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 General Sociology  
 Introduction to Philosophy  
 History of the American People to 1877  
 World Religions  
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## Honors Graduation Reflection

### Section 1: Engaging with the Program

The first day of my General Sociology class, our teacher engaged in an exercise with us, the students. She had us stand up, an odd request but doable, and then she asked us why we did it. I could have sworn she was joking when she asked, but after we told her that it was because she had told us to, it clicked. It was a test, one that required our attention. A social experiment that tested the social boundaries of how we as students interacted with our teachers. Professor Jenna Bateman (see fig. 1) was our teacher, and she was a very interactive teacher. It was never a dull moment in class while we learned about sociology. Like that one time where we commented on Karl Marx having a sugar daddy, and when we called Facebook elder abuse. We got a kick out of several of the topics we conversed about and it was perhaps one of the most fun classes I had experienced. Since the class was an Honors class, those of us that were Honors students had to do a sociological project. We would make for ourselves an original research question, one that was free for us to experiment with as we pleased, and then we would write a paper and present about the findings we received from interviews and literature reviews. I chose my research question to be about video game quality and its effect on enjoyability. But what defined quality and enjoyability, I wondered. To find that answer, I made a “Tri-Force of Game Quality” with my sister, Alex. Through it, I found that the graphics mattered the least, the gameplay was the independent variable of this experiment, and the storyline was the dependent variable. The story, my sister told me, was what kept people hooked. The graphics might have been gorgeous, the gameplay mechanics might have been fine tuned to perfection, but it wouldn’t be the same without a compelling storyline to keep the reader hooked. Using these three elements, I then had to interview four people. The results were a little bit out there considering that only two of the interviewees played video games regularly, one played video games rarely, and the final person I interviewed had only watched a friend play. That didn’t mean that the results were outside my expectations though. In fact, the answers I got corresponded with many of my thought processes. The two interviewees that played games regularly said that the storyline was the most important, the person I interviewed that rarely partook in video games said the gameplay was the most important, and my fourth and final interviewee that hadn’t played a video game and only watched their friend play said the graphics are the most important. After compiling the results, I had thought about scrapping the results from the two people I interviewed that didn’t play games regularly. After thinking and mulling it over though, I added their words to my data. This was because it always helped to have a fresh opinion in



*Fig 1: A picture of Professor Jenna Bateman in the Honors Hub. 16 March 2026.*

There are several things that make a game enjoyable to others. Whether it be that the game has fun tasks or the most incredible plot twists in the storyline, it's all up to the player or the witness. This project showed me a different perspective from those who rarely played games and who didn't play games. I was originally going to brush them aside, but sometimes an outside perspective is what you need to make your results more interesting. That's how I felt when I added my final two interviewees. Everyone has their own things that they enjoy. While I am happy that other gamers feel the same about the storyline being the most important, I can acknowledge other perspectives that provide me some fresh insight. It allows me to understand those who have a different way of analyzing gaming instead of analyzing it like a hardcore gamer. Fresh perspectives can be a good thing while analyzing something that others might have been analyzing for decades. This was an opportunity to open my eyes and chat with people who I could have never imagined talking with so freely, an opportunity to dig my heels in and do the best research that I could to find out what I needed to. It was a breathe of fresh air to see and experience so much difference. Different opinions are what make researching video games so exciting, mostly because of how new video games seem when they've actually been around for quite a while. Mostly it's the consoles and the types of games that change over time as our society progresses forward technologically. Still, the one thing I've learned and will keep repeating to myself is that different

*Fig 2: An Excerpt from My Paper for General Sociology. 16 March 2026.*

research, even if that opinion might have been irrelevant to any potential formal research, something I have stated in my conclusion(see fig. 2). Research is not stagnant. If I had just been looking for experienced, hardcore gamers, perhaps I would have cut those opinions out of my paper. I did not though and instead added their words to include perspectives outside my own. Because even if their words were irrelevant, they added a new layer of research that I would have never thought about on my own.

### Section 2: The Preparations

When I think about what I have learned from my Honors classes, I realize that I have truly learned a lot from my teachers. From my History teachers, Doctor Gene Vinzant and Doctor Christopher Huggard, I have learned the value of ten page term papers and the ugliness of the past that was there for us to learn from and yet was messed up somewhere along the line. When thinking about my Sociology professor, Jenna Bateman, I realize that I have ascertained the value of doing research for a paper and presentation and established how different perspectives make sociological research much less stagnant and a lot more confusing and fun. Upon remembering my English Composition II teacher, Professor Sabrina Chesne, I recall how I have been taught how the right sources, images, and quote sandwiches can make your essay shine. I was also given the knowledge on how to truly make a paper and presentation interesting to the intended audience, especially when it is on a subject one is passionate about, from her. The knowledge that I have learned from my Philosophy and World Religions professor, Doctor Douglas Kreuger, can not be put as simply as learning a different way that people think. In Philosophy, I have learned about questions that plague the mind, concepts that many argued about and continue to argue about to this day. The concept of God, the idea of free will, reasoning behind why there is evil in this world, the idea of morality, and many other ideas that were all astounding to learn of. In World Religions, the difference wasn't just in thought process, but it was also in action. Different religions hold different actions in higher value, all different ways of thinking and yet to them, they are still worshipping, still honoring their deities or higher beings. In many more ways, I can say that the main hard skills I've learned would be gathering sources from databases that is relevant to my studies and learning how to add those relevant sources to my essays in a way that does not make them the main point of my work, that information coming mostly from my English Composition II class. The main soft skills I've learned would be giving speeches without exceeding my time limit, something that I can admit that I have struggled with before and now felt an improvement in from my General Sociology class to my History of the American People to 1877 class, and gathering data from interviews in a way that does not show off my personal bias and instead allows for flexibility in my work, a point I learned for myself in my General Sociology class.

### Section 3: The Great Plains Honors Council Conference

The Great Plains Honors Council Conference is an inter-college event lasting a weekend that anyone would be thrilled to experience. College students from different community colleges in six different states gather together to either present their own research or they go to support classmates. The conference was set in Kansas City at Johnson County Community College, a large, lovely school that I was shocked to believe existed. Having rarely been outside of Northwest Arkansas for anything other than vacation, it was a little nerve-wracking to be at an entirely different school in a different state for something that felt like business. I managed to relax though and I had an amazing time! The first day consisted of check in and poster presentations, followed by dinner in the evening and a keynote workshop with Ned Scott Laff and Scott Carlson. The guest speakers were authors of a book called *Hacking College*, something that sounded interesting to me and would definitely be helpful for those that just entered college. I mostly listened to the entire lecture and I didn't ask any questions. There was a student social after the workshop had ended, but many of us were drained and so headed to the hotel, getting some rest. The second day was a whole different ballgame, consisting of panel presentations in



Fig 3: Me Presenting at the GPHCC. 7 March 16.

the morning. The first presentations were the Boe Paper Award Presentations, taking place from 8-9 AM. From 9 to noon, the panel presentations kicked off. Some of the students from NWACC had decided to present, myself included. I did a presentation (see fig. 3) on the history of Elias Cornelius Boudinot, a half

Cherokee, half white man who lived like he was trying to both cross the boundary line and yet stay on that border. Given that I had already spoken about him for my History of the American People to 1877 class for an assignment, I had complete confidence in my oration even when my throat grew hoarse and there were some technical issues. I was doing my panel in between two other presenters who were from different parts of Lone Star College and I can say with complete certainty that we all did amazing. After our three panels were done, me and my sister went to a different room to watch some people in the 11 to noon group present. It was a fun experience watching three separate people talk about different translations and adaptations of different books, movies, and real life events. After the panel presentations was lunch and after lunch was the excursions. My sister and I chose to go to the American Jazz Museum. It was a wonderful decision. The tour guide, a lovely woman, showed us in and took everyone who chose to go on the excursion to a jazz bar in the same building that was called *The Blue Room*. There, she explained about many famous jazz artists, most of them black. Ella Fitzgerald, Louis Armstrong, and many others were among the list. Then she decided to blow my mind by telling everyone there that many famous people had visited the jazz bar and that they had high school students practicing jazz in their own little section of the museum. Some of those students even did some gigs! It was an amazing experience, one I would definitely repeat if only to listen to the amazing jazz music I heard from the little jazz corner again. After the excursion was a rest at the hotel and then it was back to the college for dinner and a lecture about sustainability for most people. After the long day, most of us slept for the rest of the second day. On the third day, we all woke up, had breakfast, and came back to the college where we then went our separate ways to go home. The experience did have its hurdles, but it was a trip worth experiencing that I have fond memories of.

#### Section 4: My Advice for the New Members

Honors classes are not a cakewalk. They are challenging, meant to push you to be better than you already are. You got into the Honors Program for a reason, now show the world what you can do with the knowledge. Push yourself but not too hard. Remember that you are a part of a community, one that will help you be your better self. Most importantly though, have fun and don't torture yourself with mountains of work unless you take comfort in work!