Dear Honors Students, Alumni, Faculty and Friends,

Welcome to our sixth year of publication of our Honors Program newsletter, The Sage Page.

As with previous editions, the students have provided you with interesting articles on their activities such as presenting research at the Southern Regional Honors Council conference, service learning opportunities, and mentoring program, Bigs and Littles. Some of the articles I’d like to highlight are Dr. Ritzer’s thoughtful essay on why he teaches honors, both from the perspective of an honors student and honors faculty. Another highlight is a spotlight on one of our Honors Program students, Kristen Hinson, member of the Hinson Girls bluegrass group. Their concert this semester raised over $700 for Relay for Life. Finally, two students ventured away from campus, Shiannea Gathers to Peru and Dori Brown to Paris and Venice.

As always I want to thank each student who contributed to this edition, particularly Jessica Doscher, the newsletter editor. I want to encourage honors alumni to keep us updated on what you’ve been doing so that we may report it in our next edition.

Current Honors Program students help with Freshmen Move-In Day.

Kathy Lyon, Ph.D.
Honors Program Director
The Honors Program strives to make an impact that extends beyond the walls of the classroom and reaches out to serve the community. The program meets this goal by requiring students to participate in at least one service learning project before graduating. Each semester WUHA!, the student organization of our program, provides students with several volunteer options so they can partake in an activity that really interests them. The first event WUHA! completed this semester was the annual Rolling in Rock Hill project. Several honors students teamed up with SOAR to aesthetically enhance the Rock Hill community by painting the homes of those less fortunate. This project was a great experience because everyone got to come together and practice useful home upkeep techniques. The next project was the Relay for Life Bluegrass Benefit Concert on October 10. WUHA! has a few other service projects planned for the rest of the semester that will provide students with more chances to impact their community. The honors team will do many Relay for Life fundraisers throughout the school year and this will be an exciting way to start them off. Lastly, WUHA! will participate in the Children’s Attention Home fall festival, which provides children from the agency with a day of fun activities on campus. Don’t miss out on these great opportunities to serve the community!

Honors Program students volunteer at the Rolling in Rock Hill site.

Big/Little Reveal!

This year’s reveal saw the littles receiving song lyrics to match with their bigs through a series of tasks, after which they were able to talk, bond, and of course, eat!
Congratulations May 2014 Graduates!

The following students graduated with an Honors Program Degree at the May 2014 commencement. Also listed is his or her thesis title. (An asterisk indicates the student graduated with an Honors Program Degree with International Experience.)

**Keisha Carden**
Psychology
*Caregivers’ Time Perspectives, Anticipatory Grief, Depression Levels, and Overall Knowledge of Alzheimer’s Disease*

**Molly Crocker**
Psychology
*Antecedents and Consequences of Intra-psychic and Interpersonal Dimensions of Forgiveness*

**Nicole Drown***
English & History
*Papists, Machiavels, and the Roman Standard: “The White Devil” as a Critique of Jacobian Unification*

**Rebecca Jacobs**
Fine Arts—Photography
*Real Un Real*

**Destinee Johnson**
Chemistry
*Characterization of Copper (I) Binding Thermodynamics to Various Small Molecules*

**Kristen McLaurin**
Psychology
*Age Differences in Knowledge of Alzheimer’s Disease and Generalized Health Anxiety*

**Claudia Morante**
International Business
*Supply Chain Management Practices of Small Businesses in the Charlotte Area for Efficiency and Effectiveness*

**Alex Muller**
English—Writing
*In the Shape of Language: Motets and Other Poems*

**Amber Shilling***
History
*Mother, Maker, and Silent Leader: Women in the Indian National Movement*
Why I Teach Honors

Dr. Darren Ritzer

I teach honors courses for selfish reasons. I get the opportunity to teach, what I think are, interesting topics and I get to teach the kind of students who are the most rewarding to teach.

As an undergrad, my first honors class was called “America Between the Wars.” It was unlike any course I had taken or even heard about. The class was a special interest of the instructor, and the honors students were highly motivated, engaged, and scary smart. It was an exciting atmosphere. Then, as a student, I wished all my classes were like it. Now, as a professor, I wish all my classes were like it. While I can’t promise that the honors classes I teach will be life-changing, I can set the stage. Like the experiences in my undergraduate honors program, I teach topics that are special interests of mine and the classes are full of top-notch students.

I have taught “The Psychology of War” and “Shakespeare the Psychologist” as 1 credit seminars and also 3 credit versions. Counting my time as an Army cadet, I spent 17 years in uniform and, in college, I minored in Shakespeare, so war and Shakespeare are near and dear to my heart. I believe you can tell when a professor loves what he or she is teaching.

There is a different energy in the room. I hope students who took those classes can attest to that type of energy.

When I decided to become a professor, I envisioned classes full of intelligent, insightful, and motivated students. In other words, I dreamed of teaching honors students. Honors students are different. As an instructor, you don’t have to worry if they just do the minimum. You don’t have to worry if they will be prepared. You don’t have to worry if they will attend class. Honors students are challenging in the way teachers want to be challenged. In almost every class, an honors student will make an observation or ask a question that I hadn’t considered. Honors students force me to raise my game. Professors enjoy being intellectually stimulated as much as students do.

As a student, there was a certain prestige associated with taking “honors classes.” It meant the class was advanced and more difficult than ordinary classes. You had to be committed and talented to take those classes. As a professor, there is also prestige in teaching honors classes. I feel the same pride when I tell people I am teaching an honors class that I felt when I told people I was taking an honors class. It signifies the same commitment and quality that it did as a student.

In general, the term “honors” represents accomplishment. It defines the type of student you have been. Rather than building a case for your academic career by giving your G.P.A., experiences, subjective descriptions of the classes you took, and other contextual aspects, being an honors student has inherent meaning. It means you went above and beyond as a student. It summarizes success. When I look at my undergraduate diploma and see “Honors in Psychology,” I feel proud. I am fortunate enough to teach honors courses and to be part of that sense of pride and accomplishment that students will feel when they see “Honors” on their diplomas.

Above: Dr. Darren Ritzer, Ph.D.
The Southern Regional Honors Council conference in Savannah, Georgia, saw a celebration of new ideas and theories from honors students across the southern part of the United States. Naturally, Winthrop University was able to offer some of its finest to partake in this exploration of knowledge. Eleven honors students, eight of whom were seniors presenting their honors theses, travelled to this picturesque city to share their research with fellow honors students. And what an experience it was! From riverboat rides to visiting Old Fort Jackson to adventures down the old streets of the river front, we were able to explore new places and experience some marvelous things. However, the conference was much more than that. SRHC gave the Winthrop students a venue to present their own research and gain feedback, as well as meet likeminded persons who shared their interests and their passions. There is little more enriching than seeing the results of hard work culminating in such a place as SRHC.

However, SRHC also found a way to serve not only as the celebration of success, but as an inspiration. Alex Corder, who was a freshman who was able to go on the trip to watch the presentations, had this to say: “As a freshman, I had not been previously exposed to college-level honors work, so to see older Winthrop students holding their own among honors students from all over makes me want to aspire to that same goal!” Shelby Peay, a freshman who also went to observe, said that “after being able to experience SRHC, most of my worries have been erased. Now I can focus on doing the best research possible, instead of worrying about the presentation.”

SRHC saw nine Winthrop students proudly present their undergraduate research, and hopefully inspired dozens more. Next year’s conference in Greenville, South Carolina promises to expand upon that, and the Honors Program promises to bring its best and brightest once again.

Jessica Doscher

WUHA! works to offer as many social programs as possible for honors students to unwind during the school year. Here, the WUHA! officers worked with the Honors RAs to get a dessert party together to celebrate the end of midterms. Some of the RAs even made dessert pizzas!
This fall, one of our Honors Program students, Kristin Hinson, used her musical talents to raise awareness and donations for Relay for Life. Every year, WUHA sponsors a team for the Relay for Life event held on campus. Kristin, a member of a bluegrass group with her sisters called the Hinson Girls, had this to say about how she and her family became involved in music: “My dad has always wanted us to do something as a family. We started out riding dirt bikes together and then moved on to riding horses! My dad has played guitar all his life, and one day I decided that I wanted to learn. Well, when I did that my sisters got jealous (or they thought they could show me up. Not sure which one). They began to learn guitar too. One thing led to another, and we had a country band together! We played country music for about six months, but once we decided that we wanted to play gigs and sing in public, the only places we could find to sing were at the local bars. Of course four teenage girls shouldn’t be there, so my dad introduced us to bluegrass music! We went to Tennessee and met lots of other kids who were playing bluegrass music, and that really sparked our passions. Playing music with my family has taught me a lot. We have learned to cover one another and fill in the spots where someone else is weak. And although we are sisters and fight at home, we have learned to get along with each other even when it is hard. Playing music has also exposed us to a different side of the world. We have met so many great people. Bluegrass music isn’t just a genre that people enjoy, it is a family. I’ve seriously gained 10 sets of parents because everyone cares for each other and watches over each other. I don’t see this kind of atmosphere in any other genre of music, and that is why we love bluegrass. As far as the future, we would like to start traveling more. We have been all over the east coast from Maryland to Florida and to West Virginia. We really just enjoy playing music with one another and want to share our passion with others. Our dream is to one day have a tour bus with our faces on the side of it! I also have a goal of singing in all 50 states.” Because of Kristin’s musical dedication, WUHA! raised more than $700 for cancer research!

Student Review: Literary Merits of Harry Potter

Rachel Burns

Harry Potter is almost inescapable on Winthrop’s campus. Remnants of the popular series don’t only exist in architecture or after-class activities, for dedicated fans, Harry Potter can be found in the classroom as well.

Last spring, I had the pleasure of taking an English course focusing on the study of J.K. Rowling’s stories, and received honors credit for it as well, thereby killing two owls with one snitch. The class is taught by Dr. Bickford of the English Department who is as much a fan as her students. Within the first weeks, the class was sorted into houses. Our houses were our presentation groups with which we taught the class everything we could about certain topics chosen by the professor. We received bonus points for bringing food and drinks based on the series to share such as pumpkin pasties, cauldron cakes, and licorice wands.

Some students even went further and dressed up!

I do assure you, actual learning did occur. We reread the entire series over the semester, analyzing the text for genre, themes, and influences, and we looked at the book’s influence over pop culture. To receive Honors credit for this course a bit more work and an additional project were required — perfectly doable for any dedicated fan.

I would highly recommend this honors credit course to anyone who would like to add a little bit of magic to college life!
When I came to college, I really did not have an interest in studying abroad. I was afraid to be so far apart from my family for an entire semester. I am not certain what sparked my interest to want to go Peru, but whatever it was, I am so glad I made the decision. Peru was the best adventure of my life! Every day, I woke up as close to nature as possible with the coolness of the Peruvian morning around me. I was able to experience firsthand all of the diversity that Peru has to offer within its rainforest, how underprivileged the surrounding villages were, the consequences of overhunting on specific species of monkeys, the lack of care for the Peruvians’ main source of water, and the peacefulness that comes when it rains in the Amazon. Out of the entire 10-day experience, one of my favorite parts was visiting the village. We spoke to the children about how important it is to keep the water clean and the adverse effects of water pollution. Also, we bought some of the handicrafts that the villagers made out of materials they found right out of the rainforest! It was amazing to see how creative the villagers were with the resources that they were able to find.

My trip to Peru was a very humbling experience that taught me to be appreciative of everything that I have in America. If given the opportunity, I would definitely go again!

Above: Shianne Gathers during her trip to Peru.

Shianne Gathers

In the spring of 2014 during the second semester of my sophomore year, I went to Paris, France and Venice, Italy for the ENGL 320 course. There were fifteen of us who went, including the professor and our tour guide. We spent the semester reading the works of Hemingway, Fitzgerald, and Zelda Fitzgerald to prepare for our sightseeing while overseas. While in Paris, we visited sites that either Hemingway or Fitzgerald mentioned in their works. We went to a café where Hemingway wrote his pieces. We could see the very statue he saw from that café and frequently mentioned in his novels about Paris. In A Moveable Feast, Hemingway mentioned many of the aspects of Paris that not all tourists see. These included the neighborhoods that surrounded the famous city or the simple hole-in-the-wall places he visited. Because of this trip, I was able to experience such things. We visited Hemingway’s neighborhood where there was a plaque in honor of him. It was a fantastic trip that helped me put into perspective how the background and experiences of an author influences her or his writing. This dimension of understanding is something I believe is important for all educators. I am studying to be an early childhood educator, so I am extremely grateful to have had this experience. It gave me a deeper connection to how learning in the classroom can be expanded into the world.

Dori Brown

Above: A photograph taken by Dori Brown during her time in Paris.

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Welcome, Class of 2018!


Welcome, Honors

Transfers!

Christine Adoara Buckley, Lee Carey, Savannah Cox, Elizabeth Herring, Leonie May Kirby, Cynthia Brooke Snelling, Caroline Sprague, Alyson Stiles, Emily R. A. Thomas, Anna-Kay Green Woolcock

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