



The Honorific

Spring 2015

From the Desk of the Director...

Another large first year class began this fall—48 new Honors students in all! Honors Orientation went well, as we were blessed with good weather. The large group broke down into the smaller, task-oriented groups, led by advanced, seasoned veterans of the program. The new students are dynamic and sharp as a tack, for sure!

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The new groups included: (1) The Action Figures, whose responsibility is planning activities and events, (2) The Reporters, who have been responsible for creating this newsletter, (3) The Ambassadors, who are meeting with prospective students and have designed a beautiful new tablecloth to present at the Open Houses, and (4) The Servitors, whose task is to create service learning events for the Honors students.

Since last year, we have experienced a change in the Honors Secretary position. Deb Ohara, who served in that position so admirably for 16 years, has moved to the Social Sciences as their new secretary. We cannot thank her enough for all that she did for the Honors Program! Amanda Khodorkovskaya has assumed the position and is already off to a flying start. Amanda is, herself, a graduate of the Honors Program at New Paltz and she and her husband run the local farm, Living Acres Farm. In fact, the Honors Program has already had two events, called, “Honors goes to the Farm” where students have visited and worked on the farm for an afternoon, which has been very exciting and rewarding.

Once again, I can safely report that there were no casualties at Death by Chocolate this year. This is despite the fact that nearly all the desserts were consumed. After 7 years, I finally seem to have ordered nearly exactly enough. Big Brothers/Sisters were introduced to their ‘littles’ and a cool party ensued. Thanks goes to all the

Big Brothers and Big Sisters who volunteered to mentor the very large beginning class of students.

The Big Questions Series was launched with Kate Dimitrova, Art History professor, discussing the question of who rightfully owns art. We talked about the big cases—Nazis raiding nearly all of the European art—and the current issues concerning the ownership of parts of the Parthenon. Kate has become a big contributor to the Honors Program, now serving on the Honors Advisory Board.

Our annual big game of “Manhunt” sent Honors students skirmishing all over campus in a huge game of ‘hide and seek’. This has quickly become an Honors Program tradition. It allows for a good deal of social bonding but also forces people to rapidly learn about some of the little nooks and crannies on the campus. Board Games nights have also been well attended and well received.

The fall field trip featured a journey to the Rochester Broadway Theatre League to see a production of Book of Mormon. The number of students attending broke the all-time record for attendance. In all, 29 people boarded the bus and headed up to Rochester for dinner at the King and I Restaurant and a night at the theatre. The play was outstanding! Laughter was nearly constant for the entire 3 hours! The actor playing the part of Cunningham kept us entertained with his nerdy neediness and his adept physical comedy. I will never forget the way he moved on the stage! A good time was had by all.

Fall seminars were nearly completely full, given the large enrollment in the program. We offered: Monsters, from Folklore to Reality (Andrew Eklund), Create Your Own Religion (Brian Sullivan), Chemistry for the Consumer (Ruth Bowers), Avant-Garde Manifestos (Chris Churchill), Why Play Matters (Kasie Lee), Dreams, Dreams, Dreams (Yours Truly), Messages in the Media (Stacy Bender), and Culture, Cuisine, Film & Food (Becky Prophet). Five out of these eight seminars are new offerings; only three are in the category of ‘old standards.’ The most student first choices were for the Monsters class and the Dream Interpretations classes.

In the spring, we will be offering six seminars: Wiseguys, Whackos, and Whiners (Jeff Slyter-Beltrao), Tai Chi; A way of Life (Steve Crosby), Show me the Money! (Mark Lewis), Alfred E. Nigmas (Garrett McGowan & Andrew Eklund), The Car (Geoffrey Bowers), and Dungeons and Dragons: Analyzing the Adventure (Danielle Gagne). Four out of those six are new offerings. The Honors Program continues to find new sources of inspiration from new faculty—and we are quite thankful for that. Nine new courses were offered this year alone!

If you have any thoughts, ideas, or questions about the Honors Program, please feel free to contact me at: Atlas@Alfred.Edu. I love to hear from Honors Alums and find out what you’re up to. If you have any suggestions for the Honors Program, I’d love to hear them!

Fall 2014 Seminars

Culture, Cuisine, Film & Food

The honors seminar *Culture, Cuisine, Film and Food*, taught by Dr. Becky Prophet, is an interesting class that focuses on watching movies to analyze how food affects social dynamics, our lives, and cultures. Members of the class are put into groups to watch movies (like Fried Green Tomatoes, My Big Fat Greek Wedding, and Like Water for Chocolate.), and every two weeks the class has “dinner” where we make foods related to the films we watched and share them with each other. Occasional field trips first took the group to the kitchens in Powell, where they talked with the head chef of AU, Gretchen Mayer, then to Lain's Cider Mill and Jenkins Produce Market. Fun and educational, it gets you in the kitchen and learning about other cultures and their cuisine.

-Emese Jordan, Natalie Zeitz, and Charles Heulitt

Why Play Matters?

“Why Play Matters” is an honors course taught this semester for the first time by Dr. Kasie Lee. One of the first assignments in the class was to watch *The Lego Movie* in order to analyze the differences between adult play and child’s play. In class, students were able to explore the importance of play beyond childhood as well as the uses for play therapy with young, troubled children. At the end of the course, each student gave a brief presentation of a self-designed project displaying the meaning of play in his or her own personal life. The course culminated in a joint field trip to the Strong National Museum of Play in Rochester, NY with the Drawn to Diversity class.

- Emily Tuttle

Create Your Own Religion

Can you imagine a room where you’re able to express your beliefs, without there being any tension? “Create Your Own Religion” creates such an environment in which students are encouraged to be open about others’ religious beliefs as well as their own. When Professor Sullivan had the students introduce themselves to the class, it was interesting to hear that almost all of us were religious as kids and were now open to discovering something entirely new. By beginning the course in such a way, the environment of the classroom became completely open and comfortable. This seminar focused on looking at religion from different points of view, and sometimes even questioning or doubting different beliefs in a safe atmosphere. In questioning certain beliefs, Professor Sullivan has inspired students to find what they truly believe in and what they find to be untrue. Over the course of this semester, we’ve read different articles from different viewpoints such as Atheism, Theism, Agnosticism, Pantheism, Monism, etc. By becoming knowledgeable on the different viewpoints, we discovered ourselves more spiritually.

- Savannah Markajani

Avant-Garde Manifestos

What is an Art manifesto? In the Avant Garde Manifestos class, that's exactly what students discuss! Each week we discuss interesting writings and art movements that reflect on political and social movements throughout various periods of history: French Futurists, feminist writings, and whether a physical cow has more substance than the word cow. For a final project the Avant Garde students are working to define themselves and their beliefs in their own personal manifestos.

- Elizabeth Burnett and Madeline Petraske

Messages in the Media

Messages in the Media focuses on the many types of "isms" that run rampant through everyday television, magazines, and the advertisements we see every day. Students discuss and analyze the "isms" (racism, sexism, classism, and heterosexism) in different types in these examples of media. Many ideologies are subconsciously hidden in these ads, but they are imprinted on our minds and infiltrate our thoughts. This class explores how the media influences our everyday life and creates prejudice in our thoughts. Students have assigned readings about the "isms" in addition to bringing in Media Records (or examples) featuring each week's topic. One memorable class featured the coming together of the "Messages in the Media" and the "Why Play Matters" seminars to discuss gender in children's toy advertisements. The final project involves creating media about the "isms" (all or one) and students reflecting on how their views and opinions have changed over the course of the semester. Learn what the media is really telling you in this thought provoking seminar.

-Lydia Galarneau and Miranda Platt

Dreams, Dreams, Dreams

The Dreams, Dreams, Dreams Seminar, taught by Dr. Gordon Atlas, explores the significance and meaning behind dreams. The class was especially successful in hosting two Dream-A-Thons, an event open to all Alfred students to discuss their dreams and learn their interpretations. Students taking the class found it fascinating to divulge into the psychology and mystery of this nightly phenomenon.

-Allison Naclerio

Monsters, From Folklore to Reality

From wicked witches to Biblical beasts, this honors seminar has every monster you can imagine. The course is comprised of weekly lectures on various legends, in addition to both exciting and terrifying field trips and projects, including creating your own monster and visiting one of the most haunted places in America. In this course, you will learn about traditional, fictional "monsters" like the chimera, medusa, etc., and the scariest real monster of them all: man.

-Kylee Gaier

Essential Chemistry for Consumers

This honors course explores the chemistry of products used in everyday life. The topics are relevant and intriguing regardless of your discipline, and presented in a format that is not intimidating to those unfamiliar with chemistry. Topics covered include: shampoo, allergies, tattoos, Sriracha, and glowsticks. Students then have the opportunity to conduct further research into a product of interest, which culminates with individual presentations as well as a final project chosen by the class. This semester, we chose to conduct a Jeopardy tournament!

-Charles Bellows

Spring 2015 Seminars

Show me the Money!

The purpose of this course is to introduce honors students to the fundamentals of personal financial management in a more creative, interactive and dynamic manner than is used in the regular class. The class includes subject area experts sharing their knowledge, a stock investing competition with a \$50 cash prize for the winner, and hands-on exercises. We focus on wealth accumulation, paying off student loans, investment planning, insurance planning, retirement planning and estate planning. At the conclusion of the course, each student develops an individual financial plan personalized for their unique circumstances.

Alfred E. Nigmas

Throughout history, societies have used puzzles for relaxation and encrypting information. More recently, it has been shown that puzzles are an excellent means to flex your brain, to build cognitive ability and maintain mental health as we age. In this course, we study, develop, and solve puzzles of many forms - numerical, alphabetical (words), and mechanical. In addition to focusing on the history and importance of cryptography, ciphers ranging from simple substitution to technologically advanced systems are discussed.

The Car

There is no more iconic item in modern society that blends art, engineering, science, history, and culture than the automobile, especially in the United States. In this course, we explore topics such as automotive chemistry, physics, and engineering; the aesthetics of cars; car production; racing and its role in technological development; automotive history; basic auto maintenance; protecting and restoring cars; the rise of auto auctions; cars and television; etc. Through this course, students develop an increased appreciation and passion for cars, how they work, how they blend many disciplines, and how they affect our lives.

Dungeons and Dragons: Analyzing the Adventure

Whether your love of the game has turned you into “the cool one,” “the total dork,” or somewhere in between, there is no denying that Dungeons and Dragons has infiltrated many aspects of our culture. This course explores D&D from multiple perspectives; students analyze characters and discuss topics related to the literary roots of dungeons and dragons, the societal impact of the game (including its influence on subculture, art, economics, modern films, and video games), the “backlash” from parent and religious groups, personality types and values, racism, identity theory, social networking, the role of myths and storytelling, the spectrum of good and evil, magical beasts, and collaborative cognition.

T'ai Chi: A Way of Life

T'ai Chi is a way of life that has been practiced by the Chinese for many centuries. This meditative, peaceful "martial art" is known and regularly practiced daily by millions of people throughout the world. This course intends to have dual emphases. Academically, students will be introduced to T'ai Chi's early history and its evolution into the contemporary era. To this end, we will explore T'ai Chi's philosophical background as it links with Chinese culture, with occasional comparisons and contrasts to Western thought. Readings will provide additional stimuli for class discussions, which will include what is meant by the energy "Chi" and the internal power of "Jing". Students will also learn approximately half of the 64 movements of the form and the physical/mental/meditative preparation required for proper learning. Proper practice will provide the student with a balanced mind, spirit, and body!

Wiseguys, Whackos, and Whiners

This course is based on the assumption that those considered lunatics, ranters or doomsayers by our society's mainstream frequently have very interesting things to say. Using a mix of highly controversial short essays, indie films, and internet websites, we'll explore a wide variety of impassioned riffs -- from third-wave feminism, queer theory, and radical environmentalism to race nationalism, revolutionary anarchism and religious fundamentalism. Each week we'll be asking the same basic question: are these people nuts, or what?! No prior experience with fanaticism required; weirdos welcome; open mindedness is a must.



Honors Students gather for a Dreamathon sponsored by the Fall 2014 "Dreams, Dreams, Dreams" Seminar



"Action Figures" leader, Emily Stoddard, introduces Dr. Gagne on her Big Questions talk on the Quest for Immortality

Honors Events

Orientation

-Jennifer Futterman-

In August, the Honors Program welcomed 48 new students at Honors Orientation. They received their Honors t-shirts and divided into orientation groups. The new students were welcomed with pizza and the annual honors cake. Welcome Honors Class of 2018!



Death by Chocolate

-Emily Tuttle-



The Alfred University Honors Program kicked off the school year with its traditional and legendary “Death by Chocolate” in August. The newest honors members arrived first to meet their “Big Brothers and Sisters,” assigned to help the freshmen adjust to college life. Professors who were teaching honors courses this semester also came and were very excited to get to know their new students and catch up with returning members. A steady stream of honors students entered the honors house to fill up on chocolate cake, cookies, cupcakes, and more. It’s no surprise that this is always the most heavily attended of all honors events, since it has the two things college students love most: free dessert and new friends.

Students gather around the table to choose from the array of desserts at “Death by Chocolate.”

Honors Trip: *Book of Mormon*

-Peter Hoskins-

As most of our Honor Society members know, one of the group's big events every year is a trip to see a performance and have an evening of good food, entertainment, and (hopefully) a bit of culture. This year, though, our members got a bit more than they bargained for when they signed up to go see Trey Parker and Matt Stone's uproarious *Book of Mormon* in October! Upon arriving in Rochester, the group had dinner at a local Thai restaurant and enjoyed a colorful assortment of meats, veggies, and a multitude of Thai iced teas. Afterward, we went to the Auditorium Theatre closer to the heart of the city for the performance. What followed was hours of the most raunchy and hilarious performance I had ever seen on a stage, accompanied by an absolutely wonderful score and choreography. My favorite part was when... well, I don't think I can say it here, it's too risqué for the obviously high "sensibilities" of the Honors Program. Regardless, I can say with certainty that it was an Honors trip that the attendees won't easily forget!

Honors Conference

Last April, six honors students attended the Northeast Regional Honors Conference in Niagara Falls. In addition to listening to presentations, the students toured the Niagara power plant and the museum, and even took a hike along the river there.



Katherine Shoemaker, Charles Bellows, Emily Stoddard, Melissa MacDonald, Brennan Ferguson, and Daniel Kutzik

Big Questions Series: The Cultural Past



Dr. Kate Dimitrova led a discussion on "Who Owns Art" this past October

AU Honors Students are Team Players!

First Year, Kelsey Oliviera, shares her experience on the Women's Soccer Team

Kicking It with AU Women's Soccer Team

Have you ever put a puzzle together? If so, you know that without one piece the puzzle is incomplete and dysfunctional. Being on a team is very similar. Every player matters and makes up a team. All the players on the Alfred University's Women's Soccer team came together from all over New York State, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts. Their individuality makes the team diverse. Midfielder Sam Faller agrees, "If you look around there is such a different collection of girls that we have here. We have people like me, who are in theater and we have people who are engineers. We have bubbly people and shy people, but it all kinda blends together when we're on the field. We come together even stronger as a unit because of that diversity." The players have formed such a bond with each other that they have become almost inseparable. Ursula Hillman believes that her bond with her teammates creates an easier and more fun environment to play in. Every player pushes themselves and their teammates so that they can better, not only themselves, but each other as well. At times, it can be difficult, but whether it is pushing it through to the last sprint or simply a friendly, competitive game, there is always someone supporting you.

What makes Alfred Women's Soccer so special? Senior Taylor Dezio believes it is the hard work and dedication. While many students may get up for class or go to bed early, the woman's soccer team is most likely under the lights, practicing. The team plays at least six days a week for two hours. Not only are the days busy, but work continues outside the field. Aside from the hard work off the field, their work continues academically. They have to juggle their classes, homework, clubs, *and* soccer. Jasmine Ramon, a communication studies and English major (and Honors student), is the Student Senate Diversity Director, a First Year Experience Peer leader, the Poder Latino Publicity Director, a Resident Assistant, and a Writing Center tutor. How does she handle all this in addition to classes and soccer? She claims, "I have my coaches, my teachers, and bosses all on board with what I am doing. They all motivate me and keep me going. I recognize I have to make sacrifices but in the end, to say that I can play, put on a jersey, and still play on the team on top of everything else I do, is a blessing."

Creative Writing

by AU Honors Students

Wolves in the Winter

By Lydia Galarneau

There is no hope for me, no chance for the saving of my soul,
the wolves around me are howling at the half dollar moon and there is dirt on my hands,
and the little girl in my arms is whimpering in fright and I look around for salvation
but there is nothing for me but shining eyes and pine trees and great roots that make me stumble.

I curse at the roots and the child cries out but I just grip her to my chest and run,
run for her, the girl clutching to me in terror,
who has only instinctive fear at the glowing eyes, not knowing that these are the eyes of demons coming
to drag an old sinner back to hell
before he can redeem himself by saving an innocent life.

There is nothing for me now, nothing, except for the warm bundle in my arms;
she is my only chance for a new life, the only hope to gain back what she has that I have lost,
and my legs burn with every stride, the breath crawling up and down my throat;
why is redemption so hard to grasp?



The *Honorific's* editors and writers meet for the first time at orientation.

Wisdom of the Woman in the Moon

By Catherine Groh

-Inspired by a Seneca Native American story: *The Woman and Dog in the Moon*

They say I sit in the moon,
I sit in the moon all day and night,
embroidering with quills
through dark and light.
They think I must be lonely.

They say I have a big dog,
I have a big dog who watches me work,
and when I put down my quills,
he unravels my work.
They think I must be angry.
They say if I finish my work,
if I finish my work, the world will end.
I work my quills all night and day,
so they say I want the world to end.
They think I must be crazy.

They say and think so many things,
so many things, but they do not sit
in the moon with a dog,
and embroider with porcupine quills
all day and night.

I tell you this: if I finish my work,
if I finish my work, the world will end;
but when my thread is almost through,
my big dog will pull its end.
The world is always ending.

I tell you this: I have a big dog,
I have a big dog who is named Tahyoni.
He undoes what my quills have done,
and how could I be angry?
The world is never ending.

I tell you this: I sit in the moon,
I sit in the moon all day and night.
My quills follow the cycles
of dark and light,
and I am never lonely.



Even Honors Students like to Have a Bit of Fun...



Manhunt

-Emily Tuttle-

The Action Figures sponsored a Manhunt game around the King Alfred statue. The event was advertised as, “A giant game of intense hide and seek,” and it certainly delivered on that promise. All students were welcome to join! An even mix of about 20 honors and non-honors students hid behind bushes and chased each other around campus for two hours. The organizers of the event were very pleased, and the game is sure to be a tradition in the Honors Program.

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