

UNIVERSITY OF IOWA HONORS PROGRAM ORIENTATION GUIDE

IOWA
HONORS
PROGRAM

IOWA SUMMER 2021

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Sonia Beltz & Airiana Mohr
Publications Editors

Jacob Sammon
Editorial Support Specialist

Thomas Duong & Lydia Guo
Design Editors

Holly Blosser Yoder
Staff Advisor

WELCOME TO HONORS



Emily Hill

Dear Incoming Honors Students,

Congratulations! You made it to summer orientation, and you are about to begin your exciting academic journey at University of Iowa. The University Honors Program welcomes you into our community!

The tagline for our program is *Make Your Connection*—and we are here to

support you along the way. Whether through making a connection with yourself, discovering your academic passions, or connecting to a community of motivated peers and talented faculty, the University Honors Program can provide you a platform of resources to help you arrive at your future destination.

The articles in this guide give you a

glimpse at what it takes to be a successful honors student. You will learn about our curriculum—which consists of both coursework and experiential learning. Some of the articles give personal accounts of what it is like to be a first-year honors student when it comes to Honors Primetime, coursework, community, scholarships, and even roommates. And lastly, you will be introduced to some of the friendly faces of University Honors—the professional staff, outreach ambassadors, and peer mentors.

The Honors Program staff and I look forward to seeing you in the hallways of Blank Honors Center in August. Over the past academic year, there was extensive remodeling to our Honors Student Center (located on the third floor). There are a variety of new study spaces and furniture ready for you to get some work done or take a break with a friend in between classes. Additionally, there are state-of-the-art classrooms and study spaces on the fourth floor as well as all the professional staff offices—so please make sure to stop by and say hello!

Please feel free to contact me by email (emily-d-hill@uiowa.edu) or phone (319-335-1684) with any questions you may have about the University Honors Program. Also, you can direct questions on anything related to the Honors Program experience to honors-program@uiowa.edu.

With Kindness,

Emily D. Hill, PhD
Interim Director, UI Honors Program

OUTSTANDING OUTREACH

Connecting to Prospective Students Virtually

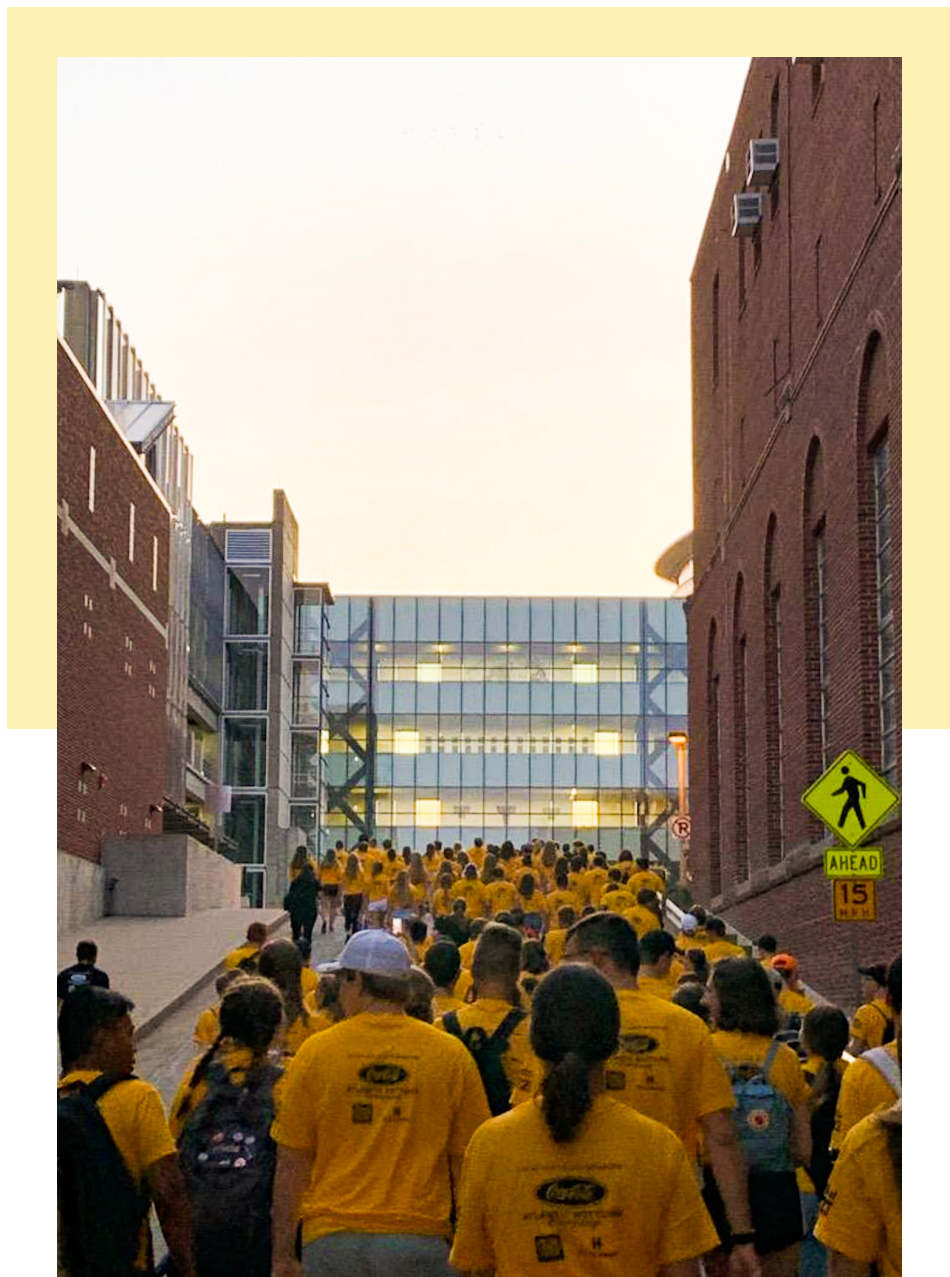
By Erin Bughman & Eleanor Abbott

Which dorm is best? Where are the best study spots? Is it worth it to bring a car to campus? All of these questions spinning around in prospective students' heads seem too troublesome to ask professional staff yet too simple to put in an email. Luckily, the Honors Outreach Ambassadors—a group of honors students who serve as a resource to current and incoming students—have given prospective students the chance to have these questions, and many more, answered through their personalized emails.

Prior to the pandemic, most of the outreach the ambassadors did for prospective students was done in person. Ambassadors attended Hawkeye Visit Days and gave tours of both Daum and Blank Honors Center to admitted students. This provided incoming students with insight into the Honors Program and life as a college student.

However, the pandemic caused a halt in much of the outreach the ambassadors previously did. With in-person events canceled and Blank Honors Center closing, all of their outreach was focused online with Instagram lives, takeovers, and virtual informational roadshows. In order to expand their outreach, the ambassadors sent personalized emails to prospective students. These emails detailed some of their favorite experiences in the Honors Program and showed the impact that the program has had on them. Many chose to write about why they chose Honors at Iowa and their favorite opportunities within it.

Delaney McDowell, a teaching assistant for the Honors Outreach Ambassador class and third-year ambassador,



Pictured: A group of first-years on their way to Kinnick Stadium during On Iowa! in 2019. Provided by: Sydney Clarkin.

“Incoming Honors students shouldn’t worry about missing too much because orientation is online this year. They will still be able to **experience Iowa** to the **fullest** once they are on campus in the fall.”

- *Renee Mittelberg,*
Honors Outreach Ambassador

states, “We want to make sure [prospective students] have that student perspective before they come to the University of Iowa.”

Each ambassador was paired with around 25 prospective honors students based on the similarity of their chosen areas of study. Pairings were made to be as close as possible, but if the students had questions about other majors or minors they were re-directed to the ambassador with the best expertise. The ambassadors then sent out emails providing their own background and experience with the Program. These messages gave prospective students an outlook on topics such as Honors Primetime and Honors First-Year Seminars.

Ambassador Kim Lybrand says, “I think it shows the [prospective] honors students that the Program cares and wants to reach out and help their students.”

The emails encouraged prospective students to reach out to their assigned ambassadors with any questions they had regarding Honors, the University of Iowa, or college life in general. Ambassador Anna Luria, says, “The emails help put a face to the program and not just a face of a pro-staff member. It’s someone that they can relate to. I think it’s really nice connecting to someone who is your age and thinks about college in the same way that you do.”

These messages sparked many conversations between students and their ambassadors. Some reached out with simple questions about further explaining seminars or what dorms are the



Pictured: An honors orientation small group session from 2018.

best for first-year students, while others requested to meet with their ambassadors over Zoom.

Due to the pandemic, other events shifted to a virtual format, including Honors Orientation. Honors Orientation shares information to new honors students about campus resources, program requirements, and class registration. While the shift to online orientation may have discouraged some students about their ability to form connections before the year starts, they will have plenty of time to do so once the year begins.

Former Honors Outreach Ambassador Renee Mittleberg says, “Incoming honors students shouldn’t worry about missing too much because Orientation is online this year. They will still be able to experience Iowa to the fullest once they are on campus in the fall.”

Honors-exclusive classes and first-year seminars are a great chance to meet students in the honors community. “Welcome to Honors” advising sessions and one-on-one peer mentoring are available to give students the advantage of a peer perspective in adjusting to campus life. Additionally, the Honors Program hosts Primetime, which allows honors students to arrive on campus early and meet staff members ahead of time and, during fall semester, ambassadors join pro-staff members in visiting all first-year seminars.

Although some of what the outreach the ambassadors typically do greatly changed due to the pandemic, ambassadors effectively adapted to reaching out to prospective students and will continue to assist in guiding them through their first semester at Iowa.

BRIEF OVERVIEW OF HONORS

12 S.H. HONORS COURSEWORK IN FIRST FOUR SEMESTERS IN PROGRAM

Honors Primetime 1 s.h.

Honors First-Year-Seminar 1 s.h.

General Education Courses (Rhetoric, Interpretation of Literature, Principles of Chemistry)

Honors Contract Course: A non-honors class contracted for honors credit

12 S.H. EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING BEFORE GRADUATION

Honors in the major (departmental requirements)

Research/Independent study

Study Abroad

Internships

Writing Fellows

Service Learning

Experiential Coursework

FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCES

A Program with Paths for All

By **Kyler Johnson**

Coming into the University of Iowa as a first-year student holds its challenges. Every student will make the transition, installing into a new community and, oftentimes, leaving behind old expectations for new ones. As new honors students begin to plan their journey here at Iowa, the scope of opportunities and paths to embark on are nearly endless, and as first-year honors students, the class of 2023 discovered the first year is by no means a one-size-fits-all situation.

Radha Velamuri, a biomedical sciences and epidemiology major, started her honors experience with Honors Primetime, establishing some of her first college connections in a three-day seminar on a subject totally different from her major.

"My entire [Primetime] class got along really well," Velamuri said. "It was nice to meet and get to know many of the people who were going to be living in Daum with me too."

Noah Sinclair, another honors student who took part in Primetime, found that living in Daum and getting to invest in that community was one of his favorite parts of Honors Primetime.

"I got to meet some of my best friends during the early move-in," Sinclair said. "Even though being social isn't exactly my thing, it was very easy to meet new people."

That being said, not all honors students will take part in either Primetime or the community within Daum, and these students can be just as successful. Take public health major Lindsey Metzger, for example. Despite not living in Daum nor having participated in

"It was wonderful to be surrounded by equally motivated students in these difficult classes."

- *Lindsey Metzger*

Primetime, Metzger still made sure to engage in course material and utilize resources offered by the Honors Program.

Taking Principles of Chemistry and Foundations of Biology as honors courses, Metzger began to tackle honors coursework requirements with which incoming first-year students will become familiar.

"It was wonderful to be surrounded by equally motivated students in these difficult classes," Metzger reflected. "Honors classes are smaller and have a constructive and collaborative environment when you not only work closely with classmates but the professor as well. I've met some of my best friends through the Honors Program."

Sinclair also engaged heavily in coursework, completing his honors coursework requirements in his first semester. Taking Honors Rhetoric, Principles of Chemistry, and an honors engineering course, his sentiments in regards to finding people and community were akin to Metzger's.

While Metzger and Sinclair were able to flourish in these honors courses during the normal academic school year, Velamuri ended up only having her seminar at Honors Primetime count for honors coursework in her first year.

Velamuri said having brought in an abundance of transfer credit, she faced difficulty finding how the honors coursework would fit into her schedule. Ultimately, Velamuri said working with Honors Program staff was extremely helpful for her individual situation.

"Holly Yoder was a very helpful advisor for me in making sure I can graduate with university honors," Velamuri said. "The [Honors] Peer Mentors were also immensely helpful in learning about experiential learning credit."

Velamuri, who is engaged in an on-campus research position analyzing major depressive disorder, acquired experiential learning credit for her work in the lab, satisfying the second required element for earning honors credit. Whereas Velamuri seized this chance, Metzger and Sinclair both said they thought it best to hold off before diving into experiential opportunities.

Although all three students ended up with varying credit, experience, and relationships with a variety of Honors Program staff, at the end of their first year, their opinions all aligned in the sense of community felt from the program. Velamuri is looking forward to cultivating these relationships throughout her undergraduate years. Metzger enjoys being challenged by peers she has met through Honors. Sinclair found himself in a tight-knit community where people look out for one another.

For incoming first-year honors students, while one path cannot fit what everyone experiences in the University of Iowa Honors Program, with the support of the honors community, everyone can find their path.

A PRIMETIME PRIMER

By Priyanka Srinivasan, Rubye Ney, & James Transue

Honors Primetime is a three-and-a-half-day long course for first-year honors students to explore interests they may not have considered before in a small group setting. Students build relationships with one another, their professors, and Iowa City before classes start. On the final day of Primetime, every class presents a brief overview of what they did throughout their course. Past Primetime offerings have included a wide range of topics to fit any interest, such as Eating Local: Mapping Food Sources From Ancient Rome to Iowa City, IA, How Do Birds Work? and Doing Politics.

Kate Cavanagh decided to enroll in Primetime to get settled into the University and to meet new people before classes started. Her course, Standup Comedy: the Why and the How, taught by Megan Gogerty, was far from her initial expectations.

Prior to Primetime, students fill out an interest survey to match with a course offered but do not actually select the course. “When I got the email about what my Primetime was about I was like ‘oh no’ because I knew I was going to be out of my comfort zone.” Humor can be a vulnerable topic for anyone, especially a group of nervous teenage strangers.

“But my professor was really awesome, she made everyone feel so comfortable,” said Cavanagh. Her professor, Megan Gogerty, has offered a Primetime course for several years, but this was her first experience teaching a standup comedy course.

“One of the great things about Honors Primetime is that the students start out terrified because they’re coming to college,” said Gogerty. But their transformations are evident to her, which

“When I got the email about what my Primetime was about I was like ‘oh no’ because I knew I was going to be out of my **comfort zone**. But my professor was **really awesome**, she made everyone feel **so comfortable**.”

- *Kate Cavanagh*

is why she loves Primetime so much. She tries to abate students’ fears by creating a sense of camaraderie within their class. On the first day, she told her students they were now part of “The Gang”, meaning they were to smile at each other around campus and get to know one another.

In addition to building relationships and learning how to perform, Gogerty feels it is equally important to teach her students about the UI campus. She offers tips like how to do their laundry and how the Cambus routes work to make students feel a little more comfortable during their first weeks on campus.

Cavanagh reflected on her relationships in “The Gang” saying, “It helped a lot that first week. When everyone was kind of rushing around, I was able to be a little more calm knowing that I had people to talk to or hang out with.”

In 2020, Professor Daniel Khalastchi taught a Primetime section titled On

Paper, In Print: Writing, Sharing, and Publishing Our Work at Iowa. Like Gogerty, he noted, “My students were committed, they were there to learn and to participate, and they were eager to get to know each other. The class went off without a hitch.”

One of the students in Khalastchi’s Primetime section was Kit Andrews, an English and creative writing major. Andrews’s main takeaway was what they’d learned about writing-related extracurriculars on campus. “Primetime gave me an idea for the future of what exactly I’ll be doing and how to get involved. It made me less anxious about the whole process, and it made it all a lot easier for me to comprehend and compartmentalize,” they said.

However, Khalastchi regretted that his students could not exchange chapbooks of their writing at the end of the class as he would normally have done in person, but his reflection on the course was positive.

Andrews, meanwhile, is eager to put what they learned from Khalastchi’s course to use finding extracurriculars to join in the future. “It was a great opportunity,” they said, “I thought it was a blast, and I’m glad I did it.”

Kyler Johnson, also a participant in Honors Primetime “wanted to attack the school year” after his return from Belgium. Johnson had been an exchange student there for a year and was ready to dive deep into everything about the UI experience.

Still not completely set on a major, Johnson looked to his Primetime course, “Creative Writing: Remembering Stories of our Lives”, with Professor Tameka Cage Conley as a way to test the waters in the creative writing major.

“As soon as I got to Primetime and

we got talking as a group and started creating and crafting and just producing a lot of cool ideas and pieces, yes, it affirmed everything that I had kind of gone into thinking about the creative writing major...And I told my academic advisor...I found my thing.”

Johnson still feels the effects of his Primetime class. Sharing his writing in Primetime gave him the confidence to do so in his creative writing courses and helped accelerate his involvement on campus. “I feel like I’m a much more

active participant in everything, which I think comes from that success with Primetime and that attack mentality.”

His experience in those three days changed Johnson outside of the classroom as well. The friendships he developed in his small Primetime class have stuck with him, creating new “traditions” that make campus feel like home.

All three students wholeheartedly recommend Primetime to incoming students. Even though she grew up only

20 minutes from campus, Cavanagh felt that Primetime introduced her to things about college she didn’t even know she didn’t know and gave her a head start on her first year at the UI.

Primetime may be the confidence-booster you need coming into the school year, as Johnson put it, “When you allow yourself to take that confident step forward, in the classroom, in Primetime, wherever, it really makes that experience ten times more powerful.”



Pictured: Students lead a discussion during an international relations-themed Primetime session. Provided by: Thomas Duong.

First Day

Students jump right into their first session with their college professor. They introduce themselves to others in their session as well as learn about what their specific topic will consist of throughout the rest of the week. Students also attend a welcome event in the afternoon.

Second & Third Day

The second and third days have students spend the majority of their class time with their professor learning and engaging with their topic. These days may also include taking field trips around campus, such as visiting the art library to get some inspiration for a project that the students will create.

Fourth Day

The final day consists of students from each topic presenting their findings to other groups in a symposium to ensure that all Honors students get a taste for what each group learned.

After each day’s sessions conclude around 5 p.m., the students are encouraged to participate in various events hosted by the Honors Program including trivia and board games.

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Do You Really Hate Your Roommate?

By Oliver Willham

Living in the same room as someone is a unique experience. If you've never done it, you might think it could be challenging. And if you have done it, you know it is challenging. Sometimes they will leave your favorite bowl in the sink covered with leftover ramen sauce and partial noodles. Sometimes you will leave your dirty underwear out when their partner comes over. That's just the reality of living five feet away from someone for a year while gaining the freedom of college life. Everyone comes from different experiences before living on campus, and it is important to have an easy and short guide on how to deal with the inevitable conflicts that emerge between two roommates. Or if you're living alone, how do you live on a floor with the same number of people required to run a small circus or a large book club?

The most important thing to remember is that both of you are just trying to live your lives. Unless you get a truly hellish roommate (and if you do, talk to your Resident Assistant [RA], they are there to help you have a fun time your first year), you can be confident your roommate is not trying to make your life a living hell. This leads to the first thing you should do: Cool off! Don't try to start something when you're still upset. Make sure you think through exactly what caused you to feel the way you do and then take the time to communicate it to your roommate. Cool off, then communicate. Talking about issues openly is the best approach to any problem you encounter in your living situation. There is nothing that sours any relationship quite

"Just respect the space and the people living in it. Take care of your hygiene and clean the room for everyone in it. Chore lists will help with that, so you each have responsibilities. Even doing something like a love language test could help you get along, and you'll probably be set!"

- *Laxmi Annapureddy,*
Resident Assistant

like passive-aggressive attempts to communicate your feelings. It can be difficult or intimidating to talk to someone, but that is the very reason it is important. If you let the little things that really bother you bottle up inside, it'll sour the entire relationship. Remember if someone admits to being wrong, as Slater RA Kyle Jones says, "no one should shame them further." When they already know they're in the wrong,

that little bit of shame already goes a long way.

Little things that bother you a bit, like fleas on a dog, are also going to come up. These aren't the important issues. Maybe your roommate always uses a paper towel to dry their hands when you want them to use the hand towel you bought specifically for dorm use. Maybe it makes you feel like they don't appreciate the work you put in to get that towel. Maybe you think it's wasteful, and it irritates you that they can't use the hand towel like everyone else. This is the time to become like a seal—the ones with all that soft silky blubber—and let that stuff slide off your back. When you're living with a roommate, try to let go of what you can without making a big fuss. If you can adjust without making a big change to your life, at least try to stick it out.

This roommate I had during my first year liked walking back from the shower wearing a towel, and only a towel, and put on his clothes in our room. The problem was that I also liked to be in our room around the same time he took his shower, meaning I was there when he got back and had to clothe himself. Potentially, this could have been a major problem in our relationship. Turning away for a minute while he got dressed seemed terrible at first, but as the semester went on, I just got used to it. In fact, it became a kind of shared joke in our friend group. I won't lie and say I miss it, but it never bothered me that much.

More on showering: the one thing you might be reading this article for. It can seem like showering in those commu-



Pictured: A triple in Daum Residence Hall. Photo courtesy of University Housing & Dining.

nal showers would be “disgusting,” “terrible,” or “another bad adjective.” That’s not really the case. As long as you wear shoes and have a moderate sense of balance, it’s not that bad. I would recommend flip flops over heels or dress shoes, just to make sure your feet get clean. Truthfully, it can be hard to get naked and shower in an unfamiliar place, and that feeling shouldn’t be diminished. You might be a bit uncomfortable the first couple times you walk down the hallway to shower, but nearly everyone there is having that same feeling. You are all in it together. Try to talk to some of them about it, I’m sure they’ll feel the same way. It will be a little awkward until it becomes just

another moment in your day.

There might be other problems with hygiene from you or your roommate. Sometimes you aren’t lucky enough to get someone who showers every day. That is something that may require RA intervention, as Hillcrest RA Laxmi Annapureddy had to deal with. “One resident told me her roommate didn’t like showering daily, rarely did laundry, and generally did not smell pleasant. Another resident’s roommate threw up in her own bed and slept in the dry vomit for three weeks before washing her sheets. Just respect the space and the people living in it. Take care of your hygiene and clean the room for everyone in it. Chore lists will help with that, so

you each have responsibilities. Even doing something like a love language test could help you get along, and you’ll probably be set!” Whatever you do, remember to clean up anything you throw up on before it gets set in there.

The final thing is that your RA is the greatest resource you’ll have on campus. They are always there for you to talk to. If you are having problems with someone on the floor or even your roommate, they are there to listen. Even if venting about it is all you need to do, they are ready to help you out. Talk to them whenever you have a problem. Trust me, they want you to talk to them. No RA would be an RA without wanting to help people.

RAGGED INDIVIDUALISM

By Jayne Mathis

My problem is that I think I'm smart. All the evidence seems to suggest it: I'm a straight-A honors student, at least competent in social situations, and usually good for a witty one-liner. I think a lot, and I think hard. I'm most comfortable when it's just me inside my own head, and that has made me a pretty independent person.

The thing about this mindset though, which I'm sure my fellow alleged intellectuals can relate to, is that the moments when I think I'm the most smart are the moments when I'm the most stupid. Once I'm convinced that I only need my own two feet to stand on, that's usually when the rug gets pulled out from underneath them.

If there's one thing I'm really, really bad at, it's asking for help. I'm just not used to it. If I had a motto for learning anything growing up, it would have been:

"If at first you don't succeed, think about it for five more minutes and you'll probably figure it out." And that works out fine when what you're trying to figure out is, "What is seven times eight?"

However, it is not fine when your problem is:

"I had my second mental breakdown in a week because I'm reminded of my crippling fear of failure. I also had a real in-person conversation for the first time in three days, only to be afraid to text my family that I want to drive home for the weekend. But do I really need to bother them about all that?"

If you sit there and think about *that* issue for another 5 minutes you just might find another thing to add to the list of concepts to be overwhelmed by. It sucks because usually after crying you feel better. But *this* time, you can't stop. It feels like you will never stop

feeling this depressed and anxious.

Fortunately, despite my efforts to beat the idea back with my "Anti-Mortifying-Ordeal-Of-Being-Known Stick," I did end up going home and talking things through with my parents. And you know what I learned? Reaching out to people when you need help...*is a good thing.*

I know. Shocker. You've never heard that one twelve billion times before. But this isn't just some Helpful Tip That You Should Try To Make Your Life Easier. You can't make it through life all by yourself. You are not smart enough to get through college all by yourself. Nobody is that smart. You have to ask for help. If there was that kind of person, you'd think they'd be in the Honors Program. If being shining stars of scholastic genius really meant that we can easily lone-wolf it through these four-ish years, why would we need that extra help?

If you want to avoid the giant mental breakdown that forced this epiphany on me, practice getting help. Start

small! If you spaced out in the middle of a lecture and suddenly the professor is putting you in small groups, ask your groupmates what the instructions were. Then it might not seem so scary to hang back a few minutes after class to ask a few questions about an assignment. Maybe you'll get bold enough to actually go to their office hours. And with all this "talking to faculty" business under your belt, you might even set up an appointment with your academic advisors outside of the obligatory timeframes. And if the panic still attacks (because frankly, it's just like that sometimes), maybe you'll be able to call up someone you trust without a fifteen-minute crisis of indecision. I promise that reaching out is so much easier than it seems, and once you do, the things that paralyze you now will look so much smaller.

You don't have to scratch and claw and stagger to pull yourself up. You just have to grab the hand that's already reaching out.



Jayne Mathis

SAY “I DO” TO ICRU

Undergraduate Research

By Isabella Holaday

The University of Iowa Honors Program is filled with sharp minds who seek out knowledge, value complex ideas, and wrestle with difficult questions. One way undergraduate students can delve deeper into those curiosities is by getting involved with ICRU (Iowa Center for Research by Undergraduates). However, the number of possible ways students can get involved with research can seem overwhelming. Below are five steps you can follow to help you navigate your search for research opportunities.

ONE: Find your passion

Research can be very specific, and it is not fair to ask students to know exactly what mechanism or molecule or disease they want to study. Third-year undergraduate lab assistant and ICRU Ambassador Saul Ocampo Landa suggests thinking broadly. In other words, ask yourself what you want your research to look like.

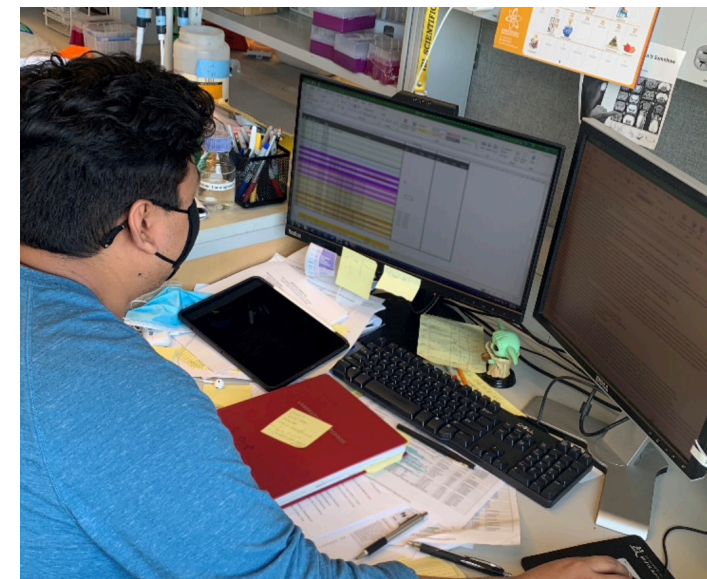
A few formats Ocampo Landa listed include:

- Benchwork with chemicals and pipetting
- Working out in a field for a geology lab that travels to different places
- Interviewing and computer work for communications research
- Coding or robotics for engineering

TWO: Find potential mentors

When trying to find a mentor, having more than one faculty member in mind is beneficial in case your number one ends up not being a match, which is okay! Create a list of multiple faculty members in whose work you are interested so you have several options. If you are struggling with creating a list, ask around!

If you are having trouble finding a mentor, professors will



Pictured: Saul Ocampo Landa analyzes data for his research opportunity. Provided by: Saul Ocampo Landa.

help direct you to another faculty member who is equally interesting and more compatible. Melinda Licht, Program Coordinator of ICRU reassures, “Your faculty members and teaching assistants, those people are really your best friends in this kind of thing because they know the departments, and they know who is doing work in their fields.”

THREE: Self-advocate

It might seem intimidating to reach out to professors, especially if you have never met them in-person. Don't fret! Professors love talking about their work and their research! Visit them during their office hours or email them asking if you can talk with them about their research. This is the time to express your interest and enthusiasm.

"Self-advocacy is huge," adds Licht. "That's how you get opportunities, going around telling people 'This is what I am interested in.'" Meeting with a professor before popping this question is a vital sub-step that allows both you and your

possible mentor to know each other better.

If a mentor you're serious about working with is not able to hire you just yet due to certain circumstances, don't fear! Ask if you would be able to join any research group meetings, read supplementary literature or past research findings, or do anything that would prepare you for when you are able to join their research team. Having a solid foundation and understanding of the groundwork will only benefit you when the time comes.

FOUR: Decisions and interviews

Once you gather information about different research projects, evaluate them. Ask yourself how much time you are willing to commit to this research project. Do you want to get paid or receive academic or Honors credit? Generally, for the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS), three hours per week equates to one semester hour.

In choosing a mentor, consider how well you communicate with them. Effective communication ultimately leads to a deeper connection and a relationship built on trust. Ocampo Landa also points out that "allowing yourself to be mentored, allowing yourself to make mistakes and learn from [your mentor] and grow from them is important."

You are not usually expected to have any experience in research. Walking into an interview without past research experience is common! Communicate any concerns to your potential mentor if you are not sure. More importantly, demonstrate your enthusiasm and willingness to learn.

FIVE: Start!

Once you've received a research opportunity, you might be wondering how to receive Honors credit for your experience. First, you'll need to communicate this to your mentor.

To receive honors credit, students are required to complete a pre- and post-experience questionnaire and a narrative submission form as well as enroll in a honors research opportunity course that indicates involvement on their degree audits. You will be eligible to indicate your involvement on your degree audit by registering for a research-specific course such as the Honors Research Practicum (HONR: 3994). However, a student cannot get paid and receive credit at the same time. Specific information can be found at

honors.uiowa.edu/experientiallearning.

Sometimes, undergraduates who are pursuing honors in their major are required to write an honors research thesis.

As you embark on your research journey, you will find your uncertainty emerging into unwavering confidence. Your CV and resume will make you a distinguishable candidate for future opportunities, and as Licht puts it, you will be "opening that door to the next steps." Experiencing and being a part of research at the University of Iowa will not only help you discern your career interests but also equip you with life-long skills needed to work, learn, and thrive.



Pictured: Saul Ocampo Lamda prepares a sample for research in his lab. Provided by: Saul Ocampo Lamda.

BALANCING PRE-MEDICAL EDUCATION

Tips for Pre-Medicine Students

By Sam Eliassen

Pre-medicine is a popular academic track at the University of Iowa. With Carver College of Medicine continuously ranking in the top 25 medical schools for primary care, opportunities for involvement in the medical community are abounding. Even the University of Iowa's infamous Kinnick halftime wave connects a seemingly disjointed sports culture to a community of medical excellence in Iowa City.

Medical schools in general, however, have the capacity to seem daunting and mysterious, even to pre-medicine students. After all, they're highly selective, intensive, and rigorous. Typically, an undergraduate degree, a pre-medicine program, hours of job-shadowing, and a hefty amount of medical involvement stand between a new student and entrance to a Medical Doctorate (MD) program. Additionally, no aspiring medical student can forget about the seven-hour Medical College Admissions Test, also known as the MCAT.

Amidst all this potential stress, students should not have to feel alone. In fact, the Honors Program can help carry some of the burden of medical school preparation. Specifically, honors sections of required pre-medicine classes can provide a smaller learning environment and build a foundation for things students will need in the future including the MCAT and initial classes in medical school.

Honors alumnus Mason Lamarche



(17BS) is a third-year student at Iowa's Carver College of Medicine; right now, he's working toward an MD with a special focus in pathology. Reflecting on his time at Iowa, both as an undergraduate and in medical school, he particularly notes how honors courses helped prepare him for a future in healthcare.

"Being in Honors was definitely helpful," he says. "Honors sections of classes like chemistry or biology are particularly helpful in test prep."

Lamarche encourages undergraduate students in Honors to take advantage of these classes when their schedules allow for it. They provide a closer learning environment with more opportunities for one-on-one engagement. Generally, they also engage with course materials at a deeper level, touching on topics that general sections may not have the time or capabil-

ity to incorporate.

While students have a specific course load that must be finished to apply to medical schools, they should feel comfortable with exploring their non-medical interests in their academic downtime. Lamarche advises students to take a step back and focus on their real interests when considering their plans. He even argues against the popular notion that pre-medicine students have to be working towards a major in the hard sciences.

"One of the biggest misconceptions that I've seen," he says, "is that someone in [pre-medicine] has to be working towards a STEM degree. In my experience, it's best to study what you like and to let that shine through your application. [Medical schools] like to see uniqueness."

Lamarche notes that "typical" pre-medicine degrees such as biology, chemistry, or human physiology are helpful in preparing for school, but he also points out that pertinent natural sciences will be covered in depth in any medical program.

"Do what you love," he advises. "If that's chemistry or biology, then go for it. If it's not, then don't feel pressure. You can still get into med school with a different degree." He even notes that veering from the beaten path may help to make someone a more interesting applicant.

This movement towards a more expansive set of academic courses is

even reflected in the undergraduate degrees of students in top US medical schools. In a survey by US News, about 26% of students at schools like Harvard, Vanderbilt, and the University of Washington held a bachelor's degree in non-scientific areas of study. This category is actually just over 2% larger than that of students with degrees in physical sciences.

However, this phenomenon isn't just for far-away places with fancy names. Hawkeyes are also doing what they love and are being surprised by the medical intersections in traditionally non-medical areas of study. Evangeline Scheibe (21BS, 21BA) completed degrees in biochemistry and English while on the pre-medicine track at the University of Iowa. During her time at the university, she was the president of the undergraduate chapter of Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors without Borders), an assistant at the cardiovascular metabolic research lab, and a University of Iowa Healthcare pharmacy employee.

As a student, she's a competitive applicant for medical schools and will be applying in the next admissions cycle. Scheibe declared a second major in English during her sophomore year at Iowa, when pre-medicine and STEM course loads were piling up around her. Though she loves biochemistry



Evangeline Scheibe

and medicine, she notes that balance is always key. Since declaring her double major, she's been more content in both fields of study. Unexpectedly, her English studies have also made her more equipped for a career in healthcare.

"Communications tactics that I've learned in English have been useful in labs and classes. The blending is helpful." Scheibe also comments on the professional medical environment, from her perspective in the pharmacy.

"One thing that I've noticed is that doctors are kind of notorious for not being able to communicate well. It's downplayed how big of a part of medicine [communication] is. If you can't communicate a diagnosis, there's really no use."

She continues: "I expected [biochemistry and English] to be two different things, but they're not. I'm happy to be learning skills as opposed to just accumulating a portfolio. Writing has been easier, and it's been valuable to know how to take information and express it succinctly to people."

Though Scheibe and Lamarche do not recommend that every pre-med-

icine student pursue an additional English degree, they are consistent in their recommendation to find balance and fulfillment. Pre-medicine should be an enjoyable track, and both of these students advise against checking off boxes on an application. Programs like Honors allow students to place some of the pre-medicine courses in built-in curricula, allowing them to use their time more effectively, and more personally.

Scheibe closes with some advice for undergraduates: "Don't sacrifice the things that you enjoy, even when it's hard to maintain balance. You have to make time for friends. Sometimes, you have to give someone a tattoo."

Pre-medicine is just one of the many pre-professional programs at the University of Iowa: students embarking on tracks like pre-law and pre-dentistry can find their passions in the Honors Program too!



Photo courtesy: University of Iowa Office of Strategic Communication.

HONORS COURSE OFFERINGS

Honors at Iowa offers a vast array of courses for students to fulfill their coursework requirements while diving into fascinating topics and developing new skill sets. Below are just a few of the courses that honors students can engage in during their first year on campus!

HONORS FIRST-YEAR SEMINARS (HONR:1300)

By James Davis

Honors First-Year Seminars, one of the signature perks available to honors students, saw just as much disruption as other classes in the 2020-2021 school year. But with the University of Iowa forecasting a fall 2021 semester with much more in-person learning, professors are preparing for a return to these beloved seminars.

The Energy Future, an Honors First-Year Seminar taught by Professor David Murhammer is one of those returning in the fall after a turbulent year. Murhammer's seminar, which focuses on how humanity will supply itself with energy in the near future, tasked students with designing their own off-grid sustainable housing. They offered a massive variety of ideas on both scientific form and aesthetic function.

Murhammer is always impressed by the research and creativity the students demonstrate. "It amazes me how much they've learned," he commented. To him, that diversity and rigor shows just how well inquisitive students take to niche topics in Honors First-Year Seminars, even on subjects outside their usual fields of study.

Another professor ready to return



Pictured: Julian Wemmie, one of Professor Carol Severino's students, used as inspiration for a piece in her seminar. Provided by: Julian Wemmie.

is Carol Severino, who teaches Bicycles, Kayaks, and Snowshoes: Writing About Travel. Although the sparsity of travel during the pandemic led to a lack of "conventional" travel writing in the spring 2021 version of the class, Severino's students adapted to circumstances and took to the challenge.

She said her class wrote about "not traveling, or longing to travel, or being very bored in their home, or driving around their city looking for something to see and do, or their jobs during

Covid...I got some of the best travel writing ever!" For her, teaching such a personal passion in such an intimate space was "a soul-nourishing experience," and getting to enjoy it with motivated and curious students was a welcome shake-up to her routine.

The Energy Future and Bicycles, Kayaks, and Snowshoes are only the tip of the iceberg when it comes to Honors First-Year Seminars. Many more course offerings are available for students to explore.

HIGH ABILITY STUDENTS AND WELLNESS

(HONR:2600:0004)

By Lauren Sanyal

For honors students at the University of Iowa, higher-level classes and elevated expectations can really take their toll. A new Honors Special Topics course offering has opened up for high-ability students interested in learning more about taking care of themselves while succeeding academically. High Ability College Students and Wellness, created by University of Iowa Honors Program Assistant Director Dr. Emily Hill, will focus on the ways in which ability interacts with wellness.

Hill is excited that honors students have access to a two-credit honors class that provides a place to think about and discuss wellness, self-care,

“Whatever program you’re in, sometimes self-care and learning about what it is and what it means to you is often put on the back burner, especially if you’re a high achieving student.”

- Dr. Emily Hill,
Interim Director

and what they need to do to be healthy. Too often, students don’t have a place to do that. “Whatever program you’re in, sometimes self-care and learning about what it is and what it means to you is often put on the back burner, especially if you’re a high achieving student,” Hill said.

The class functions in a seminar format with readings, podcasts, and videos from homework filtering into discussions in class. Hill commented: “I’m not big into lecturing. Sometimes you have to do that as an instructor, but I am much more of a fan of the honors education style where you are cultivating knowledge all together. I really see it as an active learning atmosphere.”

HONORS PUBLICATIONS: PITCH TO PRINT (HONR:2900)

By Sonia Beltz

Believe it or not, this publication is just one of the many created by the student writers in Honors Publications: Pitch to Print every semester. Students are guided through the publication process from the very beginning idea of an article through seeing their finished products in print. Honors

Publications offers hands-on experience in interviewing, writing, editing, and everything in between, as well as bringing students closer to the honors community at the University of Iowa.

Student writers for Honors Publications come from all majors, fields, and backgrounds, and there is no previous

experience in journalism or writing required. Honors students in all fields have brought their unique perspectives to the Honors Publications team, featuring articles on everything from student athletes to music majors in recent publications.

Students interested in these or any other Honors course offerings can find more information on MyUI.

ANDREW WILLARD'S GUIDE TO EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Everything You Didn't Know

By Olivia Tonelli & Airiana Mohr

Honors at Iowa has a unique curriculum composed of two requirements—12 semester hours of honors coursework and 12 semester hours of experiential learning—intended to foster learning in ways not limited to a traditional classroom setting. The second component, experiential learning, is noted as “learn by doing” on the Honors website and degree audits and is designed to promote growth through personal experiences.

Dr. Andrew Willard, the Experiential Learning Director for the University of Iowa Honors Program, said the goal of experiential learning is to incorporate the application of practical knowledge and skill included in the program's mission statement as an integral part of a student's education in a way that they can earn credit for.

“Experience is everything we do; not just in college but in our lives,” Willard commented, adding that he wishes more students would think about it during their first year.

Willard also mentioned that options for completing the experiential learning requirements include many things honors students are already likely to do. While some choose to complete this component during their third and fourth years of study, students may seek to start this process earlier, allowing them to spread out their experiences and network throughout their college career.

Debunking Common Misconceptions:

- 1.) The duration of an experience **does not** always correlate with the level of impact.
- 2.) Internships can be done part-time: students **should not** worry about working 40 hours per week.
- 3.) The word “internship” **does not** need to be in the title for a job to count as an internship.
- 4.) Students **do not** need to search for “elite” opportunities at well-known companies: there are many opportunities right here in Iowa City.

Earning honors in the major, which often involves research, allows students to earn all twelve hours of experiential learning. Research itself—whether in a student's major or not—can also earn experiential learning credit. Becoming involved with research can seem like a daunting process but can be fairly simple.

Outside of research, many students will study abroad or obtain an internship either during the summer or for a semester. While studying abroad typically does not occur during a student's first year, they may be able to

go abroad the following summer or later. Internships may require a certain grade level or educational background, but there are possibilities for those who want to get started early.

The main ways students earn credit are through the pursuit of honors in the major, study abroad, research, and internships, but with the requirements constantly adapting to students' needs, there are many opportunities to accredit their valuable experiences that are not widely known.

One recent addition is “service learning.” Willard explained that “last fall,

the Honors Program decided [they] needed to have a real category for students who do volunteer work because they've never had a good way to earn experiential learning credit for it." So, the Honors Program has created the "service learning" category to give students a way to make their volunteer experiences count.

"What we'd like the students to think of is the following: they want to turn their volunteering into service learning," advised Willard. He explained that students participating in faculty-mentored research, as well as "ser-

vice learning" and other categories of experiential learning will complete a reflection process. The reflection assignments allow students to maximize the value they find in their experiences through completing a pre-questionnaire, post-questionnaire, and a narrative submission.

"I thought [the narrative submission] was really valuable, and it flowed out of me easier than I thought it would," explained Julia Morrison, a second-year neuroscience major. After working as a certified nursing assistant last summer, the reflection process allowed her

to pause and fully appreciate her experience. She found the assignments quite beneficial: "I had worked and worked for weeks that summer, and it was good to pause and be like, 'Okay, what actually happened?'"

Other changes to experiential learning have occurred due to the pandemic. New virtual study abroad programs and remote internships have arisen, and Willard believes these are great opportunities. "In the long run, [virtual study abroad] will be a good thing because it's cheap, and there are students who want to get a feel for being

There are so many opportunities to earn honors experiential learning credit during your time at the UI. Read about these students' experiences to help inspire your own path!

RESEARCH

By Julia Fout

Elizabeth Janey, (BS 21) has been involved in research since her freshman year. Janey graduated with a Bachelors of Science in psychology in May and is now looking to apply to an eagerly-awaited graduate program. For Janey, research allows her to "think critically, come up with new ideas, and be curious about what [she is] doing." She believes research has given her the space to put "coursework into reality," through which she has found a potential career path.

She notes that being an honors student was a "motivating factor" for her involvement in research since she wished to complete an honors thesis project to attain departmental honors. Janey says, "being in the Honors

Program gives me that accessibility or drive to be involved with things like research."

In 2019, Janey presented research on swimming movements in developing genetically autistic mice at the Fall Undergraduate Research Festival. Having been involved in research since her first year as an undergraduate, Janey was involved in more than one aspect of the research. For this project, Janey was there from the start, which allowed her to help develop and follow the hypotheses, methods, and data analysis as they progressed.

Janey remarks, "[Research] gives you a lot of skills. You learn a lot of new things that you are not learning in the classroom which are pertinent to after



Elizabeth Janey

your undergraduate years." She lists team cooperation and communication skills as well as her experiences working independently in a professional environment among the ways research has enhanced her education.

WRITING FELLOWS

By Erin Bughman

The Honors Writing Fellows program, which began at the University of Iowa in 2003, assigns employed writing fellows to 10-12 students. Fellows are paired with certain classes whose professors decide to work with the Writing Fellows program. The writing fellows provide feedback on two papers per student and meet with them to discuss their writing and ideas.

Satori Good, an English and creative writing major, has been fellowing for four semesters. Good says, "Writing Fellows [promotes] revision as a crucial aspect of writing, because first drafts are never our best drafts."

The Writing Fellows program not only benefits students' revision process through the help of peers, but also provides honors students who work as fellows with ample experience of mentoring students and correspond-

ing with professors.

Those who work as fellows receive experiential learning credits through the Honors Program, in addition to gaining the experience of this mentor role. Good, who plans to teach fiction at a college level, is using this position as a learning opportunity.

"Fellowing has been the most impactful experience in my college career. It has helped me grow as a leader and communicator. As a future teacher, I feel a lot more comfortable with this experience under my belt," Good said.

Students who serve as writing fellows come from a large range of majors and interests. In turn, the Writing Fellows program aims to reach a large scope of courses and students within the University. Students can apply to be writing fellows starting in the spring of their first year.

In reflection of the Honors Writing

Fellows program, Good said, "While fellowing is an individual practice, connecting with students and other Fellows has been such a great experience for me. I would absolutely recommend anyone apply, because it's a great way to get involved in the writing community."



Satori Good

in a different environment even if they can't afford it. With virtual programs, they can afford it," said Willard.

Students can also find opportunities for experiential coursework on the Honors Program website, which are classes they can take to earn experiential credit. Classes are added to the list of experiential coursework all the time, and Willard is open to hearing about other courses that could count toward experiential learning credit. For example, "many students in the College of Nursing or the College of Education have practicum courses that are, in fact, like internships," explained Willard. Many of these courses, how-

"There are students who want to get a feel for being in a different environment even if they can't afford it. With virtual programs, they can afford it,"

- **Andy Willard,**
Experiential Learning
Director

ever, do not include a strong reflection component in their syllabus, which is required for a class to qualify as honors experiential coursework. In spite of this, Willard recommends students contact him to see if their experience can count.

Ultimately, there is a lot for honors students to take advantage of when considering their best experiential learning options. While the range of opportunities can seem daunting, the Honors staff is always willing to help students. Willard encourages students to chat with him about ideas they have or to help them find things they may want to be involved with.

CONTRACTING COURSES AT IOWA

By Jenny Cape

One aspect of Honors at Iowa that students are continuously reminded of during their first two years is the required honors coursework. More specifically, within their first four semesters in the program, students are responsible for acquiring a minimum of 12 honors-designated semester hours. To assist students in meeting this requirement, a wide variety of honors courses—ranging from large lectures to tight-knit discussion sections—are offered every semester, allowing students to squeeze diverse and rigorous classes into their standard schedules. However, for the students still looking to do even more in-depth learning about a niche topic with honors-level intensity, the university supplies students with the option of contracting courses.

Although a lesser-known option within the program, contracting courses allows students to take the path less travelled in regard to fulfilling their hon-

ors coursework requirement. “Often used by upper-level students who have completed their general education requirements, a course can be contracted when there are no honors sections of the course, or a scheduling conflict exists,” explains Honors Assessment Manager and Admissions Coordinator Addison Woll. Rather than enroll in one of the many courses offered each semester, students are able to earn honors credit for a class by enhancing their learning experience, whether through an additional research paper, an oral presentation to the class, or a creative project. Students are encouraged to show their creativity and intellectual tenacity when designing the contracted course work with a professor.

In the end, not only do undergraduates earn the necessary honors credits for their efforts, but they also acquire supplemental knowledge pertaining to the class that can further enrich their

overall comprehension. For example, Ben Pappas earned honors credit for his Introduction to Sociology course by reading an assigned book and breaking down each chapter with his professor. From his perspective, “Contracting a course and spending that extra time with my professor not only helped me build a valuable relationship, but also strengthened my understanding of sociology through thought-provoking discussions.”

The beauty of contracting courses at Iowa is that no two experiences will be the same. With the opportunity to design an original and intriguing project, students are given a say in how they meet the honors coursework requirement. Having said that, only two contracted class can count towards fulfilling the requirement, with possible exceptions determined by Woll. He further clarifies that “the student must earn a final grade of B- or better in order to earn honors credit.”

Although getting involved on campus is beneficial for incoming students, it sometimes makes finding the perfect schedule a bit of an ordeal. Thankfully, the university accommodates students who need that extra flexibility in order to obtain their required honors credits. Contracting a course is a unique and individualized way to augment any normal college class. Most students, like Pappas, wholeheartedly agree: “Looking back, contracting was probably the best decision I could have made—both for my schedule, and for my growth as a student.”

“Contracting a course and spending that extra time with my professor not only helped me build a **valuable relationship**, but also **strengthened** my understanding of sociology through **thought-provoking discussions.**”

- Ben Pappas

HONORS PROGRAM FAQ

By Jacob Sammon

The University of Iowa's Honors Program is excited to help first-year students understand what the program is all about! Fortunately, they have a staff of honors students known as peer mentors who work individually with other honors students throughout the academic year and answer any questions they may have.

Q: Are honors courses more difficult than non-honors courses? What should I expect from honors-level coursework?

A: Honors courses are not structured to be more difficult than their non-Honors counterparts. They are typically focused on teaching and exploring course content in unique ways which include more class discussion, individual and group projects, and even flipped lectures, where you do your work in class time with teaching assistants and the professor, then learn the content outside of class time. They can sometimes even be easier. For example, the traditional Foundations of Biology class has over 400 students in it and puts little to no emphasis on discussion-based learning. This directly contrasts the Honors section in which there are only 70 students, and the majority of learning is done through discussions. This often makes the courses easier due to the stronger connections and a more personal learning environment. Students may even get the chance to explore concepts more deeply and venture outside of the normal course syllabus.

Q: Do all of my courses have to be honors courses? How many courses do I need to take?

A: Nope! Not all of your courses need

to be Honors courses. You are only required to complete 12 semester hours of Honors coursework (which is the equivalent of roughly four courses), but you may take as many as you like. Most students choose to complete this requirement by taking Honors versions of general education courses, but there are plenty of other Honors courses within a student's major studies, too. These 12 semester hours need to be completed within your first four semesters in the program, so you could take one Honors course per semester and fulfill that requirement on time.

Q: If there is an honors section of a course, do I have to take it?

A: Nope! You are not required to take that section, but if it fits into your schedule, we highly recommend getting enrolled in various Honors courses to meet your peers and develop strong social and study groups. However, if the non-Honors section of a course fits better into your schedule, it is 100% acceptable to take the non-Honors section of the course.

Q: I completed all of my general education courses while in high school. Are there still honors courses that I can take?

A: Yes! You are always welcome to do an Honors contract course, but you can

also expect a number of courses that are required for majors, minors, or certificate degrees to be honors courses.

Q: What are honors contract courses and how do they work?

A: Honors contract courses are an opportunity to receive Honors credit for a non-Honors course. If you are struggling to find Honors coursework that works with your schedule and plan of study, you can choose to contract any graded, in-person class. To do this, students work with the professor of the class to come up with an additional project that they will complete throughout the semester. Students should fill out the Honors Contract Form, available on the Honors website, by the fifth week of the semester. The form will get sent to their professor for approval. At the end of the semester, the professor will confirm that the student has completed the project to their satisfaction. As long as the student receives a B- or better in the class, they will receive Honors credit for the class.

Q: What are experiential learning credits? When should I start thinking about fulfilling them?

A: Experiential learning credits are credits that you earn by engaging outside of the classroom and building upon your passions and expanding your skills.

You can earn experiential learning credits through internships, research, study abroad, and service-learning. Additionally, we offer Honors experiential coursework which can further your involvement in the Honors Program and support fellow honors students. You can begin earning experiential learning credits at any time, but most people start around their second or third year. Many honors students say that they do not add any unnecessary work to their plate and are their favorite parts of their college experience.

Q: What is Honors Primetime?

A: Honors Primetime is a unique first-year experience that brings honors students to campus a few days earlier than the rest of campus and provides an opportunity for honors students to get to know each other through various activities. It is a great way for new honors students to get acquainted with each other and move to campus a little bit earlier than everyone else. I think this is also a great way to learn new things since a lot of the courses offered will be different from what you are planning on studying. In addition, I also think this was a huge part of having a successful transition to college, which has been paramount to my overall success at the University of Iowa.

Q: What is the Honors community like?

A: It's WONDERFUL! It is a wonderful corner of campus, full of vibrant people and diversity of thought. Personally, I've met many of my closest friends through Honors experiences. We are always working on ways to improve the sense of community we create in the program.

Q: What is Blank Honors Center?

A: Blank Honors Center, or BHC, is the home of the peer mentors, Honors front office, and professional staff. Students

come to BHC to get their questions answered regarding courses, scheduling, experiential learning, study abroad, scholarships, or utilize the study spaces available.

Q: How can I receive Scholarships?

A: Complete the Honors scholarship application in the spring and consider applying for national scholarships.

Q: Why should I utilize the University of Iowa's Honors Program?

A: The University of Iowa's Honors Program is the perfect opportunity for aspiring Hawkeyes to be welcomed into a community of individuals who help cultivate and inspire success amongst one another. There are a variety of resources and scholarships that are exclusive to members of the Honors Program. The opportunity to work more in-depth with students and faculty has consistently been a motivating factor for students looking to gain the most out of their education and tenure at the University of Iowa. We would love the opportunity to get to know you!



MEET THE HONORS STAFF

By Mackenzie Anderson & Erin Bughman

Nerves are certainly a normal part of the transition to a college lifestyle, and the Honors staff is here to assist you with anything you need. While any member of the Honors team would be more than happy to assist you, there are a few designated with unique, student-oriented expertise to help you along the way who would love to hear from you. Here, they provide a bit of advice on adjusting to everything the University of Iowa has to offer.



Dr. Emily Hill

Email: emily-d-hill@uiowa.edu

Office Hours: Monday 3:00-5:00 p.m. in Room 443 of the Blank Honors Center

Interim Director Emily Hill works to make the educational experience of honors students the best it can be. She works on different programs for students to get involved in, develops ways for students to be challenged by their curriculum, and helps to build up the Honors community. Dr. Hill works very closely with students within the university, and her central area of academic research is high-ability college students with mental health issues and how universities can better serve this student population.

Advice for Incoming First-Years

"My door is always open for students to visit about honors academic advising and scholar development! One of my biggest pieces of advice as a former honors student myself is to find faculty and professional staff mentors you trust and don't be afraid to ask them questions. Those conversations can bring you to unforeseen and valuable opportunities!"



Heidi Schmitt

Email: heidi-schmitt@uiowa.edu

Office Hours: Appointments can be scheduled via email

Program Coordinator and Communications Specialist Heidi Schmitt commits a lot of her work to the events and opportunities in which the Honors Program provides. This includes planning events that happen throughout the year, talking with different staff members to make sure things are running smoothly, as well as the marketing aspect of the program. For any questions about any events advertised, she would be the one to ask!

Advice for Incoming First-Years

"Get involved in the wonderful opportunities Honors provides from experiential learning to peer mentoring to connecting with our team. There is something for everyone. Review our online calendar and the weekly Honorable Messenger electronic newsletter for important program updates and ways you can get involved. We are all here to help you succeed on your journey!"



Camille Socarras

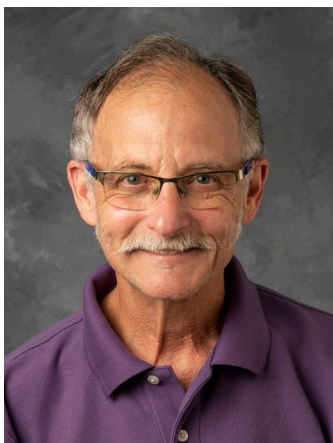
Email: camille-socarras@uiowa.edu

Office Hours: Email to schedule an appointment

Scholarship Coordinator Camille Socarras is a great resource when looking to discover what scholarship opportunities you may qualify for. With the Honors Program offering many scholarships for its members to apply for, as well as other possible opportunities to fit your situation, Camille is here to help.

Advice for Incoming First-Years

"I know it sounds very cliché, but don't be afraid to try new things; attend different events, check out student organizations, talk to the people in your classes and don't be afraid of your professors or other potential mentor-figures on campus —get to know them and let them get to know you!"



Andy Willard

Email: andrew-willard@uiowa.edu

Office Hours: Is happy to meet with students at times of mutual convenience

Experiential Learning Director Andy Willard is especially helpful when planning how to fulfill the experiential learning credit requirement to graduate with honors. With the requirement being very flexible in its demands, Andy is a great contact for finding out all of the unique ways that you can achieve the needed credits within your own field.

Advice for Incoming First-Years

"Take a deep breath or two, relax, explore new or old areas, keep your focus and discipline, and you will have a wonderful experience."



Holly Blosser-Yoder

Email: holly-yoder@uiowa.edu

Office Hours: Monday 8:30-10:00 in BHC 417 or reach me via email anytime!

Advising Director Holly Blosser-Yoder can answer a wide variety of questions due to her wide involvement within the Honors Program. Within her average day, she oversees the Honors Peer Advisors as well as the Honors Outreach Ambassadors. Whether it's studying abroad, interest in a specific Honors course, or wanting to find out more about how research can fit with Honors, scheduling an appointment will offer you an answer!

Advice for Incoming First-Years

"Seek out interesting people—peers, professors, advisors or other staff—to learn from their journeys. What educational path did they take? What college experiences have been/were meaningful to them? Look to a variety of role models and mentors."

For more information about each of these staff members as well as a complete staff directory, make sure to visit our website honors.uiowa.edu.



Addison Woll

Email: addison-woll@uiowa.edu

Office Hours: Monday & Thursday from 8:30-11:00 a.m. via Zoom or by request in office 409 of the Blank Honors Center

Assessment Manager and Admissions Coordinator Addison Woll is another staff member who dedicates his work to making sure students within the Honors Program are receiving all the best resources to help serve them throughout their time at the UI. He also keeps up with how students are doing academically, making sure they are as successful as possible. Questions or concerns about certain requirements of the Honors Program would be great reasons to schedule an appointment.

Advice for Incoming First-Years

“Jump in with both feet and get involved with things that make you excited! Honors has many opportunities to form community and showcase your passions. Simultaneously work on the power of saying ‘NO’ to make time for the things that will allow you to thrive. Lastly, always ask for help. It seems scary, but asking for help shows maturity and drive for excellence.”

HONORS PEER MENTOR TEAM

One of the most used resources that the Honors Program offers is a set of peer mentors available by appointment to help with nearly anything Honors-related. Whether you are planning honors credit, have questions about honors courses, or just want to talk to another student within your field who has already taken the courses you are enrolled in, an appointment can be helpful in an endless number of ways. Appointments can be set up with any honors peer mentor through MyUI who all have varied interests and areas of study.



Mishma Nixon

Third-year student
English and Creative Writing with Social Justice minor

Advice for Incoming First-Years

“Make connections and build your network within the program to get the best out of the resources the program can offer you. The people you meet and befriend play a big role in your overall Honors experience and success.”



Emma Carlson

Fourth-year student
B.A. Interdepartmental Studies - Health Sciences and B.B.A. Management - Leadership (Pre-medicine)

Advice for Incoming First-Years

“While having strong academics is incredibly important, finding a balance between school and life is the key to success. Before taking on any new role, class, or job, really self-reflect on what is most important to you and how this new opportunity fits into the balance you want to create.”

MEET THE WRITERS



Eleanor Abbott

Eleanor is a second-year studying statistics who likes writing, drawing, and taking long walks around campus.



Mackenzie Anderson

Mackenzie is a second-year from Ames, Iowa, studying health and human physiology with hopes of becoming a physician assistant. Other than her passion for studying health, she also enjoys doing anything active, drinking way too much coffee, and exploring Iowa City with her friends.



Sonia Beltz

Sonia is a second-year from Beavercreek, Ohio, studying in English and creative writing on the publishing track with a minor in religious studies. While at the University of Iowa, she hopes to develop her skills as an editor and writer.



Erin Bughman

Erin Bughman is a first-year from Dubuque, Iowa. She is an open major interested in psychology and journalism. She is excited to pursue her interest in writing through Honors Publications and build her leadership skills through being an Honors Outreach Ambassador. Outside of class she enjoys embroidering, scrolling through Pinterest, and making oddly specific Spotify playlists.



Jenny Cape

Jenny is a third-year from Brookfield, Wisconsin, studying biomedical sciences with a Spanish minor. Besides math and science, she loves playing soccer with her team, listening to different Spotify playlists, and exploring new places.



James Davis

James is a first-year from Delray Beach, Florida, studying English and creative writing and hoping to pursue a career as a military officer. He enjoys running, stand-up comedy, foreign relations, and movies.



Thomas Duong

Thomas is a second-year from Iowa City, Iowa, with an open major on the pre-medical track. Besides his studies, Thomas is president of UNICEF Iowa and is an undergraduate researcher. He enjoys sports, playing drums, and traveling.



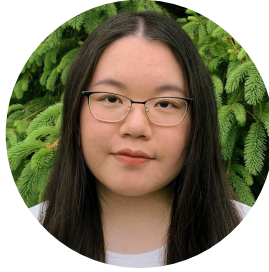
Sam Eliassen

Sam is a first-year from LeClaire, Iowa, studying neuroscience on the pre-med track. At Iowa, he hopes to build experience in scientific research and in creative publishing. In his free time, he enjoys reading books, listening to folk music, and spending days outside at the local park.



Julia Fout

Julia is a second-year from Moline, Illinois, studying French and psychology with a minor in rhetoric and persuasion. Outside of class, she enjoys biking, going to local bakeries, and practicing French.



Lydia Guo

Lydia is a second-year studying biomedical sciences and is a designer for the Honors Newsletter. She works as an undergraduate research assistant focusing on cystic fibrosis and volunteers at the UIHC. In her free time, Lydia enjoys oil painting at her local art studio.



Isabella Holaday

Isabella is a first-year from Lake Zurich, Illinois, studying neuroscience on the pre-medicine track. While at the University of Iowa, she hopes to work as an undergraduate research assistant and volunteer at the UIHC when it opens back up. Outside of school, she enjoys spending time with friends and finding cool study spots on campus.



Kyler Johnson

Kyler is a second-year studying English and creative writing with minors in German, Portuguese, and Chinese. Having spent a year abroad in Belgium, he's happy to be a bit closer to home, hopping with the stories he shares to really connect with his new college community.



Jayne Mathis

Jayne is a second-year from Ankeny, Iowa, studying English and creative writing. Along with writing, she also enjoys playing the trumpet, rotating through four very specific music playlists, and laughing at her own jokes.



Gabbie Meis

Gabbie is a fourth-year studying English and creative writing with minors in Spanish and translation. As the honors publication editor and an editor for Fools Magazine, she spends much of her time writing and editing. You can also find her baking and reading alongside her cats and friends.



Airiana Mohr

Airiana is a second-year from Machesney Park, Illinois, studying neuroscience with minors in Spanish, chemistry, and psychology. Aside from her studies, Airiana is a member of numerous groups on campus including USG and Homecoming Executive Council.



Rubye Ney

Rubye is a second-year from Wellman, Iowa, studying international studies and journalism with a minor in Arabic. She loves eating at Masala's lunch buffet, playing with her friend's kittens, and listening to the Hamilton soundtrack.



Kinsey Phipps

Kinsey is a second-year studying English and creative writing with minors in Spanish and translation. With a heart for travel, she spent summer of 2019 interning in Dublin, Ireland. You probably won't see her without a coffee in hand.



Jacob Sammon

Jacob is a second-year from Urbandale, Iowa, studying English and creative writing on the publishing track with a minor in communication studies. He hopes to continue developing his skills as a writer by learning from his dedicated peers and the City of Literature's culture.



Lauren Sanyal

Lauren is a first-year from San Diego, California, studying English and creative writing on the publishing track and screenwriting. She is excited to become part of the amazing writing community that Iowa City offers through getting involved in as many ways as she can.



Priyanka Srinivasan

Priyanka is a second-year from Bettendorf, Iowa, studying health and human physiology on the pre-medicine track with a minor in Spanish. During her free time, she enjoys volunteering at the UI Stead Family Children's Hospital. Apart from this, she likes to dance, travel, play the piano, and spend time with her friends and family.



Olivia Tonelli

Olivia Tonelli is a second-year from Joliet, Illinois, studying English and creative writing on the publishing track with a minor in Spanish. Through her academic pursuits and collaboration among her peers, she hopes to refine her artistic voice as a writer and elevate her skill set as an editor.



James Transue

James is a first-year from Rochester, Illinois, studying journalism and English and creative writing. James hopes to spend his time at college honing his writing craft and making connections among his peers and the university faculty.



Oliver Willham

Oliver is a third-year from West Des Moines, Iowa, studying English and creative writing and cinema. He spends most of his time at the library, writing, and reading. Or just drinking the library's smoothies.