



Honors College

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Have something you think should be included?
Please contact us!



@honorscollege1200



agabrie2@uwo.edu

LETTER FROM THE DEAN

"Warm greetings from the Honors College. Although we are a fledgling College, Honors as a program started at the University of Wyoming 60 years ago! From the outset back in 1959, Honors has always held true to its mission of providing exceptional opportunities and education for academically high achieving students. We like to say that if you leave Honors thinking the same way as when you arrived, then we have failed you. We strive to make you see things differently; this may be politically, socially, culturally or simply to provide you with another person's perspective. Honors does not shy from the hard discussion, we embrace it.

Standing on the shoulders of our predecessors, Susan Aronstein, Janice Harris and especially Duncan Harris, Associate Dean, Peter Parolin, and I are committed to taking Honors to new heights: more research and creative undertakings, more affordable international adventures, more opportunities to attend national and international meetings, and more interdisciplinary experiences. These collective offerings now range from the Arctic to Africa, from the origins of diseases to the forefront of cures, from deep dives into art to its ownership, and from Homer's ancient Iliad to Stephen Markley's hot off the press Ohio. We are forging new partnerships and revitalizing established and valued relationships. No barrier and no silo is sacrosanct and we encourage you to join us on this journey as we Open our Minds."

-Dean Skinner

WHY DO HONORS?

Dean Parolin has been working at the University of Wyoming since 1997, and in that time has served as both the chair of the English Department and now as the Associate Dean of the Honors College. Before beginning his career at UW, Parolin lived in Vancouver, Canada, and after attending college there, moved to the United States to seek his doctorate at the University of Pennsylvania. His work has many different focuses, but one that he is particularly passionate about is Renaissance Literature- this passion has led him to lead a study abroad trip every summer entitled Shakespeare in England and Italy. I had the opportunity to visit his beautifully modern decorated office tucked in the Guthrie House and discuss his love of the honors community, the Laramie community, and ask him how honors students can take advantage of their college experience.

“Why should incoming students consider becoming a member of the UW Honors community?”

Parolin says that honors “adds value and richness to life at the university.” Honors courses, besides having fantastic professors who seek to make the material dynamic for students, add an element of community. “We’re all looking for community,” he explained, “it can be found in an individual student’s major, but having those honors courses leads to interaction with professors and other students outside one’s traditional coursework.” He includes, “Honors students all are hungry to make a difference in the world, and that leads to fantastic opportunities.”

“How can Honors students make the most of their college experience? What advice would you give them?”

“Be curious- be committed to discover things.” Parolin’s dynamic personality burst to life when asked for the advice he would give to students. “Look for opportunities that are outside of your current experience, and know that



some opportunities may be amazing and you just might not know it yet.”

“What is your favorite thing about UW and Laramie as a whole?”

Parolin explained that his favorite thing about the University of Wyoming community and the Laramie community is the fact that they are just that- communities that are easy to find a spot in. To exemplify this, he discussed one of his hobbies he has found a home in - theater. “I have performed with both the UW Theater and Dance program and with the local Relative Theatrics company.” His first major part, that of Len in the play “The Book of Days,” was back in 2005, but he continues to blend work and play, performing in productions frequently.

Other than the places Parolin has personally found community in, he values the atmosphere of Laramie at large. “Over the past 21 years, Laramie has continued to become more diverse, lively, and interesting.” Lively and interesting indeed, two adjectives one could easily use to describe the dean himself.

FALL 2018 COLLOQUIUM REFLECTION- DREAMS AND REALITY

A major assignment in the Honors Colloquium I course was an assignment that combined the literary and creative aspects of the course. This assignment was a visual response to any of the many works read throughout the year.

Students could choose to use any medium to portray their responses, and mediums presented at the end-of-semester symposium (seen right) included spoken word, paintings, drawings, sculptures, and photography. Several examples of student work are shown below.



“ARE YOU SURE
THAT WE ARE AWAKE?
IT SEEMS TO ME
THAT YET WE SLEEP, WE DREAM.”

-William Shakespeare, A Midsummer Night's Dream

2019 SUMMER STUDY ABROAD

One of the main goals of the Honors College is to insure that any Honors student who wishes to travel abroad is able to do so. One of the ways students can do this is by traveling during the summer break. Many courses are offered only to honors students, and the application process typically ends in October. The following are classes, now closed, that are taking place this upcoming summer. However, they are wonderful examples of opportunities available to UW honors students. If students are interested in traveling abroad in the future, more information about Honors trips can be found at <http://www.uwyo.edu/honors/courses-abroad/index.html>.



Worlds of Wonder- Beauty, Power and Meaning in the Modern Museum - London & Oxford

“This class examines the history and practice of museums, investigating how the collection, interpretation, and display of objects has come to hold such fascination and influence in the modern world.” (May/June 2019)

War! - England & France

“Students will visit key locations of WWI and WWII in England and France, and consider contemporary issues related to these global wars.” (May/June 2019)

Scottish Rural Spaces- From Ancient Fields and Forests to Modern Food Systems

“Explore the countryside, economics, history, technology, policy, literature and art shaping modern Scottish food and livestock systems.” (May 2019)



“WE LIVE IN A GLOBAL COMMUNITY; RECOGNIZING THIS AND BEING PART OF THAT COMMUNITY ARE FUNDAMENTAL FIRST STEPS TO FULL ENGAGEMENT.”



Ecuador, the Galapagos Islands and the Evolution of Evolution

Course will “introduce students to history of Ecuador and the Galapagos Islands... the role of the Galapagos Islands in the development of the theory of evolution by Charles Darwin... current conservation issues in Ecuador and similarities to issues in Wyoming.”
(May/June 2019)

Walkabout Down Under- Australia

Learn about Aboriginal culture, visit ancient rock art with “renowned Aboriginal Elder Bill Harney.” **(Course open until filled- contact pauldidj@gmail.com for more information.)**
(June/July 2019)

Shakespeare in England & Italy

“Students learn about Shakespeare’s artistry and gain insight into how today’s artists use Shakespeare to make sense of our world.”
(May/June 2019)

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For information on honors college travel abroad scholarships, visit: <http://www.uwyo.edu/honors/travel-scholarships/index.html>

SPRING 2018 PREVIEW- HONORS COLLOQUIUM II

A required course for all freshman in the Honors program at the University of Wyoming is Honors Colloquium II, to be completed in the spring semester. Honors Colloquium I- completed in the fall semester- was focused on “Dreams and Reality,” and offered students the opportunity to read works ranging from Baudrillard to Plato.

Honors Colloquium II is similarly named “American Dreams and Realities.” What will this class focus on? The course description states the course will “Continue[s] study of significant works in Western and Eastern literary, scientific and philosophical traditions begun in Colloquim I. Assignments focus on using critical discourse, historical research, and textual analysis to produce effective written compositions and oral presentations.”

However, technical descriptions rarely are able to capture the discussions and realizations that occur for students in the classes themselves. Often, professors are able to take the course material and assignments, put their own spin on them, and deliver to students an experience that leads to both academic and personal growth,

The best way, then, to learn what a course will offer is to speak to the professors themselves to discover what their approach to the material will be. Ann Stebner Steele, one of the professors of “American Dreams and Realities,” shares her initial reactions to the course, the subjects she’s looking forward to, and her plan for the semester.

“What was your initial reaction to the topics and readings presented in this course?”

“So far, I am amazed by the course material. Our readings for the spring are all by American authors and pertain to subjects that are relevant today (immigration, gender and sexuality, drug addiction, race, poverty, and class, etc.). I think that our readings will challenge students and faculty alike – taken together, the course materials will push us not necessarily to change our opinions but to think more deeply about difficult, important, and uncomfortable issues.”

“Is there a particular section of the course you are looking forward to? What would you describe as the highlights?”

“A few highlights for me: I have really enjoyed listening to and reading the lyrics for the musical *Hamilton* and was totally floored by Louis Urrea’s book *The Devil’s Highway*. I am a creative writer, and reading these pieces made me think critically about the histories and issues presented but also about the prodigious craft at work in each. “

“How do you plan on approaching the course materials?”

“I plan to approach each reading by asking students to develop questions and thoughts to drive discussion. I also have an excellent teaching assistant through the LAMP program, and the two of us will work with students to develop active learning opportunities that bring the material to life. Like last semester, our discussions will be rich and we’ll be covering a lot of ground. There are fewer readings this semester, which I think will allow us to dig deeper into each one. I think that students will find these readings more readily resonant with their own lives in both affirming and challenging ways. Finally, I think students will find that the major assignments will push them in interesting and creative ways while introducing them to the principles of interdisciplinary study. I am really excited to work through the course with students – I know that I learned a lot through our discussions and by reading student work last semester, and I know that will be the case this semester!”