



The Aggregate

The UWM Honors College Newsletter

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Honors on the Scholarly Frontier



Samantha Brusky
Architecture



Halie Gehling
Conservation and Environmental Science

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Of the approximately 5,300 higher education institutions in the United States, UWM's undergraduate research program ranks in the top 2%. In Honors, 90 students are undertaking research projects of their own in nearly all disciplines.

Lena Jensen (Economics, French) started doing research the summer before her freshman year, through the Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR). Her two current projects heavily involve the Milwaukee community.

Her main research investigates the ethics of practicing care in Milwaukee, along with how citizens of Milwaukee view democracy. Her research mixes “first-hand experience with academic readings about ethics of care,” and she has created a podcast, [*The Narrative of Caring*](#).

Lena’s time in Honors has helped her critical thinking skills and led her to “be able to conduct much more independent research.” She “loves the independence of research and being able to learn from [her] community.”

Like Lena, Kathryn Pecha (Industrial Engineering) started researching before she began college. In 2017 and in conjunction with OUR, she worked with two graduate students on a sensor for a “reverse osmosis filtration system” meant to desalinate ocean and sea water.

Now, she connects the “fuzzy logic” she learns in her Engineering courses with anthropological analyses developed through an Honors course on conservation and ecology.

She explains how she takes “qualitative data and assigns it a quantitative value” in order to describe a consumer product. “It’s not like a class where the professor knows the answer; there isn’t always a linear suc-



Kathryn Pecha and Kuan Jui Chen (Grad student, Ind. Eng.). Photo courtesy of Pete Amland.

cess graph, but the prestige of the Honors writing style has given me an edge.”

Wesley Edens (English) is in the thick of understanding the complexities of contemporary marriage. Inspired by the reactions of others to his own marriage, he decided to study “how marriage is transforming in America and why.”

He recalls talking with a local barista for three hours to arrive at the conclusion that marriage in the United States is changing because of “secularization, economic resources, queering, and divorce.”

With the help of Honors College faculty member Lydia Equitz, Wesley is currently trying to find texts that discuss marriage and its place in contemporary society. He credits Professor Equitz’s encouragement for pushing him to more deeply understand the material.

Kim Phan “wanted to go to UWM because it was known for research.” Upon arrival, she was paired with UWM Professor of Nursing Dr. Teresea S. Johnson.

Although Kim’s interests did not initially lie in pre-natal care, she found herself researching a group called Centering Pregnancy in Racine.



Honors on the Scholarly Frontier (continued)



Kim Phan at the 2019 MNRS Conference.
Photo courtesy of Kim Phan.

Kim recalls, “before working with Dr. Johnson, I hadn’t considered a career in maternal child health, but now I could see it being something I could continue to research while pursuing a PhD.”

Recently, her drive and commitment to research led Kim to Kansas to present at the Midwest Nursing Research Society Conference, alongside mostly graduate students and professionals.

She has earned Honors credit for studying in Ecuador where she learned how indigenous communities practice birthing. The way the US approaches healthcare and pregnancy “doesn’t change, because nobody tries to change it,” she explains, “but I hope I can start to make a difference.”

In the last few years, Hugo Ljungbäck (Film, Video, Animation, and New Genres, JAMS) has presented his research across the world. He explores handcrafting in avant-garde cinema as a “critical practice that calls attention to the gendered labor division of early and animated cinema.”

Hugo explains how his passion for film studies began when he took Professor Eguizurtz’s Honors Seminar, “Disney and the Shaping of the American Mind.” He cites critical theory, cultural studies, and “thinking about films from a sociological, cultural, and historical perspective” as the catalyst for his continued research in film and media studies.

Although Honors students tend to think of taking on extra work as commonplace, it is important to remember that the research being done here is impactful. These students’ research holds significance not only in the greater Milwaukee-area, but its influence can be felt in academic communities throughout the country and, indeed, globally.

And while we have featured only a few Honors students in this issue, we know there are many more of you in labs, libraries, archives, and in the field conducting exciting research and leading the Honors College on the scholarly frontier.

Director's Note



Dr. Peter Sands
Honors College Director

Welcome new and returning readers of the award-winning *The Aggregate*!

Research drives the university, contributing fundamental knowledge to society at large and enhancing classroom teaching and student learning. This issue of *The Aggregate* highlights the extraordinary range and depth of Honors College student and faculty research.

Across all fields and disciplines, we map, investigate, question, write, publish, and seek with the rest of the community of scholars that is UWM. Through Honors College undergraduate research opportunities, departmental theses, and lab-specific projects, our students are researching throughout the university.

Faculty and alums are also hard at work on research, whether designing courses growing from their expertise, or writing and publishing. We are proud to celebrate them!

As you look through this issue, we hope you’ll think not just about the specific re-

search projects and people you encounter, but also about the wide world they represent: a world of inquiry and questing, of participation in the life of the mind, as well as the economic, social, political, and other lives of an open, democratic, educated society.

Finally, as I mentioned, *The Aggregate* won an award this year from the National Collegiate Honors Council. Please join me in congratulating Honors College faculty member Benjamin Schneider and his team of hard-working writers, editors, and artists for their stellar work on these pages!

As always, don’t hesitate to stop by Honors House for a tour of our building, meet with advisors and faculty members. We look forward to hearing your thoughts about *The Aggregate*, or just hearing from you!



Halie Gehling
Conservation and Environmental Science

The Verdict Is In: Moot Court Course Victorious

In “Judging Politics: U.S. Constitutional Law and Moot Court,” Honors College faculty member Jill Budny’s students intensely research Supreme Court cases.

In the course’s capstone assignment, students put their newly learned Constitutional law knowledge to the test at the end of the semester, in a mock trial court case where they must take on the role of either a Supreme Court Justice or a lawyer.

To prepare for the trial, Keygan Sinclair (Architecture) spent months researching past court cases in order to step into his role as Justice Clarence Thomas. Keygan believes that “in court, few things are more important than research. Professor Budny’s expectation for thoroughness pushed me to develop a nuanced understanding of complex issues relevant in today’s political landscape.”

Professor Budny believes that teaching students research skills is “one of [her] duties” and “one of the most important things we teach in the Honors College.”

The students learn how to utilize databases and research resources offered at the library. Maddie Sobojski (Accounting) “used a database for all of the information that [she] needed for the case. This database had opinions from small courts to the



Maddie Sobojski. Photo courtesy of Maddie Sobojski.

Supreme Court, which was crucial to being well prepared for the moot court exercise.”

For the moot court exercise, students had to argue and rule on *National Rifle Association of America (NRA) v. McCraw*, a firearms rights case that the Supreme Court declined to hear in 2014. In this case, the NRA was the petitioner, wanting to get a lower court’s ruling overturned.

Assigned to be a lawyer for the NRA, Nathan Kohls (Computer Science, Mathematics), found it challenging to defend something he did not support personally: “It was difficult at first to get into the headspace required for the NRA arguments to make sense. It made me carefully consider each of their arguments, and, while I don’t agree with them, it was a good experience in mental flexibility.”

After the trial, the students acting as the Justices reconvened and ruled in favor of the NRA. Representing Justice Sonia Sotomayor, Ashveer Singh (Economics, Philosophy) dissented in the written opinion.

Ashveer argues that his dissent resulted from his meticulous research on Justice Sotomayor, and he is “confident that, like I did, the Justice would prioritize public safety over individual rights to carry a gun.”

Valerie Perkins (Linguistics) recalls the course being demanding: “it was definitely the most research I’ve done for a class, but it’s also one of the most rewarding classes I’ve had. I loved that a lot of the work we did was research that we had to apply in the moot court exercise; it helped me gain a deeper understanding of the material.”

Thinking back to when the class donned their gowns and carried their briefcases, Lena Orwig (JAMS) remembers feeling proud of all the hard work everyone had done: “Seeing everything come together and knowing how much time everyone spent researching our roles to make it as authentic we could makes it one of the best Honors class I’ve taken.”



Foreign Correspondence



Allison Sweere
Urban Studies



Photo courtesy of Allison Sweere.



Photo courtesy of Allison Sweere.

Studying abroad is not something I originally envisioned myself doing, but during my sophomore year I truly began to consider traveling for school.

After weeks of research and conversations with others, I decided to trade Wisconsin's crisp fall and snowy winters for rain, rain, and more rain in Dublin, Ireland.

Initially, being in Dublin felt no different than being in any US city for the first time. As a developed, English-speaking city, there was no immediate culture shock.

However, as I started to explore my surroundings, I began to see the true beauty and uniqueness of the city and its people. Some customs were easy to adjust to; for instance, eating dinner at 8pm and always having an umbrella packed quickly became routine.

Other things were more challenging. Traveling on the right side of the road is so ingrained in me that I got stopped by a police officer in my first week for biking on the wrong side.

While almost everyone I have met lives on campus, I decided I wanted to live off-campus in a family home, or a "dig," which has allowed me to fully immerse in an authentic Irish home.

My host mom, Eileen, has introduced me to traditional Irish foods, such as spice bags and Irish stew. She also has helped me learn common Irish hospitality; for example, we offer tea and coffee to guests, even if it's just the mailman.

Because I am Eileen's first US student, I prepared some food you can't usually find in Ireland; fettuccine Alfredo and BBQ chicken have become some of her favorites.



Photo courtesy of Allison Sweere.

Although Ireland's transportation system is less developed than other European countries, people still elect to use alternative modes of transportation rather than private vehicles.

For me, this has meant a daily 3.5-mile bike ride to and from campus. Although it can be a drag biking through rain, most days it is an easy and enjoyable ride past historic Dublin's stone castles and beautiful churches. I have found pleasure using a bike rather than a car to get where I need to go, and I hope to bring that feeling back with me when I return.

While I do miss my friends and family back home, I am wishing for time to slow down. Being here for only a semester has meant non-stop travel and exploration. My first week here, I traveled nearly the entire island of Ireland, and learned that the countryside and city have vastly different looks and atmospheres.

Once school started, my weekdays became filled with class and homework. My weeknights have been for exploring Dublin city centre and I have visited a new European country almost every weekend.

While I have enjoyed all my classes, traveling to different places in Europe has been the most educational experience. Being in different countries has allowed me to witness literal history, from 12th century castles to tours of famous sites.

Living and traveling throughout Western Europe has opened my eyes to different perspectives and lifestyles. I couldn't be more thankful for this opportunity to broaden my knowledge of the world. Cheers!



Photo courtesy of Allison Sweere.



Samantha Brusky
Architecture

Starting Out: Nick Gilhaus

Confidence and charisma are rare to find, and even harder to come across in a first-year college student. However, Nicholas Gilhaus (Computer Engineering) immediately impresses with his assuredness and charm.

He takes great pride in personality and style: “I always choose to dress [and present] myself as if I need to make a good impression.”

Without a doubt, Nick belongs in the diverse Honors College setting. He explains that he always felt like he “wanted to be a part of a closer, higher-level community of learning” with others who also enjoy digging deeper. “Being around like-minded people who share a passion for learning,” he continues, “activates an intense curiosity within me.”

Unlike most, Nick was not attracted to the absence of exams in Honors. “I’ve always been pretty good at exams,” he laughs; “papers aren’t as easy for me, but Honors is an opportunity to change that.”

He has already noticed a difference in his writing after one month in Honors College faculty member Benjamin Schneider’s “Dirty Realism.”

So far, Nick has loved learning from and meeting the students in his class because “they allow [him] to bring new world views into [his] major.” He has also enjoyed the texts and format of his first Honors course. According to Nick, the content of the class is not only challenging and expansive, but also refreshing. He expresses an appreciation for Professor Schneider’s choice in texts, as well: “It is new and exciting to read something that I can insert my own experience into.”

Like many Honors students, Nick is heavily involved with the UWM community. As a student-athlete, he juggles academ-



Photo courtesy of Nick Gilhaus.

ics and baseball; he finds keeping all those balls in the air “chaotic but fun.”

It was hard for him to contain his passion for baseball as he told me about practices, his roommate (also a teammate), and the new skills he has been learning. He explains: “When you’re a senior in high school, you don’t often think of incoming freshman as capable of making an impact on the team, but that is what I expect of myself both in baseball and in my academic life.”

Nick honors his innate curiosity and hunger for knowledge. In his spare time, he enjoys listening to podcasts in order to be “more informed about tons of different topics,” and he also loves to read.

Currently, he is engrossed in Sean Carroll’s *Something Deeply Hidden*. “It’s all about quantum mechanics” he tells me, “even though we don’t learn about it, I am very interested in the topic.” These are the sorts of qualities that make Nick a unique and valuable addition to the Honors family.

“Everything that I do, I want to be proud of,” Nick explains; “I take pride in all of my responsibilities, and I am always striving for perfection.” With his phenomenal work ethic, inquisitive nature, and self-confidence, we’re happy Nick has found a home in the Honors College.



Research Spotlight: Jonathan Paul



Lena Orwig
JAMS



Photo courtesy of Jon Paul.

Jonathan Lee Paul's (Mechanical Engineering) work in engineering focuses on mechanical automation.

His position at the Taiwan Agricultural Technology Corporation involved a three-month collaboration with indigenous mushroom farmers in which he designed automated systems to improve various agricultural processes.

These systems log environmental factors of the farms such as humidity and CO₂ concentration, and use the data to control a network of other systems like lighting, air-cooling, and heating. Jon especially enjoyed this internship because it helped him accelerate his technical Mandarin.

A second eight-month internship with The Master Lock Company allowed Jon to work full-time while earning credit. There, he designed robotic fixtures capable of automatically cycling lock combinations.

Jon was particularly passionate about this internship: "I thoroughly enjoyed these

automation-centric projects, as they allowed me to develop a deeper competency in the fields of mechanical, electrical, firmware, and hardware design. I also had the opportunity to design my own custom robotics motherboard from the ground up. As a student trained in mechanical engineering, the opportunities that Master Lock gave me to experiment were especially rewarding."

Jon explains that he enjoys Honors because he is encouraged to think critically and "operate at a higher octane" than other courses, much like how his internships challenge him. His favorite Honors course so far has been Honors College faculty member David Southward's "Shockumentary: Truth and Activism in the Exposé."

Jon's advice to other Honors students looking into research is to attend as many career fairs as possible, especially if they are studying engineering: "There are few opportunities better than directly communicating with a prospective employer."

Research Spotlight: Bescent Ebeid



Seth Duellman
Architecture



Photo courtesy of Bescent Ebeid.

During the summer of 2018, Bescent Ebeid (Architecture) conducted research focusing on the misrepresentation of marginalized communities in Milwaukee and the misconstrued assumptions associated with these areas and their residents.

Titled "Picturing Milwaukee," the project is a collaboration between the BLC Field School organization and the Office of Undergraduate Research, lead by Dr. Arijit Sen, UWM Professor of Architecture.

In their research, Bescent's team utilized "Counter-Mapping." In this, the area's residents make of map of their community and provide their view of the surroundings, rather than that of a separate governing body or corporation.

Her team gathered information for the map by interviewing participants of a community-led Jane's Walk in the predominantly black Midtown Area of Milwaukee's North Side.

Jane's Walk is named after urbanist and social change advocate Jane Jacobs and is

a resident-led event that community members use to share their ideas regarding different places in their community.

The interviews and recordings were put together as a counter-map of the area. It shows places, landmarks, and local spaces that the community members point out as positive parts of their area.

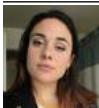
The goal of the map is to influence the misconceptions surrounding the Midtown North-Side area, and, with the open-ended nature of the research, to spark social change in the future.

Bescent thinks counter-mapping by doing a Jane's Walk is "essential for a city like Milwaukee. Since I come from an under-represented population myself, it's easy for me to see the marginalized population that I'm studying suffer. I can use my platform of entitlement and privilege to push others to see this marginalization happening in the city."

Learn more about the Picturing Milwaukee project and its foundations [here](#).



Research Spotlight: Alex Swanson



Lena Orwig
JAMS

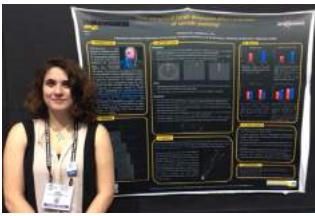


Photo courtesy of Alex Swanson.

Senior Alex Swanson (Biomedical Sciences) is part of Aurora St. Luke's School of Diagnostic Medical Sonography program. Eventually, she will perform ultrasound exams on hearts, veins, and arteries.

She began her research career the summer before her first year at UWM through the UR@UWM summer program and, currently, she works on projects in Dr. Wendy Huddleston's Visuomotor Lab.

Alex's research consists of studying how vision guides movement and the role attention plays as a cognitive mechanism.

This investigation provides "an understanding of the attentional processes involved in the selection of important information for motor planning [which] may provide a foundation for targeted therapies for individuals with motor attention deficits, such as a stroke."

Most recently, Alex presented her research at the International Society for Neuroscience Conference, in San Diego. There,

she shared her Honors research project, "Does peripheral target dimension affect precision of saccade planning?"

Alex says the goal of the project is to "create a task that could elicit a change in behavior between target sizes that could be later measured using fMRI to characterize the shape and dimension of attentional modulation along the motor pathway."

She believes her Honors coursework has prepared her well for presenting at conferences. These experiences and her research intertwined when she received Honors credit for a Health Science-related study abroad trip to Thailand.

Upon graduation, Alex hopes to work for Aurora St. Luke's and she advises visiting the Office of Undergraduate Research to get matched with faculty doing research.

Performing research is a significant part of Honors education; for Alex, it is also an important way to see how the Honors College fully integrates with her discipline.

Research Spotlight: Nathan Kohls



Seth Duellman
Architecture

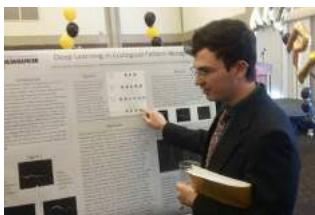


Photo courtesy of Nathan Kohls.

Nathan Kohls (Computer Science, Mathematics) partners with UWM Professor of Mathematics Dr. Peter Hinow and UWM Professor of Biology Dr. J. Rudi Strickler to conduct research on untested applications of artificial intelligence.

The team focuses on using their machine learning program to control a waste-water treatment process, which, to date, had never been done.

The Neural Network program, a type of artificial intelligence, is an image-recognition technology that determines whether a composition of waste sludge requires more or less of a polymer-based cleaning agent.

The program classifies a composition into the "more" or "less" category by looking at an image of a light pattern created by firing a laser at the sludge. A bumpy pattern qualifies into the "less" category, whereas a flat pattern means "more."

Nathan's role was to write, develop, and train the convolutional Neural Network program to accurately recognize and classify the different light patterns.

The artificial intelligence program would take on the role within the waste-waster treatment system and make the process more efficient.

The team hopes to use this technology to automate and expedite waste-water treatment processes and, more generally, to demonstrate a newly developed, out-of-the-box application for artificial intelligence programs.

The project is ongoing, and the team hopes to publish an official, detailed account of their findings in the near future.

Nathan's work with the program has been invaluable "in learning firsthand how research is done at a university level, and this experience has only reaffirmed [his] desire to go on to graduate school."



Research Spotlight: Alex Knudtson



Amanda Niebauer
English



Photo courtesy of Alex Knudtson.

Alex Knudtson (Global Studies, Italian Studies) conducts and presents research on one of the United Nations' sustainable development goals, specifically the "Zero Hunger" goal and how it can be applied in Italy.

As Vice President of AIESEC, a program that sends students abroad, Alex has a love for traveling to other countries and appreciating their cultures, but she has always been specifically attracted to Italy. When she had the opportunity to take a Food Studies class, she dove into research on the influence and importance of food in Italy.

In the Global Studies course "Sustainable Development Goals," Alex continued her food research to complete her capstone project, focusing on the "Zero Hunger" sustainable development goal in Italy.

For half the semester, Alex researched the history of food security in Italy, its problems, and Italy's impact on the food markets of other nations.

She learned that Italy helps smaller, poorer countries like Ethiopia by selling their goods to bolster their local economy; she says "it was cool to learn about this history and how it all connects."

Alex's presentation at the end of the capstone was so thorough that her instructor, UWM Professor of Nursing Dr. Anne Dressel, encouraged her to share her research at the College of Nursing's "Healthy People on a Healthy Planet" conference, which included presentations from schools all over the Midwest.

"I was able to talk about things that I was genuinely passionate about; it wasn't just another thing for class," Alex says. "It was all coming full circle."

Before she graduates, Alex hopes to secure an internship with the US Department of State with a placement in Italy, where she could apply her research to work with United Nations food and agriculture organizations based in Rome.

Research Spotlight: Isaac Repinski



Kimberly Mayer
Biology



Nia Keranova (Music), Sonia Khatchadourian, Isaac Repinski. Photo courtesy of Isaac Repinski.

During the UR@UWM summer program before his freshman year, Isaac Repinski (Biomedical Engineering) began his research experience working in Dr. Henry Tomasiewicz's Innovation Campus lab.

Here, Isaac worked on identifying zebrafish gene expression using fluorescence microscopy. Isaac believes that the UR@UWM program "is a great way to get to know the UWM campus before you even start your freshman year; it took away that scary first day of classes feeling."

After completing the summer program, Isaac spent time working with UWM Professor of Engineering Dr. Pradeep Rohatgi in the Biomedical Science Materials Lab studying magnesium foams as a hip replacement material.

Isaac recommended that students "look into research as early as possible, so you have time to change research topics if you want to do something else."

Taking his own advice, Isaac now conducts research in the Fingerstyle Guitar Department in UWM's Peck School of the Arts with Program Director Dr. John Stropes. Together, they are looking at the Ann Arbor Blues Festivals of 1969 and 1970. An accomplished guitar player himself, Isaac appreciates the opportunity to combine his passions.

Isaac's participation in several different labs has given him knowledge of what he "does and doesn't like in a research setting." Additionally, Isaac believes his research experience "has given [him] insight into how research projects function in a university and has given [his] academics more context in a work-related setting."

The best advice he gives to students interested in undergraduate research is to "talk to your professors or visit the Office of Undergraduate Research. It can help you build your experience."



Olivia Wilson
Criminal Justice

Moving Forward: Quincy Drane

Since graduating from UWM, Quincy Drane ('18, Architecture) has found success at Korb & Associates Architects, as an architectural designer, where he assists the project architects at various stages of design.

As a young, aspiring architect, Quincy understands how stressful the demands of the world can be after graduation.

While he was a student here at UWM, Quincy was a part of the National Organization of Minority Students (NOMAS). He has moved on to become a NOMAS alumni advisor, whose goal is to help recent UWM graduates bridge the transition from students to young professionals in the architecture field.

As well as being part of NOMAS, Quincy was a Lawton Scholar Advocate, where he helped provide resources and support for minority students who were awarded the Lawton Scholarship.

Despite his rigorous schedule, Quincy's accomplishments did not stop there. During his senior year, he conducted research through the Office of Undergraduate Research.

With the assistance of UWM Professor of Architecture Mo Zell and classmate Eli Liebenow (Architecture), he used his research and architectural background to enter a contemporary design competition. His work was showcased in UWM's Spaight's Plaza and can now be found in the architecture courtyard.

Quincy found similar success within the Honors College. He is a founding member of *The Aggregate* and was also



Eli Liebenow (left) and Quincy Drane. Photo courtesy of Quincy Drane.



Photo courtesy of Quincy Drane.

a part of the Honors College Advisory Committee. For two semesters, he and another student reviewed potential Honors courses and voted on which ones would be available the following semester.

While Quincy believes that all his Honors courses were impactful, the one that specifically stands out to him is Honors College faculty member Jacqueline Stuhmiller's "Symbolic Animals."

The class focuses on how animals influence people's lives and the symbolism that is used in connection to them. Quincy found it refreshing to examine the world through this lens and loved that there was no limit to the classroom conversations.

The biggest impact Quincy felt the Honors College had on him, however, was connecting with people of different backgrounds. In architecture classes, he often found himself surrounded by only students of the same major.

"In architecture you work with people of all trades," he explains, "not just other architects, so it's important to be able to work with people from different majors." In Honors, he saw new points of view and ideas from students of all types, an experience he felt he would not have gotten without the Honors College.

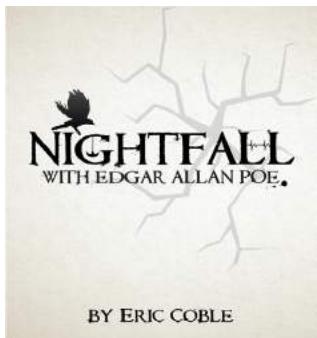
As he continues to achieve great things, Quincy will always look favorably upon his experience in Honors College. He encourages Honors students to use the resources available to them, explaining that "if you keep pushing through, it'll be more than worth it in the end."



Honors Drama Club Presents: *Nightfall with Edgar Allan Poe*



Haley Kress
Biomedical Sciences



The Honors College Drama Club continued its run of successful, thought-provoking plays during the Spring 2019 semester. This time around, director Ethan Pinkham (Film) chose Eric Coble's *Nightfall with Edgar Allan Poe*.

Distinctly part of the mystery/horror genre, the play proved no small feat for the students involved. Maria Burke (Nursing), Ava Kantack (Film), Gayle Lieberenz (Art), Dragana Knezic (Communication), and Aaron Granados (Film) each committed to their respective roles with dedication and professionalism.

The play includes three of Poe's works performed separately, so many of the cast members enacted multiple roles during the performance. While each character is a creation in Poe's style, they do not all require the same characterization, a nuance which had to be carefully pinned down for the success of the play.

To further distinguish the characters, Kate Possing (Art) designed most of the costumes from scratch. Kate's effort and detail brought out Poe's macabre intentions.

This reliance on the formal aspects of theater is no coincidence, as Ethan eagerly points out: "I picked *Nightfall* because I wanted to do a dark play, one that allowed for a wide range of technical freedom. Coble's play fit right into that category."

Light design helped make the production as spooky as possible as well. Attendees watched in a room lit by flickering artificial candles and yellow spotlights.

Moreover, the performance space has only one door, which the cast used deliberately as a prop and set piece. This gave the feeling that the viewers were tucked in a room with the drama, rather than separated from a stage in seating. The effect, as intended, caused some intended yet startling surprises in the audience.



Avery Dedjoe
Engineering



Photo courtesy of UWM Office of Undergraduate Research.

500 28 Days of Summer Research

UR@UWM Summer Research Program for Incoming Students, hosted by the UWM Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR), provides incoming first-year students four weeks to take part in research.

A group of approximately two dozen applicants are given room and board in Sandburg Hall and afforded a \$500 stipend for the duration of the program.

The list of potential research fields is extensive as the program works with all schools and colleges at UWM: from physics to art, scores of different research focuses are represented.

OUR pairs newly admitted students with experienced research faculty and they are expected to spend 25-35 hours each week conducting research.

Moreover, as an introduction to the culture of university research, students also meet with each other twice a week to learn

about the research others in the program are conducting.

Through guided and independent work, students learn and develop valuable experience for future academic and professional opportunities prior to even enrolling in their first UWM course.

During some of their downtime, students can participate in several social activities where they can form connections with their peers. The program is intended to provide not only a great environment for learning, but for socializing and community building as well.

The synthesis of these goals is embodied in the final presentation. Here, students meet and interact with faculty from across campus to present posters that detail the breadth of the academic and social experience they gained while conducting research at UWM.



Amanda Niebauer
English

Looking Back: Bethany Price

Bethany Price ('12 English) graduated from UWM and the Honors College with a specialized focus in poetry. She now works as a Visual Merchandiser for H&M and continues to be an active member in the Milwaukee literary scene and the arts scene at large.

Looking back at her experience within the Honors College, Bethany says that the small, discussion-based classes helped foster critical thinking skills and greatly influenced her creativity.

"It's a beautiful thing to sit in a room full of people and be open to discussion, hearing different opinions and forming your own," she shares.

In her favorite Honors course, students studied Homer's *The Odyssey* and drew parallels between different modes of storytelling in *The Odyssey* and James Joyce's *Ulysses*.

Bethany used this skill of studying different modes of storytelling in her senior project, where she teamed up with an Honors College student-artist to unite her poems with visual art on large canvases.

To see the art forms collide and mix so well was satisfying and it was with her senior project that Bethany began to realize her love for combining different forms of art.

After graduating, Bethany worked at a jazz café in downtown Milwaukee, as well as at Downtown Books. In her free time, she wrote and began to join the local art community.

Between submitting to publishers and publishing a collection of poems, *Terror*,



Bethany Price in Honors 155. Photo courtesy of Amanda Niebauer.



Photo courtesy of Moriah Bame.

and a chapbook, *All I Wanna Do*, she organizes frequent meetings around Milwaukee with local poets to write together and share their work.

Over the years, these regular meetings have outgrown small coffee shop tables. Now, Bethany hosts large events that include local musicians, painters, writers and more to showcase the importance of unity between art forms.

"It's fun to give others a voice," she says. "We're all artists; we just have different mediums."

At H&M, Bethany discovered her love for fashion, which she says is second only to poetry. She creates displays, dresses models with the week's latest trends, and constructs visually and stylistically appealing presentations for the store.

She also collaborates with photographers and videographers to recruit, cast, and style models for photoshoots. She has even written the script for a fashion video.

Reflecting on the community she's built, she says she owes it to her education: "It truly formed how I think of being a writer and being part of a community."

On September 24th, 2019, she returned to a full house in the Honors College to discuss her experiences with art and poetry, to share tips on writing, and to give advice to students.

She encourages students to get involved, make connections, and follow what inspires them because it could lead them to what they love.



Kaitlyn Diskin
Film



Photo courtesy of Kaitlyn Diskin.

The Aggregate Wins National Award

What began during Fall 2017 as an idea to widely communicate Honors College student achievements has turned into national recognition.

The National Collegiate Honors Council has awarded *The Aggregate* second place in the 2019 Honors Newsletter Competition's Electronically Published division.

This is the first time *The Aggregate* has entered the competition, and it was in competition with 32 Honors College publications from across the country. The newsletter submitted their Fall 2018 and Spring 2019 issues, only the third and fourth it has issues published.

Honors College faculty member Benjamin Schneider, advisor for *The Aggregate*, is "extremely proud of the students involved in *The Aggregate*. It's student run, edited, formatted, researched and it just feels fantastic to have that hard work recognized."

Each semester, the students of *The Aggregate* work to plan, curate, write, format,

and edit a nearly 20-page newsletter that details events, classes, and people within the Honors College.

"Two years ago, I thought [*The Aggregate*] could be a good idea," says Schneider, "because the Honors College has so many interesting things going on inside of it. We are proud to be able to put so much of it in one place. It's rewarding working with these students. After every issue, people come into my office to say how impressive it is that students put this together."

Now, *The Aggregate* has the award-winning credentials to support what Professor Schneider's has known from the start. The students and Professor Schneider plan to enter their newsletter in future NCHC competitions.

Along with Honors College Director Peter Sands, Professor Schneider accepted the award on November 9th at the conference's annual meeting in New Orleans. Past issues of *The Aggregate* are [here](#).



Haley Kress
Biomedical Sciences



Students from the 2019 Colloquium. Photo courtesy of David Southward.

Colloquium Showcases Student Research

Honors students who have completed research in Honors or written a senior thesis come together annually to share, celebrate, and discuss their discoveries. 2019 marked the 12th year of celebrating student successes at the Senior Project Colloquium.

The colloquium was started by past Honors College Director and UWM Professor Emeritus of Italian Lawrence Baldassaro and is currently overseen by Honors College faculty member David Southward.

The Colloquium continues to provide zealous students a chance to share what they know and encourages exploring outside the box topics.

Senior-standing Honors students have the option to pursue research or write a thesis for Honors credit, while expanding and deepening their knowledge of their topic and sharpening their presentation skills.

According to Professor Southward, the Colloquium is important for the latter.

"The Colloquium is a way to exhibit the work," he says, "it's not a defense, but students learn how to talk about what they've done."

Kristen Leer (Psychology, Religious Studies, Classic Civilizations), who presented her thesis on the appearance of schizophrenia in media and movies, agrees.

"Having to condense everything I learned into a presentable amount of material is hard," she says. "I had to pay attention to my own analytical processes" to decide what to show at the Colloquium.

Despite the challenges, the Colloquium provides a welcome chance to practice. In 2019, ten students participated and the breadth of Honors interests is not to be missed.

"We have a thesis in almost every subject," says Professor Southward. "It's incredible, really" and the Colloquium puts that talent on display.



HARPY Hosts Biannual Conferences



Kaitlyn Diskin
Film



2019 Monsters Conference participants.
Photo courtesy of HARPY.

Classes, meetings, and social events constantly fill the Honors House, but one of the highlights on the Honors College list of student activities are the conferences: the Monsters Conference in the fall and the Beastly Conference in the spring.

Initially based around two of Honors College faculty member Jacqueline Stuhmiller's courses, the conferences offer students a chance to share their work outside of class. Since their origins, the conferences have included students and faculty throughout the Honors College and have grown to include faculty researchers from across the university.

Usually, the conferences are coordinated by faculty in Honors. However, "this year, it's actually not run by me at all, but by the student group HARPY," explains Professor Stuhmiller. "They're a group of passionate, research focused students who have taken over the organizing of all the conferences."

HARPY (Honors Association of Research and Publication) puts in months of work helping students edit their work, providing practice sessions for presenting, and ensuring that the conference goes smoothly. This year, a total of fifteen students and faculty presented at the Monsters Conference.

The conferences offer a perfect complement to what Honors students do in classes and in general in the Honors College. The experience of presenting at an academic conference helps prepare students for graduate school.

"The small size of the Honors College allows professors to better get to know and even nurture students," states Professor Stuhmiller, "by helping them to be part of conferences such as these."

The dedication of the students of HARPY, as well as those who present at the conferences, culminates in an insightful and enjoyable experience for all.

Honors Association of Research & Publication



Halie Gehling
Conservation and Environmental Science



HARPY on Facebook [here](#).

If you've ever wondered why cats in medieval paintings look strange or how zombies interact with the funeral industry, then the Honors College's Honors Association of Research and Publication (HARPY) may be the place for you.

Formed as a support group for students interested in research, HARPY has grown into a network of students who contribute to and execute the Honors College's Monster Conference and Beastly Conference.

Club officer Kimberly Laberge (Theater Practice) says members are drawn to the organization because "research can become solitary, but HARPY provides an academic community."

HARPY hopes to provide a community of support, so students can step further out of their comfort zones. Kimberly adds that this group aims to "demystify the idea of research through collaboration."

Club Officer Jessica Plotkin (Biochemistry) stresses the value of research in college and especially in Honors, arguing that "no matter what field you plan to go into, it's important to know how to do research, how to deeply engage with a topic."

She believes that "HARPY is a space to hone those skills, get comfortable with a topic that interests you, and practice talking about it academically."

Although organizing and presenting at conferences are a large part of what the group does, Officer Corinne Kronschnabel (Anthropology, Religious Studies) emphasizes that "the goal isn't to push people to a huge conference," rather that "HARPY is here to support people in their research."

HARPY fosters community around research and encourages students to gain important skills that will help them become stronger academic citizens.



London Calling for Honors Students



Kaitlyn Diskin
Film



Photo courtesy of Kaitlyn Diskin.



Photo courtesy of Kaitlyn Diskin.

In May 2019, sixteen honors students, led by Honors College faculty members Alan Singer and David Southward, made the eight-hour flight to London for a two-week, six-credit study-abroad course.

“Royals and Rebels” dove into the centuries-long culture of England, framed through the royalty who built it and the rebels who opposed them. Comprehensive is the first word that both Singer and Southward use when describing the classes.

“We wanted anything the students saw or did there to be relevant,” Professor Southward shares. Professor Singer adds that it was important that the course “cover[ed] as much as possible, because we wanted to design experiences that would fit under that umbrella” of royals and rebels.

Throughout the course, students visited many of the most famous museums, castles, and monuments around London. Maddie Sobojinski (Accounting, IT Management) remembers that “Hampton court was just gorgeous. The gardens had the most beautiful roses. It was like a private oasis.”

Beyond daily excursions around London, the class also included day trips to Bath, Oxford, and Stonehenge. “Stonehenge was the first moment on the trip where I felt we were all one unit together,” reminisces Professor Singer, “actually being there – I could see it in everyone’s eyes – it was a moment where we could all feel the history. That was my favorite place.”

While the locations and tours offered so much for the students to learn, some of their favorite moments stemmed from time spent with each other. Notably, the Rock and Roll pub crawl was a favorite bonding experience of the group.

Mia Dreher (Art) recalls that she “loved when we had downtime as a group. The opportunity to take such a jam-packed trip with a group of unbelievably intelligent



Photo courtesy of Kaitlyn Diskin.

peers, with such a wide variety of majors, is once in a lifetime.”

Daily classes took place in the pub of the hotel, a truly London experience, and the reflections and discussions each day allowed students opportunities to appreciate the time abroad, both academically and personally. The unique experience of these classes and those discussions stem not only from the location of the class, but also from the variety of students’ majors.

“Having those different viewpoints effects the discussions so much, everyone notices something different,” says Professor Southward. Professor Singer shares this sentiment: “Even just reading the papers at the end of the class was exciting, the variety of expertise made each one so different.”

From the daily discussion, roaming around London, and exciting pub tours at night, the trip has had a lasting impact on all who attended, and has left many, as Mia puts it, “wishing they could literally hop on another plane tomorrow.”



Photo courtesy of Kaitlyn Diskin.



Amanda Niebauer
English

Professor Southward Wins Prestigious Award

Honors College Faculty member David Southward has won the 9th Annual Frost Farm Prize for metrical poetry with his sestina, “Mary’s Visit.”

Named for legendary poet Robert Frost, the prize recognizes outstanding poets who implement the same style of writing that made Frost famous.

Professor Southward’s favorite poet is Robert Frost, so he was honored to have won the award: “To win this award in his name, I just couldn’t be more proud.”

As part of the prize, Professor Southward was a featured poet at The Hyla Brook Reading Series at the Frost Farm Poetry Conference in New Hampshire in June. The annual conference is held on Frost’s own land, and Professor Southward, along with other guests, explored the space where Frost once lived.

“It was magical,” he said. “It was like stepping back in time.”

Professor Southward’s inspiration for “Mary’s Visit” came after an encounter with a woman who asked to look inside his house, thinking it might have been her great-aunt’s house once. The poem reflects on this experience and the visitor’s reactions as she took Professor Southward and his husband through her memories.

“It was like we had been momentarily drawn into someone else’s world,” he recalls. “We wanted it to be her great-aunt’s house too.”

Professor Southward had been wanting to write a sestina, but he never had the right subject; after the visit, he immediately knew he had to write about the experience.

A sestina is a fixed form poem with six lines in each of the first six stanzas and then three lines in the final stanza. The lines can only end with one of six words that the poet chooses. The same words



Photo courtesy of David Southward.

return throughout the poem, in the same way that the woman’s memories returned to her when touring the house.

Though he completed the poem in a little over a week and submitted it to several contests, this is the first time the poem has been published: “I tell all my students to keep sending out submissions. Every judge is different.”

After reading the 978 entries, contest judge Bruce Bennett said that “Mary’s Visit” stood out to him as the winning poem for its “quiet eloquence, even profundity” and that he “admired its relaxed colloquial quality.” “One is not surprised by the artistry,” Bennett concludes, “one is simply grateful.”

Professor Southward regularly teaches poetry workshops in the Honors College. He loves opening students’ eyes to poetry, especially to those who have never written poetry before.

He has had several works published, his most recent being *Apocrypha*, a collection of sonnets published in 2018 that retells stories from the Gospel and dives deeper into the iconic figure of Jesus. His next collection, *Bachelor’s Buttons*, is set to come out in April 2020.

Professor Southward’s poem and Bennett’s full appreciation can be read [here](#).



Avery Dedjoe
Engineering



Image courtesy of Avery Dedjoe.

Course Highlights

“What is Art”

Honors college faculty member Hilary K. Snow describes “What is Art?” as a critical thinking and writing course framed within the study of art across history and cultures.

Professor Snow seeks to have students explore the numerous roles art has played throughout history: as an aesthetic activity, as a tool for understanding history, and as a player in social and political movements, to name a few.

Her goal is not to impart her class with an encyclopedic knowledge of historic works of art, but rather to leave students better equipped to think and write about complex ideas including those found in the study of art.

On a typical day, students might discuss their thoughts and questions related to assigned readings before convening as a class,

at which point the conversation moves according to the student’s interests.

Class discussions are Professor Snow’s favorite part of the course, because of the sheer variety of topics raised by her diverse group of students.

Professor Snow believes that when studying a work or style of art, firsthand experience is greatly important and, as such, field trips are a large part of the course.

During field trips to on-campus exhibits and publicly- and privately-funded museums, students look forward to hands-on activities to keep themselves engaged between quiet musings.

“What is Art?” offers Honors students the opportunity to develop their writing and critical thinking skills in a stimulating and welcoming environment, regardless of their background in Art History.

“The Oldest Hatred”

Honors College faculty member Alan Singer knew teaching his newest course wouldn’t be easy, but it needed to be done.

“The Oldest Hatred: The Jewish People as the Perpetual Other” covers the “perplexing and irrational phenomena” of anti-Semitism and focuses primarily on historical European events.

“The idea is to trace the development of anti-Semitism through time,” Professor Singer says, “and this class covers an enormous amount of time.” Persecution of the Jewish people is one of history’s longest and most constant threads.

Two films and a slew of readings help students move through the course, providing rich discussion material for each class period. Moreover, the class will visit the Illinois Holocaust Museum to shape their understanding of anti-Semitism.

Given recent political turmoil, Professor Singer also intends to facilitate an understanding of how ancient hatred impacts

our contemporary world. To achieve this, he encourages students to bring in current events showing anti-Judaism and other examples of hatred.

He wants his students “to see that this is deeply ingrained; it’s embedded in religious cultural traditions which get carried on generation after generation.”

In typical Honors fashion, students tacitly agree to take on an emotional burden when signing up for this course. However, the class is determined to work through the material, and Professor Singer continues to engage new events and discussion points as the semester moves on.

Emma Mae Webber (JAMS, Women and Gender Studies) observes that the content “puts tension in the room, but it’s a necessary and resolvable tension.”

In this educational context, these difficult discussions prepare students to respond to the anti-Semitism we face in contemporary culture.



Haley Kress
Biomedical Sciences



Photo courtesy of Shulamith Posner-Mansbach/United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.



Kimberly Mayer
Biology



Photo courtesy of the Honors College.

Familiar Faces

Dr. Peter Sands

Honors College Director Peter Sands is a frequent sight in the halls of the Honors College, as well as across campus. Pete began teaching at UWM in 1997 and became the director of the Honors College in 2014.

Pete completed a PhD in English at SUNY-Binghamton and, later, a law degree at UW-Madison. Pete's educational background makes his interest in Utopian Studies and Slow Reading more evident.

His courses reflect his passion for teaching students to "read carefully and write well and be able to connect the two."

Currently, Pete is working on a book project about what he calls "law-topias," which he describes as "utopias that expressly deal with law and legal institutions or legal institutions which expressly deal with the utopian imaginary." He is also writing a monograph connecting the slow movement to utopianism.

When Pete is not handling responsibilities as Chair of the local chapter of the Slow Food non-profit movement Slow Food WiSE, Pete frequently reads, writes, cooks, and rides his motorcycle.

He also works in tandem with Honors College faculty member Benjamin Schneider in overseeing the Honors College Alternative Spring Break trip. Pete is enthusiastic about this experience because he is "committed to an ethic of service, and to passing that on to students."

His favorite part of being Director is teaching Honors students. He loves the inherent curiosity of the students: "Getting to be in a room with smart curious people, talking about things that they are all interested in is incredibly rewarding."

Accordingly, Pete's door is always open; he encourages students to stop by office hours to ask questions or just for a chat.

Morgan Mattly

Enrollment Coordinator Morgan Mattly is the newest member of the Honors College professional family.

In her job, Morgan focuses on recruitment and retention. She travels to area high schools and college fairs to communicate the Honors mission and the opportunities available to students in Honors.

Her days are filled with meeting current students to talk about their goals. She works with them on their class schedules, their majors, and what steps they might want to take in the future. "I like working with people who are passionate about saving the world," she says.

Before coming to Milwaukee, Morgan attended the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, where she received undergraduate degrees in Psychology and Spanish and then an MA in Business Administration.

While in graduate school, she worked for the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in a similar recruitment and retention role, trav-

eling to promote her university. After graduation, she worked as a business recruiter, but soon realized that recruiting and talking with students was her calling.

"I enjoy working with a high-achieving population," she says. "The aspirations that students have are always fun for me to hear about."

Since coming to UWM, her favorite part of the job has been getting to know not only the diverse and unique students in Honors, but also becoming more familiar with the staff and faculty.

"Every day is different," she says. "Getting to know the faculty, staff and students here has been fun."

Outside of the office, Morgan loves yoga, true crime novels, and traveling. While this is her first time living permanently outside of her home state of Nebraska, she studied abroad in Spain and returned twice.

Welcome to the Honors College, Morgan, we're glad you're here.



Amanda Niebauer
English



Photo courtesy of the Honors College.



The Aggregate:
Samantha Brusky
Avery Dedjoe
Kaitlyn Diskin
Seth Duellman
Halie Gehling
Haley Kress
Kimberly Mayer
Amanda Niebauer
Lena Orwig
Rachel Radomski
Allison Sweere
Olivia Wilson

The Aggregate's Voice

Honors College students are notorious over-achievers. They carry with them an aura of success, working their way through campus and their deadlines with clear-headedness and composure.

This issue recognizes the diligence of Honors students involved in conducting research projects. From behavioral studies to marine biology to archival film, Honors College students contribute more to their fields than we could have dreamed possible and we couldn't be more proud.

While this issue mostly describes current undergraduate research, we hope you'll read through to learn about the research faculty and previous Honors students are doing as well.

We are conscious, too, that we are only scratching the surface of what our students are doing in their research programs. We hope to inspire you to ask your peers about their amazing work.

This issue is also special to us because it is the first one as a National Collegiate Honors Council award-winner. The Council awarded the newsletter Second Place in the electronic publication category.

The list of thanks for this achievement is lengthy, but we wouldn't be here today without our faculty advisor, Honors College faculty member Benjamin Schneider.

Recognition is also due to our student co-founders as well, many of whom have graduated. As you'll see in this issue (and in previous issues), they continue to do amazing things.

Mostly, we wouldn't be here without Honors students. Your achievements and curiosity keep inspiring us to learn more about the events inside our halls, and, with the knowledge that there is always more, we are here happily to write about it.



Back row: Avery Dedjoe, Kimberly Mayer, Halie Gehling, Olivia Wilson, Seth Duellman. Front row: Samantha Brusky, Amanda Niebauer, Haley Kress, Kaitlyn Diskin. Photo courtesy of Ben Schneider. (Not pictured: Lena Orwig, Rachel Radomski, and Allison Sweere.)

Breaking News



The Aggregate



Images courtesy of anonymous.

Recently, *The Aggregate* found a diary buried in the shelves of the Honors library. The small notebook is dated around the time that Honors moved into the building.

The diary, which includes several photos, tells of three students who stayed overnight to "investigate the stories" they'd heard about the building being haunted.

Exactly which stories the students heard is unclear, but entries in the diary mention rumors of a nursing student's disappearance when the building was used as a dormitory. The writer remarks that "sometimes on quiet nights a howl echoes through the empty building, though there is no wind."

The diary documents part of a night spent in the building, a record of how the author and her companions felt throughout the night and of the "almost oppressive si-

lence" that "followed them throughout the floors like a fourth member of their crew."

Many of the pages that detail their discoveries have been ripped out or are illegible. The last entry is at 3:36 a.m. states that the group "felt like a presence in the building was demanding" something.

Our team has not been able to confirm that these students were in Honors or even students at UWM, and the diary itself is now missing. Stay tuned, we will investigate this story to its conclusion.

