

Michael Boyd
Major: Associate of Science in Liberal Arts and
Sciences - STEM

Transferring to: Utah State University

Honors Courses Taken:

- PSYC 2003H- General Psychology, Honors
- ENGL 1013H- English Composition I Honors
- ENGL 1023H- English Composition II Honors
- CHEM 1104H- College Chemistry I Honors

Graduation Date: May 9th, 2026



Community, Curiosity, Diversity

The Honors Program has helped me to stretch myself and experience more in life. As I've been a part of the program I have gotten to participate in new opportunities, meet various people of different backgrounds, as well as push myself to grow and to learn more. The program helped me demonstrate engagement in a variety of ways. Periodically, we take care of J street in Bentonville through trash pick-up. It's a wonderful opportunity to be out doing good in the community, and to get some hands-on experience volunteering. I was able to participate and help out. We went all up and down the street and picked up all of the trash we could find. I got to know a few other honors members in the process, and got to serve my community as well.

My curiosity was cultivated especially in my Honors chemistry class. In the class, due to the honors component, we were tasked to form groups and come up with a semester long project to complete. I formed a group with a guy named Taryn and a girl who liked to go by "Shorty". The requirements for the project were that it had to benefit the community and be related to chemistry in some way. We ended up performing a study on sleep aids, and their use amongst college students. I ended up learning a lot about various sleep aids, from antihistamines to melatonin to zinc. Turns out antihistamines just block all of the H1 receptors in your brain, which prevents a chemical that gives you energy from going through. Melatonin is a chemical that your brain releases towards the end of a day to help you prepare to sleep, and taking too much of it can actually give you nightmares! Zinc is just a muscle relaxant and helps someone to feel more relaxed in order to sleep. That's just a small amount of what I learned during this project! It ended up being pretty interesting. We would go on to send out a campus wide survey to get to know what kind of sleep aids students used, and then [released our research](#) of each sleep aid for the better education of the public.

It was during this same project that I was able to explore different perspectives. Taryn and Shorty were both very different people from me and from each other, and I gained lots of cool perspective from each of them. They both had their own idea on how to tackle the project, and it was those varying perspectives that ended up helping it to be a success! I would also chat religion with both of them, and it was very interesting. I'm a member of the church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, Shorty is an ex-member of my church, and Tarryn is not a member but liked to chat with our missionaries now and again. Throughout the time we worked on the

project together, we had lots of interesting discussions about the church and religion, and it was really cool to get those perspectives and work with them.

University Preparation

This program has prepared me to attend a larger university by helping me to not be afraid to push myself. I had a few extra projects to do on top of the rest of my work in psychology, a few higher-level essays I had to write in honors English, and then my chemistry project I previously discussed that I had to do on top of the rest of the classwork. I had to work incredibly hard and do all kinds of extra work, and I still finished each class with an A. I learned better study habits from having to manage the extra project work and regular homework and testing. I learned how to even better keep myself calm in stressful situations, since I always had so much to do. I learned better how to work with others in a team setting through our group project. I also learned more about assembling a final research paper from long term results. Looking back, most of the classes that helped me learn these skills were my honors courses. This will all help me as I head to Utah State University, where I'll be really diving into my Landscape Architecture degree.



Personal Experience

I had one cool experience that comes to mind from my time in the honors program. It's an experience that showed me that I was capable of doing great things, and of getting really good at something if I challenged myself. I also learned from this experience that I can put genuine good out into the world that can make a difference to people. When I was in my Honors Comp II class, we were regularly tasked to write essays to a higher level. One of these times we were tasked to write an essay on one of a few poems. I chose to write about "The Clod and the Pebble" by William Black, and I wrote an essay titled "[A Lense of Black and White](#)". The particular poem I was writing about focused on a pebble in a brook and a clod being trodden by cattle's feet. In the poem, the clod focuses on the "heaven in hells despair" and the good it has. Conversely, the pebble, sitting within a lovely brook, chooses to focus on the hell instead. In my essay, I wrote about the importance of choosing to live a happy life, of doing all that you could to let the heaven be the focus of your life, and to not let yourself be consumed and only focused on the hell. At one point I brought up a video of a rabbi that I had seen, where the rabbi stated that it's much better to be a thermostat, not a thermometer. A thermometer is strictly influenced by its environment, and whether or not it goes up or down purely depends upon that influence. A thermostat, however, sets the temperature and then stays there, regardless of the outside influence.

THE CLOD AND THE PEBBLE.

LOVE seeketh not itself to please,
Nor for itself hath any care;
But for another gives its ease,
And builds a heaven in hell's
despair.

So sung a little clod of clay,
Trodden with the cattle's feet:
But a pebble of the brook
Warbled out these metres meet—

Love seeketh only self to please,
To bind another to its delight,
Joys in another's loss of ease,
And builds a hell in heaven's
despite.

Thus, it's much better to be a thermostat, and decide what you want your life to be like, than to let every outside circumstance determine it instead. I worked hard on this essay and was very proud of it, and my professor agreed! She said that it was well written and had a wonderful message, and so she asked me if she could attach it to that assignment as an example essay for future students to read. She told me that she thought it was a good example for what that particular essay should be, but also that she thought it could do other students good to read it. It was very cool that she chose something I wrote for that, I thought. It taught me that when I put myself in a position to push myself, I can create and do awesome things. It also taught me that I can put good out into the world that can help people, and that can make the world a better place. It's something I still remember today.

Advice for New Members

If there is any advice I'd give new members, it would be to get comfortable with being uncomfortable. There is growth that you can experience if you put yourself in classes and places where you have to push yourself past where you're comfortable. There are friends you can meet and grow close to if you push past your social fears. There are skills you can develop, hobbies you can break into, and difficult subjects that you can master if you choose to push yourself outside of your comfort zone. There is a saying that goes "There is no growth in comfort zones, and there is little comfort in times of growth". If we want to get more out of the meat of life, and live our lives to the fullest, and become better people than we ever dreamed, then we all need to become more comfortable with being uncomfortable.