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Graduate of the class of 2020 Magna Cum Laude

I have taken and passed the following Honors courses:

- American National Government
- Survey of the Universe
- Composition 1
- Composition 2
- Plant Biology
- Intro to the United Nations

Section 1 - In what ways did the Program help you “demonstrate engagement,” “cultivate curiosity,” and “explore perspectives?”

Being a member of the Honors program really improved my college experience. Throughout my years at Northwest Arkansas Community College I was able to better engage myself in our community through taking honors courses, primarily with service-learning projects. I have found that honors courses are also more stimulating than regular ones. Rather than showing up to class to listen to a lecture and do tons of mind-numbing assignments, you are met with really involved instructors that take great pride in their teaching. Many periods are filled with student discussions and eye-opening conversations. I found that in an honors course we would be instructed about a subject, then allowed to use that knowledge to delve deeper and share our interpretations of the learned material. I had a project for Honors Plant Biology in which I was given a new application to learn to use to help identify plants. After I learned to use the application, I was instructed to create a guide on how to use it and then to teach my fellow students how it works. It was an amazing project because I got to experience being the instructor while having a ton of fun with my peers. Another aspect to consider when looking at honors courses is that your peers are also fellow honors students. They take their education more serious, are more involved during class discussions, and are generally all-around good people.

Section 2 - How did this program prepare you for a university? What hard or soft skills will you take with you?

Taking honors courses pushes you to your limits. It helps you break the ice and get out of your comfort zone to better learn and enjoy the educational process. The quality of work that is expected from an honors course is more than that of a regular class. This helps to prepare a student for university because it helps to hone your skills on what is required in writing, specifically on how to properly write in MLA format. These courses teach you how to use critical thinking to better analyze subjects while discussing them amongst your peers, how to better your critical thinking abilities. Do not get me wrong, these courses can also be more challenging than a conventional non honors course. The professors expect more out of you and expect you to be more dedicated than a regular student, but this is not a bad thing. They are usually more patient and really want you to succeed. Another huge advantage, and the primary reason I began taking honors courses, is that the classes are much smaller. There are only a handful of students which helps give the course a much more intimate feel. You get to know your professor, and in turn they get to know you. You also get to know your fellow students better. By the end of a semester it is not unusual to know everyone by name and even their hobbies! If you are considering transferring to a university to continue your bachelors, I would suggest you take some honors courses to help yourself be better prepared. The skills I found most useful that will help me both in my career and future education are properly writing and sourcing papers, as well as having the opportunity to better hone my conversational skills.



Section 3 - What is one experience you had while a member that you would like to share?



It is hard to choose a favorite experience from my time at NWACC. From SAGA to Honors I was very lucky to meet so many wonderful people and not only learn a lot, but really enjoy my time here. I really enjoyed the star parties for Survey the Universe. There was one evening where I was able to bring my wife and daughter out to Hobbs State Park, and we all got to see Jupiter for the first time with our own eyes! It was a perfect night, just a little chilly. Not only did I have a blast and meet wonderful fellow astronomers, but my whole family was able to enjoy it. Ever since then my daughter has been fascinated with our solar system, especially the moon! Dr. Auld was such an amazing instructor and helped facilitate growth for my love for learning. If you are looking for a science course that is both hands on and gets you out of the classroom to learn, take Honors Survey the Universe!

As part of my Honors Introduction to the United Nations course I was able to go to the University of Central Arkansas to participate in a Model UN debate. It was a lot of fun and I was able to meet students from other colleges that had as much of a love of politics as I do. Dr. Evans was kind enough to place me on the Model UN Security Council which was the perfect place for me. I was able to stay in a room with 12 other very intelligent students and play through a mock meeting. I got to play the part of Equatorial Guinea, representative to a brutal dictatorship. We worked together to pass 3 resolutions during our session. I played my role properly by voting against a resolution that would have allowed the UN to come into my nation and perform human rights violation investigations. China and Russia both voted for it to pass, in which they realistically never would have because they are both perpetrators of human rights violations themselves. I was even



able to win an honorable mention award! I can think of a few different experiences I have had while in the honors program. If I had to choose, I would say my favorite experience involving the Honors program was attending the Honors Award Dinner. Dr. Cecil had invited me and at the time I had no idea what to expect. I brought my wife and daughter and we started the evening by meeting everyone at our table. One of the best parts of the Honors Dinner is that you get to meet all the best professors on campus! I even ended up taking classes with two of the professors at my table. The food was awesome, my daughter loves pizza as much as I do, and the company was perfect. You could just look around and see that everyone was having a good time and conversating. As awards are given out you can see the pure happiness and pride in both instructors and their students. The award process was a lot of fun to watch the surprise and excitement of the winners. It was a truly wonderful night and my best experience at NWACC.

Section 4 - Considering all you have written for the above, what advice do you have for new members?

My advice to ya'll is to take as many honors courses as you can fit into your schedule. Make sure to speak up during class discussions, participate as much as possible, and make as many friends as you can. Being an honors student puts you with other students that want to take their learning to the next level. Being an honors student not only prepares you to better succeed in your education, but also in life. I hope you enjoy this program as much as I did, and may you have a bright and intriguing time in it!