

Kade Walker

ENGL 1023H Composition II, Honors.
CHEM 1104H College Chemistry I, Honors
PLSC 2803H Intro to International Relations, Honor
PLSC 2403H Intro to Comparative Politics, Honor
Graduated 5-14-22



Section 1: How the Honors Program helped me "demonstrate engagement," "cultivate curiosity," and "explore perspectives"

The honors program here at Northwest Arkansas Community College has been helpful to get me more involved and connect with others in the community. Specifically, I interacted with fellow students and instructors through discussion posts in my honors classes. I also wrote multiple research essays that helped me get my voice and ideas out. Also, I researched and put together two research posters for my political science classes that allowed me to investigate

different perspectives. I am very grateful to have been a part of this program and to be able to expand my ideas.

The program coordinator, Sabrina Chesne, does a great job of letting you know of any community events that you can participate in and ways to new meet members. I wish I was able to make more of these events, but if you have the opportunity, they are great ways to expand your connections. Also, having the Honors program page and announcements on canvas makes it very easy to stay updated.

Section 2: How the Honors Program prepared me for the workforce

This program has made me more comfortable with discussing with students and helped my social skills. Which, of course, is very important for any kind of university or workplace. I am a pretty quiet person, but after my two years at NWACC, I feel confident when I do talk with people. Another skill I will take away from the honors program is my ability to do adequate and credible research. My extra honors assignments have been heavily dependent on research through the NWACC library to find relevant articles for the projects. This can be pretty extensive work, especially if you are also writing a bibliography on your sources as well. Now that I've done so many projects requiring this kind of work, I have no doubt I will be successful with this type of research in the future. I will be continuing my studies at the University of Arkansas to get a bachelor's in biochemistry. Then I plan to apply to medical school, and any sort of experience in research projects will be very beneficial then. As well as when I am a medical Doctor I will need to be able to do thorough research. Overall I would say that I have grown in all my abilities as an Honors student. This program motivates and pushes me to continue growing my education and push myself to achieve greater goals. I believe you are a reflection of who you surround yourself with; therefore, surrounding yourself with the knowledgeable and diverse people in this community will make you one as well.

Section 3: Fun experiences with the Honors Program

I've had many positive experiences with my instructors in the Honors program. They have all been very kind and brilliant, and I very much enjoy learning from them. One of my favorite experiences was my ability to grow in my writing and find my own style. This would not have been possible without the help and support of my English Comp II, Honors Professor, James Laughton. His open-mindedness really made me feel comfortable in my writing in his class and allowed me to create some writing I am proud of.

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Kade Walker
Professor Laughton
ENGL 1023
17 March 2021

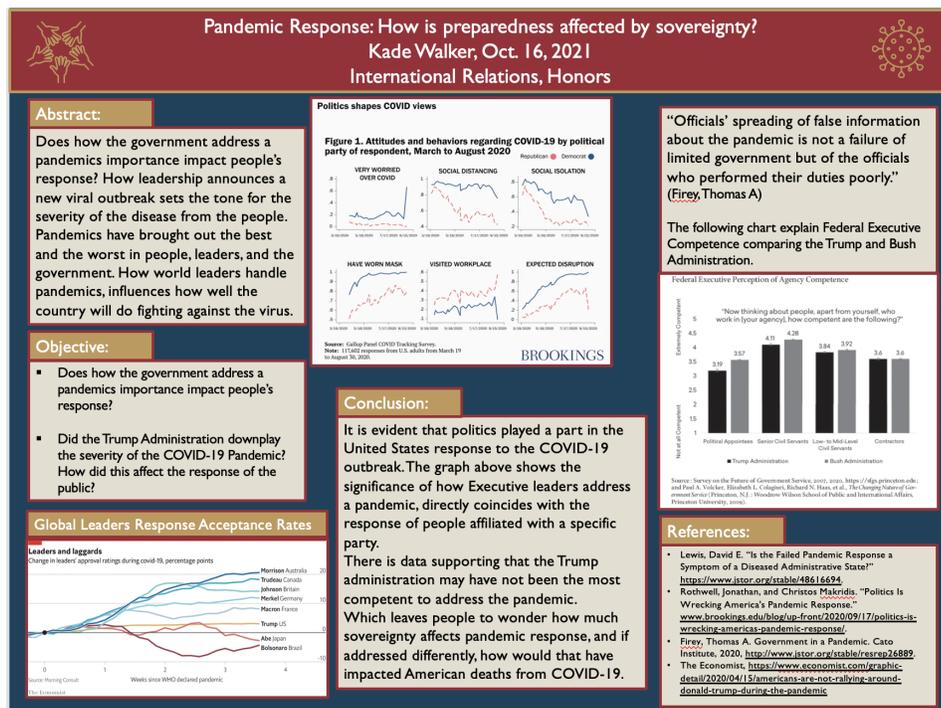
Give Me Liberty, Or Give Me Death: COVID-19 Vaccines

Do you believe the COVID-19 vaccination can help protect your life? Or do you feel like being forced to receive this vaccine is taking your human rights away? In the United States specifically, we have struggled in the past fourteen months with getting the COVID-19 pandemic under control. With many people concerned for their loved ones and their health, the COVID-19 vaccine is vital to returning to a safer life. Many people do not trust the COVID-19 vaccination on the flip side, but why could this be? What do we know about vaccines? Vaccines are biological agents that help build immunity to harmful viruses ("Vaccines" 1). Most people don't consciously realize the effectiveness of vaccines because the vaccine works, and immunity becomes part of everyday life. Even though vaccines have been more beneficial than people realize, there is a large percentage of people who wish to be vaccinated for COVID-19. In the article "Converting the Maybes: Crucial for a Successful COVID-19 Vaccination Strategy," author Katie Atwell, a social researcher for the Immunization Alliance of Western Australia, explained, "Broad community acceptance of a COVID-19 vaccination will be critical for effectively halting the spread of the virus" (Atwell 1).

Therefore if vaccination is crucial to ending this pandemic, why are people choosing to refuse the COVID-19 shot? In an infographic, "US Public Opinion Regarding a Potential COVID-19 Vaccine, May 2020," it was found that only 49% of people are willing to receive the vaccine. Whereas 20% said they would not get the vaccine, and 31% have not decided yet ("US Public" 1). An understandable and universal common concern for people who refuse the COVID-19 vaccine is unknown side effects. This is the primary concern of the vaccine for 70% of the study who refused, and 42% of candidates from the study are refusing the vaccine because they are worried they will get COVID-19 from receiving the shot ("US Public" 2). Another reserve I have found in people who do not wish to receive the vaccine is the

Next, I'd like to share my experience in my Honors Chemistry class. My professor, Dr. Lois Chun, was really great in that class and helped me understand chemistry better. I am a non-traditional student. I dropped out of high school when I was sixteen and went on to get my GED the same year. I thought chemistry would be a challenging course, being I never got a chance to take it prior. However, this was not the case; with the help of our many hands-on labs, I found quite an interest in the subject. Ultimately decided to major in Chemistry, despite the challenge ahead.

Lastly, my Political sciences professor, Matthew Evans, has been great to learn from the past two semesters. He is very well educated and open-minded, and it has been beneficial to share ideas with him. My Honors research posters have been my most demanding projects in his classes but have been fun to put together. I also have enjoyed the learning I've had on international and comparative politics. This class has specifically helped me in my community engagement and diverse perspectives.

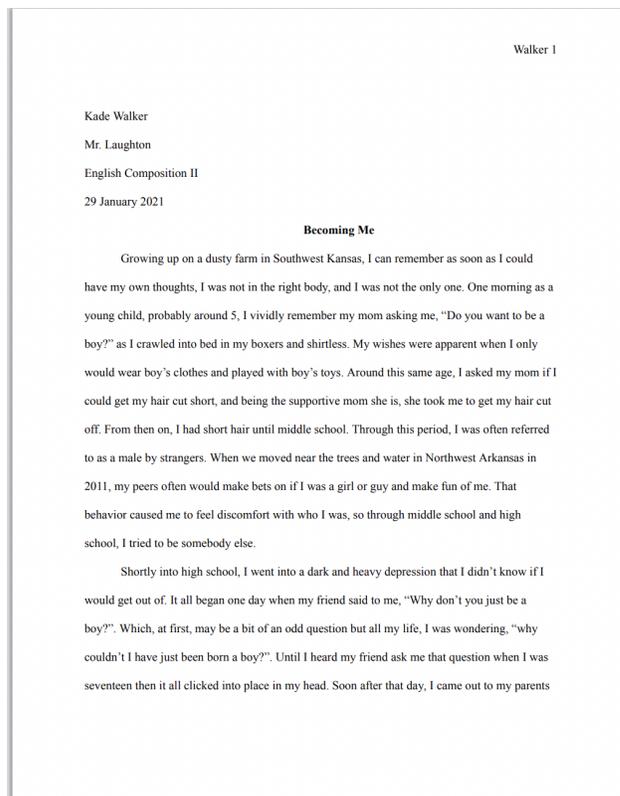


On a more personal note, these past few years, I have had ten surgeries these past few years due to a complication from my gender reassignment surgery. As a proud transgender student, I have felt very much support from all of my instructors at Northwest Arkansas Community College. Some instructors have been aware of my journey, and some have not, but they all have been exceptional when I've had to go through emergency surgeries in San Francisco. As a result, I have been able to continue my studies from afar and while recovering. Luckily I am doing well now and have fully transitioned and recovered. I am so glad to be the man I am today and a college graduate at that. I do not talk about this significant accomplishment

much, but I am pleased to have been able to achieve my Associates with Honors through my medical challenges.

I don't usually talk much about my personal journey. However, I think it's important for future students to know I felt supported in the honors program and at NWACC in general as a transgender student and nontraditional student. My instructors were very accommodating through my medical situation, and I was still able to do well in my classes despite the multiple surgeries I had during semesters. Sure I may have had to take trigonometry twice to understand what in the world was going on, but my point is that with dedication and support, anything is possible. We can truly understand and achieve anything we set our minds to, as long as we want it.

Also, I'd like to mention my entire Associate's degree was completed through online classes except for one class. So if social anxiety, medical issues, or work even makes anyone hesitant to continue their education, then that's okay. The online courses here at NWACC and the honors program have made it very easy to go to college in the most comfortable way for you. Of course, this isn't without discipline, but I know that I wouldn't have made it this far without the online program. Now that I'm healthy and well, I plan to try to attend more in-person classes, but these past two years online have been very important in preparing me for the future.



Section 4: Advice for future Honor Students

My advice for future members of the NWACC honors program would probably be to be open-minded and use this opportunity to broaden your education and social skills. Be sure to find hobbies that are a good stress relief for you and pursue that whenever needed. I always prioritized doing one stress relief hobby a day to keep from feeling overwhelmed. Maybe taking some of these honors classes will spark your interest in certain subjects, and motivate you to keep learning.