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Honors Oracle, November 2015

Marshall University Honors College

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Honors Oracle

Marshall University's Honors College newsletter • November/December 2015



Every End is a New Beginning

By NANCY PEYTON

Graduation is a time for reflecting on past accomplishments and looking forward to the future. On Dec. 12, eight Honors students will be walking across the stage with a lot of memories they can use to reflect on their college experience.

Criminal justice major Zach Falther plans to go to law school after graduation. He said he feels the challenging Honors College curriculum will help him more than other classes he took while at Marshall.

"The curriculum has challenged me to look at different concepts and issues from different perspectives, which will help me when I look at legal issues in law school," Falther said.

One of the many advantages the Honors College has to offer is the seminars. Psychology major Alyssa Borak said these seminars give professors a chance to really get to know their students.

"One of the seminars I took was all about 9/11 and we got to read

novels and have many discussions about it," Borak said. "I enjoyed how small the discussions were. It allowed the professors to get to know who you are and care about your opinions."

Energy management major Sawyer Smith said one of his favorite seminars gave him a newfound appreciation for West Virginian culture.

"One of my favorite parts about becoming an Honors College student was being able to take the honors elective 'Appalachia on film' taught by Dr. Squire and be involved with the Appalachian Studies conference hosted by Marshall," Smith said. "This class gave me great pride in being born in Appalachia and I learned many interesting facts about my own back yard."

While in the Honors College, students face a lot of unique challenges, but also get a lot of opportunities other programs may not offer. Falther said the most im-

portant thing to do is to get to know the staff.

"I would tell underclassmen to get to know the Honors College staff," Falther said. "They are all really helpful and willing to do anything for students."

Students can also be overwhelmed by the curriculum when first entering the program, but Borak said they don't have a reason to be.

"Don't be afraid to ask for help and try not to stress yourself out," Borak said. "Looking back, I would get so stressed out over things that I didn't need to be worried about."

Smith said he would like to thank the Honors College staff for their dedication to helping students succeed.

"Thank you to the Honors College staff for all of the opportunity and hard work you have done to make my time in the honors college enjoyable," Smith said. "To Dr. Gilpin, a special thank you for all you have done for me and for every Honors College student."

Honors student earns her ears at Disney

By DAVID BOYD

Honors student Caroline Mitchell is living her dream. Mitchell a senior in the Honors College, who is also majoring in communications studies with a concentration in public communications. After visiting Disney World for two days at the age of 11, she has always wanted the chance to go back and stay longer, and got her chance this semester.

Mitchell was a freshman when she first heard about the Disney College Program, but did not know if she would ever apply. This past January, she said she decided to go for it and applied.

"Honestly, I [applied] because I wanted to visit Disney World and no one would take me," Mitchell said. "I also knew that the experience and classes I'm taking here would supplement my major and my other internships, as well as give me a chance to meet a lot of people and do some networking."

Marshall does not currently have a Disney College Program representative. Mitchell said she applied and was accepted to the program by



her own accord, although not without some hoops to jump through.

"Currently, all credits for the classes in the program have to be given through the College of Business," Mitchell said. "I am in the College of Liberal Arts, so this was a bit confusing."

Mitchell gives credit to the Honors College for being very supportive and willing to work with her while she is not on campus. She said the biggest

benefit given to her by the Honors College was the opportunity to take Honors classes.

"The seminars in particular, are interesting and challenging to our traditional way of thinking, which is incredibly important," Mitchell said. "Aside from that, it's nice to have classes with professors who trust you. I think it makes the class more fun when a professor doesn't have to repeatedly remind students to do their work."

While being in Orlando, Mitchell works as a show keeper, which she described as a fancy word for custodian. Mitchell also has the opportunity to travel around the world with the World Showcase at Epcot, and said she will be appearing in Disney's Christmas Parade on ABC on Christmas Day.

"If anyone is considering participating in the Disney College Program, I 100% encourage them to apply," Mitchell said. "It is one of the coolest things I've ever done. When I complete my classes here, I will have two "Ducktorate" Degrees."

Honors 200 aims to prepare students

By RYAN FISCHER

One of the requirements for Honors students is a second year seminar course, known as Honors 200. This course is only offered in the spring, and should be completed in a student's fourth semester in college.

Second-year seminars are taught by a variety of professors in order to address both leadership and ethics in the professional world.

Bethany Walters is teaching one of the seminars this spring, said her section will emphasize civic engagement, as well as leadership.

"My section of Honors 200 will be labeled, 'Service Learning,'" Walters

said. "This means that students will get the opportunity to work professionally with groups on and off campus that are working to make Huntington, Appalachia and the world a better place."

Students should expect a great deal of control and self-advocating within the course, as it is mainly hands-on work.

Susan Gilpin, associate dean of the Honors College, helped found the course and said it gears specifically toward skills Honors students should learn before graduation.

"Being a leader doesn't necessari-

ly just mean the person who is the head of an organization," Gilpin said. "But someone who influences change, someone who can empower others to act around a common goal."

According to Gilpin, the Honors 200 course is also designed to carry students into the Honors 480 seminars.

"The seminars are different from lots of upper division courses in that they're not based on lecture and they're not just harder material that you have to learn," Gilpin said. "But it's about accounting for your engagement with whatever the seminar material is."

HCSA gives thanks for Honors staff

By KASEY MADDEN

This semester, the Honors College Student Association Committee committed to thanking Honors College professors for their contribution to the program this semester.

The 12-member committee hand wrote approximately 50 letters to professors who taught Honors courses this fall.

HSCA secretary and junior forensic chemistry major Grayce Behnke took the charge for organizing writing the thank you letters.

"We've never done this before, so it's important to show them how much

we appreciate what they do for us," Behnke said.

HSCA treasurer and senior marketing major Ashley DeMoss said the Honors College has helped her become involved and shaped her educational experience as an out of state student.

"It was an amazing experience that allowed us to connect with the professors and thank them for the education they give us," DeMoss said.

According to the HCSA bylaws, the organization exists to, "create fellowship among its members that extends

beyond the classroom." With the thank you letter writing campaign, HSCA put this concept into motion.

Each semester HSCA plans events for Honors College students. This semester the committee planned an Honors College open house for freshmen and an event offered at midterms titled "Yoga and Chocolate", which provided a short yoga session, study tips and a gift bag of candy.

The hand written thank you letters were distributed to professors through campus mail just before Thanksgiving break.

Kinghorn to share power of social media

By IAN LOVERN

While Brian Kinghorn, PhD, is a recent addition to the Honors College teaching staff, he is no stranger to teaching.

Kinghorn's passion for education has taken him from teaching summer science programs to children in California, to teaching the educators themselves and showing them that their learning doesn't have to end with the completion of their degree. His passion has now brought him to Marshall, all the way from BYU-Hawaii.

Originally, Kinghorn wanted to pursue neuroscience, and thought he might go to medical school after college. However, he said his time spent teaching science alongside elementary school teachers revealed a passion for educating he hadn't previously considered.

"I realized that there were gaps in the knowledge of many teachers," Kinghorn said. "There is no way for a teacher to learn everything they need to learn in a classroom. There's an old adage that I have found to be correct, the best learning that I've experienced was in having to teach something."

Kinghorn's research primarily focuses on middle school teachers, and how these teachers can struggle with being asked to teach several subjects at one

time, with materials that are constantly being updated. He said that one problem he has encountered is that few teachers enter the profession with an actual love of science.

"If we can show teachers that science doesn't have to be scary, we can help them to become better educators," Kinghorn said. "They can then teach the students with renewed passion, and you get a trickle-down effect."

Though his main focus is science education, Kinghorn also has a passion for social media and how it affects the user. This spring, he will be teaching an Honors seminar entitled "The Psychology of Social Media". Kinghorn said these topics are connected because the effects of social media on learning and social interaction.

"Digital media is changing the way that we think about, process, store, and retrieve information," Kinghorn said. "We now have access to information in the classroom that we might have had to go to the library for before."

Kinghorn spent two years abroad doing missions work in college, and said this made him miss the "tipping point" for online social media.

"For my first year of college, there was no college email address," Kinghorn said. "When I got back to the country, everything had changed. Everyone in your university was part of your Facebook network. It was around that time I began thinking of how technology changes us. When you're going through the change you don't notice it, but I missed the actual period of change. For me it was going from 'no one using this' to 'woah, everyone has this.'"

Beyond that, Kinghorn is interested in the social repercussions in increased use of social media. He said this is another question that his class will attempt to answer, through the use of social media right there in the classroom.

"If we look at the things the internet does, social media magnifies behaviors that are already present," Kinghorn said. "People can organize and get into groups without social media, but with it you can connect with people all over the world. It's not really changing our social behaviors, its magnifying them in positive and negative ways."

Kinghorn's class meet this spring, on Thursday afternoons.

Freshman advising proves beneficial

By AMANDA GIBSON

The Honors College staff sat down with freshman in the program individually to advise them on their next steps in the Honors College curriculum.

Honors College academic advisor Sande Yentes said freshman advising started two semesters ago because the Honors College felt it was important for students to understand the curriculum.

“We feel like it’s really important for students to start off as early as possible with a really solid understanding of the curriculum and how it works and what they need to be doing in order to be kind of working their way through the curriculum,” Yentes said.

While enrolled in the Honors College, a typical student has to take 24 credit hours of Honors courses in four years. Yentes said is the responsibility of Honors students to understand these requirements.

“We know that, especially [with] faculty advisors,” she said, “there’s a wide variety of how familiar they are with the Honors College requirements and how keyed in they are to thinking about getting students in the Honors College classes.”

She said students should advocate for themselves, and check on the core classes they are taking to see if there are Honors sections.

“And if they don’t understand how it works,” Yentes said, “then it’s not really fair to expect them to do that.”

Freshman broadcast journalism and public relations major Kyra Biscarner made her advising appointment with Dr. Gilpin. During her advising

session, Dr. Gilpin pulled up Biscarner’s DegreeWorks to look at the classes she will need to graduate, and showed her some of the Honors courses she could take.

Biscarner said being able to sit down and go through her schedule early with an adviser definitely helped her.

“I thought it was really helpful,” she said. “I actually like to plan ahead, like way ahead, and I always like to be really organized, so it actually calmed me a little bit more and made me feel more relaxed going into registration.”

Biscarner said getting her schedule together was pretty easy, and she didn’t have any issues scheduling Honors courses.

“It was actually fairly easy to be able to get Honors courses in there,” she said.

Freshman civil engineering major Brooke Rumbaugh said her advising appointment helped her a lot, as well. She had not met with her faculty advisor yet, so she got to know a little more about her major through her Honors College advisor.

Rumbaugh said it was stressful for her to think about scheduling early, but it was a benefit to have priority registration so she could get into a physics class.

“I definitely got in it, which was great to have, because it’s a very big prerequisite for engineering courses,” she said.

Rumbaugh said she knows engineering majors who have had to quit the Honors College because of

their schedules.

“The thing I have problems with is, well, the engineering course schedule, if you look at the outline for it, it’s very difficult to fit Honors courses in it,” Rumbaugh said. “It’s definitely going to be a problem...I’m going to try to stick with it.”

She said once her advisor outlined what she would need to graduate with Honors, she realized she needed to start looking ahead and see what she can possibly do with her professors.

Yentes said she had mostly positive reactions from the students about the Honors freshman advising.

“They weren’t necessarily super enthusiastic about coming in,” Yentes said, “but at the end most of them, you know, said that it had been really helpful to them.”

The Honors College reaches its students via email to notify students that they must sign up for advising.

Freshman students have to sign up for Honors College advising to utilize their priority registration. Upperclassmen must sign up if they wish to take an Honors seminar, and any Honors student must sign up if they wish to be on the Steering Committee or the Honors Oracle.

“We really kind of came at it from the perspective of we want you to come and check-in with us, we want to know how things are going for you...how your year’s shaping up at this point and then we want to kind of give you some information that you can use when you get ready to do advising,” Yentes said.

Meet the Honors Oracle Staff

GABI WARWICK, executive editor

Gabi is a senior broadcast journalism major from Martinsburg, W.Va. She joined the Honors College in 2013 and aspires to be News Director of Marshall’s student radio station, WMUL-FM.

LEXI BROWNING, layout editor

Lexi is a print and online journalism double major with a double minor in political science and international affairs. She is a native of Milton, W.Va. and entered the Honors College in 2013. She aspires to be a multimedia storyteller for *The Washington Post*.

CLARA MAYNARD, assistant editor

Clara is a public relations major from Chapmanville, W.Va. She joined the Honors College in 2013 and aspires to obtain her masters degree in public relations and doctoral degree to become a professor.

JARED CASTO, social media director

Jared is an online journalism major from Ripley, W.Va. He entered the Honors College in 2014 and aspires to enter the field of journalism after graduation or continue his education.

NANCY PEYTON, staff writer

Nancy is an online journalism and political science double major from Pecks Mill, W.Va. She entered the Honors College in 2014 and aspires to work for *The New York Times* as a reporter.

DAVID BOYD, staff writer

David is an economics major from Williamson, W.Va. He entered the Honors College in 2015 and aspires to be a professor at the Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College after he receives his masters degree.

AMANDA GIBSON, staff writer

Amanda is a print journalism major from Pocahontas County, W.Va. She entered the Honors College in 2014 and aspires to become a newspaper reporter or editor after graduation.

KASEY MADDEN, staff writer

Kasey is a public relations major from Ona, W.Va. She entered the Honors College in 2013 and aspires to go to law school or work for a professional sports team.

RYAN FISCHER, staff writer

Ryan is a print and online journalism double major from the Northern Panhandle of West Virginia. He entered the Honors College in 2014 and aspires to be a reporter and photographer for print and broadcast publications.

IAN LOVERN, staff writer

Ian is a microbiology and religious studies double major from Bluefield, W.Va. He entered the Honors College in 2012 and aspires to work in emergency medicine.

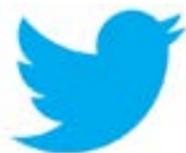
Upcoming events

December 12: Winter Commencement

December 13: Residence Halls Close

December 22: University Closes

December 23 - January 1: Winter Break



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