

Araceli Cooper

English Composition II Honors

General Psychology Honors

Survey World Literature to 1650 Honors

Music Appreciation Honors

May 2017



I became a member of the Honors Program in the Spring of 2015. Since then, I have successfully completed twelve hours of Honor Classes which have helped me increase my knowledge regarding curiosity, diversity, and community. Enrolling in North West Arkansas Community College and becoming an Honors student were at first overwhelming due to the fact that it had been over fifteen years since I graduated high school. The smaller groups that the Honor Classes offered intrigued me. The Honors Program promised a more “in-depth” strategy in learning, that I very much wanted to be involved in. I felt that the smaller class size of any Honors Classes would help me through my college life and hopefully after.

I enjoyed Survey World Literature to 1650. The series of books, that included *The Iliad*, *War Music*, and *Mahabharata* was worth the time spent reading. The class discussions in which we would give our personal opinions of the literature passages were my favorite part. To add to the class-investigation, Professor Chesne would ask the class to evaluate the role of women and how they were viewed throughout these books. I personally thought this was a great idea mainly because it sparked my interest in how women were viewed in early literature. Another class that encouraged intellectual investigation was General Psychology. Mrs. Slavik gave everyone in class the results of clinical trials of many popular types of medications for depression, sleeping problems or anxiety. The next week after careful dissection of these clinical results, we discussed

key points such as appropriate age dosage and purpose of medications versus what the medications were being used to treat and the age groups the particular medications were being given to. To my surprise, there are many medications that started out to treat anxiety, but ended up being better for cholesterol regulation. I also learned that many depression medications after the clinical trials are recorded are best used by adults after the age of twenty-one, but doctors are disregarding this vital aspect. I was very impressed by Mrs. Slavik's Honors Psychology class. I knew that this teaching strategy was exactly the experience I wanted in my college curriculum. World Literature and General Psychology were two Honor Classes that furthered my understanding and curiosity.

Music Appreciation was a class that took me out of my element for sure. Not only were there the usual tests on the history of music, but there were listening tests in which you had to correctly guess the music playing without words! My favorite moment was when I attended my first Viola Fantasia-Recital by the recipient of the prestigious 2015 Avery Fisher Career Grant, American violist, Matthew Lipman. I had never heard a viola, yet alone a recital. I felt captivated! After the recital, again I thought to myself, "Thank goodness I'm an honor student or I would have never experienced this!" I also had the opportunity of seeing my first silent film. Not only was the music part of the film, but the music was played by NWACC students. It was on Halloween night, which made the night even more exciting! The different perspectives of appreciating music were amazing. (No pun intended). English Composition II also exposed me to activities that I had never experienced. I had the opportunity of attending the Pulitzer-Prize-winning play called 'Superior Donuts' written by Tracy Letts, presented by Theatre Squared at the Walton Arts Center directed by Sean Patrick Reilly. From this, we were asked to make a newspaper play review. I have attached the review titled 'Superior Donuts.' This type of

interdisciplinary learning from Music and English Composition II further strengthened my concept of diversity.

Last but not least, the Honors Program has sparked interest in what I can do in my community. I had never thought about my community until I became an honors student at NWACC. I volunteer at the Samaritan House in Rogers, Arkansas, in the Dental Department. I have helped people that could not afford to have dental procedures done and although it was very emotional seeing people in unfortunate circumstances, I knew I was helping my community. As my last semester is coming to an end, I volunteered to represent the Honors Program at NWACC this December by collecting monetary, clothing and toy donations for the Northwest Arkansas Children's Shelter. I became interested in how I could do more and learned that the shelter needs volunteers in other ways: spending time with children, organizing donations, or even volunteering with fundraisers. I plan on being more involved during this winter break. I am grateful I can help the members of my local community, and I know this one is of many aspects the Honors Program has instilled in me today.

As a student in my middle thirties, I didn't know what to expect from the Honors Program at North West Arkansas Community College. I thought that the smaller classes were what I was looking for, but that was just the tip of the iceberg in what the Honors Program had in store for me. Going to violist recitals, plays, silent films, volunteering, and trips to Crystal Bridges Museum are things I would never have been able to attend or interested in. Experiences like these are priceless. Writing a play review, learning music without words, and analyzing the results of clinical drug trials were just a small amount of the challenges I faced being in these Honor Classes, but I mastered them, and I appreciate them now. This experience has helped me to grow as a student, mother, and in my future professional life as well. I am leaving this college

with more than just an Associate's Degree in Science. I am taking the scholarship of curiosity, diversity and community with me, and I am applying these to my life in the dental field to communicate and teach my future patients.