However, honors colleges in 2025 will not develop their own slate of online honors courses as additional revenue generators even though the University of Phoenix will no doubt develop an ersatz honors program along with online residence halls and dining facilities.

CONCLUSION

As higher education continues to change and grow, honors programs and colleges will participate in the evolution of higher education. Honors colleges will become explicit about what they implicitly emulate: the small private college. The resources required to provide a private-college experience will demand that honors colleges prove their value by enhancing the host institution's reputation and its ability to attract and matriculate high-quality students. Honors colleges will explore new ground in the size and complexity of honors staffing, alumni relations, corporate philanthropy, and the politics of university development. The future of honors colleges will require a great deal of modernization, but it will also entail a more traditional curriculum that is separate from that of the host institution. In sum, by 2025 the fully developed honors college will look and act like a private college.

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RICHARD IRA SCOTT AND PHILIP L. FRANA

Honors 2025: The Future of the Honors College

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As we attempt to foresee the future, we recognize that the increase in the number of honors colleges over the past decade appears to be an accelerating trend. We base our predictions on the continuation of this trend and on our need as honors administrators to anticipate and welcome the multiple impacts it will have on current and future honors colleges. We have selected four connected areas as the focus of our consideration: mission; curriculum; assessment and accreditation; and recruiting.

MISSION

The term “honors” is arguably moribund. The concept of “honor,” as in “honorable,” is medieval in origin and requires unquestioning conformity to social expectations (Berger, et. al 1974). From Cervantes forward, however, Western ideals have shifted to discovering individuals’ inherent dignity, nameable only after discarding scripts authored by others, authors now long dead. To do so requires critical thought immersed in the liberal arts—the liberating arts—that leads to stepping outside taken-for-granted structures of everyday life.

This cultural shift suggests that “honors” is no longer limited as it once was to a mission of strictly transmitting knowledge of past traditions. If “honors” has been emptied of that former meaning, with what will it now be filled? We see honors colleges moving away from being defined by specific problems or disciplinary approaches and heading instead toward missions that convey flexible problem-solving skills, and these require project-based classes.

With this mission, “honors” becomes understood as a site rather than a certain kind of student or class or faculty member. It is a place where selected students and faculty members practice scholarship and citizenship together. We study great books not simply because the canon is what one studies but because its answers have stood the test of time in coping with recurring human problems. We study sources of other answers, too: sources other than those of antiquity, from places other than the west, from women, from science, from contemporary scholarship.

This mission works best in a learning community with infrastructural requirements focused on the student working group rather than the faculty member. Faculty members act as interactive participants, resources, advisors, consultants, or coaches, helping keep students on task, delivering content,

HONORS 2025: THE FUTURE OF THE HONORS COLLEGE

evaluating progress, and giving regular feedback. What emerges is the ability to solve real-world problems collaboratively and creatively, grounded in scholarly undertaking that compares and contrasts wisdom traditions and disciplinary methodologies. The goal is to develop citizen-scholars, capable of carrying out research, collaborating with others, leading when necessary, and embracing the public square as a locus of action that is as important to them as their work and family lives.

CURRICULUM

To carry out this mission, the curriculum from one honors college to the next will come to resemble an integrative approach, with stand-alone, interdisciplinary courses and increasing emphasis on student-generated content as students mature each succeeding year, rather than a distributive approach, in which honors is an extra activity in departments or in departmental courses beyond ordinary requirements for graduation.

We expect the curriculum to consist of arrangements that ground student empowerment in and out of the classroom. Such a curriculum employs strategies, structures, and technologies of disintermediation: the practice of student-to-student collaboration taking place without constant intervention and oversight by an instructor. The goal is readiness, the ability to respond to new situations rather than rehearse old scenarios. Old situations are good for practice, but the test is how students perform under new sets of circumstances, which is the only way to test skills apart from content.

Service learning will proliferate, complete with more emphasis on extramural evaluation of students' work. Extramural evaluation will not come easily since it requires performance to an external public, and, although it is becoming more common, it is not yet prevalent in the liberal arts and sciences; it has not fully migrated from colleges of performing arts with their competitive juries or from colleges of education with their student teaching or from colleges of business with their internships or from colleges of health or behavioral sciences with their practicums. In the service-learning approach, students are thrust into positions of leadership, keeping track of progress, coordinating efforts, and organizing research and demonstrations of results. Professors need to give students training and experience in being evaluators, as well. By 2025 look for more honors colleges requiring internships, team tutorials, joint theses, study abroad, and intra-national travel as classroom boundaries become permeable and elastic.

Faculty will adopt pedagogies deemphasizing professorial centrality and will work together across more than one course, with faculty rotating in and out of a project as their expertise is demanded. We will see more honors colleges hire core faculty, on a tenure track within the honors college or as joint appointments or both, to develop and sustain a cadre of faculty practicing collaborative, disintermediative, and interdisciplinary teaching methods.

We believe that the curriculum of the future will be mostly project-oriented. Honors online communities will be powerful workspaces for students and

faculty members to share ideas and develop these projects. Science and industry and all academic areas, including the humanities, are increasingly organized around interdisciplinary teams. Instructors on our campuses will find themselves reenergized by the possibility of groups that learn and generate content by working together on interconnected projects. The online educator can already easily integrate messaging, chat, and virtual classrooms seamlessly. No longer distracted by technical snafus, instructors will inevitably become conversational partners rather than inaccessible sages, and honors students will more and more find acceptance as their partners in research.

In this emerging curriculum, intellectual advancement occurs through scholarship, which is the way knowledge has been generated and assessed since the Enlightenment. The core value, freedom of inquiry, requires transparency of method and assumptions as well as participation in a peer community through publications and presentations; students read and review publications of others, past and present, and attend oral presentations of their contemporaries, whether student, faculty, or guest. Assessment of scholarship will be difficult; the challenge ahead is naming and defining skills we want students to learn, not confusing skills with their outcomes, and to do so we must identify what practices are transferable to other contexts.

Citizenship and leadership develop where students build and facilitate conditions for human flourishing, including practices of listening, turn-taking, and non-violent conflict resolution along with respect for difference. Citizen-scholars will be guided in their leadership by values of unlimited inquiry, transparency of method and assumptions, and the free flow of information.

ASSESSMENT AND ACCREDITATION

In recent years contentious discussions have occurred about identifying basic characteristics of fully developed honors programs and colleges in the context of rapid increases both in honors programs and in programs transitioning to colleges. In 1994, 23 honors colleges were in the NCHC database when John Madden conducted a survey to learn what distinguished programs from colleges (Cummings, 1994; Madden, 1994). Following a decade of debate, NCHC sought to discover and codify the basic characteristics of a fully developed honors college. Peter Sederberg led the effort, saying “the NCHC ought to take a strong interest in this phenomenon, (because) if an institution is simply gilding the name, then ‘Honors College’ becomes a devalued misnomer designed as a marketing strategy and intended to mislead potential applicants” (Sederberg, 2004, p. 121). When research was conducted in 2004, the number of honors colleges affiliated with NCHC had grown to 65 (Sederberg, 2004). Since the basic characteristics were accepted and then endorsed in 2005, perhaps another 25 or more have formed; the fourth edition of Peterson’s Guide to Honors Programs and Colleges named 88 honors colleges, and the NCHC list of institutional members in April of 2007 included 92.

Because highly able and motivated students are rare, competition in recruiting is intense, and this pressure to attract students from a small pool will

HONORS 2025: THE FUTURE OF THE HONORS COLLEGE

encourage more universities to launch honors colleges or convert existing programs into colleges. To ensure that substance is not diluted during this increase in numbers of honors colleges, we expect demand to grow from the membership that NCHC become an accrediting organization. At the same time, many more programs and colleges will conduct self-studies and undertake comprehensive assessment despite slow adoption of these practices by honors administrators so far. NCHC's summer workshops on assessment and evaluation are drawing numerous participants, and the newer guard of honors administrators are operating in a "culture of evidence," implementing assessment to demonstrate value added by honors education and better justifying expenditures for scholarships, housing, faculty, technology and other resources.

RECRUITING

Recruiting will move toward active outreach, attracting students who otherwise would not have enrolled at the university rather than merely selecting among top applicants to the school. We expect recurring charges of elitism and lack of diversity to result in more sensitive ways to assess prospects and predict performance—including labor-intensive strategies favoring review of teacher recommendations and writing submissions, personal interviews, and campus visits by prospects and their families—rather than reliance mainly on standardized test scores. Race and class biases in testing are too well understood to allow continued use of standardized tests to screen for a population of prospects. Honors colleges may never be as diverse as the overall student body, but through outreach recruiters should be attracting a more diverse group than the subpopulation of all university scholarship recipients.

Elitism can be countered by emphasizing service and volunteerism when recruiting. We expect a "culture of service" to grow as administrators help students appreciate that honors education is a gift and that they are participating in what Lewis Hyde (1983) has called a gift economy. In a market economy, high status goes to those who own the most. In a gift economy, high status goes to those who *give* the most. Gifford Pinchot (1995) points out that the academy is a gift economy; academics "with highest status are not those who possess the most knowledge; they are the ones who have contributed the most to their fields." Gifts surprise us and motivate us to pass them along. By 2025, we expect honors colleges to be sites of intense community service led by citizen-scholars.

CONCLUSION

What we see for honors colleges nearly two decades in the future is a hopeful vision that we are eager to see unfold. Many of these "future" trends have existed in individual honors settings for quite some time; however, they are likely to become standard components of honors education with more colleges having more of them. Should these developments take place, some of them will inevitably cause pain and produce displacement. For example, accreditation could homogenize local traits of honors colleges incubated in

their host institutions, leading to forms of unwanted standardization. Project-based classes that limit professorial centrality will diminish traditional forms of curriculum delivery, such as the lecture and the single-author essay.

Despite potential problems, we believe that, to borrow an election year truism, what unites us is greater than what divides us, and this truism is not likely to change for honors in 2025. Traditionally our strengths have hinged on our ability to act as a powerful countervailing force in academic life, moving academic missions toward student-centered, student-empowered practices. The NCHC-approved Basic Characteristics documents speak of “distinguishing ourselves” on campus. We can continue to be strong players in higher education by standing together as a movement for high standards of student learning, engagement, and assessment.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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Experiential Learning

BERNICE BRAID

Majoring in the Minor: A Closer Look at Experiential Learning

BERNICE BRAID

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(This essay is a somewhat revised version of a plenary address that Bernice Braid delivered at the annual meeting of the North Carolina Honors Association, hosted by Fayetteville State University, September 28–29, 2007.)

Experiential learning is, for me, a preeminent means to accomplish goals that are fundamental to the entire educational enterprise. It is a set of strategies that structure acquisition of information, analysis of ideas, and self-reflection in order to pull people into active engagement with their world. Among these strategies are skills of observation and interpretation that require learners to take careful note and to examine themselves as processors of the details they themselves assemble into meaningful patterns, thus generating the insight, over and over again, that it is they who create the meaning they come to attach to events and to human interchange. The greater their awareness of what it is they are doing, the likelier it is that the meanings they create will confer on them the edge it takes to move forward with strength and to be part of a world they really want to be part of. In some sense, then, these strategies help students to be actors, not objects of everyone else's acting on them. Students often say that one or another immersion experience has "transformed" them. We as educators often call this metamorphosis "empowerment."

A quotation of Marcel Proust that has been increasingly cited during this past decade (heavily by travel companies, which is ironic) is one I used some years ago when colleagues and I published the NCHC monograph *Place as Text* about experiential learning. Proust said, "The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes but in having new eyes." The challenge of undertaking activities that might produce and develop those new eyes has been the work of my own professional life for more than thirty years. From that work I want to pull out a few principles for us to consider.

American higher education has for more than a century considered field experience a prime vehicle for what was initially called "broadening horizons." Study abroad was an early expression of this thrust, though it was generally practiced only in elite settings where students could afford to travel to distant countries. For most of the time I am referring to here, this travel took the shape

MAJORING IN THE MINOR: A CLOSER LOOK AT EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

of groups in guided tours and classes that looked very much like the ones they took at home, though perhaps taught in a language other than English. Outside class there were museums, cafés, rambles, to be sure. But the norm remained “acquisition” or “collecting impressions” as a means to broaden those horizons. The emphasis was less on seeing differently than on seeing more.

By the 1990’s a totally new kind of foreign study emerged with projects like the Peace Corps. Students in those programs lived and worked with foreign populations, usually those at economic levels far below what they were familiar with, eating odd food and sleeping in strange beds—or hammocks—in dark rooms. By and large the veterans of the Peace Corps I have known returned home with more knowledge, but also with different ways of seeing and a radically altered sense of what matters in human life. Extrapolating from the existential results of these kinds of immersion experiences, other projects took shape: VISTA, in which foreign territory in underserved urban areas or poor rural areas could be just another part of town, or another American town or farm community, where participants helped children learn to read, helped to build schools, introduced the printed word into the lives of entire populations. Most recently CityCorps, Teach for America, Jumpstart, and others have evolved, projects through which college students give one or more years transferring some of their learning to the daily life of those who have yet to learn and who thus might acquire skills that permit full participation in the economic and social life of their towns, cities, and country.

There has always been, in America and in many Western countries, the expectation that another kind of immersion is expected of anyone who wants to learn about science. Both field investigation outside the classroom and laboratory experience as part of science courses—expensive to equip and implement—have been staples of high school and college curricula, even for students not intending to become laboratory scientists. These are forms of experiential learning, though often even in these domains the experience itself has been attenuated: students have been expected to replicate experiments already documented, to verify in the field what scholars have already published and the students have already read in advance of taking to those fields and labs. The anomaly of using “canned experiments” in the context of disciplines of discovery has been the subject of both anguish and critical attention in higher education since the 1980s, and many changes have been initiated in scientific pedagogy to correct procedures that prevent understanding, excitement, and empowerment from occurring among students of science.

A final class of hands-on experience has for a couple of decades been increasingly evident in college curricula, namely workplace and what some call “real world” experience. These are marketed not so much to “broaden horizons” as to make students “more competitive.” Placements with a social service component are seen as opportunities to “give back” and as occasions to be socially responsible. Internships, volunteer commitments, and even sometimes salaried positions used as laboratories are formal components of courses that

ask students to examine connections, and disconnections, between theory and practice in the far less predictable environment of businesses, social organizations, and community programs. Presumably students acquire from this juxtaposition skills of concrete application that express or correct theory they have learned in class. But in these instances there too often is no apparatus for observation, analysis, self-reflection; no formal mechanism to promote understanding of the ramifications of experience in those practical laboratories that might **not** bear out the conclusions of theories studied on campus.

A great deal can be gained from all of the activities I have outlined here, even if they are undertaken and carried out in ways that might fall short of provoking change and deep understanding. It should be clear that I lean in the direction of constructing all laboratories as genuine experimental stations to foster consciousness of purpose and method, where students take on the responsibility of keeping accurate lab books, noting sequences of events and who is involved in them, naming (which often means creating a personal vocabulary to describe what they think they see) the elements of what they witness, analyzing their own characterization of what they see so that, like good scientists, they can ask themselves what evidence they have provided in their lab books to support whatever analytical conclusions they have come to. Finally I want to see in those books some evidence that students have sought to identify—in the way they themselves behaved or proceeded, or in what they reported as having seen—what led them to see and record things in the way they did.

Such lab books are a means of examining not only the objects/events/interactions seen but also the eyes that looked and the sensibility that reported on what was seen. This is self-reflection—not comfort-making, maybe, but essential. Looking, in other words, is only a first step. It's an important one. Noting is a second. Both together are a preliminary exercise that my colleagues and I who practice City as Text™ strategies call “mapping.” The full activity is a manifestation of observation exercises that is required for all the steps that follow from this preliminary mapping. The description, interpretation, and analysis that must come after this make possible the journey to understanding. And it is these next steps that are most often missing from what higher education has been able to mount as “experiential learning.”

My argument here is that seeing, even from the viewpoint of each of several disciplines, cannot produce understanding unless an act of synthesis—of integrating disparate and sometimes contradictory information—has taken place. If in a social science class students first examine the thinking of particular scholars, who structure their analytical findings in particular frameworks, and then move out to the streets or offices to observe activities that do not conform to theory, what are they asked to do with the disparities they think they have seen? What encourages them to examine their own way of looking to see if it has produced what they think they have witnessed? The best scientists must employ these self-reflective skills all the time, though even they can occasionally be

faulted for overlooking evidence that does not confirm their hypotheses. But I argue that all of us need to practice such self-reflection if we are ever to develop the “new eyes” Proust talks about.

A stunning example of the phenomenon I refer to here is the case of William Whyte’s investigation of the city that he ultimately published in a monumental work called, simply, *City*. He not only came out of a generation of social scientists who had concluded that people, if given half a chance, would avoid to their death the pressure of crowds and other people, but he himself shaped that generation and created that framework in his earlier theoretical research. Based on his conclusions, popular in the second half of the twentieth century, whole schools of urban planning, indeed whole neighborhood reconstruction efforts, evolved. Houses were torn down to make room for highways that bifurcated neighborhoods and then ended up destroying them. The planners and politicians were not sure why. Idiosyncratic and visionary thinkers like Jane Jacobs came along. For a couple of decades few took her seriously, though now she seems to have become The Urban Philosopher for a new century. She argued that people feel safer with lots of other folks around, that they seek out the presence of many—even too many—others. And her book *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* was prophetic in that she sought to convince us all that cities work when they feel like extensions of our living room: full of objects, other people, with a constant hum, perpetual motion and exchange of energies.

Whyte, who had begun in the older school of sociology in which less is more (give them separate parks and they will play, take away all traffic and they will thrive) heard Jacobs. He undertook a long-term study with graduate students at Columbia University as his assistants. For years they broke into small teams and pursued the exact kind of mapping exercises we have been using in NCHC City as Text™ exercises since 1976. What they mapped were specific areas of the built environment in New York City: the densely populated neighborhoods in Spanish Harlem, the chic business zones along Park Avenue. After many years and thousands of feet of film showing children at play and office personnel at lunch, they concluded something that surprised Whyte himself: kids congregate where there are other kids—that is, on their neighborhood streets—and play there. Even if their homemade baseball game, using a stick and a ball, interrupts the flow of traffic and threatens their lives, they prefer to play right there on their own streets (especially at intersections where traffic flow is the heaviest) than to retreat to a park unless the park itself is stuffed with others playing pick-up games.

And on the plazas outside expensive office buildings, people crowd to eat their picnic lunches—if there are others battling to find a perch in some tiny space where there are too few spots on the wall for all who want to hang out at lunch time. People rush into park areas where chairs can be moved to create new conversation clusters—something the French have known since their Revolution—rather than to “recreation areas” designed to provide ample space

between bodies and keep people away from one another. They even stop one another for a chat exactly at crowded intersections, where they block traffic and where conversation is difficult, but they stay there precisely to block and to chat.

Whyte's results were incontrovertible and, to him, shocking. He saw that to interpret his own data without fudging he needed, in effect, to scuttle a lot of his earlier decades of research and to construct an entirely new way of talking about urban space and urban renewal. He went on to include in the final publication additional observations about many places other than New York, but the impact of his extensive work where I live, in NYC, has been profound. No new tiny urban park is built without bunches of moveable chairs. There are now ordinances in place that provide "give backs" to developers such that they can build higher only if they provide public spaces where hundreds of workers can crowd to fight for sitting spots on the parapets of the plazas that provide a kind of apron in front of monolithic office buildings. Since I moved to New York it has changed remarkably and become usable and inviting in ways no one thought could happen in such a densely populated metropolitan area.

The point for me in this example is that Whyte began, very late in a well-published scholarly career, with the simple and in some ways primitive first steps that all experiential education needs to use. I know we all grow up with the admonition to "learn from experience," but we all know, probably by the time we are teenagers, that not many people do in fact learn from experience. Bigots are not bigoted because they have had a lot of experience with those they hate and want to exclude, but because no amount of experience or religious training has been able yet to dislodge from their closed minds the way they prefer to see the world. They are stuck, and cannot grow "new eyes." This behavior is extreme, though in today's world unfortunately not rare, but it exemplifies the worst effects of not being able to see old things in new ways, or maybe to see new things at all.

Why should this kind of experiential learning be a part of all education? Precisely because it helps explorers discover, it helps them develop a sense of agency, it accomplishes something advocated so eloquently by Parker Palmer: it helps students to "intersect their biography with that of the world." What we seek, all of us, are ways to reintegrate our thinking so that it does not divide us into "us and them" but instead connects us as participant observers in the same small world. We want an inventory of ways to create coherence. Out of the exclusionary cubbyholes that our disciplines appear to occupy because of how our institutions organize themselves administratively; out of the chaos that our world presents to us in embattled countries everywhere; out of the received knowledge that shifts and changes even as we acquire it for the first time, we must arrive at modes of thinking that help us make some sense out of conflicting viewpoints and that embolden us with an organizing principle for all the disorganized information out there.

There's another reason to bother with active learning. There's a new NCHC monograph coming out soon called *Shatter the Glassy Stare: Implementing Experiential Learning in Higher Education*. As you can guess from this title, the

MAJORING IN THE MINOR: A CLOSER LOOK AT EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

authors refer to a perception captured only from the front of the room. The “glassy stare” phenomenon is commonplace in the academy. Students bow their heads to take notes, lift faces bravely, and too often gaze with a glazed look at the speaker. It’s a phenomenon common in tour groups, seen from where the tour leader stands to tell his tale. All of us who experiment with experiential learning do so for the effect it has on deep understanding and transformative behaviors, but we also do it for the more immediate, maybe frankly self-ish reason that we want desperately to shatter the glassy stare.

In *Place as Text* I wrote about mapping, analysis, and self-reflection, and I concluded that “The process turns on making maps: newcomers need to chart a passage. When explorers see themselves charting their own routes, they come to see themselves as natives in a new land. They come, in fact, to feel that they have developed new eyes.”

Today I will add that explorers who see themselves as natives in a new land are engaged. In their innermost being they are involved and understand that everywhere they go, even to books they have read before or hometowns they thought they wanted to escape, they have what it takes to see more than they did before and to feel the power of being able to create their own new pathways in any setting.

This is not to say that field experience, service learning, or structured explorations should replace all other pedagogy. Quite the contrary. I would argue that it can enhance all other forms of teaching and learning by making all of it a “text” to be read, that is mapped, interpreted, analyzed, and understood reflectively. Lectures, though often too full of information for which students are not prepared, are important. They come at the wrong time. They should come after the reading, discussing, exploring. Sustained research is fundamental in higher education but could benefit from experience-based active learning, from conscious and active inquiry, as a prelude to scholarly inquiry.

Because people learn in many different ways, and because the mere accumulation of data, facts, and other people’s ideas does not constitute knowledge, whatever pedagogy helps students to understand what they read, perceive how they think, organize what they hear, and see what they look at should be part of a much larger whole that allows people to incorporate multiple lenses and multiple modes into their ways of knowing at every level. To be able to make this case has been important to me, and even more important has been the opportunity to see it flourish in the minds and lives of students and teachers over the past four decades.

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SARA E. QUAY AND AMY M. DAMICO

Cultural Studies as the Foundation for an Honors Program: Documenting Students' Academic and Personal Growth

SARA E. QUAY AND AMY M. DAMICO

ENDICOTT COLLEGE

"I will take the concepts I learned in this class with me for the rest of my life. I am no longer content to believe only what I am told."

—A first year Endicott Scholar

ABSTRACT

A new honors program based on the field of cultural studies rigorously combines theory and practice, resulting in significant academic and personal growth among participating honors students. Particular activities and assignments connect academic theories to real world experiences, including writing a 'shopping' paper, eating dinner at an Indian restaurant, conducting an ethnography, playing the Game of Life, and participating in a walking tour of Ground Zero. Pre- and post-test assessments, five qualitative surveys, and an end-of-the-year comprehensive portfolio are used to document student learning. A new honors journal publishes an essay by each student from the first year in the program. Key areas of growth are identified as students' ability to apply academic theories, be confident as students, comprehend difficult reading material, and write sound academic papers.

WHY CULTURAL STUDIES?

At our small comprehensive college, the creation of a new honors program provided the chance to consider what it means to educate honors students in the twenty-first century. What do today's honors students need to know, and what are they able to do? How can an honors program support these goals, particularly in the context of our college's unique mission? The vast majority of our students arrive on campus to pursue professional majors and participate in a series of academic internships. The new honors program was designed to exist

CULTURAL STUDIES AS THE FOUNDATION FOR AN HONORS PROGRAM

outside of these majors and experiences and, due to heavy requirements in many programs of study, to fulfill the general education requirements of students participating in the program. Therefore, the program was set up to explore the liberal arts while staying true to the mission of the college, which aims to “instill in students an understanding of and an appreciation for professional and liberal studies [and to put into action] the concept of applied learning” (www.endicott.edu). In order to be most meaningful to our students, the program was designed to help them connect the liberal and professional arts and to tie theory to practice outside the classroom.

The field of cultural studies became the focus of this design. Cultural studies is by its very nature interdisciplinary, drawing on theories from fields as diverse as English, philosophy, anthropology, sociology, psychology, and communications (Lindlof, n.d.). In fact, as Smith (2004) writes, by “its very nature, cultural analysis is always going to include in its project a questioning and investigation of the forms of disciplinary knowledge.” At the same time, cultural studies is about more than classroom learning. The field asks students to use the theories they study “to think critically about basic beliefs about how people and social institutions operate” (Stearns 2004) and to explain those beliefs through active observation and research. This unique juncture between theory and practice fits our college’s mission of applied learning, and from the outset we believed it would both academically challenge and personally interest our honors students. Furthermore, as Smith (2004) states, these “ways of exploring reality . . . are intellectually coherent and part of what’s necessary for today’s educated citizenry.”

THE ENDICOTT SCHOLARS PROGRAM

Using cultural studies as its foundation, the Endicott Scholars Honors Program was built around the following learning objectives: students will (1) develop the habit of intellectual curiosity; (2) understand the concepts of “culture” and “theory” from a variety of academic perspectives; (3) identify ways of thinking and knowing within academic and professional disciplines; (4) comprehend challenging readings in primary and secondary sources; (5) write academic papers that are intellectually sound and stylistically proficient; (6) serve as models of intellectual seriousness and courage; and (7) assume leadership roles in and out of class.

To meet these goals, the program requires students to complete a series of honors seminars throughout their undergraduate years. As freshmen, students complete a two-course sequence that introduces them to the field of cultural studies, *HON100 Honors Seminar I* and *HON150 Honors Seminar II*. These courses lay the groundwork of cultural studies by requiring students to read a wide range of academic articles within the field of cultural studies (see Appendix A). The foundational seminars provide students with the background in cultural theories that allows them to pursue the rigorous upper level HON350 seminars.

During the inaugural year of the Endicott Scholars program in 2006, students read and applied the ideas, theories, and concepts they were learning in a variety of academic assignments, including an ethnography, a textual analysis, a literature review, and a cultural response paper about September 11th (see Appendix B). The cohort participated in a range of out-of-class activities, including lunch with a campus guest speaker, dinner at a local Indian restaurant (where they practiced taking field notes for their ethnographies), and a trip to Ground Zero as part of a unit on September 11th. The trip to Ground Zero gave students a chance to apply what they had been reading and writing about all year to a real place and a real experience. They were able to reflect on their learning during the year and consider how their understanding of culture had changed.

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

The Endicott Scholars program was assessed at the end of its first year. Each of the seven program objectives was evaluated with at least one and sometime multiple outcome measures, including pre- and post-curriculum surveys of reading comprehension, terminology, and application; weekly on-line threaded discussions; and a comprehensive self-reflective portfolio based on all program objectives and student work from the entire year.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE 1: DEVELOP THE HABIT OF INTELLECTUAL CURIOSITY

The “habit of intellectual curiosity” refers to students’ ability to connect their classroom learning to their lived experience and their desire to ask questions about the world around them. This objective was assessed using a comprehensive portfolio that asked students to “Describe 2 concepts/readings/ideas from this course that you found especially interesting, that made you want to learn more, or that led you to think about the world around you differently. In a 3-4 page essay, describe each concept/reading/idea and demonstrate how it impacted you and your ways of thinking” (Appendix C).

Evidence that students had met this program objective was demonstrated in 100% of their portfolios. Students commented repeatedly that the material and activities of the course “opened their eyes” in new ways. Examples of student comments include the following:

“After a year of learning about culture, texts, and cultural work, I now have the hunger to learn more about everything.”

“[The concepts] made me recognize the reproduction of certain aspects of culture and made me question why these things are reproduced in certain cultures and not others . . . they impacted my way of thinking greatly and stretched the way I thought, the way I went about my problem solving and understanding, expanding my horizon of thinking in big ways.”

CULTURAL STUDIES AS THE FOUNDATION FOR AN HONORS PROGRAM

“The study of these theories from the honors program will be present in the back of my mind forever. I will be unconsciously examining every type of text I come across whether it be a store I am shopping at or a movie I am watching. This class has truly helped me to become more aware of my surroundings.”

LEARNING OBJECTIVE 2: UNDERSTAND THE CONCEPTS OF “CULTURE” AND “THEORY” FROM A VARIETY OF ACADEMIC PERSPECTIVES

“Theory” and “culture” are central to the discipline of cultural studies and students explored many types of theories and many definitions of culture throughout the year. This program objective was assessed through the reflective portfolio, which asked them to “Choose two of those theories and write a 3-4 page essay that: 1. summarizes, in your own words, the main ideas of each theory; 2. describes how each theory can be used to understand culture; and 3. compares and contrasts what happens when a similar cultural text is read through the lens of each theory” (Appendix C).

One hundred percent of Endicott Scholars indicated that HON100 and HON150 expanded their understanding of culture and theory:

“I came to see that there is much more to culture than what the dictionary says. I was encouraged to look at the world from many different points of view, and I learned that there is more than one way to read an aspect of culture. In everything I did and saw, it was like experiencing it through the new eyes I gained from the Scholars Program.”

“I was able to apply the cultural theories and concepts that we learned about in class to practically everything around me . . . I feel it is worth mentioning that I will be able to apply cultural theories and concepts as I begin my clinical next year. I will be able to observe and participate in the micro-cultures of nursing throughout a hospital.”

Assessment of this objective also occurred through a questionnaire given after the spring trip to Ground Zero. In a post-trip reflection, students were asked to imagine taking the trip to Ground Zero a year earlier, before they had been introduced to cultural studies, and then to answer the question “How was your experience of NYC impacted by the ideas you have learned this year?” Students responded as follows:

“I always knew that the twin towers symbolized the wealth and power of America, but knowing more about texts and ideologies helped me to understand exactly why they were targeted and how great an impact 9/11 has had on America.”

“[If I had gone to NYC before this class]I would definitely have not examined what I was seeing critically. I would have accepted what

was in front of me and probably left NYC with the same amount of understanding as I had when I came. But through all the concepts [we studied] I was able to see how culture has changed and think back to how NY must have been before 9/11."

"Without this class, this tour would have been a visit to a place where something devastating happened. But because we've discussed many aspects of cultural theory I was interested in everything—from the economic impact of selling WTC memorabilia, which could be some individual's principle income, to what the role of leaving some rubble and pieces in their original form since the attacks says about what we need to hold on to."

LEARNING OBJECTIVE 3: IDENTIFY WAYS OF THINKING AND KNOWING WITHIN ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL DISCIPLINES

Students were expected to learn about a wide range of academic and professional disciplines throughout the year, and the selected readings for the course addressed content relevant to the theories and practices in many fields of study. Specific assignments—including the ethnography, textual analysis, cultural response paper, and a literature review—were completed during the foundational sequence, addressing the multidisciplinary theories and practices. All of the Endicott Scholars completed the assignments, and thorough assessments of their work indicated that students were in tune with the course content.

As the year progressed, students demonstrated deeper understandings of course material. The first year's focus on some of the theories used in cultural studies (such as neo-Marxist theory, feminism, and cultural imperialism) as well as skills in research practice (such as interviews, observational fieldwork, and library research) provided students with different vantage points from which to think about their individual programs of study. In class discussion, papers, and on-line threaded discussions, students demonstrated a broader application of course terminology and concepts as was most evident in the progression of on-line discussion contributions by each student. Initially, student responses to the assigned readings contained phrases such as "I'm not sure if I'm right," "I was a little confused about what [the author] was saying," or "I didn't get it," indicating the students' lack of confidence in their understanding of the material. As students made their way into the first semester of the course, this discourse began to change as students wrote posts that spoke specifically to the content of the reading and the authors' perspectives. Students also began to craft responses that connected the material being read and discussed in class to their individual majors and other classes.

In the second semester, students evidently were able to apply the knowledge gained in the first-year sequence of honors seminars to their other classes, activities, and majors. As a nursing major described, "I was able to apply the

CULTURAL STUDIES AS THE FOUNDATION FOR AN HONORS PROGRAM

cultural theories and concepts that we learned about in class to practically everything around me. . . . I feel it is worth mentioning that I will be able to apply cultural theories and concepts as I begin my clinical next year. I will be able to observe and participate in the micro-cultures of nursing throughout a hospital." Another student wrote, "I feel that second semester . . . was a major turning point for me. I began to apply all the concepts I had learned previously, I discovered and worked towards good study habits, and I felt more comfortable in everything I was doing."

LEARNING OBJECTIVE 4: COMPREHEND CHALLENGING READINGS IN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SOURCES

Students were required to read assignments from a variety of academic disciplines, including anthropology, communications, literary studies, philosophy, and sociology (Appendix A). This program objective was assessed through both a pre- and post-test survey of reading comprehension and the first-year portfolio. The pre- and post-test survey asked students to evaluate their understanding of one of the most difficult and important readings of the course, Lindlof's essay "Cultural Studies." Specifically, students were asked: "On a scale from 1-5, how well did you understand this reading?" A score of 1 meant "I did not understand this reading at all" while a score of 5 meant "I understood this reading very well." Students completed the survey after they read the essay for the first time in the fall, and then again at the end of the spring semester.

On the pre- and post-test assessment of reading comprehension, all but one of the Endicott Scholars recorded increased understanding of Lindlof's essay. In September the majority of the students rated themselves a 3 while in May the most common rating was a 5. During the May classroom session, when students were asked to revisit Lindlof and assess their comprehension, a number of students commented aloud about how well they understood the main points of the essay. Several students noted on the written comprehension assessment that they could see how much they had learned over the year. One stated, "I feel like this is our final exam. Everything we learned is in here."

This objective was also assessed through the reflective portfolio which asked students to "Look back at the readings you were asked to complete as an Endicott Scholar this year. In a 1-2 page essay, describe your growth as a reader this year. Compare and contrast your confidence and comprehension from September to May. Be specific. Feel free to include quotes of passages from readings that exemplify change in your understanding, note specific readings that marked turning points in your reading, or quote your own gullnet posts. Identify 1-2 ways you can challenge yourself to be a better reader in the future." Students reflected in their portfolios on the change in reading comprehension between September and May:

“From September to May, my confidence as a reader went from thinking I was going to flunk the course because I would never understand what we were reading, to being so glad that I could grasp more than I had before and wanting to add to the knowledge gained from the reading.”

“My comprehension of the material has increased so much since this course started, and as a result I am more confident in all of my work, including gullnet posts and papers. I am now able to discern difficult readings with ease compared to nine months ago.”

“Most of all, this class helped me to wholly understand complex readings and subjects.”

“Overall, I feel that my reading skills have greatly improved through completing such challenging assignments.”

LEARNING OBJECTIVE 5: WRITE ACADEMIC PAPERS THAT ARE INTELLECTUALLY SOUND AND STYLISTICALLY PROFICIENT

Endicott Scholars were asked to develop their skills as writers over the course of the year. This objective was assessed through the self-reflective portfolio and through the Endicott Scholars publication, *Exploring Culture*. In the portfolio students were asked to “Choose three papers you wrote this year and in a 2-3-page essay describe how each registers your growth as 1. a student and 2. a writer. These papers do not have to be your best. Rather, they should mark turning points in your understanding of yourself as a learner and as a writer. Be specific in your reflections: what was it like to write each essay and how did it change you? At least one of the papers should be from the first semester.”

One hundred percent of the students in the program thought they had improved their writing skills. For instance, students wrote in their reflective portfolio:

“When I looked back on the work that I accomplished in the beginning of the year compared to what I am completing now, I was shocked. My papers showed growth in analyzing and organizational skills. They now flow smoother and make points that display critical thinking.”

“I am thrilled by the improvement in my writing over the course of this year. I know I will carry the skills and new understanding of myself as a writer, throughout my writing for the rest of my time here at Endicott and beyond.”

Students were also asked to select the written assignment they had completed during the year that they felt best reflected this objective. The essays

CULTURAL STUDIES AS THE FOUNDATION FOR AN HONORS PROGRAM

were published in a newly established journal, *Exploring Culture*, which published writing by Endicott Scholars.

Inclusion of the essay in the journal documented the best of their academic writing throughout the year.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE 6: SERVE AS MODELS OF INTELLECTUAL SERIOUSNESS AND COURAGE

Participants in the Endicott Scholars program are also expected to be models of academic excellence on the college campus. Such excellence is defined by the required 3.5 GPA as well as their commitment to learning and their willingness to take intellectual risks.

Seventy-nine percent of the students in the first year of the program maintained the required 3.5 GPA. While this percentage was lower than anticipated, it also reflects the academic challenge of participating in an honors program.

In the self-reflective portfolio students were asked to “Describe 2 concepts/readings/ideas from this course that you found especially interesting—that made you want to learn more or led you to think about the world around you differently. In a 3-4 page essay, describe each concept/reading/idea and demonstrate how it impacted you and your ways of thinking.” Responses included the following:

“Looking back at all that I have learned this year in the Endicott Scholars Program, I have discovered one consistent finding: I have become a much more confident student.”

“The honors program has prepared me in so many ways for the challenges I will face as I move through my college career.”

LEARNING OBJECTIVE 7: ASSUME LEADERSHIP ROLES IN AND OUT OF CLASS

Finally, Endicott Scholars are expected to be engaged in the college community, not only in academics but in other areas of campus life. Students were surveyed at the end of the first year of the program to assess the types of leadership roles they had assumed and to determine what percentage of them were participating in such activities.

Eighty-nine percent of first-year students participated in at least one leadership role outside of class. Examples of such roles included resident assistant, student activities board member, peer mentor, athlete, student nursing association member, community service volunteer, oratory society participant, model United Nations participant, chorus member, and admissions volunteer.

CHALLENGES

As with the implementation of any new program, a number of challenges arose during the first year of the Endicott Scholars Program and in teaching the HON100, HON150 sequence for the first time. For example, students must maintain at 3.5 GPA throughout their tenure in the program. If they don't maintain this average, they have a one-semester grace period to raise their grades before they are dismissed. At the end of the first semester, 68% of students had met this requirement and 32% had to use their one-semester grace period to remain in the program. By the end of the first year, 79% of students had met the required GPA. In the program's second year, two changes were implemented to improve these percentages. First, the initial selection process whereby students are invited to apply to the program was changed. Instead of inviting accepted students who earned over a certain SAT score to apply, a larger pool of accepted student admissions files was reviewed to ensure that those who were invited to apply to the program had the highest possibilities of being accepted. Second, during the midpoint of the semester, students in the second year of the Scholars program were requested to check in with all their professors and obtain an estimate of their class grades so that students who potentially were in danger of not making the required GPA could be identified with enough time to raise grades.

As professors teaching the first-year sequence, we initially were a little too ambitious in our syllabus. We had not allowed enough time for students to process, think about, and apply some of the theoretical concepts to which we were introducing them. We had to make some adjustments as we progressed through the course, and in the following year's syllabus we built in more time for working with and discussing challenging concepts and readings. We also were not initially aware of just how frustrated students were with their first paper grades, which were mostly Cs. Upon reflection we realized that, because students were engaged in the intellectual work of struggling to make sense of and apply some theoretical concepts that were new to them, their paper writing efforts were solely focused in this direction. As a result, the organization, sentence structure, and synthesis of ideas in their first papers were extremely weak. To confront this issue directly, we altered the syllabus to talk more about the process of writing and built some peer-criticism days into the semester. In the second year, we kept the practice of dedicating time to teaching writing and working with drafts and added a shorter first paper that was not worth a high percentage of their grade to introduce students to the kinds of papers expected in the seminar. At the end of the first year, we also asked for feedback on the program in general and used this to fine tune the class for the next year.

CONCLUSION

A newly developed honors program chose the field of cultural studies as its foundation based on the interdisciplinary nature of the discipline and its ability

CULTURAL STUDIES AS THE FOUNDATION FOR AN HONORS PROGRAM

to challenge students to connect theory to practice. Through a thorough program assessment at the end of the first year, the cultural studies curriculum succeeded in meeting the program's six learning outcomes. Students demonstrated increased skills not only as readers and writers but as able readers of cultural texts. Their heightened understanding, observation, and inquiry into the world around them were repeatedly evident in their papers and reflective portfolios as well as in their growth as individuals and scholars. Although we encountered a few challenges in the program's first year, we have made some tailored adjustments to better the program as it becomes more integrated into our College. We are looking forward to developing it further as the years progress.

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APPENDIX A

SAMPLE CULTURAL STUDIES READINGS

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APPENDIX B

SAMPLE CULTURAL STUDIES ASSIGNMENTS

Text Analysis Paper

We have spent some time exploring what it means to read a “text,” including the ways in which texts influence people to think and act in certain ways. We have also discussed how texts can be sites of struggle over meaning, or places where different cultural beliefs compete to be heard. In this assignment you will be a detective in search of meanings in a cultural text of your choosing. Your first task is to select a cultural text from the list provided. Next, you will begin to interpret the text, describing specific ways in which the text influences people’s beliefs. In doing so, you will need to discuss ways in which the text is a site of struggle for competing meanings. What are those meanings? What elements in the text record their presence? Which meaning is dominant? How does that dominance reflect cultural beliefs, including tensions, in society more generally? Throughout this paper, you must use the language of semiotics and ideology as discussed and applied in class.

Shopping Paper

This assignment invites you to explore the “culture” of three different stores: Old Navy, The Gap, and The Banana Republic. Please visit each of these establishments and try on (as if you were considering to purchase) a pair of khaki pants and a button down shirt. While in each store you will want to note its culture: consider the layout, the lighting, the presentation of clothing and other items, the prices, the changing rooms, the staff, the assistance offered to you or asked for, etc. Keep track of your experience looking for and trying on clothes in each store. Note any similarities and differences. Consider how these aspects of the stores’ “cultures” can be interpreted using the concepts discussed in class and in the readings. Please also complete some research on these places of business—look at their websites and conduct a library search to see what has been written about them in professional and academic publications. Throughout this paper, you must use the language of semiotics and ideology as discussed and applied in class. In a 5-7 page paper compare and contrast the cultures of each store, drawing upon your experiences and observations to support your main points. Use outside research to contextualize your findings and summary descriptions. In your analysis of Old Navy, The Gap, and The Banana Republic, be sure to utilize concepts and vernacular discussed in the course readings and class discussion. You may use first person voice to write this paper, but the tone should be formal and all outside research should be appropriately documented using APA style.

Ethnography Paper

Please complete an ethnographic, cultural observation and write up an 8-10 page analysis of the observation using critical discourse and tying in course

SARA E. QUAY AND AMY M. DAMICO

content and a brief (3 pages) personal reflection about how this course has influenced the way you now view the cultural event. A cultural observation should be made of some common occurrence in our society (examples: a visit to McDonalds, observation of the prom dress department at a department store, observation of how listening stations are used at a music store, a visit to an arcade, club, movie theater, book group, etc.) You may use direct observation (observing and taking notes without any interaction) or participant observation (observing and taking notes while you participate in the event or activity). Both observation methods will be reviewed in class. You should also complete at least one in-depth interview with a participant who frequents your location. Interviewing methodology will be reviewed in class. You must have your site approved by us.

APPENDIX C: REFLECTIVE PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT

Learning Objectives 1 & 3

Develop the habit of intellectual curiosity

Identify ways of thinking and knowing within academic and professional disciplines

Assessment: Describe 2 concepts/readings/ideas from this course that you found especially interesting—that made you want to learn more or led you to think about the world around you differently. In a 3-4 page essay, describe each concept/reading/idea and demonstrate how it impacted you and your ways of thinking. (30%)

Learning Objectives 2 & 6

Understand the concepts of “culture” and “theory” from a variety of academic perspectives

Serve as models of intellectual seriousness and courage

Assessment: Throughout the year, we have read many different theories about culture and have applied these theories to different texts. Choose two of those theories and write a 3-4 essay that: 1. summarizes, in your own words, the main ideas of each theory; 2. describes how each theory can be used to understand culture; and 3. compares and contrasts what happens when a similar cultural text is read through the lens of each theory. (30%)

Learning Objective 4

Comprehend challenging readings in primary and secondary sources

Assessment: Look back at the readings you were asked to complete as an Endicott Scholar this year. Re-read Lindlof’s “Cultural Studies” essay, and an additional essay that you found particular challenging. Consider what aspects of the essay you understand at the end of the year. In a 1-2 page essay, describe your growth as a reader this year. Compare and contrast your confidence and comprehension from September to May. Identify 1-2 ways you can challenge yourself to be a better reader in the future. (10%)

Learning Objective 5

Write academic papers that are intellectually sound and stylistically proficient

Assessment: Choose three papers you wrote this year and in a 3-page essay describe how each registers your growth as 1. a student and 2. a writer. These papers do not have to be your best. Rather, they should be turning points in your understanding of yourself as a learner and as a writer. Feel free to draw on

the in-class writing you did as evidence of your growth. At least one of the papers should be from the first semester. (20%)

Learning Objective 7

Assume leadership roles in and out of class

Assessment: Thinking back on your transition to college, it is important to note how you created a place for yourself in the Endicott community. In a 1-2 page essay, tell the story of your transition to Endicott and how you have built connections. Pay particular attention to leadership roles you have taken on this year—*through in-class contributions and out-of-class activities*—and set 2-3 goals around leadership for next year. (10%)

INNOVATIVE COURSES

KATERYNA A. R. SCHRAY

Literary Ornithology: Bird-Watching Across Academic Disciplines with Honors Students

KATERYNA A. R. SCHRAY

MARSHALL UNIVERSITY

As professors of literature, we have a fairly good chance of engaging our students when we teach Samuel Taylor Coleridge's "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner." True, the text can seem daunting on a first read, but who can resist a moody if not downright creepy ghost story told by the survivor of a nightmarish ordeal to a detained and gradually mesmerized wedding guest? The story has an intriguing psychological component in the progressive isolation of its main narrator, strong theological references, and vivid tactile images. And it has a bird in it, an albatross, the image of which has given rise to the well known expression "an albatross around one's neck." Similarly, John Keats's "Ode to a Nightingale," a beautiful poem that practically embraces the readers with its lyricism and commandeers them with its precision and elegance, is a relatively easy sell to undergraduates. Both of these poems use a bird to reflect some sort of journey of the mind, and while these works are inviting texts on their own, their appeal is enhanced when the reader knows something about the bird at the center of the verse. This appeal is even stronger in poems and literary periods that do not appear quite as immediately attractive to students, such as the longer Middle English debate poem "The Owl and the Nightingale," an entertaining and spirited argument between two species as to which better serves humanity. Or, to move back a few centuries, the Old English poem "The Phoenix," which students tend to find too dry or "philosophical" (they mean theological), or, to move ahead to a more recent era, Edward Thomas's "The Owl," a poem which remains cryptic to students unfamiliar with its World War I milieu. Even Emily Dickinson's "Poem 1463," almost universally acknowledged as a description of a hummingbird, becomes more appealing when the powerful images are reinforced by scientific observation and biological reality. This reinforcement is what we set out to do in our interdisciplinary team-taught honors seminar at Marshall University, playfully entitled "Literary Ornithology."

COURSE CONTEXT

The scientific consensus is that 9,702 bird species live on our planet, just under one tenth of that number on the North American continent; quite a few of these birds have made their way into our literature and culture, appearing in early texts in both practical and metaphoric capacities. The vast majority of these poems can certainly be appreciated without any further knowledge about the birds, but having that knowledge makes the reading experience all the more satisfying and, for lack of a better word, relevant, for our students. The Marshall University Honors Program provided an ideal opportunity to read poems and stories about birds in the spirit of scientific inquiry and in the context of cultural perceptions; like other programs described in *Honors in Practice*, the Marshall University Honors Program is built on team-taught interdisciplinary seminars. Bird-watching is an educational pastime that lends itself ideally to a multi-disciplinary approach; in addition to learning about the many species of birds in our immediate area (representing seventeen of the twenty-one orders in North America; there are twenty-eight orders world-wide), we were also able to observe how birds function as a barometer of an environment's general health. We then read works of literature describing birds in light of our own experiences and measured their literary portrayals against our scientific observations. We looked for birds in literary texts and cultural icons as well as in the field.

Two poems serve as ideal examples of our approach, Walt Whitman's "The Dalliance of the Eagles" (1880) and, on a more complex level, Richard Wilbur's "The Writer" (1976). Whitman's poem is a flurry of activity, punctuated by present participles (the number of *-ing* words is practically overwhelming). Whitman readers will immediately recognize the familiar features of a Whitman poem, notably the extended lines of blank verse and the absence of a main verb. Literary critics will note the poem's use of alliteration and vivid imagery. However, Whitman's accomplishment becomes even more apparent when the bird activity he describes is taken into account; indeed, "The Dalliance of the Eagles" is a beautifully accurate description of eagle courtship. Prior to the actual mating, eagles engage in a dramatic aerial display, locking talons and plummeting to earth in a stunning free fall, an action that naturalists describe as cartwheeling (Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge). Appealing to the reader's auditory sense, Whitman's repetition of key consonants emphasizes the noisy action of this airborne courtship, with the alliteration of a hard "c" (sound /k/) drawing attention to its magnificently violent nature—"The *clinch-
ing interlocking* claws, a *living, fierce, gyrating* wheel" (l. 4, my emphasis)—while the present participles (there are sixteen of them in the ten-line poem) convey the circular motion of the courting pair "in tumbling turning clustering loops" (l. 6). As the eagles fall toward the ground, Whitman repeats his alliterative force to create "a moment's lull" (l. 7), relying on nasal and liquid phonemes to still the action: "A motionless still balance in the air" (l. 8). While a good close reading will almost certainly take into account Whitman's attention to both phonology and morphology in his crafting of this poem, the work

takes on added appeal when students recognize the close relationship between the words Whitman writes as a poet and the scientific reality of what he describes with those words.

This approach is even more enlightening for Richard Wilbur's beautiful poem "The Writer" (1976), in which a father listens as his daughter writes in her room and ponders the challenges that await her as she grows up. He recalls the day when a starling struggled to find its way out of the house. As with the Whitman poem, a literature teacher will find much to offer students: the poem contains clever similes, comparing the sounds of a typewriter to "a chain hauled over a gunwale" (l. 6), and powerful metaphors, "the stuff/ Of her life is a great cargo, and some of it heavy" (ll. 7–8). The speaker of the poem, however, rejects these poetic devices himself and continues by describing the "dazed starling/ Which was trapped in that very room, two years ago" (ll. 16–17). The starling becomes a tender image of the child leaving home as it batters against the glass before finally "clearing the sill of the world" (l. 30), yet Wilbur could not have picked a hardier bird for his poem. Starlings are notoriously aggressive birds, taking nests from other species and leaving those nests unusable once their young have fledged. Although they can be seen just about anywhere in the United States, they are not native birds. In an effort to bring all of the songbirds mentioned in Shakespeare's works to America, Eugene Scheiffelin brought one hundred starlings from England to New York City in 1890–91 and released them in Central Park. Sixteen pairs survived the first two winters. By 1930, the starling population extended to the Mississippi River, by 1940 past the Rocky Mountains, and by 1970 well into Alaska (Cabe). While Wilbur's poem indicates a father's natural concern for his daughter, the central image of the poem—a small bird that takes on larger species and quickly dominates a continent—can hardly be seen as fragile.

SETTING UP THE SEMESTER

We have taught "Literary Ornithology" twice now, both times during the fall semester. To accommodate field trips and other class activities, we met once a week for two and a half hours; in order to maintain a sense of the seminar during the week, both faculty and students posted reflections, announcements, and questions to an email list established specifically for this class. In addition to staying in contact throughout the week, this email list quickly became an opportunity for ongoing dialogue, as will be demonstrated below.

Our first two seminar meetings were devoted to setting up the semester's work. To begin building a sense of community, we asked students to free-write about and then share with the class their most interesting bird encounters (these ranged from tender memories of watching bluebirds fledge to entertaining accounts of being attacked by angry geese). We showed our students a fifty-slide PowerPoint presentation which they jokingly dubbed an "Avian I. Q. Test" (Appendix A): the first ten slides showed birds that most Americans east of the Rocky Mountains can see almost daily; slides 11–17 showed birds that most

LITERARY ORNITHOLOGY

people recognize; slides 18–40 showed birds we expected to see on our three field visits; slides 41–50 showed birds in popular culture and national marketing campaigns. The slides provided ample opportunity to point out the characteristics of birds most useful in identification (eye bars, beak shape, etc.). To round out the genres, we also asked students to identify the source of two literary passages that draw heavily on bird references, one from William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, the other from J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit*. With this introduction, the students' first challenge was to select a field guide and learn how to wield binoculars, neither of which is an easy task.

Before beginning our field visits, which would keep us out of the classroom for three weeks, we previewed the first two major assignments for the seminar (described below) and, to give the course a sense of literary depth, discussed three works: Ovid's "Story of Phoebus and Coronis," Geoffrey Chaucer's "The Manciple's Tale," and Robert Olen Butler's "Jealous Husband Returns in Form of Parrot." The first two works are clearly related: Chaucer retells Ovid's cautionary tale of a talking crow that reveals a woman's infidelity to her husband who, in a fit of jealousy, kills her. On the surface, Butler's modern short story, the title of which provides a good summary, appears to have little in common with these two canonical works, but, in the context of our honors seminar, it soon became apparent that all three works address the complexity of cross-cultural and cross-gender communication.

FIELD TRIPS: LOGISTICS AND REACTIONS

"Literary Ornithology" was about bird-watching in the broadest sense of the term. As expected, we took our students on bird-watching expeditions and visited three natural sites within easy driving distance from our campus: an urban park, a man-made lake, and a wetlands mitigation project. These sites were selected to reflect a modest but manageable range of natural habitats, and the field trips were scheduled at the beginning of the semester to catch the last of the migrations.

The first field visit was to Ritter Park, a few miles from campus; this popular urban park runs the length of the southwest section of Huntington, West Virginia, bordered by houses on the north side and a hill on the south side with Four Pole Creek running east to west. Despite the constant drizzle on this field trip during both semesters, our students' reactions were positive and set the tone for the grander adventures to come. One student wrote about the validating experience of correctly identifying a bird:

There was a bit of excitement for me at the beginning of the trip because I first noticed the Nuthatch that was hopping down the side of the tree. I remembered what Professor Van Kirk had just said in the classroom about the Nuthatch being the only bird to go headfirst down a tree. So when I saw a bird doing exactly that, I thought that it might be one, and Professor Van Kirk confirmed my guess.

KATERYNA A. R. SCHRAY

Both semesters only one student in a class of fifteen came to the class with any experience (or, for that matter, interest) in bird-watching. This next reflection typifies the experience of a new birder:

Before this class started I had no experience watching birds and did not care about it, really. I took this class not realizing that we would actually be watching birds, so when we were told we would be, I was surprised. At first I did not like the idea because I have no idea what I am doing, but after watching at our campus spot and going to Ritter Park I am really growing to like it. I find myself noticing birds flying around no matter where I am. I listen more closely when I hear them. This class already has opened my eyes to something I had never considered before.

The highly interactive nature of the class, which required students to huddle together under a picnic shelter at one point, resulted in a supportive learning environment where the students easily shared their concerns about the course. One student posted this first reflection (note the salutation after only the third class meeting), the last sentence of which was echoed by everyone in the seminar:

Dear friends, I must admit that tramping around in the rain is not usually my cup of tea, but I did enjoy our experience in the park. . . . I'm still feeling pretty unsure of my ability to identify anything that is not common, but my abilities are getting better with practice. I am definitely looking forward to our next field visit.

The second field trip was to Beech Fork Lake, where we were able to spot birds from two large pontoon boats. Beech Fork Lake is a man-made lake approximately ten miles from campus. During both semesters, some good-natured rivalry developed between the two boats, which ranged from racing to the observation destinations to competing for the coveted title of "party barge." Beech Fork Lake was perhaps our most memorable trip during our first run of this seminar because we were able to observe a Bald Eagle. As we were leaving the marina, boaters coming ashore claimed to have seen a Bald Eagle an hour earlier. Their report raised expectations but still sounded too good to be true. It wasn't, and most of us stood breathless as we watched a Bald Eagle circle overhead for the better part of fifteen minutes. In the words of one student,

Out of all of the species that we were able to see, the one that had the most impact on me was the Bald Eagle. All of my life I had heard about how rare they were and I had understood that they were only really found in places like Alaska or other extreme wildernesses . . . But then, there it was, just as majestic as I had imagined. I could not take my eyes off him and I found myself following his flight until he was out of sight. It was definitely an experience that I will remember for the rest of my life.

LITERARY ORNITHOLOGY

Our students' comments moved from purely descriptive to more contemplative:

Who would have thought that seeing a single bird could cause such great joy? . . . The Bald Eagle looked every bit the striking national symbol it is, with its brilliant white head and tail flanking its darker brown body. As I watched it soar through the air, I was overwhelmed by the majesty and grace with which it moved. Yet, this was no pretty-boy bird. The Bald Eagle's wings flapped with immense power and determination . . . I understood, as I watched the Bald Eagle, why it had been chosen as our national bird. It exhibited many qualities that one would hope our nation exhibits.

All of the students posted their reactions to this unexpected sighting in exuberant terms:

I have talked on and on about our Beech Fork trip to everyone I meet, chattering away like a giddy five-year-old . . . But I knew the trip merited such excitement when I even impressed my cool, disinterested fifteen-year-old brother.

On this trip, we also got prolonged looks at a Belted Kingfisher and a Great Blue Heron (which many of our students claimed looked prehistoric), and spotted Goldfinches, Wood Ducks, Killdeer, and Turkey Vultures. As we had hoped, our students' written reflections became more specific and substantial. One student described our sighting of the Belted Kingfisher in colorful prose:

We pulled a little closer to his stately perch in the pontoon boat, and he cockily stood his ground, just daring us to frighten him away . . . With his bright blue crown slipped over his eyes, he looks at the world in style. He wore his royal blue cape jauntily fastened under a snowy white muff . . . He finally did fly away, but only because he was good and ready.

By this second field trip, the weekly email reflections made it clear that the class activities were generating a supportive academic environment and the students were building good working relationships; this would become important later in the semester as they began their work on group presentations. Emails sent to the list, while generally substantial in content, good-naturedly lamented the weather or terrain or mosquitoes and often opened with such friendly salutations as "Hola mi amigos" and "Hey gang" and ended with such sentiments as "Have a Great Week."

Our third trip was to Green Bottom, a wetlands remediation project of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, located along the Ohio River about twenty miles east of Huntington. On this trip, we observed an American Kestrel, a Red-Tailed Hawk, Double-Crested Cormorants, Catbirds, Red-Winged Blackbirds, and several species of woodpeckers. The most impressive bird of this field visit during our first run of the seminar was an Osprey that flew in from the distance and

hovered over the swamp for several minutes before leaving the area. On that same trip, we also observed a Great Blue Heron:

One of the most exciting sightings for me was witnessing a Great Blue Heron's sudden flight in front of us when we surprised it on the muddiest part of the walk—the part when I started believing that the professors' wading boots were actually necessary instead of just another part of their bird watchers' fashion ensemble. We were straining our eyes and focusing our binoculars on a woodpecker that instantly became tiny when the heron appeared. This trip especially excited me because I had the opportunity to add the Osprey to my life list . . . I could feel power emanating from the bird as it masterfully flew over the water, and I almost pitied the first fish it spotted, though I would have been happy to see it catch one.

At one point on the Green Bottom trip it became clear that a field we had to cross was still soggy from a recent hurricane's remnant-induced flood, and we gave our students the option of circling back to the starting point or continuing on the muddy trail. The group split up fairly evenly and we were surprised by which of our students chose the more arduous route. One of these students reflected on her experience:

I did not have as much enthusiasm for yesterday's trip as for the last, after being told that it was necessary to wear clothes and shoes we didn't care about. Little red flags started to shoot up, as I am not a real outdoorsy sort of person. I figured if I was going to get that dirty, it should at least be worth it. Had someone told me that I would be one of the few that went through all the mud and water, I never would have believed it. Not for just a few birds! But I did, and it was great! I'll admit I was afraid of falling, and the first oozing slime that entered my shoe definitely elicited a sharp cry of horror. That's what made it great, though. I was totally out of my element, but I was seeing all kinds of interesting birds . . . It's really silly, but I left my mud-caked sneakers out on my stoop last night just so everyone could see.

By this final excursion, students were pointing out birds from the road; one student wrote in her reflection:

Of course on the way home, our minds were still on what we had just been doing. Calls of 'There's a bird,' 'A flock just flew by,' and 'Canada geese to your right' informed the rest of the car of what we were seeing.

We were especially pleased with the immediate rewards of the field visits, reflected in such comments as "I'm sorry that our field trips have ended—it was so nice to be out of the traditional classroom and doing something new and interesting"; "Even a bad [rainy] day in the field beats an ordinary day in the

classroom”; “not only do we have the added bonus of seeing birds that live in more rural areas, but we also have a chance of falling into a lake! That’s always a good time in my book”; and “This class has helped me to become more observant of the things around me that I take for granted.” Because of the field trips, a once-a-week class made the most sense, but we were concerned about waiting a week between classes; posting email reflections on each field trip (rather than turning in weekly essays to the professors) maintained an engaging dialogue throughout the week.

BIRD WATCHING IN A LITERARY AND CULTURAL SENSE

Our field adventures translated well back into the classroom; for one thing, we had a bonded group of students who had trekked through mud and rain together now reading poems and stories about birds. In their weekly posts, some of our students commented on the healthy group dynamics:

Ok, yeah, it can’t all be field visits and boating, but the experiences we had in the field and those relationships we formed with others will carry over into the classroom and help stimulate our thoughts there.

The tangible field experiences became a fitting preparation for the rest of the course as we invited our students to go bird-watching in the texts and cultural artifacts of several nations and many different traditions, beginning with classical literature and ending with modern popular culture(s).

Students completed five major assignments over the course of the semester, beginning with a scientific consideration of birds and then moving to literature, art, music, film, and popular culture, finishing up the semester with a creative writing assignment. With class time devoted to field visits, students were working outside of class on their first writing assignment: a field study of the population, habitat, and habits of a selected bird species on Marshall University’s campus. Working in small groups, students selected a site on campus, worked individually to obtain detailed information about a bird species of their choosing through regular observation, and then reconciled their findings with published articles in professional scientific journals. In addition to posting their field trip reflections, students also used our email list to alert one another to bird sightings on campus relevant to our field studies:

By the way, for those having cardinal problems: I spotted a young male this morning in the bush on the corner of the science building and Morrow (near 3rd Avenue). I saw him about a week and a half ago with an adult male near the other corner of the science building . . . I suppose he may be a she, but he’s small and there’s a lot of red on him (as if he’s changing from being a brown youngster to an adult male). I heard him before I saw him—he has a short, high chirp. Hope anyone looking for him is able to find him, he seems to be a resident.

The second assignment was a class presentation with a partner, a literary analysis of a work or works about birds selected from our anthology, *Birds in the Hand* (2004); this assignment followed several weeks of class discussion on well known poems and stories about birds, including Keats's "Ode to a Nightingale" and Sarah Orne Jewett's "A White Heron." To offer an example, one team explored how eagles are portrayed in Native American poetry, focusing on works by Sherman Alexie and Joy Harjo. The third assignment, also a team presentation, was an analysis of birds in either religion or mythology, the arts (music, painting, sculpture), or popular culture (marketing, film, television); our students' choices varied widely, from bird characters in Looney Tunes cartoons to the Phoenix in the *Harry Potter* stories and *X-Men* films, and pigeon symbolism in the 1954 film *On the Waterfront*. For these presentations, students were asked to select relevant literary/artistic/cultural artifacts that build upon a bird species and present those artifacts to the class, analyze the portrayal of the species, assess its scientific accuracy, examine the authors' emphases, explore the reasons for those emphases, and make interesting connections to our course content. The fourth assignment was poetry or creative prose drawing inspiration from birds or the observation of birds; for this assignment, many of our students revisited their empirical notes from our field experiences for material.

Our fifth assignment served as a type of capstone project for the course and provided the substance for our last class meeting: we asked our students to each compile an anthology of any ten items related to a bird species of their choosing and to introduce the collection with a well-written preface. This assignment allowed students the opportunity to select any bird at all (the first part of the semester was limited to birds we could actually observe in the wild while the reading assignments limited the species our students could choose from for their analyses). Our students did not disappoint us; notable choices included the Emperor Penguin, Brown Pelican, Flamingo, Japanese Crane, Mandarin Duck, Wild Turkey, Macaw, Great Horned Owl, Ivory-billed Woodpecker, Kookaburra, and Canary. The assignment also asked our students to combine the various approaches to "literary ornithology" in one assignment (systematic study, literary and cultural analysis, and creative thinking); the most interesting anthologies contained scientific articles as well as poems, children's books, cartoons, reproductions of paintings, song lyrics, advertisements, and in one case origami.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

The goal of "Literary Ornithology" was to approach one interesting and easily accessible subject from a number of diverse academic perspectives and learning styles. Like all honors courses at Marshall, our seminar introduced students to new materials and new experiences, offering a greater awareness of and appreciation for the connections between academic disciplines, in this case the natural sciences and the humanities. We were also able to explore the mechanics of different genres and the creative impulses of different fields

LITERARY ORNITHOLOGY

(literature, film, art, marketing). This process, in turn, enabled us to demonstrate easily how writing differs from one academic discipline to another and how writing successfully about the same material differs dramatically from audience to audience.

In addition to receiving repeated coverage in Marshall University's *Honors Newsletter*, the course attracted the attention of journalist Scott Shalaway, who described the students' excitement for the seminar in his syndicated newspaper column "The Wild Side." The discussion list for the more recent semester is still active, with occasional enthusiastic reports of a new sighting or bird-watching experience. The success of the course was due first and foremost to our students, who exceeded our expectations in their class work, and next to the benefits of a team-taught seminar that by its nature invites students to work productively in small groups and to assume leadership roles. The field experiences at the beginning of the semester put all of us, in a very real sense, on the same playing field; after all, any one of us—student or teacher—could be the first to spot a bird out in the field. The most successful moments of our seminar were those when the lines between students and teachers were naturally blurred as we helped one another focus binoculars, shared rain gear, and took turns driving the pontoon boats. These shared experiences resonated beautifully in the classroom as we continued to work together to make exciting discoveries about birds in our texts and cultural artifacts.

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APPENDIX A

AVIAN I.Q. POWERPOINT SLIDE SHOW

I. Common Birds We See Every Day

Chances are that you will recognize all of these—they are listed in order of expected familiarity, from the most recognized to the least.

→ *Keep track of how many you recognize.*

- 1 Rock Dove (Pigeon)
- 2 American Robin
- 3 House Sparrow
- 4 European Starling
- 5 Mourning Dove
- 6 Cardinal
- 7 Blue Jay
- 8 American Crow
- 9 Mallard
- 10 Canada Goose

→ *How did we do? Did anyone get all 10? Which species were unfamiliar?*

II. Birds Most of Us Recognize

→ *I'll bet all of you can identify the birds pictured in these slides.*

- 11 Mockingbird
- 12 Eastern Bluebird
- 13 Ruby-Throated Hummingbird
- 14 Turkey Vulture
- 15 American Bald Eagle
- 16 American White Pelican
- 17 Brown Pelican

III. Birds We are Likely to See in the Coming Weeks

→ *See if you can identify any of these slides:*

[likely at Ritter Park/Four Pole Creek]

- 18 Nuthatch
- 19 Black-Capped Chickadee
- 20 Tufted Titmouse
- 21 Catbird
- 22 Common Grackle
- 23 Boat-Tailed Grackle
- 24 Downy Woodpecker
- 25 Red-bellied Woodpecker
- 26 Pileated Woodpecker
- 27 Northern Flicker

- 28 House Finch
- 29 Purple Finch

[likely at Beech Fork]

- 30 Goldfinch
- 31 Belted Kingfisher
- 32 American Coot
- 33 Great Blue Heron
- 34 Osprey

[likely at Green Bottom]

- 35 Barn Swallow
- 36 Red-winged Blackbird
- 37 Killdeer
- 39 Red-Tailed Hawk
- 40 American Kestrel

IV. Birds in Popular Culture

→ *Chances are that you will easily recognize the birds on these slides:*

- 41 Big Bird (Sesame Street)
- 42 Donald Duck (Disney)
- 43 Daffy Duck (Warner Brothers)
- 44 Tweety Bird
- 45 Foghorn Leghorn
- 46 Road Runner
- 47 Penguin from Batman

V. Birds in Marketing Campaigns

→ *And I'm certain you can tell me who these characters are:*

- 48 Sonny (Cocoa Puffs/General Mills)
- 49 Toucan Sam (Fruit Loops/Kelloggs)
- 50 Aflac Duck

APPENDIX B

SYLLABUS FOR HONORS 482: LITERARY ORNITHOLOGY

Week 1

Intro to course

Basic bird topography-terminology

Testing your "Avian IQ"

Walt Whitman's "The Dalliance of the Eagles"

Richard Wilbur's "The Writer"

Overview of assignments

Selecting a field guide: Photos vs. Drawings

→ *In-class writing: What is your most interesting experience with birds? (It can be practical, literary, cinematographic, etc.)*

Week 2

From the medieval to the modern: enduring themes in bird stories

→ *Read for today:*

Chaucer's "The Manciple's Tale" (handout)

Robert Olen Butler's "Jealous Husband Returns in Form of Parrot" (anthology)

Discussion of field guide choices

Introduction to Field Study Project

Binocular training: Cardinals vs. Tanagers

Bird-watching around campus

→ *Due today: a one-page explanation of why you chose the field guide you've chosen.*

(Sign up for presentations this week by e-mail.

Week 3

Field Visit—Ritter Park: Woodpeckers, Nuthatches, Chickadees

The basics of a city park habitat

→ *Read for today:*

Emily Dickinson "Poem 1463" (handout)

Paul Hamilton Payne's "The Mocking-Bird" (handout)

"The Three Ravens" (popular ballad) (handout)

"The Twa Corbies" (popular ballad) (handout)

→ *Meet behind Corbly Hall at 4 p.m.; be at North Blvd. & 2nd Street by 4:20 p.m.; briefly discuss poems around 5:40 (meet at bridge at North Blvd. & 2nd Street); leave for campus at 6 p.m.*

KATERYNA A. R. SCHRAY

First official day of Campus Field Study—Wednesday, Sept. 6

→ *Due today: Site description for Campus Field Study.*

→ *By Friday, Sept. 8, email your one-page reflection on the field visit to our class list.*

Week 4

Field Visit—Beech Fork Lake: Herons, Ducks, Vultures

The features of a public recreation area habitat

→ *Read for today:*

Sarah Orne Jewett's "A White Heron" (handout)

William Cullen Bryant's "To a Waterfowl" (handout)

→ Meet behind Corbly Hall at 4 p.m.; be at Beech Fork Marina by 4:20 p.m.; pontoon boats depart at 4:30 p.m.; pull boats alongside and discuss texts at second birding site; back on shore by 6 p.m.

→ *By Friday, Sept. 15, e-mail your one-page reflection on the field visit to our class list.*

Week 5

Field Visit—Green Bottom Wetlands: Swallows, Blackbirds, Hawks

The features of a wetlands mitigation habitat

→ *Read for today:*

Robert Penn Warren's "Evening Hawk"

Elizabeth Bishop's "Sandpiper"

→ Meet behind Corbly Hall at 4 p.m.; be at Green Bottom by 4:30, general orientation to area; explore hidden banks by canoe in groups of four; meet at observation deck to discuss texts and share experiences at 5:40; leave for campus at 6 p.m.

Last day of Campus Field Study—Wednesday, Sept. 20

→ *By Friday, Sept. 22, email your one-page reflection on the field visit to our class list.*

Week 6

The Middle Ages: Birds as reflections of faith

→ *Read for today:*

"The Phoenix" (Old English, transl.) (handout)

Sections of "The Owl and the Nighthale" (Middle English, transl.) (handout)

Catch up discussing reading assignments from field visit days: we will likely devote some time to Jewett's "A White Heron" today.

LITERARY ORNITHOLOGY

Due today: draft of Campus Field Study
Draft workshop for Campus Field Study
Creative Writing exercise (in class)

Week 7

Romanticism: Birds and journeys of the mind

→ *Read for today:*

Samuel T. Coleridge's "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" (handout)

"The Nightingale" (handout)

John Keats' "Ode to a Nightingale" (handout)

Percy B. Shelley's "To a Skylark" (handout)

Due today: Campus Field Study

Share Field Study findings with the class, draw general conclusions

Creative Writing exercise (in class)

Week 8

Class Presentations on Literature

Birds in Pre-Modernist poems

→ *Read for today:*

Gerard Manley Hopkins' "The Windhover"

"The Caged Skylark"

"The Sea and the Skylark"

Thomas Hardy's "The Darkling Thrush"

Edward Thomas' "The Owl"

and texts selected by classmates for their presentations

Week 9

Class Presentations on Literature (con't)

Birds in 20th century poetry

→ *Read for today:*

W. B. Yeats' "The Wild Swans at Coole"

"Leda and the Swan"

Robert Frost's "The Ovenbird"

Eamon Grennan's "On a Cape May Warbler Who Flew Against My Window"

and texts selected by classmates for their presentations

Week 10

→ *Read for today:*

Howard Norman's *The Bird Artist*

Discuss Norman's novel

Creative Writing exercise (in class)

Week 11

Music and Art Presentations

Creative Writing exercise (in class)

Week 12

Popular Culture Presentations

Creative Writing exercise (in class)

Week 13

Creative Writing Workshop

Week 14

Thanksgiving Break

Week 15

Creative Writing Due

Poetry/Fiction Reading

Week 16

Anthology Due

Anthology roundtable

Course wrap-up

Evaluations

MARA PARKER

The American Musical as an Honors Course: Obstacles and Possibilities

MARA PARKER

WIDENER UNIVERSITY

Music courses are often problematic for the general undergraduate student as they focus on abstract concepts, employ a specialized vocabulary, and examine compositions not part of most people's everyday listening repertoire. Many will acknowledge that while they enjoy listening to music, their background and experiences are limited and steeped in the familiar. Appreciation is based on personal taste and often fails to consider historical context, structural components, and stylistic trends. Despite these obstacles, it is possible to construct a meaningful and challenging course for students, regardless of their major, as long as one is willing to use music not as an object for analysis but as a lens through which other topics are viewed, studied, and examined. Such an approach lends itself especially well to a discussion-based class and, in particular, an honors seminar.

How does one create a class that seriously considers some aspect of music when a majority of the participants have little or no prior background in the subject? The trick is to identify a genre that is accessible to students on first hearing and allows them to work with the medium in a critical manner. The American musical provides an attractive possibility because it is familiar enough that most students are not immediately discouraged by "new" or different sounds, the subject matter is sufficiently varied for extensive discussion, and the genre is one with which nearly all have had at least some personal experience. This article explains my positive experience teaching an honors seminar focused on this popular genre.

I began the planning process acknowledging that those enrolled in the course would have little or no background in music theory and/or history and would be able neither to examine a composition using traditional means of analysis (harmonic, thematic, rhythmic, structural, etc.) nor draw on any historical perspective. How then could I get them to consider a musical beyond something that is fun and entertaining (*a la* Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's *That's Entertainment*)? One approach was to start by examining the texts, both the original sources (plays, short stories, or novels) and the resultant libretti. Not only would this approach provide an *entrée* for those students who might initially have problems getting beyond the "basic plot," but it also offered

THE AMERICAN MUSICAL AS AN HONORS COURSE

opportunities for comparison between the initial work and its transformation into a play set to music.

While students could thus begin looking at a work via the text, they still needed assistance in developing other skills: how to listen, analyze, and evaluate. In particular, their aural skills would require attention. Learning to think about the quality of sound, the relationship between various parts, the interplay between lines, and the function of the orchestra required a realignment of the students' standard practice of listening, which generally consisted of focusing almost exclusively on the lyrics and vocal parts. I have often found that non-musicians label lyrics as "the music" with everything else relegated to "the instruments." I needed to train the students to become aural learners. Previous classroom experiences revealed that many students listened passively; when a visual component was added, their passivity became even more pronounced. In those situations, music was peripheral to costuming, movement, and spoken text. As a countermeasure, I determined that listening to a musical's sound track would necessarily have to come prior to viewing a performance.

Constructing a methodology for analysis was also a challenge. While students traditionally developed insight into characters, relationships, motifs, moods, and emotions through a careful reading of the text, I expected them to gain the same information through active listening to music and close observation of choreographed movements. They would have to examine a work with respect to structure, texture, function of vocal and dance numbers, quality of sound and movement, and vocal and dance style. Understanding these components would provide a framework for assessment of representative pieces rather than an evaluation based on a personal likes and dislikes.

I divided the seminar into different sections, each focusing on a theme: viewing the musical as entertainment and social commentary (*Kiss Me, Kate; My Fair Lady*), establishing an American identity (*Oklahoma!, Guys and Dolls, Carousel*), considering ethnic issues (*Show Boat, West Side Story, Cabaret*), and entering the world of Stephen Sondheim (*A Little Night Music, Sweeney Todd*). Each student, assigned a particular composition, would be responsible for leading a discussion of the texts connected with his or her musical. Students examined both the original piece of literature and the musical libretto, considering the transformation of the former to the latter. Furthermore, they were required to investigate character types, central themes, symbolic references, and subplots; to explore how these varied from one medium to the other; and lastly, to examine the role and placement of songs and dances. I met with each student prior to his or her session; this was an opportunity for the student to try out ideas, ask for suggestions, or clear up any confusion. Knowing the potential direction of the class discussion allowed me to tailor my remarks so that I could supplement what was being presented that day. The "class agreement" was that, after the student-led discussion, I would guide the class through some of the technical aspects for which they possessed neither training nor knowledge.

Our introductory session considered the musical in its most abstract sense. Did one view the genre as an art form or simply as entertainment? If the former,

how did one determine value in a work of art, and what criteria might one use to judge it? We talked about why texts were set to music. What were the effects of such settings, and which ones were most successful? From here we considered the role of dance. Was it possible for dance to take the place of dialogue? Were there times when dance might be a more effective conveyor of emotion and drama than either spoken text or lyrics? Why did musicals move us, and how? My goal was for the students to think about these pieces not just as a source of entertainment but also as a means of communication, perhaps even a form of persuasion. Did these works confirm belief systems, did they offer new modes of thinking, or did they challenge us to confront fears and insecurities?

The following week was devoted to a consideration of the musical within an historical context. I provided students with a chronological overview of the genre, moving from its early history up to the 1980s, highlighting its various components and features. Examples from representative musicals provided concrete illustrations of the various approaches to structure, subject matter, song, dance, and the like over the course of slightly less than a hundred years. During this section, I stopped periodically and asked, "What is a musical?" This question initially confused the students because their first reaction was simply to say that it was a "text set to music with some dance." The notion of the musical as a reflection of American attitudes and values did not readily come to mind. By the end of the session, however, students easily thought about the genre in terms of social issues, the role of song and dance, stage presentation, quality of sound, and types of characters.

As an introductory exercise, each student was asked to read the libretto to Cole Porter's *Kiss Me, Kate* and make predictions about it in light of the historical overview provided. My institution treats all honors courses as writing intensive. Rather than one long paper, I chose to have students fulfill this requirement through both short responses and a larger project of moderate length. The first assignment was to write a brief paper of two or three pages about *Kiss Me, Kate* describing the sound and style of music, presentation and development of characters, and placement and function of song. This assignment set the pattern for the weeks to come. Students came to understand that a particular musical would be a point of departure from which to consider a specific idea, issue, or concept and to write about it in a critical manner.

Kiss Me, Kate, as an initial activity, was treated in workshop fashion, allowing students to develop ideas about how they might approach their own presentations of assigned musicals. We began with a discussion of Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew*, focusing primarily on major themes and character types. Turning to Porter's work, I asked the students to determine how much of it came from Shakespeare's. We discussed the notion of a play-within-a-play, one of the more obvious similarities. Students considered how the backstage ("American/Baltimore") and on-stage ("*Shrew*") parts of the musical were differentiated. Initially they separated the two parts based on plot with little thought given to how music, lyrics, and dance helped situate the two into

THE AMERICAN MUSICAL AS AN HONORS COURSE

Shakespearean and modern-day settings. To illustrate, I asked the students to consider the function of “Too Darn Hot,” the song-dance sequence which opens the second act. Their immediate response was that it was simply “fun” and had little to do with the musical itself. Asked to outline characteristics of this segment, they identified the big-band jazz sound, casual interaction between the sexes, manner of speech, topical references in the lyrics (i.e., the Kinsey Report), and style of dance. With assistance, students understood that they were describing 1940s America. In contrast, a musical sound reminiscent of the Renaissance period, a more formalized mode of interaction (both style of speech and social roles), inclusion of courtly dances, and choice of subject matter distinguished the “*Shrew*” portions. Students thus began to take into account quality of sound, song types, instrumental music, and dance sequences as a means to separate the two, both visually and aurally.

While plot parallels could be determined for the on-stage setting, it was also important to note how the themes of *Taming of the Shrew* showed up throughout *Kiss Me, Kate*, in both the “American/Baltimore” and “*Shrew*” segments. The notion of mistaken identity, for example, could easily be found in both works, although not necessarily in identical fashions. Courtship types also served as a useful means of comparison. Students came to realize that the portions of *Kiss Me, Kate* directly connected to *Taming of the Shrew* via text and plot were not the only places where the Shakespearean play presented itself. For the following week, students were given the assignment of determining where and how *Kiss Me, Kate* referred to the *Taming of the Shrew*: on-stage, backstage, or both.

The next four sessions featured student-led discussions on George Bernard Shaw’s *Pygmalion*/Alan Lerner’s *My Fair Lady*, Lynn Riggs’s *Green Grow the Lilacs*/Richard Rogers and Oscar Hammerstein’s *Oklahoma!*, two short stories by Damon Runyon/Frank Loesser’s *Guys and Dolls*, and Ferenc Molnar’s *Liliom*/Rogers and Hammerstein’s *Carousel*. Each presenter spent time with me before class trying out ideas, mapping out points to discuss, and in general looking at how a play or story changed when set to music. Equipped with texts, sound tracks, and videos, the class then explored each of these works from the perspective of the individual characters, the rationale for change of plots/events, the role of dance, the effectiveness of music/song, and the like. Writing assignments encouraged students to think about whether *Kiss Me, Kate* and *My Fair Lady* were merely entertaining pieces or vehicles for conveying larger social issues; to consider the role and function of dance in *Oklahoma!*; and to explore the concept of the idealized America in *Oklahoma!* and *Guys and Dolls*. In each circumstance, students received extensive feedback from me. Not only did I examine their writings for persuasiveness and clarity, but I also posed questions that suggested further avenues of exploration. I often asked students to consider an alternative interpretation of actions and lyrics, to entertain the idea that a character or scene could serve as a metaphor for a larger issue, or to evaluate the connection (or lack thereof) between some song or

dance and the drama. While I knew that a short response paper was not the place to explore these questions fully, I wanted to offer my writers ideas for their larger papers or simply a different way of thinking that might be helpful in future assignments.

These papers, then, became a dialogue between teacher and student. I asked each person to clarify his or her thoughts, to provide further support, and to consider other possibilities. I invited my writers to reflect upon alternative ideas, not as a corrective measure but as an encouragement to think critically about the compositions. The goal was to promote a deeper examination of the works in question and to apply the same techniques to other compositions as well. Over the course of the semester, students revealed a gradual acceptance of the premise that while a musical functioned in one sense as a source of entertainment, on another level it served as a form of communication, one in which the creators used an accessible art form to offer a viewpoint or idea. For the students, the task was to discover how it was done, determine its effectiveness, and identify the means by which it was or was not achieved.

Halfway through the semester, students knew to expect more than a story with song and dance. They looked for a second and perhaps even a third layer to uncover. They were comfortable dealing with the texts and noticing where, how, and why songs and dances were used. They had started to examine the functions of the various parts of the musicals, understanding that each component—dance, song, chorus, and text—was carefully crafted to support the entire composition. They considered the difference between a staged play and a staged musical. They learned that texts and plots were altered for specific reasons. Lyrics could not be treated in the same manner as poetry or prose works. Audiences were different, and the intent of the original author and creators of the musical was not always the same.

The next step was to reassess the musical based on what we had learned so far. I began by asking, "What is a musical? Why do we watch them? Why are they written?" They offer us a world view—whether or not it is realistic or plausible—and often present us with familiar situations, characters, ideas, goals, and hopes. Each of the musicals discussed up to that point had included the notion of "community"; students considered what this actually meant—safety net, solidarity, shared values, ominous crowd? How did text, song, and dance convey this meaning? From the five works previously examined, students selected representative songs that illustrated "community." After listening to several, we talked about the stylistic aspects. While text was an important component, students also understood that "community" was often more effectively heightened by musical means, especially through the use of voices singing in unison, as well as dances that involved nearly all the cast members moving in similar ways.

Musical style is also an ideal way to flesh out roles and personalities. Leading characters, for example, are distinguished from secondary ones by their vocal style and declamation and by the lyrical and rhythmic quality of the

THE AMERICAN MUSICAL AS AN HONORS COURSE

melodies, even when different characters sing the same type of song (i.e., love song, comic song, and dialogue-style song). Some songs highlight a person's ideals and values while others tell us about one character's relationship with another, often in a very subtle fashion. One can listen to how the voices work together or not, if people sing in consonance or not, or if melodies return during the course of a whole musical.

As with the concept of community, students selected particular songs that supported these ideas. After listening, we made lists of characteristics. Students became comfortable identifying those qualities likely to be found in songs for leading characters, secondary characters, and large communal groups; they were also able to identify how music expressed emotion (joy, sadness, fear, frustration) not merely through lyrics but through melody, harmony, and timbre.

To reinforce these ideas and to provide an opportunity for each student to apply them, I assigned a scene from Jerome Kern's *Show Boat*. Students examined the text and then predicted how the scene would be set to music, incorporating what we had discussed about uses of sound, orchestra, chorus, vocal types, and other stylistic characteristics. The following week, we talked about their expectations and then listened to the actual scene. Interestingly, nearly all the students had begun to develop a sense of what worked from a dramatic and musical point of view; moreover, most students could verbalize why they made particular choices. A discussion of *Show Boat* provided an opportunity for each student to begin making connections with previously analyzed musicals. An assigned paper detailing the influence of that early work on later ones encouraged students to synthesize critical aspects of the musical as a genre up to the mid-1950s.

Show Boat also became the starting point to consider how composers, lyricists, and others treated ethnic issues. I once again turned the class over to the students. Although previously we had discussed the concept of the marriage trope (i.e., a successful or unsuccessful union of two characters serving as a metaphor for the resolution or non-resolution of a larger issue) in musicals such as *West Side Story* and *Cabaret*, its application became more integral to understanding underlying ethnic and/or social conflicts. The two works by Stephen Sondheim mentioned earlier formed the basis for the final portion of the semester. These last four pieces challenged the students' notion of the musical as "happy and fun." They were particularly problematic for presenters and classmates alike, primarily because of their serious nature. For example, when I asked the students whether there were instances when murder and deception could be justified, they had no immediate and definite answer. Our lively discussions often focused on a particular character's behavior, words, and motivations. Interestingly, students routinely turned to the musical numbers—both songs and dances—as a way of supporting their positions and buttressing their arguments. Thus, while initially students may have viewed songs and dances as simple entertainment, by this point in the semester those very elements had become central to understanding relationships, personalities, subtexts, and subtle points.

MARA PARKER

At the same time, students worked on their final, ten-page papers. All were required to submit a rough draft and then schedule a meeting with me. In their final, polished form, these papers demonstrated a nuanced understanding of how characters and plots symbolized concepts and issues. Topics ranged from the role of community in musicals from the 1940s to approaches to World War II to the use of dance as a replacement for text (spoken or sung) to issues of social and ethnic identity. Students successfully analyzed lyrics, dance, and music as well as structural components. Their writing revealed an appreciation of how the American musical promoted examination of human relationships, social issues, and historical and cultural events.

By the end of the semester I had answered my initial question of whether it was possible for a group of students to consider seriously a musical form that previous experience had taught them was solely for entertainment. Using the original texts and the subsequent libretti as points of departure, students learned to think critically about the genre, incorporating textual, aural, and visual analysis. For these students, the musical had come to serve as a means by which one could examine social and ethnic issues, character types, and perceptions and misperceptions. The musical, a form of communication between creator and observer, creator and student, offered material worthy of serious and critical consideration. For these students, the musical was no longer merely a form of entertainment but had become a genre that had powers of persuasion and challenged them to consider concepts and ideas in new and varied ways.

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TODD TIMMONS

Honors Calculus: An Historical Approach

TODD TIMMONS

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS—FORT SMITH

When the honors program at the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith (then Westark Community College) began in 1990, it was decided that the honors mathematics course would be College Algebra, a decision based on the premise that our student population required an opportunity to earn honors credit at an introductory level, at least in mathematics. The course developed by the mathematics department met with some success by stimulating interest in algebra topics using an environmental modeling approach. The textbook, *Earth Algebra* (by Schuafele, Zumoff, Sims, and Sims), provided a wonderful opportunity for our students to learn the techniques of College Algebra through applications to “real-world” problems.

After offering Honors College Algebra for several years, it gradually became apparent that offering honors credit for College Algebra was excluding many students who tested into higher courses, particularly calculus. Not surprisingly, these higher placement scores often equated to honors students. Since Westark (a two-year college) became the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith (offering baccalaureate degrees) in 2002 and because mathematics became one of the first baccalaureate degrees offered by our new university, the mathematics department decided to develop an honors calculus course to reflect the changing demographics of our students. After discussing several ideas, the mathematics faculty decided to develop a first-semester calculus course centered on a study of the historical development of calculus. With a university enrollment of about 6500 students, and a small honors program (40–60 students), a single section of 15–20 students was planned. My interests and experiences in using history in the mathematics classroom led to my being “volunteered” to create the course, an assignment I enthusiastically accepted.

The premise for the honors calculus course I designed was that the students would learn the traditional topics in a Calculus I course—an important criterion for several reasons, not the least of which was that most of these students would continue on to Calculus II—while participating in an ongoing investigation of the historical development of calculus. The use of historical concepts to motivate learning in mathematics has many adherents. F. J. Swetz wrote, “History is commonly taught in schools to initiate the young into a community—to give them an awareness of tradition, a feeling of belonging, and a sense of participation in an ongoing process or institution. Similar goals can be advocated for the

HONORS CALCULUS: AN HISTORICAL APPROACH

teaching of the history of mathematics.” Swetz and many other authors (some of whom may be found below in the bibliographical essay) have found great success in motivating student learning and inspiring disinterested students by “humanizing” mathematics through its history. In addition to the strong belief from many in the mathematical community that history enhances the learning experience in mathematics, another motivation for this format comes from the goals of our honors program. Each honors course is designed to improve communication skills, both verbal and written, and honors faculty are encouraged to develop courses that address learning across the curriculum.

The catalog description of the new course encapsulates these ideas:

This course will develop the standard topics in Calculus I from the perspective of the historical development of calculus and its reciprocating influence on society. Readings from original sources and extensive writing are required.

In addition to the typical requirements of a calculus course, the honors students are asked to read, discuss, debate, and write about issues and episodes in the history of calculus. Because the academic requirements (GPA and standardized test scores) are significantly higher for our honors students than the general student population, this rather accelerated first-semester calculus has never presented serious problems for most of my students. I have been able to weave historical content and assignments into the standard syllabus without causing noticeable distress in the students. By inserting reading assignments and discussions at appropriate times—for instance, students read and discuss the article “Fermat on maxima and minima” [see bibliographical essay below] while we are covering the traditional calculus subject of function extrema—I have attempted to create a course in which the historical perspectives fit seamlessly into the calculus curriculum. The study of the history of calculus culminates in a debate over who should be considered the “father” of calculus, Isaac Newton or Gottfried Leibniz. In essence, the addition of historical content entails that the honors calculus class requires more time and more work than the non-honors sections although the mathematical difficulty and expectations remain the same.

Has the course been successful? So far, there are not enough data to make any conclusions. Although the success rate (as measured by the number of students passing with a C or better) is significantly higher than in my non-honors calculus classes—around 85 percent for the honors course versus 60 percent for non-honors—this could very easily be attributed to the higher entrance requirements for honors students. As much as 20 percent of the final grade may come from the historical modules; however, this grade is not given easily and does not normally have a significantly positive effect on the final grade. Anecdotally speaking, I do have a strong impression that my honors students are more engaged than my other calculus students. Again, this could be the product of a higher quality student population, yet the group projects and the class interactions do seem to provide a more stimulating environment for learning. With a few notable exceptions, the vast majority of the students seem to

enjoy the class format. Only a few complain that all the history research and discussion take away from their study of calculus. This essay details some of the activities I have found successful (as well as a few that were disasters!) over the past several years of teaching the course.

The honors component is centered on a series of projects that all relate to the history of mathematics in general and the history of calculus in particular. One interesting class project I also often use in my non-honors calculus classes comes from a volume of applications of calculus published by the Mathematical Association of America (MAA Notes Number 29, Volume 3). This project combines “real-world” application with an historical twist. The project involves using elementary calculus to find a solution to an arbitration dispute between management and labor in a fictitious company. The project is rather long and involved; although the mathematics is not terribly difficult for a first-year calculus student, it does consume the better part of a week’s class time. Without going into detail, the solution of the problem involves an application of the Nash equilibrium theory, published by John Nash in the 1950s. Nash later won a Nobel Prize in Economics for his work. What is so interesting about John Nash? Some say he had *A Beautiful Mind*. Interestingly, the farther removed from the movie’s premier we become, the fewer students I have who have heard of John Nash or even of the movie.

The majority of the readings and discussions come from secondary sources detailing the development of calculus and from primary sources by a few of the mathematicians who provided the foundations of calculus in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. (The only exception to this seventeenth- and eighteenth-century emphasis is the incredible accomplishments of Archimedes.) From the work of Johannes Kepler in approximating the volumes of wine barrels to the important contributions of Pierre Fermat to both the differential and integral calculus, the students read about, write about, and discuss in class the evolution of calculus before the arrival of Newton and Leibniz on the scene.

At first, I believed that honors students should be able to work together—without detailed direction from me—to understand the mathematics they were reading in the original sources. Of course, in retrospect, I should have known better. Reading mathematics in original sources is difficult not only because the mathematics itself might be on the outer edge of the students’ abilities but also because the language and notation of the seventeenth century is appreciably different from that of the twenty-first century. Therefore, as I taught this course in subsequent semesters, I developed questions and guidelines to help students grasp the material they were reading (see Appendix for a few examples). With these guidelines, along with direction provided directly by me during class time, I found that students in small groups of three or four could successfully work through this difficult material and gain insight into the evolution of some central ideas in calculus.

THE GREAT DEBATE

Because the unifying theme of the course is the historical development of calculus, the major project that the students tackle is a debate titled “Who should be called the father of calculus, Newton or Leibniz?” For those not familiar with the story, I will provide a brief summary. The great English mathematician and physicist Isaac Newton developed calculus (although he called it the method of fluxions) in the late 1660s. Although some of the essential ideas of calculus were developed by earlier mathematicians such as Fermat, Cavalieri, Barrow, and others, Newton was able to pull some of these disparate methods together, add several crucial ideas of his own, and “invent” a completely new branch of mathematics. Although Newton wrote and circulated several tracts on his new discovery, none were published until a much later date. In the meantime, Gottfried Leibniz, a German philosopher who developed an interest in mathematics later in life, discovered his own version of calculus. Although he did not develop his ideas on the new mathematics until the mid-1670s (nearly ten years after Newton), Leibniz—unlike Newton—immediately published his results. A bitter priority dispute immediately arose between Newton and his supporters (primarily British) and Leibniz and his supporters (most of continental Europe). With national pride at stake, Newtonians accused Leibniz of plagiarism, claiming that he had seen the unpublished manuscripts containing Newton’s calculus. Meanwhile, Leibnizians also accused Newton of plagiarism, maintaining that Newton did not complete his ideas on calculus until after Leibniz’s publications appeared. Although the dispute was long and bitter, lasting even after the deaths of the two protagonists, today historians agree that both developed calculus independently and should both be considered the co-inventors of calculus.

At least six weeks before the debate is scheduled, students are divided into two groups, the Newtonians and the Leibnizians. With an average enrollment of somewhere between 12 and 16 students, this means that the groups themselves are rather large. A chief Newtonian and a chief Leibnizian are each instructed to distribute the workload among their groups. I provide a set of readings for both groups. The first set of readings consists of articles, or portions of books or articles, that provide an overview of the contributions of both men to the development of calculus. After students have read this assignment, we take class time to discuss the essential contributions of Newton and Leibniz. Then the meat of their research begins.

Each group is given several readings pertaining specifically to their man. The Leibnizians read both secondary sources and some portions of Leibniz’s original works. At the same time, of course, the Newtonians are reading similar sources by and about Newton. I provide plenty of class time for the teams to talk with each other—and with me—about what they are reading and work through some of the problems they encounter. Some of these readings, especially the primary source materials, are rather difficult for first-year calculus students to follow. Although the calculus concepts are those they are studying in

the course, the notation and the language sometimes make interpretation a challenge. It is not unusual for a group to discuss a short section of a reading for most of a class period until someone in the group finally says something like, “Wait, wait . . . that’s just basically the product rule, isn’t it?” Sometimes these epiphanies require a little prompting from me.

One fact that neither group knows is that I have planted a mole inside each group. Sometime near the beginning of the process, I pull aside a member of each group—someone I see is particularly engaged in the process—and hand each of them a copy of Bishop Berkeley’s *The Analyst*. I explain that Berkeley attacked the foundations of calculus and those who professed to accept its tenets (the diatribe is sub-titled *A discourse addressed to an infidel mathematician*). The assignment for these two hand-picked students is two-fold. First, I want them to continue honest participation in their groups as they prepare for the debate. Secondly, I ask them to read Berkeley’s essay and prepare their own refutation of the methods of *both* Newton and Leibniz. As the debate winds down, these two students will take the floor and accuse both sides of unsound thinking. Many times the debate that follows is more heated than the original priority debate as the Newtonians and Leibnizians bond together against the common enemy.

Of course, as with all college students, how the project is graded is of great concern. The majority of the grade for the project comes simply from participating. If both sides actively participate in the research, the preparation, and the debate itself—and if they do an acceptable job in each phase—the grading is not an issue; it is, after all, an honors course and for the most part the students are highly motivated and engaged in the project. If I feel that a particular student is not pulling his or her weight, I talk with the student and indicate that he/she may not receive the same grade as the rest of the team without improved participation. As an added incentive, the students are informed in the beginning that the team deemed the winner of the debate by the judge—that would be me—receives bonus points for the project. This alone stokes the fire of their competitive spirits even if the idea of a debate has not already done the trick.

I have now been through this assignment four times with an honors calculus class and twice more (in a slightly revised format) with a senior-level history of mathematics course. The day of the debate invariably proceeds in about the same way. Before the debate even begins, the classroom resembles a scene from *Westside Story*, with catcalls and challenges flying across the room. Under the rules of the debate, the first presentation from each side must address specifically the methods and procedures that their man used in developing and refining his version of the calculus. No mention of priority is allowed. This section is a test of the group’s understanding of the calculus as written by Leibniz and by Newton. Each group is also expected to answer questions posed by me about the mathematics of their man.

After the technical portion of the debate ends, the fun begins. Each side is allowed a set time to present an overview of their claim for the priority of their

HONORS CALCULUS: AN HISTORICAL APPROACH

mathematician in the calculus dispute. The basic argument by the Newtonians is always, “Newton did it first, and we’re still not so sure Leibniz didn’t steal some of his ideas.” On the other hand, the Leibnizians counter with something along the lines of “Even if Newton was first with a complete calculus (a point that may not be completely true to begin with), he did not publish, teach, or disseminate his knowledge. Leibniz nurtured calculus and made it what we know it as today!” Dates fly back and forth, letters written by both men, travels and contacts of Leibniz, etc. I should note that I do not require the students to follow any customary rules of debating—I make up the rules and may even change them as the debate progresses. If one team makes a particularly interesting or contentious point, I might interrupt and ask the other group to respond. If the group requests a few minutes to talk about their response, the time is usually granted. My goal, of course, is not to teach proper debating etiquette but rather for the students to learn as much about the early development of calculus as they can. I think flexible debating rules help me in this endeavor.

In closing, each class brings its own surprises and new outlooks on a subject I have studied for many years. One particular episode stands out in my mind. Near the end of the debate, I told each group they had one minute to summarize their most important points. After the Newtonians reiterated that Newton “discovered” calculus before Leibniz did and therefore Newton should be called the father of calculus, the Leibnizians responded with an ingenious tactic. Reading from a dictionary, one student emphasized various definitions of “dad” that used terms like “nurturing parent” or “one who teaches and instructs offspring.” They made the point that under this definition of “dad,” Leibniz would obviously be the most qualified. Newton, they concluded, might lay claim to father, but never to “dad.” At best, Newton could be called “the sperm donor” of calculus. The Leibnizians won the debate that year.

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BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY

There are countless readings addressing the history of calculus. These readings take the form of complete books, journal articles, edited collections of essays, and Internet articles. Each class is not necessarily assigned all of the readings discussed below. Following is a complete list of readings I have used at various times for the honors calculus course.

Of the numerous books that attempt to cover the entire history of the development of calculus, the three I have found most useful are Carl Boyer's *The History of Calculus and Its Conceptual Development* (New York: Dover Publications, 1949), C. H. Edwards' *The Historical Development of the Calculus* (New York: Springer-Verlag, 1979), and Margaret E. Baron's *The Origins of the Infinitesimal Calculus* (New York: Dover Publications, 1969). Two books addressing the priority dispute specifically have proven useful. They are A. R. Hall's classic work, *Philosophers at War: The Quarrel Between Newton and Leibniz* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980) and a newer book not so historically rigorous as Hall's but very readable, J.C. Bardi's *The Calculus Wars: Newton, Leibniz, and the Greatest Mathematical Clash of All Time* (New York: Thunder's Mouth Press, 2006).

Several edited collections offer fine articles on various aspects of the history of calculus. One is *MAA Notes Volume 5—Readings For Calculus* (The Mathematical Association of America, 1993), which includes essays such as "Background for Calculus" (Steven Galovich), "Anticipations of Calculus in Medieval Indian Mathematics" (Ranjan Roy), "Slicing it Thin" (Howard Eves), "Fermat" (George F. Simmons), "On the Seashore" (E. T. Bell), "The Creation of the Calculus" (Morris Kline), "Principia Mathematica" (Isaac Newton), "The World's First Calculus Textbook," and "Calculus Notation." Similar types of information may be found in *Historical Topics for the Mathematics Classroom*, 2nd ed., published by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, 1989. In addition to a very nice overview of the history of calculus by historian of mathematics Carl Boyer, this book offers short topics covering many of the main players in the history of calculus, including Archimedes, Kepler, Cavalieri, Fermat, Wallis, Barrow, Leibniz, and Newton. In addition it offers a few topics on non-European roots of calculus, such as developments in Japan and in India. A third volume in the same vein is *Learn from the Masters* (The Mathematical Association of America, 1995). Included are articles to help the mathematics teacher incorporate history into the classroom, including some specific suggestions on how to use history in the calculus classroom.

William Dunham has published several volumes with rich historical material written in an easy and engaging style. See for instance *Journey Through Genius: The Great Theorems of Mathematics* (New York: Wiley and Sons, 1990). This Dunham work offers interesting excerpts on "The Bernoullis and the Harmonic Series," "The Extraordinary Sums of Euler," and "A Gem from Isaac Newton." Also see Dunham's *Mathematical Universe: An Alphabetical Journey Through the Great Proofs, Problems, and Personalities* (New York: Wiley and

HONORS CALCULUS: AN HISTORICAL APPROACH

Sons, 1994). Articles include “Differential Calculus,” “Knighted Newton,” and “Lost Leibniz.”

For primary source materials, two excellent resources are D. E. Smith’s *A Source Book in Mathematics* (New York: Dover Publications, 1929) and Ronald Calinger’s *Classics of Mathematics* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1995). In Smith’s book the reader finds primary source material from various branches of mathematics, including “Cavalieri on an approach to the calculus,” “Fermat on maxima and minima,” “Newton on fluxions,” “Leibniz on the calculus,” “Berkeley’s ‘Analyst,’” and “Cauchy on derivative and differentials.” Calinger’s work offers another source of primary material from various branches of mathematics, including work of Archimedes, Kepler, Leibniz, Newton, Jakob and Johann Bernoulli, Euler, and others.

In addition to the above monographs and edited collections, many mathematics journals publish historical articles. For instance, “The Evolution of Integration” (*The American Mathematical Monthly*, January 1994, Volume 101, Number 1, 66–72) by Shenitzer and Steprāns offers a very nice overview of the development of integration. The research journal *Historia Mathematica*, although targeting professional historians of mathematics, publishes many articles accessible to undergraduate students.

Finally, although I warn my students to be wary of information they find on the Internet, one site that does offer reliable and remarkably detailed historical information is the MacTutor History of Mathematics Website, <http://www-groups.dcs.st-and.ac.uk/~history/index.html>.

APPENDIX

Newton/Leibniz Questions

From the articles “Newton’s DOT-age Versus Leibniz’ D-ism” and “Newton and Leibniz” from Boyer’s *The Calculus*, answer the following questions:

What is a fluxion?

What is a fluent?

What is a moment?

What does \dot{x} represent?

What does o represent?

What does $\dot{x}o$ represent?

What does Newton call $\dot{x}o$?

What is $x + \dot{x}o$?

Use Newton’s method to calculate the fluxion of $xy - a = 0$

Do you recognize what rule of derivatives you arrived at in the previous question?

Use Leibniz’s method to differentiate.

Who discovered this method of derivatives first, Newton or Leibniz?

Who was most concerned with the theoretical basis of calculus, Newton or Leibniz?

Who was most concerned with good notation, Newton or Leibniz?

Who originated the term dot-age vs. d-ism?

Explain what you think dot-age vs. d-ism means.

What did Newton and Leibniz do differently than Descartes, Cavalieri, Fermat, Wallis and Barrow?

Show how Newton used expansion of an infinite series to show that (in modern notation):

$$\int \frac{1}{1+x} dx = 1n(1+x)$$

(Hint: You will have to use long division to divide 1 by $1+x$.)

Why does Boyer credit Newton as being the first inventor of calculus?

Show Newton’s method for finding q/p , or what we would call dy/dx , for:
 $x^3 - abx + a^3 - cy^2 = 0$

HONORS CALCULUS: AN HISTORICAL APPROACH

Why does Boyer say Newton's logical foundations for calculus were better than Leibniz's?

What does Boyer mean when he says "From a logical point of view the calculus of Leibniz was a failure, but heuristically it was a resounding success"?

When was the first calculus textbook published? What was it called? What is the title in English? Who wrote it?

List four reasons why Leibniz's calculus was more successful on the European continent than was Newton's?

Leibnizians

In the article by Evelyn Walker, there is an error on page 622. Find it!

There is also an error on page 625. Find it!

Explain what the first formula you see at the top on page 53 in the Morris Kline article means:

$$ds = \sqrt{dx^2 + dy^2}$$

Newtonians

In the article by Evelyn Walker on page 616, Newton finds a derivative one way (under explication), then turns around and finds the same derivative another way (under demonstration). Why two methods?

There is a mistake in the second method. Find it!

Explain case 1 on page 56 of the article titled "Principia Mathematica." Draw some diagrams to aid the explanation.

PATRICIA L. POWELL

Honored to be a Part of Service-Learning

PATRICIA L. POWELL

TRINITY CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

What do an adolescent self-esteem workshop for African-American girls, a food and clothing pantry, a Young Authors event in Montego Bay, Jamaica, an HIV/AIDS awareness brochure for a Chicago health-care facility, an after-school program for low income students, and an international student awareness survey have in common? Each started as an idea born of a personal passion and then grew into a semester-long service-learning project for six honors students at Trinity Christian College in Palos Heights, Illinois.

Trinity Christian College has a long history of service to its community, a middle-class suburb south of Chicago that has a long Dutch tradition. In 2005 the college instituted an office of Community Partnerships to further its community service commitment, but efforts have just begun to incorporate service-learning into the academic arena of the college. Each year at Trinity professors are asked to submit course proposals for the Honors Program, and in the spring of 2006 I was pleased to find that my course submission, *Academic Partnered Learning or Service-Learning Across the Curriculum*, had been accepted as part of the fall course offerings, available to any Trinity student enrolled in the Honors Program. Trinity students accepted into the program must take Honors Writing, Honors Philosophy, one honors interim, one honors seminar, and at least two semester-hours of honors work in their major. My course met the honors seminar requirement and was geared to students' academic pursuits and majors as well as their extracurricular passions and interests.

Six students—juniors and seniors from various majors—elected to take the course, and our adventure together began. Students started the semester by introducing themselves, their interests and passions as well as their majors and minors. The intersection of academic interest and personal passion would form the basis for each of their service-learning projects. Students were also asked to reflect on previous service experiences, specifically the highlights of those experiences. Additionally, students were asked to identify their individual frames of reference, those individual life experiences, attitudes, beliefs, qualities, and expectations that gave them their unique perspective on life. This information would help guide each student to a particular semester-long project.

This service-learning course used two texts that proved to be an important foundation for the students' work. The first, *Learning through Serving: A Student*

HONORED TO BE A PART OF SERVICE-LEARNING

Guidebook for Service-Learning across the Disciplines by Cress, Collier, Reitenauer, and Associates, provided an analysis of the essential elements of both learning and serving, various inventories and reflection activities to guide the students in understanding their relationship with their community partner, academic scholarship and inquiry questions designed to help the students understand the nature and process of societal change, and exercises designed to help the students both understand and learn from their service-learning experience. The second text, *Where's the Learning in Service-Learning?* by J. Eyler and D. E. Giles, offered definitions important to the field of service-learning, data about learning in general, and service-learning program characteristics with learning outcomes. Theoretical in nature, this book confronted the students with extensive data from two national research projects that focused on attitudes and perceptions of learning in relationship to the service-learning process. Finally, students read several service-learning articles, in particular "Why Service-Learning is Bad" by John W. Eby, "Service-Learning: a balanced approach to experiential education" by Andrew Furco, and "Service Learning as a Transgressive Pedagogy: A Must for Today's Generation" by Angela Leonard. Students also did extensive personal research related to their specific project and wrote a literature review based on that research.

The semester opened with intensive teaching on service-learning history, pedagogy, and practice. The students studied the vocabulary of service-learning and delved into the distinctions between community service, volunteerism, field placements, and service-learning. They were also exposed to the foundations of service-learning theory and practice and did extensive reading and journaling in both of these areas. The students needed to understand that service-learning work is messy and the process and results often unexpected. Though encouraged to develop a timeline, budget, and structure for their project, they needed to understand that there would be roadblocks and flat tires along the way to completion of their project, and all might not proceed smoothly from beginning to end.

Students heard from the Director of Trinity's Office of Community Partnerships, who presented a list of possible partnerships and project ideas that could become their service-learning projects. For many of these projects, the foundation had already been laid for a strong community partnership relationship, but some of the community needs did not match either the student's academic interest or passion. Each student evaluated the possibilities by speaking to me and to professors and advisors in their major area of study, eventually coming up with a project that connected to their major as well as a passion in their life and that could be completed within one semester.

The work began. Early in the semester, students were asked to write an abstract of their service-learning project, including the name of their community partner, their assessment of the community partner's needs, and potential strategies to address those needs. Students also did several team-building exercises in class, learning about themselves and the types of team players they

were or, perhaps, were not. Additionally, students were introduced to several learning-styles quizzes that provided additional insight into obstacles they might face when they began working with their community partner.

Spirits were high as each student went through a service-learning project worksheet that included writing goals and objectives, defining the needs of their project's community partner, assessing that community partner's needs, defining potential strategies to meet those needs, designing a project timeline, estimating budget requirements, and assessing potential liability issues with continual reflection on both their process and progress. The students researched their area of interest, their community partner, and the historical basis for that community partner's work, and they wrote a literature review theoretically supporting and informing their service-learning project. Additionally, they arranged to meet or at least communicate with their community partner several times throughout the semester. Each student understood that, in order for the project to be effective and successful, there had to be mutual give and take, with both the student and the community partner learning from and serving the other.

It was important that the students have authentic and honest in-class discussions on deconstructing stereotypes and unpacking the privilege that is a part of many of their lives, so together the students read *White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack* by Peggy McIntosh. The students began to realize that they might have preconceived notions of their community partner and their community partner might also have preconceived notions about them, both of which might be false. Since most of the students were working with a community partner that represented people different from them racially, ethnically, geographically, and/or in health or disability, it was important that they each address what it might be like to work with and sometimes for a community partner with a different background and set of experiences than themselves. Students' self-assessments were honest and often eye-opening since, for some of them, this expedition into a different culture and/or socioeconomic sphere was a relatively new phenomenon. These issues led us to a discussion of critical theory, a social theory oriented toward critiquing and changing society, and its place in service-learning pedagogy and practice, another important and necessary conversation.

Each week, in addition to meeting as a class, students were required to progress through their service-learning working document and write written reflections based on that work. By week three, students had each identified their specific project and the hard work began. Students reported back to each other weekly on their progress including frustrations and breakthroughs in their work. They learned to support each other's successes and offer creative suggestions for getting around brick walls. They took class time to bounce ideas off each other about difficulties they encountered. One particularly interesting class period saw us brainstorming titles for the projects. We began by writing all of the words and phrases that came to mind regarding each one. Words were

HONORED TO BE A PART OF SERVICE-LEARNING

joined and separated, similes and metaphors discussed, plays on words and acronyms suggested. What evolved were six titles that both expressed the heart of the project and the project coordinator's unique personality and interests. For instance, one project focused on developing and implementing an after-school program for children in a neighboring school district that was primarily African American and underserved. The title "Oh the Places You'll Go: Providing Opportunities for Under-Acknowledged Students of Posen-Robbins School District 143½," taken from the title of one of Dr. Seuss's books, evoked the spirit of adventure and learning that the project coordinator hoped to achieve.

Students were also exposed to the idea of writing "thick description" in their journals, knowing that excerpts from those journals would become a part of their final paper and tri-fold display. Students responded to journal prompts weekly, and I had the opportunity to stay in close touch with each project and its progress via these journals. Students also shared their journals with classmates, prompting numerous worthwhile in-class discussions.

Along their service-learning journey, students were introduced to educational philosophers and practitioners whose work has heavily influenced service-learning pedagogy. From Vygotsky they learned the concept of social capital. Vygotsky believed learning from experience or "learning by doing" is the process whereby human development occurs. Knowledge is created through the transformation of experience, the essence of education being to help us see, hear, and experience the world more clearly, more completely, and with more understanding.

From John Dewey, author, educator, and philosopher, students studied the role of democracy and citizenship in education. Dewey argued that one's decisions and actions must be made with regard to the effect they have on others and that schools should be places where service and participatory citizenship are the norm, believing that schools are responsible for addressing social ills.

David Kolb's work helped them delve more deeply into the learning cycle. Kolb defined "experiential learning" as "learning that transforms . . . impulses, feelings, and desires . . . into higher-order purposeful action" (Cooper, 1998, p. 22). It involves a four-part experiential learning process: 1) concrete experience, 2) observations and reflections, 3) formation of abstract concepts and generalizations, and 4) testing implications of concepts in new situations, with information mainly being derived from experience. (Kolb, 1984, p. 21) It offers the foundation for an approach to education and learning as a lifelong process that is soundly based in the intellectual traditions of social psychology, philosophy, and cognitive psychology and that insures critical linkages among education, work, and personal development.

Students were asked to assess, revise, and reassess their service-learning projects, knowing that this was to be a dynamic learning experience that was continually changing and growing. Discouragement became accomplishment as goals were adapted to changing community partners' needs and expectations. Students learned to critically assess themselves and their work and began to ask

PATRICIA L. POWELL

themselves hard questions about why they were doing the work they were doing. For instance, they might have had difficulty communicating effectively with their community partner, either by phone or e-mail, and would then need to come up with alternate ways to communicate and accomplish their goals that aligned with the goals of their community partner. They were also asked to consider whether the work undertaken would be a one-time experience or part of the framework of their lives. Would they continue to be a server, a learner, a community partner, an informed citizen, a democratic participant?

The students wrote segments of their service-learning paper throughout the semester, giving me the opportunity to provide critical feedback and suggestions throughout each stage of the journey. Beginning with their literature review and proceeding with their preparation, action, reflection, celebration, and conclusion sections, students would write initial, corrected, and final drafts until both the student and I were satisfied with the work. Toward the end of the semester, students began designing a final tri-fold display that would visually portray a semester's worth of work, time, and energy. Again students critiqued and supported each other's work, and I saw the projects get better and stronger as students learned from and leaned on each other.

The semester ended with a celebration of the student's projects as they shared their tri-fold displays and papers with interested students and faculty from the college. Each student was ready to discuss his or her work and journey, and each rose to the occasion. The "Honored to Be a Part of Service-Learning" event was held in Trinity's Grand Lobby, and the president and provost of the college stopped by for refreshments and a chance to converse with each of the students. Not only were the students able to put their work into words and a visual display, but they also verbally shared the process of their project, hoping others might join them on their service-learning journeys.

Was the road smooth? Did the students confront any overwhelming obstacles? Were their goals and their community partners' goals met? Were the community partners pleased with the results of the students' work? Perhaps it is best to hear from the students themselves. Following is a brief synopsis of three of the students' projects, including a portion of the literature review, preparation, action and reflection components as well as some concluding thoughts. As these synopses reveal, the students grew in the confidence that they could make changes in their community and their world; they understood that passion is an excellent basis for societal change; and they realized that authentic service and learning can be integrated in ways that lead to personal growth and academic enrichment as well as societal change.

Following are excerpts from the projects undertaken by three of the students.

**OH THE PLACES YOU'LL GO: PROVIDING
OPPORTUNITIES FOR UNDER-ACKNOWLEDGED
STUDENTS OF POSEN-ROBBINS SCHOOL
DISTRICT 143½**

BETSY DYK: JUNIOR ELEMENTARY EDUCATION MAJOR/SPANISH MINOR

“The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you’ll go.”—Literature Review

After-school programs offer what students growing up in low socioeconomic situations crave. Students receive the academic help they need to soar to new heights in their scholastic achievement. They are presented with the social and community stability necessary for healthy personal growth, which impacts not only their immediate childhood, but their future as well. Children are also given a safe-haven and place of refuge to avoid the many dangers which present themselves to unsupervised children. The establishment of after-school programs works to offset the roadblocks which are often experienced in life in underprivileged areas.

“You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself in any direction you choose. You’re on your own. And you know what you know. You are the guy who’ll decide where to go.”—Preparation

We were led into a small cramped office, where we were met by vibrant African decorations and a smiling young woman who introduced herself as Principal Olawumi. She went over the story that was already well known to us, telling us how she had recently taken charge of the school and certain parts of our project hadn’t been passed onto her. We presented both our ideas, as well as those conceived by Keith Dykstra and Emily Kilbourn in their research from the spring. As Principal Olawumi perused the paperwork and asked us questions, we sat on cold metal folding chairs, still trying to calm our fears. Finally she looked up, smiling and said, “Can you start today?” We were so relieved to hear such a positive reaction we could hardly respond.

“I have heard there are troubles of more than one kind. Some come from ahead and some come from behind. But I’ve bought a big bat. I’m all ready you see. Now my troubles are going to have troubles with me!”—Planning to Meet Project Needs

As with most projects our first concern was financial. Without large accounts of money to draw from, as we are poor college students, we had to rely on our own creativity and ingenuity. After our initial worries surrounding the budget had subsided, we began to consider other aspects for which we should be prepared. We discussed many possible parts of our program such as: liability issues, media coverage, participant roles, schedules, and transportation needs. Our primary worry (after finances of course) was that of our liability. In working with the public school system, many different legal responsibilities

come into play. I wrote up a "Discipline Statement" for our volunteers, stating acceptable and unacceptable discipline tactics and procedures. We also discussed and determined what actions should be taken to get background checks for all volunteers working in the public school system.

"And will you succeed? Yes, indeed, yes indeed! Ninety-eight and three-quarters percent guaranteed!"—Action

Our first attempt to start our program proved to be quite rocky. We were quickly faced with the rude awakening and realization that in working with other people, communication break-downs and glitches easily occur. We had planned to begin the program in mid-October and when we contacted the secretary at Childs Elementary school to verify this fact, we were informed that they were not expecting us. A simple misunderstanding over the responsibility of contacting Principal Olawumi resulted in a team of overly-prepared and highly anxious volunteers. We used this opportunity to take a few volunteers to Childs Elementary so that they could become accustomed to the environment of the school

We worked hard to clean up our communication mishap, and were eager to officially begin two weeks later on the first day of November. A much larger group of volunteers piled into the van and headed to Childs Elementary School. When we arrived we were greeted warmly by Principal Olawumi, who led us into the gym and introduced us to the group of students with whom we would be working. After a brief lecture to the students about the result of bad behavior (and a few resounding chorus' of "If we're bad we get kicked out!") she handed the power to our nervous team of college students. Instantly coming to life, the volunteers split in various directions sitting down at the tables and getting to know the students while three of us quickly made up nametags for each of the students. Our project is not over and will continue to grow and change, however the first step has been taken and we are off to an amazing start. Our volunteers, along with us learned that, (in the timeless wisdom of Dr. Seuss) "If you never did, you should. These things are fun, and fun is good."

"Be who you are and say what you feel, because those who mind don't matter and those who matter don't mind."—Reflection

Not only have I taken great lessons and tips about education and working with students (which will serve me well in my future occupation), but I have learned quite a bit about myself as well. In my journal I stated, "I have learned how much of a control-freak I can be and how unwilling I can be to put my trust in others, and have become more flexible and easy-going." It is incredible how drastically situations can change a person and force them to evaluate themselves.

TWO SCHOOLS, TWO COUNTRIES, ONE MISSION: HOW A COLLEGE IN THE U.S. AND A SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF IN JAMAICA PARTNERED TO STRENGTHEN LITERACY

SARAH ENGBERS, SENIOR SPECIAL EDUCATION/ELEMENTARY EDUCATION MAJOR

The Story Introducing the Story

How can two schools be so different, and yet so alike? Can two cultures mesh to form one community? Can that community be united under one goal? These are three questions that are answered by this story. This is my story. This is the story of two schools, two countries, one mission.

Trinity Christian College and the Caribbean Christian Center for the Deaf have been in partnership for just over five years. This partnership started as a work trip, when a group from Trinity went to CCCD for interim as a work team. This partnership has grown and changed, and is now in the form of a week of learning for both the Trinity team and the people at CCCD. Every January, a group from Trinity goes to CCCD and works in the classrooms with the students. While this is going on, the teachers from the school meet with a Trinity professor or two for a week of in-service.

The Story of How I Got Involved

I was sitting at my computer at home one day during the summer, and decided to check my e-mail. I did not usually get many e-mails, so I really wasn't expecting to see anything in my in-box. But on this particular day, there just happened to be an e-mail from one of my professors. I opened the e-mail and as I started reading it joy and sadness welled up in me at once. She was asking about my interest in a special class that she was planning for the upcoming fall semester that was all about service-learning. When registering for classes I had read about this class and had immense interest, but it simply did not fit in my schedule. She said that she had a special project in mind for me that would help fulfill the requirements of her class. The project: to plan a Young Authors Festival to be held at the Caribbean Christian Centre of the Deaf (CCCD) in Montego Bay, Jamaica, the very place I had gone and worked at for interim half a year previous.

The Story of Reading about Reading—Literature Review

Community needs are often different from the needs in the community the “servers” are coming from; international community needs are commonly needs felt by many countries. A majority of communities serviced in international projects are in developing nations. All this is true for my project. Having been to the community once before, I know the impact that culture had on me, and I now have a better understanding of how to work with that community. This, however, does not limit the possibilities for learning through this project. I think that by addressing the need of literacy at CCCD, I have become more aware of the academic divides between the United States and other areas.

The Story of What Happened—Action

With the planning is done, my duty seems complete, but there is so much more to come. This project focuses on the planning of the festival, but I must not ignore the fact that the actual festival day is fast approaching. I have no doubt that little changes will be made as the event approaches, especially once we are in Jamaica. But this does not worry me, for the work that I have done already is quality work, and there is much flexibility and room for change. As long as the event is enjoyable for the students, I will be pleased.

The Story of Celebration

This project allows for a unique form of celebration. This project is composed of planning, and I can celebrate the completion of the planning. That celebration comes through the turning in of this paper, and the final gathering of my service-learning class for our tri-fold presentations. But due to the fact that what I planned is yet to happen, more celebration is due.

Following the Young Authors Festival at CCCD, we plan on having a “feast” with the students, to close that part of the day with celebrating. This will be part of my celebration, for it will be after the event is finished, and I’ll be in celebration with my community partners and also the students, the ones for whom all this planning took place.

The Story of What I Learned—Reflection

Now that the project is complete, I cannot help but be aware of what I have learned. The first big thing is patience. I always thought that I was a patient person, but this showed me that patience is an area that can continually be worked on. It was very frustrating to me to have to do everything in a step-by-step process. I could not place Trinity students in different roles until I knew what roles were needed. I could not buy supplies until I had a supply list. I needed patience in each step.

I also learned a big lesson in partnership. So often I try to do things on my own. I do not like asking other people for help, and am usually quite stubborn when it comes to relying on others. But for this project I needed help from others, and was very grateful to receive it. I realized that I love to help others accomplish tasks; that is part of why I took this project on, but I struggle in letting others help me. To best complete this project, I needed input from my community partners, and support from my classmates, group mates, and friends.

The Story of Future Stories

Although this project is completed, it has paved the way for future potential. It would be difficult to walk away from this project and only say “That was fun.” What is actually said is “That was fun. I wonder where this might lead me to. Perhaps . . . or . . . ” The possibilities are endless. One thing is certain: there are possibilities.

A NEW SEASON: INVOLVING THE LAWNDALE COMMUNITY IN HIV/AIDS PREVENTION AND CARE

KIMBERLY MONSMA: SENIOR COMMUNICATION ARTS/ENGLISH MAJOR

Introduction and Literature Review

My interest in the topic of HIV/AIDS began in May 2005 when I traveled to South Africa to teach HIV/AIDS prevention in rural high schools. While I was there, I got a crash course in the issues facing Africans with this disease. When I returned to school the following year, I joined Trinity's Acting on AIDS chapter, which was in its initial stages. With Acting on AIDS now in its second year, I have taken over as co-director. One area we are trying to develop is a focus on local communities affected by HIV/AIDS. One such community is Lawndale, home of the Lawndale Christian Health Centers, my community partner. The Lawndale Christian Health Center serves a low-income community where HIV/AIDS has become a significant problem. There is a great need for greater awareness and education as well as care for HIV positive people in communities like Lawndale.

To provide clients a way to unite to fight this epidemic and a way for their voices to be heard, the Lawndale Christian Health Center has created a newsletter entitled *A New Season*. This quarterly newsletter provides an outlet for patients to tell their story, a place for the clinic doctor to share health information, a "meet the staff" section for clients to get connected to the center, and a question and answer section for clients to voice their concerns and get answers. This newsletter is the first step in encouraging the community to eradicate this stigma and join together to fight this disease. The HIV Consumer Newsletter is a part of a support system for those who are infected. With this newsletter, the clients finally have a place to have their questions answered, learn about new developments in HIV/AIDS treatments and hear about people like themselves. I have been asked to assist in writing this newsletter.

The Work Begins—Preparation

My learning for this project began before my first meeting with Allison. I had never been to this area of the city before, so getting to the clinic was a new experience that pushed me out of the comfort of my normal experiences. LCHC is in an area of Chicago that is significantly different than areas in which I have lived. I definitely originally felt out of place in this neighborhood. Once I found the clinic, I was immediately put at ease by the friendly and helpful staff, everyone from the parking attendant to the receptionist.

The Work Continues—Action

Later on in the semester, I met with Patricia Johnson, the case manager in charge of the Consumer Advisory Committee. One of my responsibilities for this project was to work with Patricia to facilitate the next CAC meeting, which was scheduled for December 5. During the course of this meeting, we drew up a list of guidelines for the CAC and brainstormed possible clients to invite. We

PATRICIA L. POWELL

decided that it was best to get a broad spectrum of diverse clients, including Hispanics and African Americans, men and women. Patricia agreed to be in charge of recruiting the members of the committee while I planned the agenda.

This meeting with Patricia was significant because I learned a lot more than details for the meeting. Patricia began to ask me questions about my motivation, my goals for this committee, and my heart for this issue. Patricia made me examine my self and she asked me some tough questions. For one of the first times in my whole experience with HIV/AIDS, I was forced to articulate the things I want to do to change this problem. I talked with Patricia about the common problem of trying to cure AIDS by looking only at the problem and not the people. As I reflected with Patricia, we discussed how many of the problems that people face are connected, such as homelessness, drug abuse, and HIV/AIDS. Because of this, it is impossible to fix just one problem. We cannot fight HIV/AIDS by focusing on the problem. We must care for one person at a time with a holistic approach, caring for every aspect of the person.

The Work is Evaluated—Reflection

Throughout this semester, I have been put in many new situations that have taught me many new things. As I produced the newsletter, I was able to develop my skills and learn new things. I was able to expand upon the writing I'd done in classes and use these skills in real life situations. In order to produce the newsletter, I learned how to use Microsoft Publisher for the first time. I was able to use my interviewing skills for a few of the sections and I did a lot of editing and proofreading. The additional writing experience and work with Publisher are skills that will help me as I pursue a career in journalism.

Aside from the technical and career oriented learning that took place, I have changed a lot in my understanding of HIV/AIDS. I still will not claim to know everything—I know I have a lot to learn and probably will never understand it all. But I have a much richer understanding of the different issues that are involved in caring for HIV positive people and the struggles they face everyday.

SPECIAL THANKS

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(also the primary resources used by students in their final papers and bibliography)

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APPENDIX

SERVICE-LEARNING WORKSHEET

Title: _____

Project Administrator: _____

Abstract (a brief description of your project—around 50 words)

Issue and or concern you are addressing (one descriptive sentence)

Preparation: Collaboration and Community Building

1. Name and Brief Description of Community Partner (s): how and why did you choose this partner
2. Assessment of Community Need
3. Potential Strategies to Address this Need

Action: Planning and Implementation

1. Planning to Meet Project Needs

- Preparation
 - Budget Requirements for Project
 - Celebration Budget
 - Potential Liability Issues
 - Potential Media Coverage: Trinity and Beyond
 - Participant Roles (both for you and your community partner (s))
 - Project Schedule
 - Project Structure
 - Supervision/Support Requirements: People or Otherwise
 - Timeline for Project Completion
 - Required Training: You or Your Community Partner
 - Transportation Needs

2. Implementing the Service-Learning Project

Reflection: Assessing the Service-Learning Project

- Student Learning
- Student Service
- Student Experience
- Community Learning
- Community Service
- Community Experience

Service-Learning Project Outcome (s) Connected to your Christian World and Life View

Celebration: Celebrating with your Community Partner

Citations or References: Literature Review

LUKE VASSILIOU

Learning by Leading and Leading by Teaching: A Student-Led Honors Seminar

LUKE VASSILIOU

ABRAHAM BALDWIN AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 2004, the honors program at the two-year Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College offered six core classes and two one-hour seminars for the Honors students, and nothing else. The classes themselves were rewarding for both students and teachers and encouraged student participation, but since the program's existence was limited to the space within the classroom walls, it had low visibility on campus and none beyond our campus. As a new (and completely inexperienced) honors director, I consulted both the NCHC executive committee's statement of "Basic Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors Program" (1994) and Rew Godow's article on "Honors Program Leadership" (*Forum for Honors*). Both documents emphasized the multiple functions of honors programs beyond the classroom and the variety of roles for an honors program administrator, so the first apparent step the program needed beyond curriculum was the creation of an honors student association. Students quickly took the initiative in the effort once I brought up the idea; in the first year alone our student association got the award for highest fundraising amount for Relay for Life on campus and we initiated events that enhance the campus feeling of community. Creating a social branch of the program and increasing visibility on campus were by themselves a significant accomplishment, yet we were still a long way from the goalpost set by the NCHC and Rew Godow. We were also faced with realities beyond our control: Tifton, Georgia, is a small rural town among other similar towns, and our college enrollment was no more than 3,000 students at that time (the honors program had a total of 40 students in the freshman and sophomore years). If students were to gain more leadership experience, more opportunities were needed.

I had to examine my own assumptions that such opportunities happen through extra-curricular activities alone. I had already noticed that many of the honors students from the area were involved in church groups and Bible study sessions where they did assume leadership positions in managing discussions and organizing sessions; many students had also been members of groups such as 4H or FFA, the latter a completely student-run organization. Ironically, then,

LEARNING BY LEADING AND LEADING BY TEACHING

students had come to see their churches and extracurricular clubs as institutions that entrusted them with power more than the academic world did. Clearly our students had background and potential in assuming leadership roles, but having freshman students lead a seminar all on their own was still somewhat of an academic taboo. My own previous experience when I started as a graduate teaching assistant fresh out of a bachelor's program in English was a reminder that sometimes the only way to learn how to do something is to actually do it. Out of these needs and thoughts, an experiment was born. In the spring of 2005, I restructured the honors spring seminar so that it would no longer be led by an honors faculty member. Instead, the honors director would coach students outside the classroom to prepare them to run the seminar themselves. The first semester of their college career would thus be a prelude to becoming teachers in the second semester.

PREPARATION

In our program, honors students take two one-hour seminars: the first focused on self, society, and citizenship, and the second on science and nature. I hypothesized that after a semester's worth of seminar discussions, students would be familiar with a format that calls for active participation rather than passive note-taking. Since southern culture is generally disapproving of confrontation and of challenging someone else's expressed opinion, it was even more urgent to allow these gifted students, fresh out of high school, to adapt to the more open-ended nature of college learning. To allow for short teaching units during the second semester, I chose a science reader that had a variety of topics covered in short individual essays. That year the choice was *The Best Science and Nature Writing 2003*, with selections that included essays on, for instance, cloning, pesticides, population control, historical doubts about the Old Testament, and challenges to the blank-slate theory. I intentionally chose readings that would motivate students to argue against the published writers even if they would be hesitant to confront each other. The seminar met once a week; since we had twenty-four students, I chose twelve units and a pair of two students to run the classroom for each unit/week.

The next step was to create a process through which students would understand what they were required to do. They would not simply present, as at a conference. They would not simply lead discussion. They would be in control of the classroom, from defining the start time (the student leaders for that day would decide how to handle interruptions and tardiness) to introducing the topic, providing additional information, calling on students, regulating participation, and ending class for the day. If I, as an instructor, wanted to participate, I would have to raise my hand and wait to be called on (participating by raising the hand was another choice students would make—they could have different formats). I warned students that I would provide no safety net unless classroom happenings transgressed legal boundaries (this, of course, never happened or came close). Since the lack of an instructor-led discussion might make

students think they did not have to do the readings, and since I did not want the leaders to face that problem so early in their teaching experience, I required that all students except the day's leaders had to write a journal response for the day's readings; the journal would be turned in to me at the end of the day.

An important consideration here was assigning the pairs. I considered allowing students to choose their own co-presenters, but in the end the learning potential seemed greater if they had to factor in how to cooperate with someone new in addition to learning how to coordinate the class. Of all my decisions in the trial run, this was the one I pondered the most, and I have since decided to continue with it: students learn a lot from each other not only in terms of different presentation, research, and discussion styles but also in attitudes toward deadlines and assignments. I decided to have students rate the essays/topics that most interested them on the first day of class and then did my best to assign them one of their highest rated topics. No one could look at each other's sheets as they rated the topics to ensure that they would not change their preferences in order to get a particular partner. Not every partnership was successful, but all of the students gained insight into how they deal with personalities different from their own.

After I assigned the pairs, each pair signed up for three conferences with me: two before the day they would run the class and one after. The first conference was, frankly, a chance for me to make sure they had read the essay and to explain how their effort would be graded. The conference took place at least two weeks before they led the class, but some chose to come much earlier. I gave them the following rubric:

- 1) Did they introduce the topic?
- 2) Did they present research beyond the assigned essay?
- 3) Did they keep the class focused on the topic?
- 4) Did they make sure everyone participated?
- 5) Did they avoid having a few students talk too much at the expense of others?
- 6) Did they make sure discussion was grounded in the reading and research?
- 7) Did they offer enough time for their classmates to participate rather than monopolizing the class time themselves?

However, I emphasized that I would grade their performance on a holistic scale beyond the individual elements, and based on whether the class was engaging and focused while also offering learning opportunities for the students. My decision to keep grading at the instructor level was both to emphasize the training element of the seminar and to alleviate any concerns about grades at the division and college level.

At the first session I offered suggestions for getting class discussion moving: for example, if someone is unwilling to contribute, leaders could ask that

student to mention a couple of comments from his or her journal. I also suggested they should have a series of questions for the class and consider everything from how the class would sit (in a circle? in traditional rows? in an amphitheater style?) to what, if any, activities they would include. The week before a pair-led discussion, we had the second meeting. At that point they presented to me a plan of how they would organize the day's class. I let them know that, unless it looked as if they had no plan to speak of, I would not correct, amend, or endorse their plan. Creating their plan was part of the learning process; I simply wanted to assess their preparation. I was not there to approve or disapprove of what they would do in class.

The third and final conference took place after (but not immediately after) the students had led class discussion. Each student leader individually submitted a self-evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the session and of his or her own performance as well as suggestions for what should be changed, maintained, or expanded in the future. I gave more comments during post-class discussions with the first two pairs because they had no basis of comparison with others; later in the semester, I emphasized their strengths but, instead of indicating weaknesses, I pointed out how other pairs had handled similar situations.

THE ACTUAL CLASS

For all three years I have conducted the seminar in this format, I spend the first three weeks of the spring semester (as I assign pairs and work with the pairs in selecting topics) modeling for students a variety of classroom management styles. At the end of each class I take five or ten minutes to point out the reasons for my actions that day, where I think the class went well, and how it could improve. I reiterate every day that there is no such thing as a perfect class. I emphasize the importance of reflection upon choices both before and after I commit them. I also use these three weeks as points of reference during our conference sessions.

Once students start leading class, I enter the room as early as I can, take attendance, and then choose a seat in the back unless the students have arranged for a particular seating for all of us. I treat the experience as I would an observation of a colleague, although obviously I am on a much higher state of alert than that. Sometimes "facts" are presented that are not only erroneous but can lead to harmful and prejudicial generalizations; sometimes a particular personal example is presented as indicative of a whole class, race, or sex; sometimes the leaders are more interested in talking than listening to others and encouraging participation. I have to make a leap of faith; I have to believe that the long-term goals and benefits will outweigh the particular problems. I also have to accept that, since I do not have more than a couple of turns in which to speak when called on, I have to save my comments for the end. Even then, I have to avoid appearing as the fact checker or police officer of the class and simply state an opinion. I have no illusion that my authority is dissolved during class, but I believe that the less it is used, the softer it is. I therefore try not to get involved in the most heated debates.

RESULTS

At least nine times out of ten, the class flows effortlessly: more students participate than they do in other classes led by me and other instructors; the leaders find innovative and ingenious ways to engage the class; and both the research and discussion take us places I never would have imagined. I assumed that the biggest benefit would be to the students, but the freshness and constant element of change has significantly rejuvenated me as an instructor and has made the seminar a learning experience for me as well as them. In terms of training students to take a leadership role, even students who are not eager to have an audience find that being paired with another student or just being able to sit down eases them into the process. While during the first couple of sessions there is still an air of apprehension, usually by the third session students forget I am there and focus their attention on the classroom leaders and each other.

The most noticeable result in the spring of 2005 was an increased involvement in the honors student association. Other honors faculty, moreover, started observing that students gradually requested more interaction and assignments that called for greater initiative on their part. In the following year, our students volunteered to present at the Georgia Collegiate Honors Council conference and then the Southern Regional Honors Council conference; they continued their participation in 2007 as well. In 2007 our students submitted proposals to the NCHC conference for the first time; their proposals were not accepted, but they were not discouraged, and they plan to help next year's freshmen submit proposals in addition to submitting new proposals of their own. In fact, our honors students now regularly coach other students on how to present at conferences.

Even further, honors program students have taken the initiative in programs and clubs outside our own, and in the last three years we have had a student body president, a Jack Kent Cooke foundation scholar, and full scholarships to our students who were accepted at Mercer University in Georgia, Georgia Tech, Northwestern in Chicago, and Stanford. Before, our cohort of students transferred to UGA alone, or to smaller regional universities. Their essays and my letters of recommendation demonstrate that the challenge, complexity, and instructional benefits of the leadership experience in their honors seminar offer students an added learning dimension that the environment of a small college would not easily provide.

MODIFICATIONS

After the first run, a major modification has been to turn part of the fall semester seminar into a vehicle for critique and analysis of classroom instruction through journals and small-group, post-session evaluations. These evaluations take place four times after midterm, when the class has found its pace and students have gotten used to the seminar format. The discussions after these sessions focus on the following areas, similar to the rubric for student leaders:

LEARNING BY LEADING AND LEADING BY TEACHING

- 1) Did the instructor introduce the topic?
- 2) Did the instructor present any research beyond the assigned text?
- 3) Did the instructor keep the class focused on the topic?
- 4) Did the instructor make sure everyone participated?
- 5) Did the instructor avoid having a few students talk too much at the expense of others?
- 6) Did the instructor make sure discussion was grounded in the readings and research?
- 7) Did the instructor offer enough time for students to participate rather than monopolizing the class time?

The journals invite students to write a narrative impression of what worked well and what did not, taking into consideration the above questions but also allowing for other feedback and concerns. I tell students that these critiques are designed as preparation for leading the class and not as traditional end-of-the-semester course evaluations.

As a result of student feedback, some curricular changes have included adding honors sections of Speech and of Computer Applications in order to help students with their presentation skills and public speaking in the fall semester prior to the leadership seminar in the spring.

ONGOING CONSIDERATIONS

A major pedagogical consideration is the integrity of the seminar's content: does the selection of essays guarantee that the level, breadth, and depth of intellectual discussion will be similar to those in a seminar led by an instructor? For me this concern brings forth a different set of questions: Does being most qualified to teach a subject mean you are a good teacher? Even if I were running the class, is an English professor qualified to teach an interdisciplinary seminar? From whom and through what processes do students ultimately learn in a seminar? Are our assumptions about what students cannot do predicated on our assumptions about our own abilities? I have no definitive answers to these questions; I have, however, accepted that there is a certain trade-off of content for engagement and leadership opportunities, and it is a trade-off that I and the college have accepted.

An administrative consideration relates to student evaluations of the instructor at the end of the semester. Other than the first three weeks when I model the process for students, my actual presence in the classroom is not center-stage but on the sidelines even though I am ready to intervene if absolutely necessary. Students (and sometimes administrators) can overlook the work that goes into preparing each pair for classroom leadership and assessing their performance after the class. Untraditional pedagogy can lead to untraditional course evaluations.

LUKE VASSILIOU

CONCLUSION

A final—and initially unforeseen—consequence has been that teaching and classroom management have been problematized among honors program students. Consequently, student reviews of faculty in casual conversations as well as formal evaluations do not stay at the superficial level of whether the instructors are fair or willing to listen to student opinion or even whether they deliver an interesting class. Once students have seen a variety of management styles and have been in the driver’s seat themselves, they see each class as a work in progress and are aware of possibilities and choices rather than just the finished product. This heightened sophistication about pedagogy creates more scrutiny of honors faculty, and this scrutiny then expands beyond the honors program into the college as a whole. While such scrutiny is not always comfortable, it benefits the students, the honors program, and the whole campus, making us better teachers and learners; it thus affirms the transformative role of honors in institutional culture.

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APPENDIX

SAMPLE STUDENT OPINIONS, CHOSEN TO REPRESENT A VARIETY OF RESPONSES

"I am not a science major, but this class was my favorite. It was exciting coming to class every week. I was nervous when I would present because I am not good with speeches, but being able to sit on the desk made all the difference. Now I know why you professors aren't nervous."

"Dr. Vassiliou, this summer I applied for an internship with Lowe's . . . for my job I would visit some cities in the Charleston area and they asked if I have any experience leading groups etc. When I told them what we did in the seminar they were very impressed. The hiring manager said I have a very good chance . . . I got the job this week. Thanks for giving me something more in the class!"

"I loved how much input we have on everything. I feel like this was truly different from high school where we had no say on anything. The only thing I would suggest is if maybe we can also come up with the essays and topics in the future, and that way it will really be our own class."

"Our group talked with the 'Silent Spring' group since we had similar issues in the essays and we didn't want to do the same. We didn't know if this was allowed. We were so glad when you told us at the first meeting there are no rules. Then we stressed out cause what if some other group did some extravagant stuff and ours was boring by comparison? Overall I found the experience very good, but maybe it would be better for sophomores because this year we were still figuring out college and preparing for our discussion day was so much work for a 1-hour seminar."

"Dr. V, I don't know if I would keep the same essays again. Maybe next time do the class with some focus other than science and nature. Some things were difficult for us to discuss because of people's religious beliefs. But I loved the way we were in charge of the class. I know I was edgy at the conference. I had never done it and I wanted more help from you, but I am glad you trusted us to do a good job."

"I didn't always like the way people handled class, and that's the only suggestion I have to improve the course, don't let people do whatever they want. Have some guidelines. It was hard participating every week because it was like I was walking into a different class every Wednesday."

Study Abroad And at Home

GAYLE A. LEVY

Sweden in the Summer: Developing an Honors Study-Abroad Program

GAYLE A. LEVY

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI-KANSAS CITY

I want to begin this paper by making a claim with which, at first, not everyone might agree. Any *good* study abroad experience can be considered an honors experience. This short sentence raises any number of questions, which I cannot fully answer in this space, nor is it the primary topic of my essay. It is, however, a way to contextualize our one-month honors study abroad program at University of Missouri-Kansas City.

STUDY ABROAD = HONORS?

First, what do I mean by a “good” study abroad experience? “Good” implies that its structure and content allow the student participant to achieve what most of us would agree are the main reasons to study abroad—an expanded vision of the global community and the United States’ (sometimes deleterious) role in that community, a more profound understanding of the target culture, a greater sense of individual responsibility and self-reliance, and the realization that a college education in general is a precious commodity that should be mined for all its possibilities. In a 2002 article in the *National Honors Report*, Mel Shoemaker, though writing about honors programs, outlines goals that are also praiseworthy for study abroad programs: “The challenge is to [. . .] create conscientious consumers of commodities, critical evaluators of local, national and world media, and compassionate global citizens who ask questions beyond those of individual and national self-interest of the present” (6). These are goals that we hope to impart to honors students throughout their undergraduate careers; study abroad is perhaps the most direct way to teach them and is thus an important component in an honors student’s education.

In creating UMKC’s honors study abroad program, I was already quite aware of the positive results engendered by study abroad because I have directed our non-honors summer program in Lyon, France, for four summers. I have seen first-hand the self-reliance and confidence a homestay-based program can impart to a student, and I have witnessed the exciting projects students present after doing research in a European archive (in the case of Lyon, at the Centre d’Histoire de la Résistance et de la Déportation). What I was less aware of was honors pedagogy and what makes an honors course different from a regular

SWEDEN IN THE SUMMER

course. I should add that I became director of the 120-student UMKC Honors Program in 2003 and that same year began to lay the groundwork for our study abroad program; thus, much of what I learned about honors occurred in the trenches while I was launching a host of new initiatives.

Honors administrators and faculty constantly define and redefine what honors courses are. I tell my students that honors courses are not necessarily more work, and they are not necessarily harder, but they are more suited to the way that honors students (often known as gifted or accelerated students earlier in their academic careers) learn. These courses should be smaller than regular courses, be based on discussion (not lecture), include more primary sources and student-centered discovery (meaning that students should be allowed to make connections, discover new ideas, and explore the texts on their own as opposed to having the instructor proffer his or her own readings), stress writing and oral presentations, and, I would add, generally be more lively, a bit more out-of-control than a regular class. I like the image of controlled chaos—many diverse voices arguing, agreeing, and creating together and individually.

NUTS AND BOLTS OF HONORS STUDY ABROAD

When I began to envision an honors study abroad program, I quickly realized that the model I was accustomed to, the language-immersion experience, did not apply in this case. In order to make this program feasible for the widest population of honors students, it could not be a foreign-language based program. Furthermore, UMKC students in general have not had the opportunity to travel much outside the Midwest, let alone beyond the U.S., and thus we needed to plan a program that felt manageable for our students. I assembled a subcommittee to help me design the program, and the honors students in the group felt strongly that the program needed to take place in a country where English was spoken widely. After much discussion, we found ourselves hesitating between South Africa and Sweden. I wanted the former, but the other committee members felt that it would be too difficult a place for our students to travel to—in terms of both culture and cost. We decided that we needed to create a program that would serve as a jumping-off point for our students' study abroad experiences. Ideally an honors student would participate in our Sweden Study Abroad program the summer after his or her first year at UMKC and would, as a result, the next year try a language-immersion program or spend a semester or a year in a non-European country. Sweden fit the bill perfectly as an "introduction to study abroad" of sorts.

The final reason we chose Uppsala, Sweden, was that one of the members of the committee is a native and was able to help us negotiate some of the initial hurdles. These days it is becoming easier to set up a study abroad program without first engaging in a fact-finding mission to the country. Dr. Lynda Payne, the faculty member who leads the program to Sweden, designed the day-to-day schedules using resources she found on the Internet and in travel guides. She put together her entire budget, planned the excursions (trips to museums, a day

in Stockholm, a weekend in the Värmland), and found important information for the students (bus schedules and fares from the airport to Uppsala, for example) without leaving Kansas City. This said, however, a preparatory trip to Sweden was necessary to find housing for the students. Although even this might have been possible to find over the Internet, I felt it necessary that someone actually visit the hostel we were considering, and this is where Dr. Bibie Chronwall, our native-informant, came in. Like many honors programs, we had no money to spend setting up the Sweden program. However, we were lucky that Bibie was going to Sweden the summer before our inaugural trip, and she gamely agreed to find housing for the students. In the end, the first hostel she looked at fit our needs precisely: small, single rooms with kitchenettes rented on a monthly basis and meeting rooms on the first floor that we could use as classrooms. So, my first bit of advice for setting up an honors study abroad program would be to find some gentle soul who will do a bit of the target-country legwork. Preferably the director of the program should go to the country to find the housing and classroom space, but, if this is not economically possible, with some preparation beforehand (e.g., addresses to be visited, a list of questions to be asked) a kindly volunteer can help out. Of course, ideally, the kindly volunteer will be a native of the country as well. No matter how similar the target country's culture is to our own, there are always forms of decorum and other customs that escape our notice and that, when understood, make the task much more enjoyable.

Once we had our student housing (I found the director's lodgings on-line with the help of someone at Uppsala University), we put together our budget. We used the program fee to pay for the director's housing and food while the students' tuition offset the cost of her summer salary. Students were asked to find their own flights as no one wanted to leave on the same day and they all had different ways of getting to Sweden. We did have a few pre-departure meetings, months in advance, for students to arrange to travel there together if they so desired.

The first problem we encountered was one we had foreseen and tried to forestall. Because of the demanding set of general education requirements at UMKC, our students tend not to take courses that do not fulfill either major or general requirements (if they come in with no AP or other college credit, students must take 66 units of general education courses!). We had to devise a way that the six units of coursework completed in Sweden would fulfill basic curricular requirements, which we did by shaping the syllabi of the classes to fulfill related requirements. The courses highlighted interdisciplinary and cross-cultural perspectives, two of our general education requirements. Although this strategy might seem obvious for teaching about a foreign culture, it had to be worked into the syllabi from the beginning in order to fulfill these requirements.

On our campus it is difficult to attract students to a new study abroad program. We offer very few scholarships for study abroad, and, as I have noted earlier, our students tend to remain in the Midwest. Furthermore, 90% of UMKC's students are commuters, and over the summer many work. That first summer

SWEDEN IN THE SUMMER

(July 2006), only two of 120 honors students chose to participate in the program, so we opened it up to both honors students outside of UMKC (I advertised on the National Collegiate Honors Council website—two students joined us from the website announcement) and non-honors students at UMKC (six more students enrolled for a total of 10). We decided that we wouldn't change the classes at all. The non-honors students would simply benefit from the classes as designed, and this proved to be no problem. We also targeted our recruiting efforts at student populations that seemed most likely to be able to take advantage of the program, such as the UMKC six-year medical school program. The students in this program were more likely to be able to afford the program, and the study abroad director, Dr. Payne, is an historian of medicine and gender (with a Master's in Scandinavian Studies); thus her perspective on Carl Linnaeus (the Swedish botanist who established the system of binomial nomenclature) and the National Romantics interested medical students. Recruitment for the next year (July 2007 was our second summer in Uppsala) was much easier. We asked students who had already participated in the program to speak to prospective participants, and obviously their efforts helped recruitment. We organized a number of information sessions where they could share their experiences and display their projects. In the end, thirteen students traveled to Sweden in the 2007 program.

One Sweden-specific issue that has come up and that is not necessarily correlated to honors is marketing. Language-based study abroad programs have a built-in audience. "Exotic" countries from the American perspective, nations in Africa or Asia, also tend to sell themselves. Places like Scandinavian countries, however, are often seen as dull or too familiar. The stereotype of Sweden is that it is a clean, homogeneous country with a culture very similar to America's. The students who went on the program, however, returned with a completely different view of Sweden. They learned about the Laplanders and their non-Western culture and way of life. They read about the offensive national eugenics program that stretched from 1905 through 1945. They researched Sweden's "neutrality" (or lack thereof) during WWII. And they attended festivals and visited neighborhoods that proved to them that Sweden is in no way a racially or culturally homogeneous nation. These sides of Sweden do not generate the stereotypes with which our students are familiar, and they are important facets of Swedish culture.

BUREAUCRATIC ISSUES

The major problem we have had to face in establishing this program has been institutional, quite specific to UMKC. We cannot seem to get the payment, enrollment, and reimbursement issues ironed out. These problems stem from UMKC's rather small Center for International Academic Programs. We do not have many customized study abroad programs; each department or unit has traditionally run its own program. So, my home department, Foreign Languages and Literatures, has been running our programs in Lyon, Xalapa, Grenada,

Buenos Aires, and Klagenfurt on our own. We take the students' money, we enroll them for classes, we (or, I should specify, our amazing secretary) collect receipts, and we reimburse the directors of the programs. The same goes for the programs in the Business School, the School of Nursing, etc. CIAP helps with publicity and preparing the students, but each department handles its own grunt work. For a program like Honors Study Abroad, there is no department to take care of these matters. In principle our International Programs office should do this, but it is not set up to handle all the money and enrollment issues. So we muddle through. At the moment our Continuing Education program is manhandling the money and enrollment matters, and we hope that in the future we will find a bureaucratic home for the program.

HONORS CLASSES AT HOME AND ABROAD

I would like to return to the issue of honors pedagogy and in what ways the courses taught in Sweden are honors classes. Obviously, as she designed the curriculum, Dr. Payne wanted to take full advantage of Uppsala. Thus, although each morning the students are in a classroom discussing the texts they have read (these are generally primary texts—essays by Linnaeus, a novel by Selma Lagerlöf, *April Witch* by Majgull Axelsson, excerpts from the classic anthropological text *Culture Builders* by Frykman and Löfgren), each afternoon they take an excursion. Sometimes they explore the urban space, in the classic City as Text™ model, discussing the symbolic meaning for Swedes of the site in question. On other days they are in museums, exploring palaces, or visiting libraries. From the outset each student chooses a research topic and develops a project in order to report the findings of that research. Although some students' research topics relate directly to their major (for example, a public policy student designed an evaluation to assess how the Sweden program fulfilled the students' expectations, curricular needs, etc.), others choose projects that allow them to broaden their creative horizons. One political science student chose to assemble a scrapbook reflecting her perspective on the history of Uppsala. A Conservatory of Music honors student painted a series of landscapes and then wrote an analysis of the ways Nordic painters use light. A medical student mapped out and evaluated Linnaeus' garden and then transposed it to the Midwest, substituting the appropriate plants from the different climate zone. This summer an honors student in Spanish interviewed Spanish teachers in Uppsala to ascertain how foreign-language pedagogy in Sweden differs from that in the U.S. The resulting project may be very creative in form or more traditional. In either case, at the end of the month the students gather at Gamla Uppsala, the ancient settlement of Uppsala, and present their projects to the class as a whole.

The honors characteristic of these classes derives from the combination of primary texts, research (in a few cases archival, although in some projects the research involves interviewing Swedes), creative or scholarly projects, and oral presentations. But the honors quality also stems from the specificity of the study abroad experience. Directors of honors programs strive to imbue in their students

SWEDEN IN THE SUMMER

the desire to be intellectuals. We model this behavior, but we also try to make it a natural outcome of the classes we teach and the extracurricular activities we program for the students. In our Honors Living/Learning Community we have movie nights where faculty members lead discussions of the films; we organize debates around philosophical or political topics; we have a book club and go to the theater together. All these events encourage intellectualism. Even if the event is purely social—a touch football game on the dorm lawn—I hope that at some point a few students might get a “kick” out of analyzing the ritualistic elements of the game.

Simply by having the courses take place in Sweden, the students make links between their classes and the lives they are leading outside the classroom. Dr. Payne told me of the animated discussion that ensued at lunch one day when the students observed the Swedish obsession with fleeing the city during the summer (they were surprised by the number of families who leave town to spend time in their tiny, very primitive summer homes, communing with nature) through the lens of their readings by Linnaeus. She explained that other lunchtime discussions ranged from the extensive child protection laws—corporal punishment is illegal—to the Swedes’ seemingly complete lack of interest in religion or the pros and cons of the Swedish welfare state. This kind of moment is what we as honors directors strive to create in our home-institution classes and residence-hall activities; the discussion is completely impromptu in a study abroad program. There is no need for programming, planning, designing. The students make the links quite naturally, perhaps because not only are the texts and information new to them but also the environment, culture, and people. All of this newness begs to be analyzed, thought about, and discussed. The students pick up the baton and run, on their own, out of sheer curiosity and excitement.

So, through a long, rather discursive exercise, I’ve circled back to my original premise, that a *good* study abroad experience can be considered an honors experience. I think that our Honors Study Abroad in Uppsala, Sweden is really quite wonderful, thanks in full to the gifted faculty members who have helped organize and lead it. In a perfect world, all honors students (okay, all students) need to study abroad.

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CRAIG T. COBANE AND DERICK B. STRODE

Literary New England: Planning and Implementing Domestic Travel Study

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ABSTRACT

Domestic travel courses provide honors programs/colleges a variety of educational opportunities to immerse students in a culture different from their own. This essay presents one example of an honors-sponsored domestic travel course and discusses its differences from and similarities to study abroad courses. Additionally, we discuss the various elements that go into conceiving, developing, and executing such an educational experience. The essay is structured to provide a roadmap for creating a domestic travel course.

BACKGROUND

Over the past several years the Honors Program at Western Kentucky University (WKU) has seen a growth of over 200% in its freshman class while at the same time increasing its admission standards and building a reputation for its innovative courses. Expansion in the number of students has also occurred in the university at large, which has undergone a decade-long growth trend and continues to be one of the fastest growing institutions in the region, reaching 19,215 total students in the fall of 2007. The combination of a larger, stronger institution and the ongoing development of the Honors Program led to the transformation of the program into an Honors College in the summer of 2007.

Like most honors experiences, the WKU Honors College encourages and supports a range of study abroad courses and experiential learning opportunities for all its students. The Honors College is distinguishing itself through its willingness to be experimental in its course offerings. The summer of 2007 featured a new addition: an honors course designed like a study abroad course but focused domestically. This course, Literary New England, was what we call a "domestic travel study."

DOMESTIC TRAVEL STUDY VS. STUDY ABROAD

Literary New England personified the values of the WKU Honors College by combining features of experiential learning, critical thinking, and creative activity with a conscious effort to develop collegial associations between students,

LITERARY NEW ENGLAND

faculty, and staff. Additionally, successful completion of the course required reflective analysis (through a blog-based personal travel journal), independent thinking and research (manifested in a post-travel research paper), and team-based participation throughout the travel itself. The course was co-organized and facilitated by a longtime honors faculty member from the English department and a graduate intern from the Honors College (the essay's second author). Because Literary New England drew upon the Honors College's philosophy of engaging students, it depended heavily for pre-travel advice and support from the Director of the Honors College (the essay's first author), who served as a sounding board for ideas, assisted in getting much needed administrative assistance from several departments on campus, and provided financial support for the trip.

The trip featured experiential learning spread out over fourteen full days of travel in New England visiting various American literary, historical, and cultural sites. Students were asked to go beyond analyzing the literature (as they would do in a classroom) by linking literary ideas to place, culture, and time. One student made the connection evident when he wrote, "I was walking where Thoreau and Emerson walked on the shores of Walden Pond, I breathed in the cold ocean air as Melville once did, and I traced the curves and angles of Hawthorne's own handwriting with my index finger. How much closer can someone get to these literary geniuses of nineteenth-century America?" On completion of the course, students earned three hours of honors credit, the same as a three-week, concentrated May-term course on campus.

The course organizers, realizing that one of the primary advantages of education abroad is experiential learning, sought to apply this immersion pedagogy domestically. Domestic travel courses involve almost every element of planning that a study abroad includes (minus passports, money exchanges, and sometimes language barriers). At the completion of the trip, the consensus of the faculty, staff, and students (those with previous study abroad experience) was that domestically focused experiential learning can be as powerful an educational experience as international travel. One student commented, "This trip [. . .] has shown me that some of the greatest treasures for a student of literature aren't necessarily located in London or anywhere else in Europe; they are here in our backyard. Literature is no longer this far-away concept for me; it is something tangible and close to home. I don't need a passport to reconnect with my studies on a physical level."

For students interested in American literature, the course provided the fresh option of studying their genre on site. Like students on a study abroad trip, students in this course, most of whom were from Kentucky, learned about cultural differences—in this case between New England and their home culture. Students saw unfamiliar architectural styles, heard accents and word usages different from those of their peers at home, and, perhaps most importantly, experienced a culture of proximate history in New England that scarcely exists in Kentucky. New England provided the class a place where noted authors sometimes lived next door to one another and where students could walk across

lawns between historic sites. Immersed in New England's abundance of storied American Revolutionary sites, students found themselves in a culture where academia met reality. As one student stated in her blog, "As I turned the pages filled with handwriting hundreds of years old, I could not help but finally feel connected to these great writers." Such reactions demonstrate the success of the experiential learning style of Literary New England.

Another component of international travel that domestic travel mimics is the interdisciplinary nature of learning. Focusing on the concentration of literary opportunities that New England offers, students inadvertently learned lessons across a range of disciplines. For example, while visiting Stellwagen Bank for whale watching, students had an unexpected biology lesson about the anatomy, life spans, and feeding habits of several species of whales. This lesson intertwined with the literature, prompting one student to write, "I now understand the line from *Moby Dick*, 'The birds, the birds, they mark the spot,' because seagulls will circle the spot where the whales are feeding." On Nantucket Island, the group spent an evening with a guest lecturer who discussed telescope making and the history of astronomy in the United States. One student's reflection upon the evening led her to comment, "I learned more about astronomy in one night than I did in an entire semester." American history and American art infiltrated students' study as a linking theme of each site visit. Students talked with Wampanoag American Indians at Plimoth Plantation and visited an Edward Hopper exhibit at the Museum of Fine Art in Boston. Students' final papers connected Hopper's art to Longfellow's home and poetry, generated discussion about private and public ownership of literary sites, and pulled in themes of education, history, and politics that supported the literary focus. Boundaries between American literature, geography, curatorial work, the sciences, history, culture, and society blurred into a fusion of learning the same way that study abroad trips offer more educational value than what is written in the course description.

The university treated Literary New England as a study abroad experience in issues related to risk management including the requirement that all extended academic trips must have at least two faculty or staff members, preferably of opposite genders. On Sunday, May 13, 2007, eleven students and three staff members (two males and one female) flew from Kentucky into Manchester, New Hampshire, where two rented vans were waiting at the airport. These vans provided the group's transportation for the trip with two exceptions: a two-day stay in Boston when the group relied solely on public transportation and a visit to Nantucket Island when they relied on ferry and foot travel while the vans waited on the mainland.

Just as students travel to Florence to study art and Costa Rica to study biology, students traveled to Massachusetts to study literature. The proximity and concentration of sites allowed a number of American literary and historical sites to be visited—sometimes at a rate of three places a day—during the trip. Visits centered on the course's required reading. For example, Herman Melville's

LITERARY NEW ENGLAND

Moby Dick was accentuated by a four-hour-long whale-watching excursion from Gloucester, Massachusetts, a weekend trip to Nantucket Island (where the whaling industry had reached its height in the mid-nineteenth century), and finally to Arrowhead Farm, Melville's homestead in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, where he wrote this great novel. (See Appendix B for a full list of sites.)

FUNDING

Trip organizers wanted to limit each student's cost to \$1500. This revenue was the primary source of funding, but supplemental funds for the trip were also necessary. New England offered an endless bounty of options such as the aforementioned weekend trip to Nantucket Island, the whale-watching excursion, and a pub tour of Revolutionary Boston. To overcome the limits of finance, the planners of the trip sought external funding from multiple university departments. Supplemental funding came from the Honors College, the English Department, the Potter College of Arts and Letters, the Office of Graduate Studies and Research, and the Student Government Association. Administrative support was provided by the WKU Division of Extended Learning and Outreach (DELO), which also assisted logistically in finalizing travel arrangements, communicating the trip's budget to its planners, and paying the bills. At the trip's end, DELO, which managed the course's general account, reported a small surplus of money in the course's budget. The excess money was recycled back into the general fund to support future travel study courses.

DELO was instrumental in keeping an accurate account of money spent versus money in the general course budget by providing one of their staff members to travel along as part of the trip's leadership team. DELO is interested in taking on more budgeting and logistical support roles for future travel study trips at WKU and believed there were multiple advantages to be gained by offering a staff member. Not only could they assist in carrying out the prescribed budget of the trip, but they could also see the travel study through all its phases. The pre-trip planning became an additional learning opportunity because the entire process (i.e., negotiating room prices, bartering services for lower room rates, and staying in facilities other than hotels or motels) became an educational experience for students who did not realize the issues involved in planning a trip such as this one. At pre-trip meetings, students got updates on where they would be going and staying and which university departments were pitching in to sponsor the trip. The trip organizers also shared with the students the time and effort needed to organize a two-week trip.

TIMELINE OF PLANNING

Specific planning for the May 2007 trip began as early as November 2006, some seven months before the travel actually took place. By December 2006, a rough itinerary was created to allow for lodging reservations to be made. When students returned from winter break in January 2007, recruitment began immediately to attract a gender-balanced group of honors students, thus easing

room assignments. By March 2007, the roster was finalized; students had submitted their applications, signed their waivers of liability, and paid their deposits. Because the anticipated revenue was established, specific site visits and reservations could be made. Special tours were arranged with on-site experts (such as a visit to view American literary manuscripts at Harvard University's Houghton Library), group airfare rates were finalized, and the rental vans were reserved.

LODGING

Lodging for the trip was one of the earliest considerations in planning. The trip leaders considered hotels and motels only as a last resort, believing that other options would encourage more community building among the group and lend more character to the trip. Finding places to stay that would offer common areas for class discussions was a necessity. Having one central location to stay the entire time might have been an option; however, the top choice for such a location could not accommodate the group for two weeks. In the end, four separate lodgings were booked: a rural hostel on the suburban fringe of Boston; a Nantucket Island research facility; an urban Boston hostel; and a Berkshire retreat center. (See Appendix C for specific comments on lodgings.) This combination of lodging facilities added character and charm to the stay; most importantly, it fostered community building among students through the use of shared commons areas. Classes were held in the evenings. Because the rooms, in all cases, were without televisions and computers, students sought each other's company.

Planning a trip for honors students provided significant advantages to the organizers. Every phone conversation began with brief descriptions of the academic intent of Literary New England and of the honors students. The mention of honors students dispelled concerns about typical "student field trips" and helped planners negotiate cost-saving deals. For example, at both the rural hostel and retreat center, money was saved by having students vacuum their rooms and strip their beds before checking out. Trip planners were convinced that these negotiations were possible because managers assumed that honors students were more mature and could be trusted as good visitors. At the research center in Nantucket, the group was given access to parts of the facility not normally open to student groups; the students were allowed, for instance, to do their laundry at the center for free. Finally, planners selected lodgings with usable kitchens to allow students to prepare meals some evenings instead of eating out.

PRE-TRIP COMMUNITY BUILDING

Because community building plays such a vital role in the success of group trips, strategies to foster familiarity and friendships before traveling (what the Honors College calls collegial associations) began two months before the trip. Students were expected to have all the assigned works read prior to the

LITERARY NEW ENGLAND

trip. Pre-trip classes met four separate times to start discussion of the works. Students had a forum to discuss with planners and classmates not only the literature they were reading but also questions about the trip. During these four class meetings, students learned each other's names and gained some knowledge about their classmates in a relaxed classroom setting. As a final pre-trip exercise, the professor hosted a "Bon Voyage" party at his house one week before departure. With jazz piano, croquet in the backyard, and the draw of food, students had a chance to socialize and to toast their journey with faculty and staff who were providing support for the trip. The party also gave students the opportunity to thank the many individuals and departments that helped subsidize their travel.

COMMUNITY BUILDING ON THE ROAD

Once in New England, the community building intensified. Because each of the lodgings had a kitchen, students planned group meal nights. They went grocery shopping together and shared a budget, requiring direct engagement with their classmates on a practical level and resulting in collective planning about what they would prepare and how much they would need to purchase. Concerns about different palates, vegetarian options, and special dietary needs emerged, and students began looking out for one another. Students seemed to love the novelty of grocery shopping with their professor and classmates despite the strange looks they got from local grocery shoppers.

Back at the lodgings, the group separated into two teams: one for cooking and one for cleaning up afterwards. The two teams alternated jobs on different evenings and developed an unspoken cooking competition. A sense of community emerged almost immediately, and the group's stress level abated as the day's academic focus was temporarily put aside and students engaged with one another on a more human level. As an added bonus, students got a chance to rest, reread assignments, or communicate with family at home either while they waited for their dinner to be ready or while their classmates cleaned up after them. The process of shopping, cooking, dining, and cleaning up together led to some of the best times of the trip.

PUBLICITY

The WKU Honors College gained excellent publicity from Literary New England. Both before and after the trip, the local media were alerted to the Honors College's unique endeavor. Through area newspapers, local television, university press releases, and the Literary New England blog, the trip was a discussion piece at WKU throughout the late spring. Connections were made early in the planning stages with staff members in the Office of University Relations, and multiple press releases went out at different stages of the trip's planning and execution; these were uploaded onto the university's homepage and released directly to the students' hometown newspapers. Before the trip, a video camcorder was checked out from the university, and students took turns doing a

collaborative documentation of their adventures. At the trip's conclusion, the local ABC affiliate aired a story on the local newscast that featured video taken by students and interviews with several of the students, the faculty leaders of the trip, and the Director of the Honors College.

The most labor-intensive publicity was a blog created especially for the trip. The blog (www.wku.edu/honors/LitNE/) proved successful at communicating information about the WKU Honors College and the course in a format targeted towards an audience of millennials in an academic yet fun way. One of the participating students created the blog, and it became his culminating project in place of the required research paper. For other students, the blog served as a real-time forum both to communicate with the WKU community and to turn in assignments (including a minimum of ten journal entries posted on the blog). Students typed away furiously at laptops when internet access was available on the trip. Readers could leave comments and feedback, making it interactive even for others not on the trip. Students posted pictures and recounted experiences from their travels and then called their friends and family to take a look. During the two weeks of the trip, the university put out a press release that was uploaded to the university's homepage advertising the blog. The entire university community could follow the actions of Literary New England day by day to see new photos and blog entries.

The blog also became the final forum for the students' research papers. Once final drafts were approved and graded, students' research papers were published on the blog. Individual web pages display the photos, journal entries, and research projects for each student. For the Honors College, the blog serves as a lasting recruitment tool. Not only can the Honors College talk about the nontraditional learning formats that students experience, but they can demonstrate it through a recent, well documented example.

LESSONS LEARNED

Although Literary New England proved to be a great success for the Honors College, there were plenty of lessons learned that may prove useful for an honors program/college wishing to plan domestic travel study. Early planning by multiple people is essential. Though planning began for this particular trip seven months in advance and involved numerous people, it still became a second job for the trip planners to bring the details together. It is also essential to include at least a second organizer in the planning and travel to help seek out site visits and places to stay, make reservations, and make payments. Travel, by its very nature, is situational, and decisions must be made on location. It is also wise, if two people plan the trip, to have a clear chain of command so that, when decisions must be made on site, everybody knows who is responsible for making them.

Scheduling is another area where trip organizers learned a great deal. One of the only student complaints came from the tight schedule. Students suggested including more free time on the next trip. Students are linked in the class by

LITERARY NEW ENGLAND

a common interest, but that bond can only hold them together for so long. Factoring in time for student independence is a necessity to avoid burnout. Free time also builds confidence for independent travel in the future. For many of the students who grew up in rural Kentucky, seeing that they could navigate the public transportation system alone in Boston (buy a metro card, reach a determined destination, and return safely at an appointed time) built the confidence to plan further travel. Another challenge was that much of the free time that did come by happenstance occurred when the group was staying in rural locations where public transportation was not available and local nightlife was absent. In short, when the Honors College sponsors the trip again, leaders will build in more free time, especially in populated areas, for students to explore and learn on their own.

Some scheduling changes will also occur in future planning. Although Nantucket afforded experiences that could not be duplicated, that visit created complications. Staying in a research facility, having a private lecture from an astronomer, and visiting the famous Whaling Museum of the Nantucket Historical Association were valuable; however, getting to the island proved too expensive and time-consuming. Furthermore, students reported that it was one of the least enriching experiences in part because there were not enough ways to satisfy their interests, and they felt financially out of their league in the expensive shop- and restaurant-lined streets of the town's tourist center.

If grocery shopping and communal cooking are going to be part of a trip, the cost of the food should be included in the students' program fee. Splitting the cost of food at the register, as was done on the initial grocery trip, was difficult and inevitably seemed unfair to some students. Though one student may not eat meat, for instance, it may seem a necessity to others. Group shopping proved fun, but when it came to paying for the food, the initial shopping trip was more stress than it was worth. Later grocery trips were paid for by the scholarship the class received from the Student Government Association. Having the responsibility of the food's cost out of students' hands during later shopping trips prevented worries and complaints of inequalities.

Finally, with travel courses like Literary New England, where faculty and staff members are also responsible for the navigation, having a Global Positioning System (GPS) device is helpful. Though site visits were set up with what seemed ample buffer time, the group was often pushing the clock; instead of asking directions, navigating confusing rural roads, or worrying about taking the right exit on a roundabout, the leaders of the trip were able to rely on the accuracy of GPS.

CONCLUSION

A domestic travel course like Literary New England has many of the same characteristics as a study abroad course: logistical planning, detailed cost management, and responsibility for leadership of the group. It also has many of the same advantages, including experience of other cultures, a 24-hour immersed

learning environment, and opportunities for community development. On-site instruction in the United States transcends academic disciplines and provides new pedagogical opportunities for honors programs/colleges, making it a great value.

We hope that this essay will inspire other ideas for domestic travel study and will help in their planning. Out-of-class learning experiences for honors students, whether domestic or abroad, provide on-site cultural immersion that magnifies learning and changes mindsets as the blog of one student reveals: "Today I held pieces of untouchable art in my hands. My beliefs have been shattered that every important art piece must be sitting behind some piece of glass somewhere deep in a museum." Most likely, she will never walk through a museum the same way again. This type of intellectual development was the goal of Literary New England.

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APPENDIX A
COURSE SYLLABUS
LITERARY NEW ENGLAND
ENGLISH 399 HONORS
MAY TERM 2007

Purpose:

English 399H—Literary New England—is available only for honors-eligible students. Its purpose is to provide students with an opportunity to study some of America’s most famous New England writers—and to study them with the intensity of on-site instruction. Special features of the course include field trips to Concord, MA., Salem, Boston, Nantucket Island, Amherst, and to Hartford, CT.

Syllabus:

Enrolled students will be furnished with a complete syllabus by the middle of March 2007. We will meet a few times as a group before departure. Also, each of our lodgings has a commons room in which we can have lectures, discussions, and even reading quizzes. The expectation is that all works will have been read before we leave Kentucky.

Reading Selections:

The reading selections have been carefully chosen to reflect the sites visited:

Text: Bradford, William. Selections from “Of Plymouth Plantation.”

Site: Plymouth, MA.

Text: Thoreau, Henry David. *Walden*.

Site: Walden Pond

Text: Emerson, Ralph Waldo. Selected essays.

Site: Concord, MA.

Text: Alcott, Bronson. Selected essays.

Site: Orchard House (Alcott’s home in Concord) and Fruitlands (Alcott’s experiment in communal living near Harvard, MA.)

Text: Hawthorne, Nathaniel: Selected tales and *The House of the Seven Gables*.

Site: Salem, MA, and the house of the seven gables.

Text: Melville, Herman. *Moby-Dick*.

Site: Nantucket Island and also Arrowhead Farm at Pittsfield, where Melville wrote *Moby-Dick*.

Text: Dickinson, Emily. Selected poems.

Site: Amherst, MA.

CRAIG T. COBANE AND DERICK B. STRODE

Text: Stowe, Harriet Beecher. *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

Site: Hartford, CT., home of Stowe.

Text: Twain, Mark. *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*.

Site: Hartford, CT., "steamboat" home of Twain.

Assignments:

In addition to being prepared to discuss the readings, each student will be expected to keep a reflective travel journal. Within a month after we return, a substantial research paper needs to be submitted in which the student explores the importance of place upon a given writer's work. A topic might be as narrow as "The Influence of Arrowhead Farm upon Melville's *Moby-Dick*" or as inclusive as "The Significance of Concord upon the Transcendentalists."

APPENDIX B

COURSE ITINERARY

Sunday, May 13—Travel

Traveled, checked in to rural hostel, and bought groceries.

Monday, May 14—Concord, MA

Sites visited included Lexington Town Center, Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, the Old Manse, the North Bridge at Minute Man National Historic Park, Wayside, and Walden Pond.

Tuesday, May 15—Concord, MA

Sites visited include the Concord Town Museum, the Emerson House, and nearby Fruitlands.

Wednesday, May 16—Gloucester, MA

Whale-watching cruise on the Stellwagen Bank.

Thursday, May 17—Salem, MA

Sites visited included the House of the Seven Gables and the Salem Witch Museum.

Friday, May 18—Plymouth, MA and travel to Nantucket Island, MA

Sites visited were Plimoth Plantation, Plymouth Rock, and the Mayflower II. Ferried to Nantucket Island and checked-in at research center.

Saturday, May 19—Nantucket, MA

Free day for students to explore town and island, highlighted by an evening astronomy lecture and viewing at the Loines Observatory.

Sunday, May 20—Nantucket, MA and travel to Boston, MA

Sites visited were the Nantucket Whaling Museum. Traveled to Boston, MA and checked-in at urban hostel.

Monday, May 21—Boston, MA

Sites visited included the Boston Commons, Freedom Trail, Union Oyster House, Museum of Fine Arts, and a Historic Pub Crawl.

Tuesday, May 22—Cambridge, MA and travel to Plainfield, MA

Sites visited included the Harvard University campus, private tour in the Houghton Library for viewings of special holdings, and Longfellow's House. Traveled to Plainfield, MA and checked-in at rural retreat center.

Wednesday, May 23—Pittsfield, MA

Sites visited included Arrowhead Farm, with free time throughout the afternoon.

Thursday, May 24—Hartford, CT

Sites visited included the Mark Twain Home and the Harriet Beecher Stowe House.

CRAIG T. COBANE AND DERICK B. STRODE

Friday, May 25—Amherst, MA

Sites visited included the Emily Dickinson Homestead, the Evergreen House, and Dickinson's burial site.

Saturday, May 26—Travel back to Kentucky

APPENDIX C

LODGING OPTIONS

Friendly Crossways in Harvard, Massachusetts was Literary New England's home for the first five days of the trip. This facility would be the ideal central location to stay for the entire trip (except for the weekend to Nantucket) if the trip were to be recreated with similar site visits. Friendly Crossways can host a number of guests that would far exceed Literary New England's class size.

The Maria Mitchell Association on Nantucket Island hosts a summer intern program starting in June each year. This site, originally recommended by the Nantucket Island Chamber of Commerce, proved ideal. Literary New England's group of 14 was able to stay in the still empty dormitories that would be used by interns in the coming weeks. Available amenities included a common kitchen area, a cozy TV room, wireless internet access, and walking accessibility to the Nantucket town center.

The Boston Hostel, located by the Berklee College of Music, provided an urban and central two-night change from Literary New England's otherwise rural and quaint stays.

Nine Mountain, a retreat in Plainfield, MA, was the class's final home. This location was chosen because of its central location between Amherst and Plainfield, MA and its easy access to Hartford, CT, and Manchester, NH.

Senior Theses And Projects

JIM LACEY

The Senior Honors Thesis: From Millstone to Capstone

JIM LACEY

EASTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY

When I became director of a small college honors program, many students perceived the senior honors thesis to be a millstone. Even worse, the word was being bruited about that students didn't really have to complete the thesis, that the only penalty was not being listed in the separate section for honors scholars in the graduation program. Although the discussion below is about redeeming the thesis process in a small program, some of the strategies should be applicable to large programs as well.

After a brief discussion of the possibility of having two honors tracks, one without the thesis, the Honors Council decided to retain the thesis requirement for all students. The thinking was that, since honors courses were interdisciplinary and required projects rather than traditional papers and formal exams, a substantial honors thesis would demonstrate the student's ability to do independent research, the surest ticket to graduate school in this era of grade inflation and glowing recommendations. With murmurs about Draconian measures, the Honors Council handed the problem back to me.

My first step was to hear what the students had to say. Their most frequent complaints were that the thesis was not related to the rest of the program, that it was just one more hoop to jump through, and that it was an additional burden in the senior year when they were completing their major and other university requirements. Some argued that the honors thesis was superfluous since their major required substantial research in senior seminars. These were reasonable objections, and I realized there would be no quick fix to the problem. In fact, the changes, one step at a time, took two full years.

During the first couple of semesters, the honors thesis process was gradually elaborated; new or modified courses, online discussions, and formal student presentations were developed to morph a task for seniors into an ongoing, four-year concern. The first step was to do away with the generic thesis preparation course students had been taking with an instructor from the English department and replace it with individual independent studies taken as juniors with a thesis advisor from the student's major department. The generic course had been unnecessary for students in majors such as biology, history, and English, which emphasized research in all advanced courses, and it was insufficient for students in majors such as communications and education, which taught skills and techniques but did not require substantial research. This

THE SENIOR HONORS THESIS: FROM MILLSTONE TO CAPSTONE

change meant that each student would spend three full semesters working on a thesis with an advisor in her/his discipline, without increasing the number of honors credits required.

Instead of submitting a thesis proposal to the Honors Council for approval by all its members half way through the senior year, as had been the case, written thesis proposals in the new system were approved by the thesis advisor, one member of the Honors Council, and the honors program director by specified dates in the spring of the student's junior year. A new wrinkle was to have thesis proposals also formally presented on campus to an audience including the Honors Council, thesis advisors, and sophomores in the honors program. Additionally, first-semester juniors were required to come up with a thesis topic and locate a faculty member willing to work with them as an advisor, so that, for all practical purposes, the thesis had become a four-semester project. An online discussion of problems, solutions, hazards to avoid, and difficulties encountered or resolved in developing thesis proposals or completing theses was made available to all honors students. In their first honors writing course, freshmen were informed that it fulfilled the first of two university writing requirements and that their honors thesis would complete this requirement. Students in majors requiring substantial research were encouraged also to follow the honors program guidelines with topics they were working on in their majors, even if this meant some flexibility in schedules, due dates, and the like.

With these elaborations, the honors thesis truly became a capstone experience. It was understood that the thesis had to be submitted and approved by those who had accepted the proposal and also publicly presented as a paper or poster. Venues included national, regional, and state honors conferences, regional conferences sponsored by the various disciplines, and, for those remaining, an on-campus presentation to which faculty and all honors students were invited. Some five years of exit interviews before my retirement confirmed the value of the thesis. Several students reported they had featured their thesis research in applications to graduate school or had been asked about their theses during interviews for admission to medical or law schools and other graduate programs. One student, after reading a sophisticated paper at a regional biology conference, was pleased that a number of auditors had gathered around her with questions after the session was concluded and was nonplussed when a senior professor asked where she had taken her Ph.D.!

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LINDA L. VILA

Mentoring Honors Thesis Students: A Lawyer's Perspective

LINDA L. VILA

LONG ISLAND UNIVERSITY, C.W. POST CAMPUS

As a mentor of thesis students in an honors program, I find that students acquire tremendously helpful substantive knowledge through courses they take during college but rarely develop a honed skill set necessary to succeed in graduate or professional education or employment in the real world. These skills range from problem solving to effective communication to analytical thinking. To address these weaknesses, I constructed an approach, borrowed from my law school days, for engaging students in an active, student-centered learning process during the thesis stage of their honors curriculum. My purpose is to provide them the opportunity to cultivate, if not learn, numerous skill-based leadership competencies demanded by today's pragmatic society. My law-school model of pedagogy is experiential, whereby I treat students as though they were colleagues and hold them to professional standards. This model is four-pronged and outcomes-driven. I teach students how to think like a lawyer, build a strong and cogent argument, excel in communication, and act professionally at all times. I also teach them how to have fun journeying through the process.

I practice my approach in an honors program housed in the eighth largest private liberal arts university in the nation. The institution—a multi-campus, diverse, doctoral university—offers more than 600 degree programs and certificates and employs more than 650 full-time faculty members. Total student enrollment currently hovers at 8,500 students. On my campus, the honors program is open to all undergraduate majors, and students may enter any time until their junior year. For the past several years, the honors program has encouraged faculty and students from the health sciences, management, marketing, finance, and diverse majors in what are commonly called the “professional” schools to participate in honors. This multidisciplinary access has opened the entire campus to a program that is tailored to meet a wide variety of student goals. With approximately 500 students in the program, the curriculum emphasizes a liberal balance between traditional and innovative studies with courses divided into those that fulfill core requirements and advanced electives; the program also fulfills the requirement for a mandatory, individually researched tutorial and thesis commitment in the student's major. As in most honors programs,

faculty members teach from their respective departments, and honors teaching is part of our regular departmental workload; no dedicated honors faculty exists. Students who undertake the 6-credit tutorial (research) and thesis are eligible to apply for up to \$200 toward reference materials, travel supplies, and other support for thesis work. There is an annual prize of \$500 to the student who has submitted the best research.

The honors program is successful because of the dedication of the honors director and faculty, its objective of enrichment rather than acceleration, and its focus on the individual student. Moreover, students and faculty recognize that participation in the program means membership in a unique decision-making community that is both academic and social. A diverse group of students, from all disciplines and many countries, join with faculty to choose honors program curricula, course instructors, and extracurricular activities. I am able to enthusiastically implement my law school approach, especially the first prong—think like a lawyer—with the support of this community.

THINK LIKE A LAWYER

Students learn to “think like a lawyer,” however cynical or amused people might be by that idea. This concept involves approaching issues and solving problems in a timely manner by identifying and organizing pertinent issues and knowledge, evaluating information with discernment, and using critical and logical analysis to arrive at judgments or conclusions that are sound. It encompasses the ability to assimilate new information quickly, recognize when more information is needed, and connect the dots between and among pieces of information. Thinking like a lawyer entails appreciating the various positions presented on an issue and mastering how to think on your feet and respond under pressure and scrutiny. It promotes a comfort level in dealing with unforeseen circumstances (Ambrosio, 2006).

The components of thinking like a lawyer demand a highly interactive pedagogy and assignments that challenge students to develop the aforementioned skills (Henderson, 2003). I enlist three methods to achieve these goals. First, I teach students how to outline; surprisingly, some students do not know how to do this. I have them create and maintain two types of working outlines of their research problem: one general outline delineating how the thesis is divided into chapters and chapter outlines delineating the specific points, with supporting literature, to be included and addressed in each chapter. These outlines, especially the latter, typically start out skeletal, and students are rarely enthusiastic about constructing them, much less using them. But as students become more familiar with the topical literature, gain a deeper understanding of the research problem itself, and make choices regarding what information is pertinent to the problem, they appreciate the outlines. In fact, they start to rely on them. They realize that, working within an organized framework, they are quickly able to determine where weak points in their research exist, where issues are not fully addressed and where information is needed. They learn that an academically rigorous task is made much easier through planning, managing, and analyzing.

Second, I require students to draw up annotated bibliographies of their literature reviews that concentrate more on the procedural and less on the substantive. Students summarize the content of their literature, but they note the macro—exactly how the literature relates to their overall research problem—as well as the micro—how it fits into the specific chapters. Students determine whether a journal article, for instance, lends direct or ancillary support to the research hypothesis or addresses a precise issue but offers an unpopular perspective. I have students “rate” the evidentiary weight of each piece of literature by assigning it a number from 1 to 5, 1 being a very applicable and on-point piece and 5 bearing little relation, but a relation nonetheless, to the research problem. Considered in conjunction with their outlines, students determine whether particular additional information would make a difference in their research, and then they proceed to search for such information.

Third, I regularly engage students in a Socratic dialogue in which my questions lead them through a chain of reasoning forward to conclusions and backward to assumptions. I springboard from their outlines and annotated bibliographies by inquiring about the research problem, the research methodology, the literature review, and, when applicable, findings. I probe into substantive information concerning the topic and the research problem as well as procedural information concerning the relation of the supporting information to the problem and its subtopics. I structure my version of an interrogation, which in its friendliness is a far cry from questioning on *Law and Order*, to move from the particular to the general to the abstract in order to instill in students the capacity to evaluate and compare information for relevance and applicability. One way I do this is by changing some of the facts in their gathered literature, such as study results, or by presenting my own scenario of information and then asking how such information would affect the research specifically and the topic globally. I challenge students more intensely as they move further along in the thesis process.

Socratic dialogue seems to stimulate student interest in a topic and motivate students to learn the subject matter better. I find that this type of active engagement encourages students to question the validity of information and develops their capacity to become self-educators. As many of us know, self-education is a given in graduate and professional education. Socratic dialogue also highlights the complexity of issues, allowing me to determine whether students’ skills in analyzing, communicating and problem solving have reached their full potential; if they have not, then I have a benchmark for how much skill-building needs to be done in these areas.

One of my students who had no interest in thinking like a lawyer became the poster child for this strategy. Cris, a very bright and astute young man, chose to conduct a content analysis of the textile industries in Korea and Italy for his thesis. He amassed a large amount of literature on the topic and thought that, if he just read all the material and highlighted important points, he could begin writing and that his paper consisting of well-written chapters would be

completed before he knew it. I tried to warn Cris that a planned and logical approach was needed, but he insisted that he always worked this way. Four weeks and a mere fifty words later, Cris finally admitted that he was confused and disorganized and didn't know where to begin. He agreed to follow whatever plan I set for him.

Over a pizza and Snapple, Cris and I sat down as two peers would sit down to work on a project, and he began to lay out the research problem and its issues while I observed. With some initial prodding from me, he started developing the two outlines mentioned above. This went well since he immediately saw the utility of the exercise and was pleased that thinking methodically came rather easily to him. That same day we selected two of his journal articles and he read them aloud, stopping after each paragraph to discuss whether the preceding information was pertinent or irrelevant to the research problem. Cris evaluated the information and drew conclusions from the articles with momentum. He discerned how the information from the articles was related and how it differed. We had quite a few laughs invoking my article-rating system because Cris rated the articles in dramatic fashion, holding up a piece of paper with a number on it as a judge in a competition would. By the end of the hour, Cris knew what was expected of him and was on the road to delivering it. His entire outlook toward his thesis changed from dread to enthusiasm.

At first I was going to skip the Socratizing because I did not want Cris to feel uncomfortable or discouraged. He was born and raised in Verona, Italy, and his command of the English language, while strong, was not stellar. I decided not to omit this teaching tool, however, since he needed practice in thinking on his feet and communicating. After Cris was well into developing comprehensive outlines and annotated bibliographies, I started presenting him with scenarios of information and asked him how they related to his research problem. Initially he was slow to respond, not wanting to say anything foolish. But as I included humorous yet applicable scenarios to lighten the mood, he began to think and analyze before responding and was able to demonstrate his knowledge of his research problem. His logical thought process carried over from the outlines and bibliographies. Cris experienced several "Eureka" moments, and I, of course, was tickled. Cris produced an excellent thesis that we are now attempting to get published; his chances look very good.

BUILD AN ARGUMENT

Students learn the art of building and sustaining a strong argument. They ascertain how to recognize all sides of an issue, approach issues objectively, and engage in evidence-based reasoning and decision-making. They figure out how to cut through verbiage, weigh the pros and cons of issues, and manage multiple perspectives while distilling abundant information (Rosen, 2002). Students learn to recognize the roles of advocacy, of assumptions, and of a supported and suitable conclusion. They realize that the ability to argue well, both in form and substance, is directly linked to strong persuasion skills, which come

in handy with a boyfriend, girlfriend, spouse, parent, boss, family member, or friend. To motivate students, I plant the seed that someday they may be inclined to challenge a professor for a higher grade in a course and will be unsuccessful unless they can present a solid argument.

I teach students how to construct a cogent argument by providing them with a framework and requiring that they “argue” issues, in writing and orally, using this framework. I use the CIRAC framework, which was introduced to many lawyers, myself included, when studying for the state bar examination. CIRAC is a mnemonic that stands for conclusion, issue, rule of law, application, and conclusion. (It is interesting to note that when I first advise students that they are going to learn a method to argue and will, indeed, argue with me, most get nervous because they conjure visions of engaging in a contentious debate with me and failing the course. Once I mollify their concerns and explain that an argument is simply a line of reasoning, they are much more willing to undertake the task.)

I amended CIRAC so that students present their arguments in three easy steps. Step 1 involves identifying the issue(s) at hand. I advise students to separate a multifaceted problem into separate, individual issues and identify each issue independently. Students should use straightforward language in their statement of each issue and include no superfluous wording. Step 2 involves identifying the information that relates to and addresses each issue. Step 3 involves stating a conclusion to each issue in a definitive and succinct manner based on evidentiary information presented in Step 2. When faced with a problem or situation, students can visualize this framework and use it to organize details. It is particularly helpful in teaching students the difference between relevant and irrelevant information and, thus, between a strong and weak argument.

I address the importance of objectivity by engaging students in discussions about controversial topics and demonstrating how personal bias affects one’s thinking and analysis. These discussions may or may not bear any relation to a student’s research problem and may or may not be planned. They do, however, touch a nerve with the students. I typically will engage students in such a discussion when we first sit down and begin a mentoring session. Unfortunately, sometimes our discussions take up a significant amount of session time and leave little room for discussing the thesis, but this is all right since the benefits of these discussions are enormous.

Tamara, a social work major with a 3.97 G.P.A., was able to use this strategy effectively. She was writing her thesis on the effects of Internet usage on family values and, from the onset, inadvertently focused only on the downside of this research problem. Her outlines focused on the negative cause-and-effect relationship between the Internet and values, and they were wholly one-sided. Her annotated bibliographies included research articles addressing family problems caused by the Internet. All of her initial discussions with me led to the demise of value systems because of the Internet, and Tamara saw the current moral landscape of today’s youth who frequent the Internet as macabre. Tamara

included a point or two in a few chapters about the positive impact of the Internet on the family unit, but they were points lacking substance and support. Once I pointed out that her argument lacked credibility because, among other factors, it failed to examine other viewpoints, Tamara applied the modified CIRAC. Tamara immediately recognized that identifying and acknowledging the various sides of her research problem and addressing them objectively elevated her position on the topic. She also saw that, when she permitted her research studies to serve as evidence to support her assumptions and conclusions, she was on solid footing.

Tamara really got it. She experienced first-hand how her argument moved from fairly weak to persuasive. Her completed thesis was superb. She appreciated my law school approach so much that she sits for the LSAT examination next month and plans to apply to law schools in spring 2008. While this world does not necessarily need one more legal eagle (as I myself moved from public service lawyer to hospital administrator to full-time faculty member), Tamara will undoubtedly be an asset to the profession.

COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY

Students learn communication capacity, which is the ability to get a message across effectively to a variety of audiences for a variety of purposes. I emphasize speaking and writing persuasively, in a clear and concise manner, with directed thought and focused attention; this leads to understanding the effects of one's personality and behavioral style and realizing how one is perceived by others. In the process, students learn the importance of flexibility and patience (Henderson, 2003). Communication capacity, taken a step further, includes respecting diversity and promoting equity by appreciating who one's listeners are and delivering information to them in a respectful manner that they can understand and process; it takes into account, with sensitivity and tolerance, the values, mores, and norms of others; and it requires actively and effectively hearing others, truly listening to what they say.

I develop communication capacity in several ways. The most obvious and common way involves one-on-one coaching. When I meet with my students during our regularly scheduled thesis mentoring sessions, I direct them on voice volume, speaking speed, eye contact, body language, and gesturing. I ensure that they avoid ambiguous language and use proper words properly pronounced. We discuss how not to send mixed messages and how not to stray from a topic. When students submit something in writing to me, whether by email or in hard copy, I provide extensive feedback about the clarity and organization of the writing.

I also engage students in two particular exercises that are designed to enhance their communication abilities. The first (the recap) builds listening skills and primes students on addressing different audiences; the second (the interview) teaches them how to ask questions while conveying their own thoughts.

I cannot take credit for creating the recap, only for using it effectively. After students have submitted a draft of several pages or a chapter of their thesis, I provide them with extensive feedback, first orally in person then in writing. Upon giving my oral critique of their work during a mentoring session, and not warning the students to listen carefully or jot down my comments, I have the students, in their own words and on the spot, recapitulate my comments. It is during the recap (actually within the first forty-five seconds) that I am able to determine to what extent students are good listeners. Often I engage a colleague, administrative staff member, or classmate to stand in my shoes as listener in this process. Students need to adjust the delivery of their recap of my comments to their audience. This exercise helps students become competent at packaging the same information to different audiences. It also makes them hear when they listen. At first, the recap usually yields some inconsistent information, but as students become better listeners the recap eventually incorporates my comments.

The other exercise is a formal interview with an expert in the student's field of research. Students, on their own but usually with my assistance, identify and contact their interviewee and, ultimately, meet and carry out the interview. Before the interview, the students draw up a list of open and closed-ended questions, and I review them for pertinence. Then I engage the students in a role-play where we practice interview techniques, thus heightening their understanding of the interview process and helping them overcome nervousness. The interview works best when I identify an appropriate person to interview and am able to speak with the person ahead of time. The ideal situation occurs when the interviewee is a colleague of mine; when this occurs, I ask the interviewee to assist me with building the student's communication skills by evaluating the student during the interview and providing feedback immediately thereafter. If the colleague agrees, the interview is recorded so that the student and I can later observe and critique the communication that occurred.

The interview serves as an avenue for acquiring information but also as a training ground for interpersonal development and confidence building. It highlights the importance of the verbal and non-verbal components of communication and emphasizes the importance of being a culturally competent communicator. Synthesizing the information obtained during the interview gives students additional practice in sorting through information for relevance. Further, many students have never met or spoken with an expert in their field of study, and the exercise fills this void.

One of my students, Vonetta, was a strong writer but a poor speaker. She often became extremely nervous, unable to listen or think clearly, and stumbled over her words when speaking in front of me or a group of people. While one-on-one coaching and the recap did improve her delivery, presentation, and listening skills, it was the interview that enhanced her ability to engage in a productive exchange of information with clarity and confidence. Vonetta's thesis

research problem centered on crises in hospital psychiatric emergency departments, and from the outset I knew that Vonetta could benefit from interviewing my former colleague, Lew, the chairman of an emergency department in a large, urban teaching hospital. He was the perfect person to provide her with additional mentoring that could break down some of her barriers to good communication. I suggested that she conduct an interview with Lew as part of her thesis experience, and she was excited to do so. Prior to the interview, Vonetta drew up a list of questions to ask, and she and I engaged in a role-play exercise. I also spoke at length with Lew. He was aware of Vonetta's communication pitfalls and agreed to help me help her overcome some of them.

Their interview lasted three hours and, according to Vonetta, was one of the best experiences she had ever had. Apparently Lew was warm and funny, and his expression of kindness put her at ease immediately, enabling her to shed her habit of being intimidated and to speak with him more comfortably. She obtained a wealth of information and data from Lew as well as some of his communication pearls. It was obvious that she also gained a level of confidence that I could not provide. When Vonetta and I viewed the videotape together, the learning process multiplied a hundredfold for both of us.

ACT PROFESSIONALLY

Finally, students learn the significance of acting professionally. For college honors students, acting professionally is practicing basic etiquette and demonstrating emotional intelligence. The latter, simply stated, is recognizing emotions, managing them so that they appropriately guide actions, and engaging in self-reflection.

Students learn basic etiquette through rigor. I am adamant with my students that, as responsible adults, they arrive for our mentoring meetings five minutes prior to our scheduled time, notify me in reasonable time if they will be late or cannot attend an appointment, and always submit work to me when it is due. I agree on timelines with students early in the thesis process so that there are no surprises vis-à-vis deadline expectations. I place tremendous weight on time management because my experience has taught me that the current generation of typical college students—my son included—has false conceptions about the importance of time. Students are also expected to dress appropriately for our sessions or for meetings with others and to act respectfully at all times.

I foster emotional intelligence by focusing on the spiritual nature of the thesis process and promoting the notion that students must submit good work for their own sake. At the beginning of the thesis process, I have students begin writing a reflective journal where they document their emotional responses to the process. I ask them to explore the intrinsic reasons that drive them to perform and persevere and to examine how they handle stressful or charged situations. As I remind students that they have a social responsibility as contributing members of society to achieve their goals and complete a solid thesis, I focus on the caveat that getting profound personal satisfaction in a job well

done is part of the education process (Pang, 2005) and fosters a healthy and productive individual. Achievement leads to satisfaction in life, and there is no greater goal to accomplish. Of course, students are not thrilled to produce another piece of written work. They do come on board, though, when I share with them my reflective journals from college, law school, and my days as a young lawyer.

The student who underwent the greatest transformation from selfish student to suitable peer was Cris, whom I discussed earlier. When we first began working together, Cris had little respect for time and lacked maturity. He would arrive late to our appointments and fail to respond to emails. He would forget to submit work when it was due. He would also constantly complain about the stress he was under and frequently display anger, lashing out because he was "tired of doing schoolwork." Cris finally started seeing the light after one mentoring session to which he arrived forty minutes late; I made him wait for me until I was again available, two hours later, and reminded him that he lived in an apartment five minutes from campus, paid for by his parents, and did not have to hold down a job during the semester. He began to comprehend the meaning of acting professionally. His use of the reflective journal enhanced this process. Cris's journal entries demonstrated his progression from spoiled son to an adult with an admirable sense of self and motivation toward achievement.

CONCLUSION

Mentoring an honors thesis student is a challenging assignment and rightfully so. This is, perhaps, the one time in a student's college career when the student has the opportunity to work closely with a professor and the professor has the opportunity to ensure that the student is adequately armed with the skill set needed by college graduates. Mentoring is teaching at its best, and the meaningful relationships that develop between professor and student are priceless.

This law-school mentoring approach has several positive and a few negative features. Students appreciate the individualized attention they receive and thrive on the interest shown for their work and progress. Their skills invariably improve through the continuous interaction with and monitoring by the mentor. Students in all majors can benefit from these strategies, and mentors in all disciplines can use them. Most importantly, a mentor need not attend law school to use and master this approach. On the other hand, the approach requires a tremendous amount of work from both the mentor and student. Some students may not want to invest the time and energy necessary to benefit from it. Many may dislike the extensive contact. The strategies are time-consuming and the processes emotionally draining. At the same time, some very important skills are not addressed; these include team building and working collaboratively. Overall, however, this legal approach can be highly effective in improving students' readiness for graduate school and the world of work.

The approach works well for two seemingly opposite reasons: formality and personal engagement. When students first ask me to take on the role of

MENTORING HONORS THESIS STUDENTS: A LAWYER'S PERSPECTIVE

mentor, I warn them that the thesis process is a rigorous one. I lay out my methodology in detail and make sure they understand what is involved. I have students sign a formal contract that states they agree to follow my instructional strategies and will stay committed 100% until the thesis is completed. Having established rules and expectations, I am able to commit myself to a personal engagement in their work that comes from my desire to help them achieve success. Sometimes it may seem as if I overwhelm them with support and encouragement, but my experience with honors students has been that, from clearly established parameters, deep mentoring follows in a spirit that I find analogous to a good lawyer-client relationship.

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JOYCE W. FIELDS

Using External Review in the Honors Project Process

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COLUMBIA COLLEGE

Understanding the competitive nature of applications to graduate programs, Ferrari and Davis (2000) surveyed psychology faculty to discover their level of awareness of resources for undergraduate research publication. They found that most of the psychology faculty members they surveyed were unaware of such resources. Their finding made me curious about how many honors directors, faculty, and advisors are aware of such resources for their students not only in psychology but in all disciplines across the curriculum. Most of us realize the importance of helping our students become competitive for graduate work, and we know that publication and/or presentation of research may add to their chances for acceptance into the program of their choice. For many of our honors students, the capstone project in their major, which is also typically their honors project, may represent opportunities for increasing their marketability in graduate and professional arenas.

Aware of the requirements for both capstone and honors projects for our honors students, our social science department was faced with the task of finding a method for reducing duplication for honors students and mentors. The obvious solution was to join the senior research project (capstone) with the senior honors project, but we had to find a way to differentiate honors from non-honors student projects. The solution for this department was to introduce external review for honors students, and this may be a fairly easy option for collaborative efforts between departments and honors programs elsewhere. External review for this purpose takes three forms: review for undergraduate or research journals, for conference presentations, or for grants.

Many institutions have lists of publication resources available for students through publication or research offices. On small college campuses, however, these offices are rare, so it is incumbent upon honors directors to collect such sources, publicize them among their honors faculty or teachers, and encourage such scholarship among students. Publicizing these sources on an honors website allows student access to information that encourages their research and creative efforts while also making them responsible for the submission process and external review. We have had little experience with undergraduate publication because (1) it is a recent addition to our options and (2) our capstone is required in the fall of the senior year, leaving little time for review and revision prior to graduation. However, if a program has an academic progression such that

USING EXTERNAL REVIEW IN THE HONORS PROJECT PROCESS

capstone/honors projects are completed earlier in the academic career, submission for publication is a viable option. Several of our students have submitted their projects for publication in scholarly journals, but the review process is so lengthy that the benefit is in preparing a project for submission rather than having a project accepted for publication. One student whose undergraduate research was accepted for publication was revising her paper deep into her graduate work. Depending on academic scheduling and the goal of submission (preparing a manuscript for external review and/or being successful in publishing), undergraduate research journals can be an excellent resource for defining and differentiating the honors project from other capstone projects. A list of useful websites is provided in Appendix B.

Three particular lists merit special attention. The website for Undergraduate Journals and Conferences Directory (<http://upd.mercyhurst.edu/>) is categorized by topic listings of over fifty journals across the curriculum including arts and creative writing, economics, history, honors, international affairs, mathematics, natural science, philosophy, political science, and psychology and cognitive sciences. Additionally, it provides the student with guidelines for publishing. The Council on Undergraduate Research (www.cur.org/ugjournal.html) lists over forty publication sources. The list is not arranged topically, but the journals are provided as direct links on the CUR website to allow easy access. The third list is provided by the Journal of Young Investigators (www.jyi.org/resources) and includes links to categorized resources ranging from science and news to education and creative writing. Also, tapping into sources on the web from other colleges and universities (University of North Carolina or Creighton University, for example) that have compiled such lists is helpful. Many of these sites provide information for students about submission policies and writing styles, and they allow students the luxury of “shopping” their work to see which journal may be the best fit for their project. External review in this context provides the student with an opportunity to produce her best work, get professional feedback, and experience the mechanics of academic publication.

The second source for external review for our students is submitting their project for presentation at a professional or student conference. Several years ago, one of my students presented a poster at a large research conference and was the only undergraduate at the conference to win recognition for her work. As a result, she decided that maybe she could attend graduate school; she has since completed her master’s degree and is working on her Ph. D. We have similarly enjoyed our students’ presentations at regional and national honors conferences. The opportunity to present research in a meaningful format and then exchange ideas through poster sessions or presentations provides practice in multiple skills such as conducting research and communicating about it in both visual and verbal media. Our students come back to our campus revitalized, energized, confident, and more mature.

One of the most popular sources for presenting undergraduate research is the National Conferences on Undergraduate Research (www.ncur.org/ugresearch.htm). This annual conference is open to all research disciplines and the

JOYCE W. FIELDS

performing arts, and it usually takes place in late spring to facilitate the project process. The deadline for abstracts is normally late in the first semester so that students can apply for review prior to the beginning of their second senior semester. Their website is rich with information regarding NCUR's purpose and their belief in the value of undergraduate research and scholarship.

Other excellent venues for student scholarship presentation are NCHC and regional honors conferences. Our students have received useful feedback from both general sessions and poster presentations at these conferences and have enjoyed the intellectual exchange of information available in the conference setting. The Journal of Young Investigators web site (www.jyi.org/resources/conferences) offers a list of additional conferences targeting undergraduate submissions. We have also found state association conferences also to be rich venues for student presentations in professional areas such as social work, speech and language pathology, education, and communication.

The third possibility for external review is applying for a grant to fund either the entire project or a component of it. We have identified local granting agencies such as state arts associations as target options for our honors students. Researching and writing grants is a powerful experience for honors students who often parlay it into greater marketability in their post-baccalaureate job search. At Columbia College, we have developed a system of microgrants to enable students to find mentors and write grants early in their academic careers. A copy of the grant philosophy and criteria is attached. These small grants allow students to purchase software, travel short distances, print art work, purchase limited lab equipment, and visit historic libraries and other sites. When students succeed early in their academic careers in writing and receiving grants, they are more willing to risk the external review process for the more ambitious research/creative projects that evolve into their senior honors work. Faculty mentors who facilitate these early grants are awarded a small stipend in the form of increased faculty development funding. On our campus, these grants are not limited to honors students and are funded through faculty development monies. If restricted to honors students, such grants are a fairly economical investment in student work from the honors budget.

Our students have been successful in obtaining grants from the South Carolina Arts Commission, the South Carolina Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, and various specialty competitive research grants originating on our own campus. One SCICU Grant enabled a student to travel from South Carolina to Utah to work with children on an Indian reservation. Another student used these grant funds to design and implement an online survey and purchase interpretative software. Student research grants are available across disciplines, and our students have received funding in the areas of biological sciences, visual arts, psychology, education, sociology, history, and political science. The grants require formal presentation and justification of spending so that the experience extends from research to grant administration and responsibility for the fiduciary health of the project.

USING EXTERNAL REVIEW IN THE HONORS PROJECT PROCESS

When honors faculty members are aware of sources for external review for undergraduate work, they can target specific journals or conferences or grants that may apply to their specific discipline. Additionally, there are multidisciplinary targets that provide students and mentors with interesting possibilities for academic growth. With the wealth of undergraduate journals, conferences, and grant possibilities, students are well positioned to complete their honors projects with an eye toward external review and public presentation.

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JOYCE W. FIELDS

APPENDIX A

COLUMBIA COLLEGE COLLABORATIVE FACULTY/STUDENT MICROGRANTS

Target

Four MicroGrants have been budgeted for the 2007–2008 academic year. The goal of these grants is to mentor first and second year students in the grant writing process and build interest in other grant opportunities (Savory PURL, SCICU, etc), although the grants are not limited to first and second year students. These grants are not to be used for routine academic credit but for stimulating creative interest in topics outside routine classroom requirements.

Funding

The maximum amount a student may request for the grant is \$500 to be applied toward travel, research instruments, software, materials, student stipend (not to exceed 50% of funded grant amount). The student stipend payment amount is \$6.00 per hour. The funds are not to be used for travel for presentation of information at conferences or meetings. The faculty mentor will receive an additional \$200 in faculty development allowance.

Timeline

Grants will be reviewed by the Faculty Development Committee and awarded in the spring semester of the academic year for completion during the summer and fall of the next academic year. In April, the Faculty Development Committee will sponsor reports to the faculty on these grants.

Proposal Format

MicroGrants applications were designed according to other grant proposal outlines to include: the project title, the project rationale or description, a methodology or outline of how project goals will be accomplished, a list of desired outcomes, a detailed budget, an outline of both student and faculty mentor responsibilities, and a list of references. (see attached form)

Questions and Concerns

All questions and concerns may be addressed to the Director of Faculty Development or to a member of the Faculty Development Committee.

C2 MICROGRANT PROPOSAL

Semester _____ **Year** _____

Student _____

Signature _____

Social Security Number (required for stipend) _____

Faculty Mentor _____

Signature _____

Department Chair _____

Signature _____

- I. Project Title
- II. Project Rationale or Description
(Please include a *brief* literature review of the topic and a statement of why it is of interest to the collaborators. You should include a concise statement beginning with "The purpose of this (research, project, study) is . . ." What are your goals?)
- III. Methodology
(This is a statement of how you plan to accomplish your goals. You should include an expected time line for points until completion).
- IV. Desired Outcomes
(What do you hope or expect will be the result of this work)
- V. Budget
(Please include all expected expenses and a brief description of how these funds will further your project).
- VI. Planned Student Activities and Responsibilities
(Bullet points of the student's responsibilities)
- VII. Planned Faculty Mentor Activity and Responsibility
(Bullet points of the faculty mentor's responsibilities)
- VIII. References
(in appropriate format)

JOYCE W. FIELDS

APPENDIX B

WEBSITES FOR PROMOTING SCHOLARSHIP AND RESEARCH ON THE SMALL COLLEGE CAMPUS:

JOYCE W. FIELDS, PH. D., COLUMBIA COLLEGE, SC

<http://upd.mercyhurst.edu>

Undergraduate journals and conferences directory

<http://www.cur.org/ugjournal.html>

Council on Undergraduate Research

<http://www.jyi.org/resources>

Journal of Young Investigators, Undergraduate peer-reviewed science journals and conference listings

<http://www.unc.edu/dept/our/urj2.htm>

list of journals from UNC's office of undergraduate research

<http://www.ncur.org/ugresearch.htm>

The National Conference on Undergraduate Research web site, full of information about their conference and some pedagogical justifications for undergraduate research

<http://view.fdu.edu/default.aspx?id=784>

Journal of Psychology and Behavioral Sciences

<http://puffin.creighton.edu/psy/journal/studentjournals.asp>

A listing of undergraduate student psychology journals

http://www.kon.org/CFP/cfp_urjhs.html

Undergraduate research journal for human sciences (excellent section of instruction for authors)

<http://jgbc.fiu.edu>

A forum for publishing undergraduate business and business-related research

<http://pur.honorscollege.pitt.edu/>

Pittsburg Undergraduate Review—multidisciplinary journal

Creating Community

Creating Community: Honors Welcome Week Programming

LAUREN C. POUCHAK, MAUREEN E. KELLEHER,
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NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY

ABSTRACT

The Northeastern University Honors Program established its first-year Welcome Week initiative in 2006 as part of our movement toward enhancing the goals of an Honors Living Learning Community. The Welcome Week is characterized by a series of linked events that bring together various on-campus members of our honors community for the common goal of welcoming new students to campus. Members of that on-campus community include faculty, administrators, staff, and upper-class honors students. Welcome Week introduces new students to the opportunities and challenges of a university honors experience.

BACKGROUND

The Northeastern University Honors Program is roughly 20% larger than that of many institutions our size because we are a cooperative education university with a five-year undergraduate program. All of our 1,400 honors students are never on campus at the same time because of co-op and study-abroad opportunities. When a new director took over the program in fall 2004, we were poised for change. Realizing that with large numbers comes the opportunity to create a robust community, we looked towards other honors programs to see how they were building their honors communities on larger campuses. Part of that process involved inviting NCHC-recommended site visitors to our campus to make recommendations on a variety of issues including what we began to call “the first-year experience.” We also looked at national campus trends and found several important initiatives that we adopted.

In addition, in the summer of 2006 our office moved from the basement of an old building to a brand new facility that included the Honors Program office (computer lab and lounge, small seminar room, reception area, and professional offices) as well as apartment-style housing for 224 first-year honors students. We continue to use our older first-year honors housing for 60–100 additional students. Our concern with moving into the new building was that our students would hide in their apartments without experiencing the camaraderie that many students build in those first few weeks by wandering the halls. We

CREATING COMMUNITY: HONORS WELCOME WEEK PROGRAMMING

collaborated with the Department of Residence Life to make it possible for all of our first-year students to move onto campus a week early, and we focused our events around those early days; that was the official beginning of our commitment to a living-learning philosophy. If our change could be represented as a formula it would look like this:

New director + New building + NCHC advice = Shake Up (aka Welcome Week)

Welcome Week highlights some of the major goals of the Honors Program including a commitment to an Honors Living Learning Community, recognition of the importance of interdisciplinary learning, and participation in civic engagement. All of these opportunities, and more, take place within the supportive environment that includes faculty, staff, and upper-class students.

PREPARING FOR WELCOME WEEK

The goal of Welcome Week is to have programming that threads through the first days on campus. Each day there is a group event and also time set aside for the students to settle into campus and the city of Boston. The schedule highlights include:

Wednesday	Move-in day; evening social
Thursday	Faculty panel to discuss the First-Year Reading selection; small faculty/staff-led panels to discuss the book; students join with their discussion leader for lunch
Friday	Group team-building experience at a day-long ropes course retreat
Saturday	Assistance in campus-wide move-in
Sunday	Author visit and book signing reception
Monday	Honors Induction Breakfast
Saturday	(after first week of classes) Honors Outreach Project

The preparation for Welcome Week begins about ten months before the first-year students set foot on campus. The academic linchpin of Welcome Week is the First-Year Reading Project. This project was inspired by a national movement toward college reading programs (Ferguson, 2006; Twiton, 2007). In addition, the highly integrated reading program of the Honors College at the University of Massachusetts Commonwealth College, known as the Dean's Book Club, also proved to be a wonderful resource (www.comcol.umass.edu; Bartlett, 2003).

Our program staff compiles a list of suggested books from a number of sources, including campus best-seller lists, other reading programs, and suggestions from faculty, staff, and students. Working with a committee of four

students, four faculty members, and four administrative/staff members, we discuss the books they read and recommend a book to be selected for the First-Year Reading Project. So many of our students want to participate in the process that we have created a separate group known as “Honors Readers,” and thirty students read possible selections over the semester break and make recommendations to the smaller committee. Once a book is selected, usually by the end of January, we work with the library to create a “webliography” that, like a bibliography, includes a list of interviews the author has done, more detailed information about the topics that are covered in the book, and links to videos and other media. Students are able to view the webliography on their “student portal” before coming to campus.

As Welcome Week approaches, we begin organizing an interdisciplinary faculty panel, rounding up workshop facilitators, scheduling buses for our retreat, working with the Department of Residence Life and the Center for Community Service, and planning other logistics that are necessary for Welcome Week to occur. Student preparation for Welcome Week begins during summer orientation when all students receive a copy of the First-Year Reading Project book. This book establishes a common ground for beginning conversations in the honors community during Welcome Week. The 2007 selection was Michael Patrick MacDonald’s *Easter Rising*; in 2006 it was Tracy Kidder’s *Mountains Beyond Mountains*.

The day the students move in, they sign a “participation” contract stating that they understand that all Welcome Week events are mandatory. This contract works particularly well because their parents are with them as they move in and we often hear them say “I told you it was mandatory!” Before the events get started, each student receives a folder with a detailed personal schedule for the week (see Appendix A). The folder includes personalized information on the students’ breakout group for the workshop discussions, detailed information on their Honors Outreach Project community partner, an Honors Program “Viewbook” of all of their peers, and a raffle ticket for a chance to join our author for lunch the day of his or her visit.

A WEEK OF PROGRAMMING

Welcome Week begins with a low-key **ice-cream social** sponsored by the Department of Residence Life right after the students have moved in. During this event, first-year honors students are joined by upper-class resident assistants, residence directors, and upper-class honors mentors. This event is also a way to get students from both of our residence halls together since we cannot house everyone in the 224-person hall in which we are located. After Welcome Week, we survey students on their experiences; their comments are interspersed in the text, and the survey instrument appears in Appendix B.

I loved that all the events centered on getting to know Northeastern and our new classmates. It gave everyone a comfortable place to be social and meet new people. (Student A)

CREATING COMMUNITY: HONORS WELCOME WEEK PROGRAMMING

The **First-Year Reading Project** gets off the ground on the second day. The morning after students move in, everyone meets for a faculty-led panel discussion centered on the book. RAs and GAs help sign students into the event. After the panel, students break into small discussion groups. Facilitators are given a list of students, an outline of questions to help guide the discussion, and a ticket for lunch if they choose to join their group in the dining hall after the breakout discussion.

Our interdisciplinary panel includes professors from four different colleges who discuss topics from the book that are relevant to their particular fields. The goal of the experience is to allow students to see how different disciplines ask sets of questions about the reading and to move toward an introduction to interdisciplinary thinking. So, for example, for Kidder's book on social justice and health care in Haiti, a professor of engineering talked about constructing clean water systems, a professor in human services discussed issues of poverty and development, a professor in architecture talked about innovation in housing for the poor, and a professor in business talked about global microfinance initiatives. Students then move into workshops to discuss the First-Year Reading book in smaller groups. The workshops are facilitated by faculty and staff from all over campus, including the Dean of Arts and Sciences. Students have a chance to discuss and reflect upon the topics discussed by the faculty panel as well as offer their own thoughts and opinions within their breakout groups.

I liked that it wasn't just a series of icebreakers . . . It was a way for us all to get to know each other without the cliché name-sharing over and over again. (Student B)

The third day students are whisked off campus to attend an **all-day team-building retreat** at Northeastern's Ashland Campus. The Warren Conference Center is located just forty-five minutes west of Boston. We hire group facilitators who challenge the students throughout the day with both physical and mental tasks. The minute the students step off of the buses, they are broken up into four groups in which they will remain throughout the day-long round robin of activities, including a high ropes course element. Students are challenged to step out of their comfort zones and rely on the trust of others to complete the team-building tasks and games. Once again, RAs and honors mentors are a vital part of the day's activities. They facilitate the bus rides and participate in the activities with the first-year students.

I really enjoyed the ropes course and getting to meet other people. At first, I was dreading the course and the day because it didn't sound interesting and sounded like some corny activity. After completing the course, my perspective totally changed and it was a really fun day. I'm so glad it was mandatory . . . (Student C)

It was things that put some of us out of our element and it was cool to see how each person reacted. (Student D)

This past year we added an opportunity for our students to assist with campus-wide move-in activities; while in principle it is a good idea for honors students to give back to the NU community from the beginning, in reality the move-in is already so well organized that our students had little to do. We will probably look for another type of give-back experience for next year.

The majority of Welcome Week is based around the **First-Year Reading Project** book and the **author's visit** to campus. On the fifth day of Welcome Week, seven students join the author for lunch. Earlier in the week, students enter a raffle to have this opportunity. Once the author arrives in the early afternoon, he or she meets with the Honors Program staff and then heads over to a catered lunch with the students as well as other students, faculty, and staff who facilitate Honors Welcome Week. After lunch, the author addresses the entire first-year honors class and answers student questions. The address is then followed by a book signing and reception.

I also really enjoyed listening to Michael Patrick MacDonald and hearing about his perspective of his book. It was fascinating meeting him and I am so glad he could sign my book. (Student C)

Having Michael Patrick MacDonald come to NU made me feel like a VIP. (Student E)

I was able to have lunch with him and that made the experience by far the best of the week. (Student F)

The annual **Honors Induction Breakfast** is on Monday morning, the sixth day of our Welcome Week. This event is a formal welcome to the students from members of the campus community such as the Dean of Admissions, the Director of Residence Life, and the Vice-Provost for Undergraduate Education. The breakfast ends with a pinning ceremony for the students, officially welcoming them to the Northeastern University Honors Program, followed by a class photo.

I really enjoyed how these events helped to create a feeling of community among the honors students. (Student G)

The culmination of Welcome Week is the **Honors Outreach Project**, which takes place the Saturday after classes begin. Throughout the spring and summer, we work with the Center for Community Service, which helps us plan this event. At their summer orientation, students select an issue area for their service project such as hunger, children, or the environment. Their assignments are given to them at the beginning of Welcome Week when they get their personalized schedules.

On the day of the event, the students all meet in the morning to break up into their assigned groups, led by honors mentors, and go out to serve their new community. Projects may include painting a fence, helping teachers decorate

CREATING COMMUNITY: HONORS WELCOME WEEK PROGRAMMING

classrooms, or packaging food at a local shelter. Last fall, students and upper-class group leaders completed about 1,800 hours of community service.

I thought the Outreach Program was a good way to remind students all they have to offer and to make students aware of their surroundings. I also feel that by having this outreach program, more students will be likely to volunteer on their own. (Student H)

POST-WELCOME WEEK PROGRAMMING

The first year we offered Welcome Week, we all felt that we lost the momentum during the term by not having some type of follow-up academic experience that built upon this week. This year we feel that we have effectively been able to build on that positive energy. Once again, the ideas and resources of NCHC were critical in this development. In 2006, a group of students accompanied us to the annual NCHC meetings in Philadelphia. Their assignment was to attend workshops and presentations on first-year courses. American University presented a particularly helpful model. The students who attended the NCHC meetings established a committee in spring 2007 to get a course off the ground. We now offer a new course required for all incoming honors students. The course, *Enhancing Honors 101*, is team-taught by upper-class honors mentors and the Director of the Honors Program. The course introduces all first-year students to the larger opportunities available in the program as they begin to chart a plan for their undergraduate years; it includes advising opportunities, information on fellowships and basic navigation skills for the students' first year.

With the recent restructuring of the university's general education requirements, we were also able to develop the *First-Year Inquiry Series*, inaugurated in fall 2007. The courses in this series are designed to meet the requirements of comparative understanding of cultures, social sciences, arts and humanities, and science and technology. We offer courses in both the fall and spring. One of the unexpected consequences of the fall course on *Ethics and the World Religions* is that at least several students are now going to major in religion; that must have made for some lively Thanksgiving table conversations this past fall!

COST

Our annual budget for Welcome Week activities hovers around \$76,000, or \$230 per student. The off-campus ropes course and the First-Year Reading Project make up the bulk of the cost. The off-campus day of programming, including transportation, food, and facilitators, costs approximately \$125 per student. The types of events that occur throughout the day, minus the ropes course, could be recreated on campus with student facilitators keeping the costs to a minimum for smaller budgets and programs.

The first-year reading book and speaker fee also comprise a large part of the cost. We are able to secure a 40% discount on books from the campus

bookstore because we order them in bulk. Programs that do not have a significant budget to cover these costs could do without a speaker and still have programming and events, including a panel discussion and smaller breakout sessions using faculty, staff, and graduate students to facilitate discussions.

Our Welcome Week staff includes three professionals, a staff assistant, and two part-time graduate students. We also have the support of Residential Life and numerous upper-class honors students. We could not run such a program without their help.

CONCLUSION

Through Welcome Week programming and the new curriculum initiatives for first-year students, we have made significant strides in first-year programming. Students have opportunities to meet their classmates and interact with upper-class students in a variety of settings beyond the classroom. We feel that we have effectively met the challenges of integrating a first-year living learning community and have established close ties with units across campus. An unexpected consequence of these activities is increased awareness of the activities of the Honors Program campus-wide and a greater appreciation of the opportunities and contributions that the program and our students make to the larger university community and the city. Increasingly, faculty, staff, and other campus programs want to collaborate with us on a variety of initiatives, and the opportunities for all our students will grow as a result.

Another consequence of the initiatives is the positive effect that we are having on recruiting students to Northeastern University and the Honors Program. Last spring and this fall, our students have spread the word about activities that have "made" the experience for them. Indicators of our success range from parents writing to find out what the book is so that they can read it to our hefty over-subscription in honors this fall.

We also would be remiss not to acknowledge once again the generous resources that our peers in NCHC have shared with us. Starting with the talents of our NCHC consultant team led by Bob Spurrier, together with Rosalie Otero and Bruce Carter, we have used the ideas and talents of others to help us move our program to the next stage. We look forward to future NCHC meetings where we will have a chance both to share our ideas and to learn from other programs how to make our program stronger.

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APPENDIX A
YOUR PERSONALIZED WELCOME WEEK SCHEDULE
STUDENT EXAMPLE #1

Thursday August 30th

Your group for the Easter Rising Discussion and room is: Group A 162 Meserve

Friday August 31st

Report to the Forsyth Circle by 7:45am to sign in on the bus—give your ID to check in.

Saturday September 1st

Please report to Frost Lounge in Ell Hall to sign in. Your Shift for move in help is: 10am–12pm

Sunday September 2nd

Please report to the Solomon Court at 1:30pm to sign in. Make sure to bring your book to be signed by Michael Patrick MacDonald!

Monday September 3rd

Report to the Curry Student Center, Indoor Quad by 9:00am to sign in.
Your Placement for the Honors Outreach Project is: Nuestra Comunidad

How will you get there?

You will be taking the T—your group leader has a pass for you.

What to bring for lunch:

Your organization will be providing lunch OR bring your own lunch.

Special Instructions:

Volunteers must wear closed-toe shoes. Don't forget—wear your NU Honors shirt and comfortable clothes that you don't mind getting a little dirty!

APPENDIX B

HONORS PROGRAM WELCOME WEEK ACTIVITIES SURVEY 2007

1. How would you rate the Honors Program Welcome Week?

- a. Excellent
- b. Good
- c. Average
- d. Fair
- e. Poor

2. Which of the Welcome Week events do you think we should offer again next year? (select all that apply)

- Wednesday Night—Ice Cream Social
- Thursday—Panelist and breakout groups
- Friday—Ashland Ropes Course
- Saturday—Help with Move In
- Sunday—Speaker, book signing
- Monday—Honors Induction Breakfast
- Saturday—Community Service Awareness

3. Please rate each program:

- a. Wednesday Night—Ice Cream Social
 Excellent Good Average Fair Poor
- b. Thursday—Panelist and breakout groups
 Excellent Good Average Fair Poor
- c. Friday—Ashland Ropes Course
 Excellent Good Average Fair Poor
- d. Saturday—Help with Move In
 Excellent Good Average Fair Poor
- e. Sunday—Speaker, book signing
 Excellent Good Average Fair Poor
- f. Monday—Honors Induction Breakfast
 Excellent Good Average Fair Poor
- g. Saturday—Community Service Awareness
 Excellent Good Average Fair Poor

4. What did you like about the events?

5. What do you think could be improved?

6. Was the First Year Reading Project a valuable experience?

Yes No

7. Please rate the Honors Program First Year Reading Project book, *Easter Rising*:

Excellent Good Average Fair Poor

8. Do you have any suggestions for next year?

9. Would you like to be involved in any of the following student committees:

a. Honors First Year Reading Project Planning Committee

Welcome Week Planning Committee

Global Awareness Committee: World as Text

Alternative Spring Break Committee

Honors Student Council

b. Please provide your name and email if you would like us to contact you about joining these committees: _____

LINDSAY ROBERTS AND JESSIE SALMON

Creating Faculty-Student Interaction

LINDSAY ROBERTS AND JESSIE SALMON

TOWSON UNIVERSITY

Creating a thriving community is a challenge for any honors program or college, especially for a program in transition like the Honors College at Towson University. The Honors College has approximately nine hundred students out of about sixteen thousand undergraduate students, and within the past three years it has undergone major curricular and structural changes. To keep honors students and faculty connected and invested in their honors experience through this transition period, the Honors College has focused on establishing a tighter bond between faculty and students, one that is unique to the college and recognized by the university as a whole.

In the fall of 2005, the Honors College Student Council (HCSC) was formed. Like any student organization, we have experienced the triumphs and pitfalls of becoming an established group in the honors and university communities. We continue to evolve from a small group of dedicated honors students to a fully developed organization that includes students, faculty, and staff. Even though anyone at the university can be a member and honors students are automatically considered members, the HCSC is currently operating with about thirty active student members who attend at least a couple of events and several meetings each semester. The purpose of the HCSC is to create community among the Honors College students and to connect students with faculty. While we host typical student events such as game nights, trips to local museums and attractions, community service projects, and fundraisers, we also facilitate faculty and student interaction in a manner that is unique to our organization at Towson University. Faculty and students connect on social, personal, and academic levels through the outlets of our Seminar Night and "Generation Jeopardy" game.

Seminar Night is held once a semester to provide students with information about upcoming honors seminars from the professors who will be teaching them. Because of the nature of these seminars and their varying topics, students often cannot get a good sense of the course content based on the university catalog description. At Seminar Night, each professor has time to summarize his or her course and its basic requirements. As a result, students are able to make informed decisions about course registration. Seminar Night is beneficial to students because it provides them information about upcoming courses, and it increases student-faculty interaction outside the classroom.

CREATING FACULTY-STUDENT INTERACTION

Seminar Night allows students to feel more connected to their honors teachers, and *vice versa*, as they make initial contact with each other. Students gain a sense of what to expect in the courses they are considering by hearing about requirements directly from the professor. Seminar Night also gives faculty the opportunity to answer questions and receive feedback from the students. This preliminary dialogue about upcoming courses sparks student interest in subjects to be taught. Because of such conversation, students come to class at the beginning of the semester with a more personal connection to the subject that enhances the in-class experience.

The most successful event that the HCSC has sponsored thus far was what we called Generation Jeopardy. This student vs. faculty trivia game consisted of questions about pop culture, academic subjects, and random facts from a variety of decades. Three students, including the two authors of this essay, generated the questions. Some of the questions and categories were as follows: "Name the television show: Let's set sail on a three-hour tour"; a Bond category with questions ranging from "Set home run record in 2001 while with the San Francisco Giants" to "Electrostatic donations forming lattices"; and a music category with songs downloaded onto a PowerPoint presentation where the players had to name the song title, artist, and more.

The game was operated via PowerPoint on a screen. Rotations of three students and three teachers stood at the front and answered questions as teams. The three students on one team and three teachers on the other were the only ones answering a set of five questions. Everyone was responsible for keeping the rotation going to encourage a hundred percent participation and to ensure that a few people would not be answering questions during the whole game. Fortunately, the father of one of the students constructed two light-up buzzers for the event. The three students and three faculty members stood around a buzzer; when someone hit the button, a light came on to indicate which team had answered first.

To encourage faculty participation, members of the HCSC decorated personalized invitations and delivered them to their favorite faculty members. The personal invitation not only created a special connection between the student and his or her professor but made the professor more likely and willing to attend.

The night was a great success, and, although the students were defeated, both teams enjoyed the event. Outbursts of laughter from faculty and students alike, especially when a professor broke out in the song "Jeremiah was a Bullfrog," created a fun and relaxed atmosphere not typically seen in a classroom. The room was buzzing with excitement as the competition intensified, and we all forgot that college professors were in the commons room of an honors residence hall.

Generation Jeopardy has had lasting effects on the faculty and students, especially as we now prepare for this year's game. Knowing they will be inviting their favorite faculty members, they have been plotting whom to invite. The returning faculty members who have sent in their RSVP for this year's event have indicated that they are going to continue the faculty tradition of beating

the students; two biology professors, who are good friends and attended last year's game, remind us every time we pass them in the hallways that the faculty will win. Another sign of our success is that a representative from another student organization asked if we would help them invite faculty to one of their events since we have "connections." We are developing a university-wide reputation of being the organization connected with the faculty.

Faculty-student interaction offers numerous benefits for students and faculty. The chance to get to know and appreciate each other as individuals outside of class provides potential for a better in-class experience. Since teachers get to know the students in a more relaxed atmosphere, they can better understand students, which can benefit their teaching. Students participating in activities such as Seminar Night and Generation Jeopardy have the opportunity to make connections with faculty whom they might not otherwise encounter since, once students are engaged in their major, they do not often have the chance to connect with teachers outside of their department. Through such interdisciplinary interaction, students gain a better sense of opportunities available to them.

Through the hard work of dedicated honors students and faculty, the Honors College at Towson University has found some successful ways to cultivate an honors community. Seminar Night and Generation Jeopardy enhance our classroom learning experience and help us build a community among the honors students and the greater university. As we continue to grow, we eagerly seek new pathways to encourage beneficial faculty-student interaction.

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BOOK NOTES

SAM SCHUMAN

Wholly Spirit: Searching for a Plausible God by C. Grey Austin

SAM SCHUMAN

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA ASHEVILLE

Long before NCHC had a paid, professional staff, Grey Austin was one of a small group of legendary executive secretary/treasurers (along with Jean Philips, John Portz, Lothar Tresp, Bill Mech, and Earl Brown, Jr.) who kept our organization functional and solvent. He served in that capacity in the 1970s and was also the president of our organization early in the following decade. Those of us in honors “of a certain age” recall Grey as a thoughtful, quiet, gentle, skilled leader and manager. Some of us, too, will never forget his characterization of honors leadership: being an honors director, he said, is like being a little boy who has wet his pants—it gives you a nice warm feeling, and you hope nobody notices! Fewer of us, perhaps, knew that Grey was a Methodist minister, who had left the ministry for academe shortly after he completed his seminary studies. Now Grey has written a book about his spiritual journey with the gently punning title *Wholly Spirit*. His book, too, gives one a nice warm feeling, and a good deal more in addition, and I hope lots of readers **do** notice.

Spiritual autobiography is an ancient genre, certainly going back as far as St. Augustine’s *Confessions*, and still lively at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Austin’s meditations and ruminations remind us why. A good work in this tradition may help us to find answers, certainly, but more importantly it can illuminate questions which we wish to ask ourselves. More exactly, a book like *Wholly Spirit* can, through the honesty of its intellectual and spiritual seeking, give us permission to face our own spiritual puzzles and doubts. It can and, in this case, does empower us to raise issues and ask questions which it often turns out we wanted to ask all along but were afraid to confront directly.

As one would expect of its author, Grey Austin’s writing is not brutally but gently direct and honest. This is as much a recounting of what Grey has come *not* to believe as an iteration of his faith; it casts the clear light of logic on a spiritual landscape, and, for Grey, it turns out that many of the presumed features of that landscape were mere shadows. So, he concludes, reason has led him to abandon any belief in a God who is the creator of the universe and, hence, outside it. He cannot put credence in a Divinity who answers personal prayers or prefers one human religion to another.

WHOLLY SPIRIT: SEARCHING FOR A PLAUSIBLE GOD BY C. GREY AUSTIN

At the same time, Grey's meditations reveal an intensely spiritual person, one who seeks meaning in his life, and in life itself, and one who cannot accept an entirely mechanistic universe. A short book-note such as this cannot do justice to the complex theological and psychological convolutions of Grey Austin's search for a "plausible God." His metaphysical travels do not follow a straight and simple superhighway: there are turns and U-turns, dead-ends, surprising moments of illumination (one of which follows an injudicious indulgence in an overly rich dessert that leads to an inquiet night of thought and meditation), and much mystery. He moves towards a theology of wholeness and a sense of unity and oneness in the universe which seems to him "wholly spirit."

These are, obviously, big issues—the biggest. But Grey Austin's style is ruminatory and humane. *Wholly Spirit* certainly demonstrates that one can deal with the big issues without getting a big head. The book is leavened with touches of kindly humor. It is also impressively scholarly, with a 23-page annotated bibliography of rather astounding breadth. Grey has certainly ranged across Eastern and Western religious traditions and ventured into many of the non-theological disciplines (psychology, physics, etc.) in his searchings. The "A"s in his "Index of Names" are: Aristotle, Karen Armstrong, Louis Armstrong, Augustine of Hippo, and Augustus Caesar! In this respect, his book is an emblem of the kind of thinking that liberal learning can bring to the illumination of multifaceted investigations.

Finally, I would note that *Wholly Spirit* is not a book a young person could have written. Grey Austin's religious quest has been a long one, and he writes from the wise perspective of decades of thought. But, in the directness, wit, and clarity of that thought, Grey demonstrates that he still has a consciousness as lithe and energetic as that of a first-year honors student.

Wholly Spirit is available through amazon.com, at bookstores, and at www.greyaustin.com

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PAUL STRONG

A Dangerous Thing: A Memoir of Learning and Teaching by Betty Krasne

PAUL STRONG

ALFRED UNIVERSITY

Betty Krasne's *A Dangerous Thing: A Memoir of Learning and Teaching* opens with her paternal grandparents, the Krasnoschezeks (the name means "red-cheeks" and probably refers to a beard), leaving the Ukraine and its pogroms for the safety and hope of America. Once here, they set up as retail grocers, then wholesalers, then owners of Krasdale Foods and Bernice Foods. Both sides of the family make a good living. Betty's mother's parents, the Goldsteins, own a Philadelphia brownstone with a Steinway grand in the living room; her father's family lives in a large apartment on Manhattan's Central Park West. They drive Packards and Cadillacs. The grandchildren go to Vassar, Columbia, and Mount Holyoke. In 1936, thirty years after their father's emigration, two Krasne sons and their wives board the *Queen Mary* on the first leg of a trip back to the old country, with sixteen bags containing dozens of coats, dresses, sweaters, and medical supplies to help their family in Odessa. The memoir begins as a Jewish-American success story.

For the third generation, values that were taken for granted by her grandparents have become problematic, and Betty finds herself engaged in an "insidious conflict, a war waged between family and school for our secular souls." At home, material values reign: "good taste" is everything. College isn't for women; what women need is to be able to "manage a household properly (meaning elegantly but efficiently)." Education for women, in a lovely turn of phrase, is "a kind of exterior decoration." The value placed on taste moves Betty to become a dilettante: "If someone does something that requires neither particular talent nor decades of intense training—not like dancing on point or playing a Chopin sonata—I feel I too must be able to do this . . . The elements that combined to make me a dilettante were ingrained by the time I was in elementary school: the understanding that life was founded on good taste, a competitive nature, the short attention span of a spoiled daughter. By the time I came upon Pope's warning about knowledge—'A little learning is a dangerous thing'—it was far too late to retool myself into a scholar."

After Fieldston, Mount Holyoke, and a Master's from Columbia, Betty juggled teaching at Mercy College, a Catholic school in Dobbs Ferry, with the demands of managing two sons, a twelve-room house, a cat, and a dog. As if

A DANGEROUS THING: A MEMOIR OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

this weren't enough, she became pregnant again, a circumstance described this way: "At 36, I was considered very old for the baby business, as though there were something rather disgusting about being pregnant at that age. Also, having a third child wasn't the smartest move for a woman trying to make a career in academe. It indicated a lack of intellectual focus; it indicated that teaching was a job, not a career." Not long after, she began work on a Ph.D. When asked how her name should appear on the degree, Betty Levine chose to become Dr. Krasne. "Along with my new name, there was a promotion and a new undertaking. I was asked to coordinate the College's honors courses. One issue had been settled: I did not have a job; I had a career, with all the shifting priorities that entailed. At work I was Dr. Krasne; when I stepped through the looking glass, I was Mrs. Levine."

This will be a familiar story to any woman who has, as Betty puts it, been "guilty of stealing time from work for family, but more often from home for work, and from both for writing." It is movingly told; it is also filled with humor. There is her maternal grandmother's attempt to find sour cream in a neighborhood where Jews are relatively new. "'Sour cream?' the dairyman wanted to know? 'Mrs. Goldstein, you think I sell my customers sour cream?'" As a new teacher at Mercy, Betty sat in on a colleague's course to see how things were done. Sister Joannes Christie's class began with "a rapid chant, reciting something at such speed that I could make out none of the words. They were, I guessed, reciting a prayer." When Betty asked if beginning class with a prayer was required, "She paused, puzzled. 'Well, my dear, how else would you get everyone's attention?' Answering this seemed obvious to me, so obvious I was afraid of being considered impertinent. Searching around in my memory bank of classes I had attended, I suggested, 'Couldn't I just shut the door?'" That she managed to fit in was confirmed when she received a letter addressed to "Sister Betty Levine."

To this Russian-Jewish middle-class boy from Queens who went to public schools and whose mother shopped at Alexander's and Klein's, Betty's description of how the other half lived—shopping at "the three B's: Bergdorfs, Bendels, Bonwits," going to Fieldston, riding at Aylward's Riding Academy, and summering in Bar Harbor—was a real eye opener. But, as they say, you don't have to be Jewish. Anyone "of a certain age" will enjoy revisiting the days of butterfly chairs, Space Shoes, and avocado pits sprouting in jellyjars. A younger generation of readers will be fascinated by Betty's description of college life at Mount Holyoke in the fifties, the heyday of *in loco parentis* and parietal rules.

"In the fifties," Betty writes, "it did not occur to most of us women tucked away in the middle of Massachusetts, trying to absorb the sum of human knowledge, that we could do anything about the shape of events, other than be spectators at the course of history." *A Dangerous Thing* tells of the many ways expectations and possibilities for American women have changed since Anna Krasnoschezek and Hannah Goldstein came to these shores a century ago. It is also the story of a dignified, thoughtful, accomplished woman—poet, teacher,

PAUL STRONG

author of children's books, honors director, and yes, wife and mother of three—
and how she did, in fact, help shape the events of her time.

For more information about the book, go to www.bettykrasne.com.

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New Information From NCHC

ROBERT SPURRIER

The Newest “Basic Characteristic” of a Fully Developed Honors Program

ROBERT SPURRIER

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY

After years of conversations about the sixteen “Basic Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors Program” (adopted in 1994), NCHC has added a new Basic Characteristic to the arsenal of the honors dean, director, or coordinator seeking to demonstrate that a particular institution’s honors program or honors college complies with NCHC’s “best practices” documents. NCHC’s Board of Directors approved the newest characteristic in November, 2007:

A fully developed program will provide priority enrollment for honors students who are active in the program in recognition of their unique class scheduling needs.

Having had the privilege to serve as an external reviewer or consultant with NCHC colleagues on more than thirty occasions, I am convinced that it is difficult to overstate the importance of the “Basic Characteristics” in making the case to a central administration that the honors program or college complies with (or needs additional resources to meet) national guidelines developed by NCHC.

The unique scheduling needs of honors students are recognized even at institutions with large numbers of honors courses because even under the best of circumstances honors students must juggle their honors courses around requirements in their academic majors. Honors students frequently pursue double (or triple) majors, multiple minors, study abroad options, and internships—all of which make it imperative that they be able to implement sometimes extremely complex plans of study in order to graduate on time. The newest Characteristic quite properly recognizes these unique scheduling needs.

As recommended by the Honors Assessment and Evaluation Committee and approved by NCHC’s Board of Directors, priority enrollment is presented as a perquisite earned by “active” honors students in light of their unique class scheduling needs rather than as a birthright of students from the time they enter an honors program or honors college. Of course each institution is free to determine what “active” means for its honors program or college.

Having priority enrollment for special populations, based on demonstrated need, is nothing out of the ordinary. Many institutions provide priority enrollment for students who fall under the terms of the Americans with Disabilities

THE NEWEST “BASIC CHARACTERISTIC”

Act. Others do so for students involved in intercollegiate athletics in recognition of the time constraints imposed by mandatory practice and travel schedules that are beyond the control of the students. (Both of these groups of students may well include honors students, of course.)

The new priority enrollment Characteristic also is important in light of ongoing difficulties with the Banner enrollment management system in some of its manifestations and the various work-arounds required after the fact to take into account the needs of honors students, programs, and colleges. Of course, a computer system *can* do essentially anything the institution is willing to pay for it to do, so having this national guideline in hand (especially if an institution is about to make the transition to the Banner system) may well be a valuable card to play in the campus negotiations about how Banner or some other system will be configured.

Finally, and more broadly, NCHC’s “Basic Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors Program” (Appendix A) and more recent “Basic Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors College” (Appendix B) continue to be extremely valuable tools for the development of honors programs and colleges. Having passed the test of time, the “Basic Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors Program” are something akin to the received wisdom of the national honors community—and the “Basic Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors College” are well on their way to the same status. There is every reason to anticipate that the newest Characteristic soon will be viewed in a similar light.

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ROBERT SPURRIER

APPENDIX A

BASIC CHARACTERISTICS OF A FULLY DEVELOPED HONORS PROGRAM

(Approved by the NCHC Executive Committee on March 4, 1994, and
amended by the NCHC Board of Directors on November 23, 2007)

No one model of an Honors program can be superimposed on all types of institutions. However, there are characteristics which are common to successfully developed Honors programs. Listed below are those characteristics, although not all characteristics are necessary for an Honors program to be considered a successful and/or fully developed Honors program.

- * A fully developed Honors program should be carefully set up to accommodate the special needs and abilities of the undergraduate students it is designed to serve. This entails identifying the targeted student population by some clearly articulated set of criteria (e.g., GPA, SAT score, a written essay). A program with open admission needs to spell out expectations for retention in the program and for satisfactory completion of program requirements.
- * The program should have a clear mandate from the institutional administration ideally in the form of a mission statement clearly stating the objectives and responsibilities of the program and defining its place in both the administrative and academic structure of the institution. This mandate or mission statement should be such as to assure the permanence and stability of the program by guaranteeing an adequate budget and by avoiding any tendency to force the program to depend on temporary or spasmodic dedication of particular faculty members or administrators. In other words, the program should be fully institutionalized so as to build thereby a genuine tradition of excellence.
- * The Honors director should report to the chief academic officer of the institution.
- * There should be an Honors curriculum featuring special courses, seminars, colloquia, and independent study established in harmony with the mission statement and in response to the needs of the program.
- * The program requirements themselves should include a substantial portion of the participants' undergraduate work, usually in the vicinity of 20% to 25% of their total course work and certainly no less than 15%.
- * The program should be so formulated that it relates effectively both to all the college work for the degree (e.g., by satisfying general education requirements) and to the area of concentration, departmental specialization, pre-professional or professional training.

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- * The program should be both visible and highly reputed throughout the institution so that it is perceived as providing standards and models of excellence for students and faculty across the campus.
- * Faculty participating in the program should be fully identified with the aims of the program. They should be carefully selected on the basis of exceptional teaching skills and the ability to provide intellectual leadership to able students.
- * The program should occupy suitable quarters constituting an Honors center with such facilities as an Honors library, lounge, reading rooms, personal computers and other appropriate decor.
- * The director or other administrative officer charged with administering the program should work in close collaboration with a committee or council of faculty members representing the colleges and/or departments served by the program.
- * The program should have in place a committee of Honors students to serve as liaison with the Honors faculty committee or council who must keep them fully informed on the program and elicit their cooperation in evaluation and development. This student group should enjoy as much autonomy as possible conducting the business of the committee in representing the needs and concerns of all Honors students to the administration, and it should also be included in governance, serving on the advisory/policy committee as well as constituting the group that governs the student association.
- * There should be provisions for special academic counseling of Honors students by uniquely qualified faculty and/or staff personnel.
- * The Honors program, in distinguishing itself from the rest of the institution, serves as a kind of laboratory within which faculty can try things they have always wanted to try but for which they could find no suitable outlet. When such efforts are demonstrated to be successful, they may well become institutionalized thereby raising the general level of education within the college or university for all students. In this connection, the Honors curriculum should serve as a prototype for things that can work campus-wide in the future.
- * The fully developed Honors program must be open to continuous and critical review and be prepared to change in order to maintain its distinctive position of offering distinguished education to the best students in the institution.
- * A fully developed program will emphasize the participatory nature of the Honors educational process by adopting such measures as offering opportunities for students to participate in regional and national conferences, Honors semesters, international programs, community service, and other types of experiential education.

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- * Fully developed two-year and four-year Honors programs will have articulation agreements by which Honors graduates from two-year colleges are accepted into four-year Honors programs when they meet previously agreed-upon requirements.
- * A fully developed program will provide priority enrollment for honors students who are active in the program in recognition of their unique class scheduling needs.

APPENDIX B

BASIC CHARACTERISTICS OF A FULLY DEVELOPED HONORS COLLEGE

(Approved by the NCHC Executive Committee on June 25, 2005)

An honors educational experience can occur in a wide variety of institutional settings. When institutions establish an honors college or embark upon a transition from an honors program to an honors college, they face a transformational moment. No one model defines this transformation. Although not all of the following characteristics are necessary to be considered a successful or fully developed honors college, the National Collegiate Honors Council recognizes these as representative:

- * A fully developed honors college should incorporate the relevant characteristics of a fully developed honors program.
- * A fully developed honors college should exist as an equal collegiate unit within a multi-collegiate university structure.
- * The head of a fully developed honors college should be a dean reporting directly to the chief academic officer of the institution and serving as a full member of the Council of Deans, if one exists. The dean should be a full-time, 12-month appointment.
- * The operational and staff budgets of fully developed honors colleges should provide resources at least comparable to other collegiate units of equivalent size.
- * A fully developed honors college should exercise increased coordination and control of departmental honors where the college has emerged out of such a decentralized system.
- * A fully developed honors college should exercise considerable control over honors recruitment and admissions, including the appropriate size of the incoming class. Admission to the honors college should be by separate application.
- * An honors college should exercise considerable control over its policies, curriculum, and selection of faculty.
- * The curriculum of a fully developed honors college should offer significant course opportunities across all four years of study.
- * The curriculum of the fully developed honors college should constitute at least 20% of a student's degree program. An honors thesis or project should be required.

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- * Where the home university has a significant residential component, the fully developed honors college should offer substantial honors residential opportunities.
- * The distinction awarded by a fully developed honors college should be announced at commencement, noted on the diploma, and featured on the student's final transcript.
- * Like other colleges within the university, a fully developed honors college should be involved in alumni affairs and development and should have an external advisory board.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Bernice Braid is Professor Emeritus of Comparative Literature at Long Island University Brooklyn, where she designed cross-disciplinary curricula for the University Honors Program and directed the program for thirty-seven years. She was one of the founders of NCHC's Honors Semesters, into which she introduced City as Text™ to be the integrative field-based seminar in 1981. She continues to experiment with, write about, and facilitate faculty workshops and institutes on experiential learning strategies for liberal education.

Katherine E. Bruce is Professor of Psychology and Director of the Honors Scholars Program at the University of North Carolina Wilmington. She conducts research on animal cognition in rats as well as mate selection in live-bearing fish, and she has benefited from the insights of many honors students who have studied these topics with her. Kate is active in state, regional, and national honors councils and has served as president of the National Collegiate Honors Council, the Southern Regional Honors Council, and the North Carolina Honors Association.

Craig T. Cobane is Director of the Honors College and Associate Professor of Political Science at Western Kentucky University. He earned his B.S. from University of Wisconsin-Green Bay and his M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Cincinnati, all in political science. His scholarly interests include terrorism/counter-terrorism, international relations, and political philosophy. Cobane is the recipient of a number of teaching awards and fellowships. In 2005, he was awarded the Distinguished Alumni Award from UW-Green Bay.

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Philip L. Frana is Assistant Professor of Science Studies and Assistant Director of the University of Central Arkansas Honors College. He earned a Ph.D. in the history of science and technology at Iowa State University. Dr. Frana has published on the origins of the Internet, computer software as science and business, medical informatics, and biomedical research. His primary domains for pedagogical practice are collaborative e-scholarship and technology in honors education.

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Maureen E. Kelleher is Director of the Honors Program and Associate Professor of Sociology at Northeastern University. She is a member of the teaching team with upper-class mentors for a first-year honors course called Enhancing Honors 101, and she also teaches an upper-level honors seminar. Her research interests include risk-taking behavior on college campuses.

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Mara Parker is Associate Dean of Humanities and Associate Professor of Musicology and String Performance at Widener University, where she teaches music history, chamber music, and cello. She has published and presented papers on eighteenth-century chamber music, particularly the string quartet, and on cello literature. She presents a cello recital every year as part of Widener University's Honors Week.

Lauren C. Pouchak is Associate Director of the Honors Program at Northeastern University. She has an M.P.A. from Northeastern University in political science and a M.Ed. from Lynchburg College. She coordinates the Honors Welcome Week Program and a variety of other programmatic initiatives that include editing *The Honors Perspective*, a 2006 winner of the NCHC newsletter competition.

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Lindsay Roberts is a sophomore double-majoring in international studies and French at Towson University. She is vice president of the Honors College Student Council and co-editor of the TU pre-law journal. As an active member of the Towson community, Lindsay encourages others to take advantage of numerous opportunities available to them.

Jessie Salmon is a junior biology major and Spanish minor at Towson University. Her undergraduate research is in conservation ecology, observing the effects of urban and rural stream settings on fish. As treasurer and president she has been active in developing the Honors College Student Council. Her many interests are well suited to the interdisciplinary Honors College, and she hopes to spread her enthusiasm to fellow students.

Kateryna A. R. Schray is Professor of English and Coordinator of the Graduate Certificate Program in Medieval and Renaissance Studies at Marshall University, Huntington, WV. In addition to teaching honors courses, she serves as a writing mentor for Marshall's Yeager Scholars program, accompanying a group of honors students through a sequence of four interdisciplinary seminars. Dr. Schray is the recipient of several teaching awards and the author of numerous articles on medieval and modern authors.

Sam Schuman is Chancellor Emeritus of the University of Minnesota, Morris. He has served in several capacities in the NCHC, including a term as president. Sam created the "Beginning in Honors" workshop and authored the *Beginning in Honors Handbook*. His most recent book is *Old Main: Small Colleges in Twenty-First Century America* (Johns Hopkins University Press), and he is currently at work on a book on religious colleges and universities.

Richard Ira Scott is Professor of Sociology and Director of the University of Central Arkansas Honors College. He holds a Ph.D. in sociology from the University of Nebraska. Researching poverty and hunger, he helped devise the United States Index of Food Security. He also writes and speaks about pedagogy and curriculum development. Dr. Scott is on the NCHC Board of Directors and has been in honors education since 1985.

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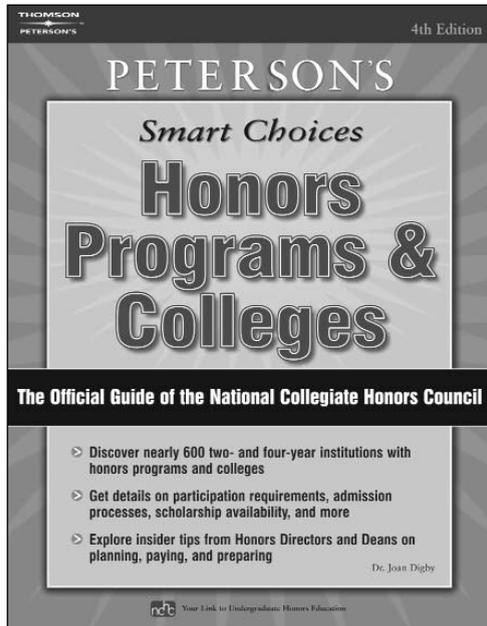
Luke Vassiliou is Director of the Honors Program and Associate Professor of English at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College. He teaches freshman writing courses and survey courses on American, British, and world literature in addition to teaching the college's honors seminars. He is originally from Athens, Greece, and he earned an M.A. in English at Illinois State University and a Ph.D. in English at Louisiana State University, both as a recipient of a Fulbright scholarship.

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Assessing and Evaluating Honors Programs and Honors Colleges: A Practical Handbook by Rosalie Otero and Robert Spurrier (2005, 98pp). This monograph includes an overview of assessment and evaluation practices and strategies. It explores the process for conducting self-studies and discusses the differences between using consultants and external reviewers. It provides a guide to conducting external reviews along with information about how to become an NCHC-Recommended Site Visitor. A dozen appendices provide examples of "best practices."

Beginning in Honors: A Handbook by Samuel Schuman (Fourth Edition, 2006, 80pp). Advice on starting a new honors program. Covers budgets, recruiting students and faculty, physical plant, administrative concerns, curriculum design, and descriptions of some model programs.

A Handbook for Honors Administrators by Ada Long (1995, 117pp). Everything an honors administrator needs to know including a description of some models of honors administration.

A Handbook for Honors Programs at Two-Year Colleges by Theresa James (2006, 136pp). A useful handbook for two-year schools contemplating beginning or redesigning their honors program and for four-year schools doing likewise or wanting to increase awareness about two-year programs and articulation agreements. Contains extensive appendices about honors contracts and a comprehensive bibliography on honors education.

Honors Composition: Historical Perspectives and Contemporary Practices by Annmarie Guzy (2003 182 pp). Parallel historical developments in honors and composition studies; contemporary honors writing projects ranging from admission essays to theses as reported by over 300 NCHC members.

Honors Programs at Smaller Colleges by Samuel Schuman (Second Edition, 1999, 53pp). How to implement an honors program, with particular emphasis on colleges with fewer than 3000 students.

Innovations in Undergraduate Research and Honors Education: Proceedings of the Second Schreyer National Conference edited by Josephine M. Carubia and Renata S. Engel (2004 145pp). Essays on the importance of undergraduate research, course models, connections to service learning, and learning strategies that support undergraduate research.

Place as Text: Approaches to Active Learning edited by Bernice Braid and Ada Long (2000, 104pp). Information and practical advice on the experiential pedagogies developed within NCHC during the past 25 years, using Honors Semesters and City as Text™ as models, along with suggestions for how to adapt these models to a variety of educational contexts.

Teaching and Learning in Honors edited by Cheryl L. Fuiks and Larry Clark (2000, 128 pp). Presents a variety of perspectives on teaching and learning useful to anyone developing new or renovating established honors curricula.

Journal of the National Collegiate Honors Council (JNCHC) is a semi-annual periodical featuring scholarly articles on honors education. Articles may include analyses of trends in teaching methodology, articles on interdisciplinary efforts, discussions of problems common to honors programs, items on the national higher education agenda, and presentations of emergent issues relevant to honors education.

Honors in Practice (HIP) is an annual journal that accommodates the need and desire for articles about nuts and bolts practices by featuring practical and descriptive essays on topics such as successful honors courses, suggestions for out-of-class experiences, administrative issues, and other topics of interest to honors administrators, faculty and students.

NCHC Handbook. Included are lists of all NCHC members, NCHC Constitution and Bylaws, committees and committee charges, and other useful information.