

Portfolio Reflection

Joseph W. Reneau

Composition I, Honors

Composition II, Honors

History of American People Since 1877, Honors

General Geology I, Honors

Survey of the Universe, Honors



Reflection on Time Spent in Program and Growth

Northwest Arkansas Community College and its Honors Program were real eye openers for me. Honestly, it was never my intention to attend college when I graduated high school. I became a student due to circumstances in my life that led me here to NWACC through the Veterans Rehabilitation Program. I enrolled with pre-conceived, negative notions of what attending college would be like. However, it was necessary that I attain a degree to compliment my work experience and enhance my likelihood of gaining a position equal to or greater than the one I chose to leave, leading me here.

When I was choosing my classes for the first semester, it was recommended that I take Composition I Honors class, due to my intake testing. I followed the advice and found myself in a classroom environment that I enjoyed far more than the standard classes I was taking. The Honors class encouraged creativity and consisted of intriguing new ways of learning the material with inclusion of the students through discussion, group projects, service learning, and license to be creative in our essay assignments. My service learning for Comp I Honors was volunteering at Helping Hands. My time at Helping Hands opened my eyes to the plight of others in the community. I had been going through life narrowly focused on my family and close friends, blissfully and willingly blinding myself to the local and larger communities around me. I found myself greatly enjoying my time volunteering, even getting my wife to volunteer with me, working to help others. This was the beginning of my metamorphosis of self and a journey to becoming a more active participant in the communities around me.

I enjoyed the first Honors class so much, I decided to sign up for two honors classes the following semester leading me to take Comp II, Honors and History of American People Since 1877, Honors. During the Comp II class we were given an assignment to create a "Cabinet of Curiosities" instead of writing the normal essay. I loved the assignment because we were able to select five subjects we were interested in writing about and use them for our Cabinet. We had to select visual representations of the subjects and write a paragraph about each one, citing them properly. While I enjoy writing papers, on subjects interesting to me, the Cabinets of Curiosity assignment was much more enjoyable and fulfilling. For the service learning component, I was part of an experimental service learning project judging essays for the 2016

Region 10 History Day Competition. This allowed me to interact with young students, from across the State, participating in the competition. I found myself learning more about composition and enjoying it, while judging the papers and interviewing the young writers. I discovered that I enjoyed being part of the event to promote creativity and expression through writing, acting, and other venues.

The service learning project for my History class was special to me because it related to me personally. I joined a group researching the role of Native Americans in the Civil War, namely the Cherokee Indians. This project meant a lot to me as I am Cherokee though I was not raised in tribal traditions and knew next to nothing about my heritage or family. This project taught me a lot about the plight of my tribe. I discovered that the Cherokee, like many tribes, are losing their language. I also learned they had developed programs to preserve their language and the project I was working on would help them by raising money and school supplies for the Immersion School. The Immersion school is responsible for teaching the very young Cherokee their native language and syllabary. The project led me to continuing my help by assisting Professor Huggard and future Native American projects in raising money and awareness of the problem. This project also helped me to learn more about my familial ancestors and their roles in the tribe and history. I was able to read about some of my direct ancestors in existing history texts peaking my curiosity and increasing my thirst for more knowledge about them.

I found myself greatly enjoying the Honors classes and service learning projects associated with them. I elected to take General Geology I Honors next. Our class voted and decided to work on a single project for the whole class. Our project was environmental in nature and concerned the water tables, rock formations, and mineral types found in Northwestern Arkansas, Northeastern Oklahoma, and Southwest Missouri. We also studied hands on, the horrible, nightmarish effects of lead mining in Picher, Oklahoma and the reclamation efforts taking place there. These "lessons" will stay with me throughout my life, they will not wither and fade as memorized lessons tend to do, because these lessons are absorbed into a person's mind and core being. The information gleaned and learned through our project was shared with the United States Geological Society for use in understanding the physical world around us and the effects, both negative and positive, that we have on our environment.

My last semester found me signing up for Survey of the Universe Honors class. This was due, in large part, to my enjoyment of Geology and the desire to learn more and on a larger scale, about not only our planet, but also the Universe at large. This class involved a service learning/group project, decided on by the class, about our local solar system. Each student in the class was to research a specific planet, belt, or phenomena, within our solar system. We created slides, that not only included the information researched, but were also interactive and entertaining. The purpose of this project was to create an interactive, scale model of our solar system on campus for the public, students, and faculty to use for learning and teaching in all subjects.

The Honors classes were engaging, fulfilling, informative, and entertaining, creating a fun environment for learning with long-lasting results. Honors classes, not only improve a student, but also the communities around them and the world at large. The smaller class sizes

give students a personal level of contact and engagement with the professors teaching them, creating a comfortable environment for learning. Students in Honors classes are encouraged to be inquisitive, curious, and creative in their learning. They are encouraged to explore alternative perspectives, that they might better understand or change their own. Of course, I can only speak of my own experiences in this program. However, I can say, without a shadow of doubt, the Honors program helped me to grow in more ways than academics alone. I grew as a person, coming out of my introverted shell and learned to be more involved in my community and the world. My curiosity was encouraged to explore areas I had never considered before, to learn knowledge beyond what I needed for existence and success. But, most of all, I was challenged to explore differing perspectives about all aspects of life. I learned to respect those perspectives, even those I do not agree with. This program helped me to grow, increasing my value to society and my family.

Best Part of My Experience in The Honors Program

Upon reflection, I would have to say the best part of my experience in the Honors program were the professors and fellow Honors students. Being a part of the program was like having another close-knit family. That sense of belonging kept me looking forward to my classes each day in anticipation of what we would learn next and how we would learn it.

How the Program Prepared Me for University

Working closely with professors, students, and the community helped me to be more open to others and more willing to share myself. The program increased my self-confidence and taught me to be more understanding of the people around me. The tools given to me by the Honors program prepared me for University learning by encouraging me to reach out for help and to help others. I learned to let go of my need to keep control of everything and rely on my group to help complete our projects. The program increased the effectiveness of my ability to communicate. It taught me to look beyond my narrow vision and understanding when solving problems. But, the largest take-away, was learning from the program to be an integral part of the various groups and communities that I interact with instead of living on the sidelines of life as an observer.

Advice for New Members

I would advise new members to be involved, participate, and take advantage of the programs benefits. I would advise them to not be afraid, to be willing to ask questions, and to let their creativity flow. Most of all, I would advise them to have fun and enjoy the experience as I have.



Honors Geology – Spring 2017 Class

Thank you for watching our story!

Lake Heckman, Hunter Wilson, Ronaldo Serranillo, Jazm Desjar, Timothy Robinson, Benjamin Schoop, James Browning, Joseph Reneau, Nicholette Wilson, Josaline Zamora, Amber Woltz, Benjamin Schoop, Mohamed Abusaleh, Emily Ducease, Lauren Leonard and Jorge Rodriguez-Garcia, Professor: C. Dianne Phillips, photographer.

Project Results

- The educational experience of students was enhanced by the use of online GIS applications

USING ESRI ONLINE APPLICATIONS AND GEOSCIENCE DATA IN CAPSTONE PROJECTS FOR HONORS GEOLOGY: 2Y COLLEGE

PHILLIPS, C. Dianne, Science and Math, Northwest Arkansas Community College, One College Drive, Bentonville, AR 72712 and SOREY, Nathan, Geosciences, University of Arkansas, 340 N. Campus Drive, 216 Gearhart Hall, Fayetteville, AR 72703, dphillips@nwacc.edu

Using ESRI Online Applications

ESRI Collector application allows students to collect geospatial attribute data, images, and videos in the field with internal or external GNSS receivers and immediately upload content to an online map platform.

Figure 1. Map of Karst Features at Tanyard Creek, Bella Vista, AR

Figure 2. Map of Abandoned Mine Features at Tar Creek, near Picher, OK

Problem Solving

Figure 3. Images of students in the field at Tanyard Creek, Bella Vista, AR. Handcopy notes at right; left shows Collector for ArcGIS use on smartphone.

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