



Pablo Portillo

May 14, 2022

Honors Courses:

Composition II:

Survey World Lit to 1650

World Religions

General Geology I

Section 1: Community and Diversity

I started off in the Honors program as the odd one out since I joined in my second semester leaving few honors courses that fit my degree plan. At first it was a scary thing to me and my bank account, but it turned out to be one of the best courses that I had taken in my two years here. That course being Honors World Religions with Dr. Kruger thought it had one flaw which was that it was live streamed. I'm a big fan of watching foreign shows, Bollywood and Korean dramas. I had watched a lot and over time I picked up a couple things over local religions, so the course was a good option for me. Though the work was tedious, I can say that I enjoyed the class with the final project being the cherry on top. The final project not only opened my eyes but quite literally forced me to visit places I wouldn't have dared to go. I based mine off

learning more about the inspirational figure in Islam besides the Prophet. That took me to the Islamic Center of Northwest Arkansas at the U of A where I conducted my interview with two of the members of their community. I'd never imagined that I would have ever stepped foot in a mosque before that day but boy was I glad I did. I learned about inspirational figures such as the first 4 Caliphs and of man who in the wait for the Prophet allowed himself to become slave in order to meet him. I walked away with respect for my fellow Abrahamic religion and a new perspective in which I examined my own faith. It was the first time that I had ever connected

I recently attended the Ozark Mountains British Brass Band concert in the Walmart Auditorium and it was fabulous! Several of our talented and hard-working NWACC friends performed—Jo Ann Schwader, **Pablo Portillo** (student), Dianne Phillips—along with a number of others from Rogers, Bentonville, U of A and the northwest AR community. What a spirited performance; it was one of those performances where everyone in the audience spontaneously begins to clap along with the music!

and experienced a religion outside of my own. If that wasn't a diverse experience, I don't know what is. After that I started to get more involved on campus and met new people from all walks of life. I got into the Music club which led me to join the Brass Band, I also became VP of PTK with all the business majors I've pretty much met people from every part of the campus. All thanks to Dr. Kruger making me do his project. P.S That's a shout out from Dr. Jorgenson

herself which was a big moment for me.

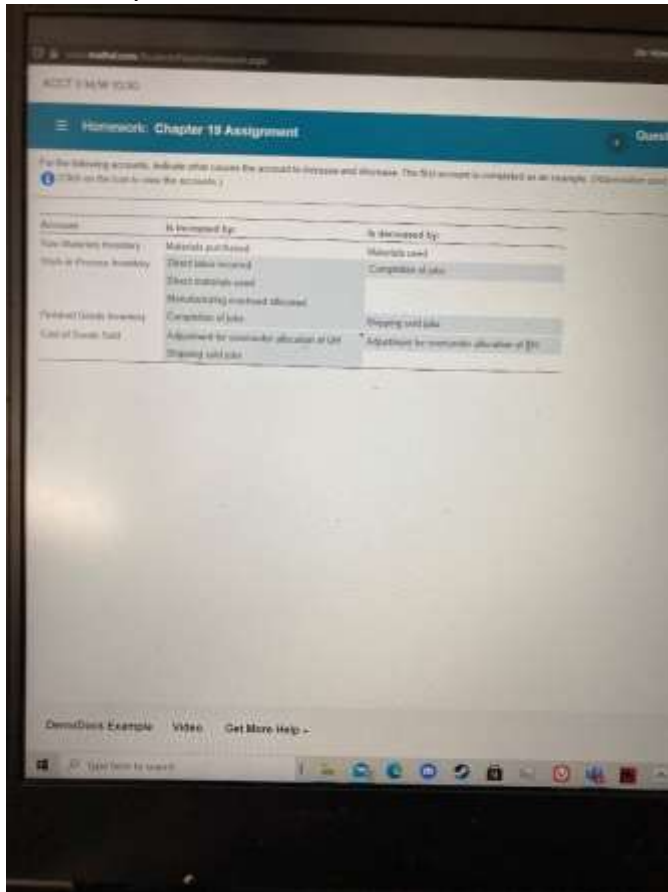
Section 2: Skills Gained with Honors Program

Being a Business major, I spend most of my time over at Shewmaker with likeminded people. Thankfully thanks to the program I got my fair share of people who ideas and though process was completely different from mine. What I learned in honors Geology was how to disagree with someone who has a completely different opinion and still works together. We were discussing nuclear tests that day and how that created the worldwide network of seismic arrays. It was crazy to see that they detonated thousands of bombs during the cold war. I ended up saying that it was because of those bombs that we have the relative peace that we have today. This was before Ukraine, but I stand by it as the principal MAD seems to still hold considering that no country has intervened. The person in question audibly gasped and gave me a look of disbelief that I even said something like that. It remained awkward for the next few minutes but by next class we were good. We ended up helping each other a few minutes

before our mineral exam so it paid off to work with each other. The Honors program really brings you into contact with just about every type of person on campus and that's a good thing. Those communications skills will really come in handy when I transfer over and beyond. Though most of my honors classes were of an English sort, they all fortunately give you an analytical mind which is constantly tested. Having to shift my mind from a numbers game to a game of reading between the lines gives the brain power. That flexibility between both worlds is something that I see as a valuable skill to have in the work force.

Section 3: My Most Memorable Event

I'd say that the most memorable part of the program was the time I visited the Fayetteville Mosque. While I already talked about it still really was a cool experience to do and I left a part just for this. While I was conducting my interview, I found that the interviewee was a former student of Dr. Kruger. Now that was a cool moment. What really set the deal was the next 3 people that I met. Around halfway in Two guys from their community came and asked what was going on and they ended up sitting with us and joined the interview. That how I got the slave story from and at the end and met two Muslim dudes. I also shook hands with the Imam



which was just an amazing moment by itself though it was brief. He seemed like a good man though he was a bit busy he eventually made it around and said to everyone there. There were a lot of moments in my time here at NWACC with the program, but this was one that was just leagues ahead of the rest. While it also kicked off itch for involvement on campus. NWACC was just opening back up, so I had barely stepped foot on campus and to this day never have gotten a formal tour. This event was the starter for my involvement on campus and in the community. The covid restrictions had me in a hole where I talked to very few people, and I rarely left my home. While part of it was on me the rest was on the virtual classes and this project along with the semester really pulled me out of it. So, this is not something that I'm likely to forget any time soon.

Section 4: My Message to You

So aside from taking an Honors course your first semester to gauge the program out and so you don't suffer later there is one thing I would advise everyone to do. Get involved it is a cliché of line but for god's sake do it. Some of the best memories I've made is when I got involved on campus and gave it my all. It makes everything easier if you do something on campus and as a bonus people will know you which makes life go smoothly. If you can do that everything else will follow skills, classwork, grades etc. It's a piece of advice that's been given hundreds of times and will be given a lot more. But if I can be the last poke that gets people to do it, I'll be that guy, because that's what it took for me to get my stuff together. At the very least try to make it point to talk new people every day because you never know who you might meet. To quote one of my favorite memes "take it easy but take it". Anything that's worth doing is also worth doing slowly and easily. It's a good mantra to keep in mind as the work piles on either from school or life and I'm glad to say it kept me sane.