Honors Program Finds a Home in Nunemaker

After eighteen years of looking, Westminster College’s Honors program has finally found a home at the south end of campus in Nunemaker Place. On August 15, the program officially moved into the three-story, 28 year-old building located on the banks of Emigration Creek. According to program director Richard Badenhausen, “the long wait is over!” The program’s 100 students and more than a dozen faculty members “are delighted,” he said, “to finally have a specific building in which to locate the many learning community activities that have been taking place in Honors over the past number of years.”

The Honors program is currently designed around guidelines outlined in the National Collegiate Honors Council’s “16 Basic Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors Program.” That document strongly recommends placing programs in a flexible space that allows for the centralizing of activities. Now that Westminster’s program has satisfied this key aspect of the NCHC guidelines, it can start discussions about strategic planning that will allow it to move above and beyond the NCHC recommendations.

Although a distinctive concrete building that was not necessarily designed to house individual programs, Nunemaker has been used over the years for a variety of purposes, including temporary quarters for the campus bookstore, classroom and storage space for the music and theater programs, a locale for weddings, and an intimate setting for poetry readings and academic lectures.

The current space for Honors has been designed according to models provided by other Honors programs around the country. The third floor houses a resource library containing books on writing, graduate school, and scholarships. The second floor includes the office of the Honors director, a desk and computer for work study students, and a lounge area in which to greet visitors or allow students to relax and read the Sunday New York Times, which is always available.

The first floor of Nunemaker contains three computer workstations, meeting space, and a large conference table for study groups or small lunches. On the southwest wall hangs an oversized bulletin board containing information about Honors students in the news. Although Honors has been in the building for only a few months, many students now regularly work on the computers, meet in weekly study groups, and write papers in Nunemaker. It also helps that officers of the Student Honors Council keep the building regularly stocked with pretzels, candy, dried fruit, and hot chocolate.

The first few months of the term have already seen a variety of successful events in Nunemaker, including a new two-day orientation program for incoming Honors students, fascinating presentations by Honors students Mike Acord and Shauna Walker on their independent summer research projects, a “Pizza with Profs” meeting, and a special lunch for Honors students and faculty with USA Today reporter Steven Komarow, who discussed the recently-concluded presidential election in light of his two decades of experience covering politics and terrorism.

Nunemaker has also been the location for non-Honors activities like the Aviation program’s orientation for new students, an election night party for about 40 faculty and staff members thrown by “War Room” moderators Bill Bynum and Jeff Nichols, and a lunch hosted by Gore School of Business associate instructor Susan Arsi to welcome a dozen visiting students from Africa.

Although the program is still getting settled into the space and a few modifications remain to be completed, Badenhausen is excited about the many different options now available to Honors students and faculty because of the building. He made a point of saying how grateful he was for the support of key administrators who have been trying to help Honors make such a move over the years. Badenhausen noted that President Bassis, Vice President Steve Morgan, Provost Cid Seidelman, and Dean Mary Jane Chase were “especially instrumental in helping locate the Honors community in a space that will enhance the learning experience for the many fine students in Honors.”
This fall, “Pizza with Profs” presented Honors students with a distinguished panel of professionals who related their individual graduate school experiences to help students get an idea of what to expect from that next educational milestone.

Panel member Juliette White offered her advice from a law students’ perspective. She is currently a member of the litigation department at the law firm of Parsons Behle and Latimer. After obtaining her bachelor’s degree she waited several years before going back to school for her Masters of Public Policy (M.P.P) from Duke University as well as her Juris Doctor (J.D.) degree from the University of North Carolina School of Law.

Jenni Merten gave insight into what life as a current graduate student is all about. She is in her third year at the University of Utah in the Ph. D. program in English, focusing on American Studies.

Finally, Greg Livers rounded out the panel, helping students gain a perspective on the particulars of medical school. He attended the University of Virginia Medical School and he is now finishing his residency in surgery.

All three panelists had practical advice regarding the initial application process. If you anticipate taking time off, said Merten, keep in contact with professors and send them writing samples to help them write your recommendation. White agreed. She stayed in close enough contact with her professors that she was able to get her recommendations. All panelists stressed the importance of thinking ahead.

The panelists also mentioned that taking time off between your bachelor's degree and any graduate work makes the application process a little trickier because you are more removed from the college environment. Know what you did in college, and figure out the dates for your tests, suggested Livers. Speaking of tests, while White recommended taking the LSAT now if anyone is thinking about attending law school, she also mentioned that she had benefited from the extra time she had to prepare for the exam.

Another necessary component to the application process is the personal statement. Dr. Badenhausen interjected that most students don't realize the importance of the personal statement.

“Try to find an authentic voice, not one that's fake, boring, or cliché,” Badenhausen offered. While a personal statement won't get you into a program if your test scores aren't high enough, Merten said, a striking story can put you above the rest once you are among the top applicants.

The panelists also addressed the cost of graduate school, which can be daunting, especially for students coming straight from undergraduate work. All three panelists agreed graduate school was an investment that was well worth the money. “I don't think anyone regrets going into debt” for school, White said.

While students munched on Wasatch Pizza, the panelists offered several tidbits of useful information. Don’t be discouraged by the application process, said White. Keep your options open and apply to several different schools. Visit and talk to the admissions department, she said. If you can, calling on the phone is better than e-mail as far as contacting the school in which you are interested. Look at publication records to see who you would like to work with, said Merten. Sit in on a course to see what going to school there would be like.

Above all, each panelist suggested using professors as useful resources. Professors can be mentors and offer helpful insights into whatever field interests you. Remember, said Merten, mentorship is not a sign that you need help. Livers agreed. “There are reasons people are professors — they like to teach. You will not be their first apprentice. The relationship is natural and expected.”

If you are interested in graduate school, visit the Honors Resource Library in Nunemaker or talk to one of your professors. You have nothing to lose and your entire future to gain.

-Teresa Elias
The Honors Resource Library Has What You Need

There is a place on campus where Honors students can go to find resources ranging from how to make the most of college life and write research papers to how to apply for graduate school. This place offers advice and helpful hints about each step of the undergraduate experience. This place is called the Honors Resource Library, and it is located on the third floor of Nunemaker.

Dr. Badenhausen started the resource library during his first year at Westminster. “Students were asking about graduate school, and I thought it would be a good idea to have that material on hand,” Badenhausen said. Since then, it has expanded into a helpful resource for all Honors students by offering information covering several topics.

The resource library can help those who need advice on how to write papers. In addition to stylebooks, there are writing handbooks for research papers, as well as almanacs to help with any fact-finding or research students may need. For the grad-school bound student, preparation guides are available for a number of high level exams, including the LSAT, GRE, MCAT, and GMAT. Additionally, the library contains a selection of guides and overviews concerning how to get into graduate school, what programs are available, and what graduate schools have to offer.

There are a number of texts on Honors programs in general, as well as advice for those just beginning their college and honors career. Badenhausen recommends Making the Most of College by Richard Light to help students adapt to college life. Particularly good for freshmen, the book shares the most important facts to ensure college success from students who have graduated and lived through the experience.

The resources available to students are listed on the Honors website, under the “For Students” section. Books may be checked out for 48 hours at a time. Badenhausen encourages all Honors students to check out the offerings and make new suggestions for resources to add to the library. Stop by Nunemaker and start educating yourself using the many resources available to you as an Honors student. -Teresa Elias

Walker and Acord Present the Results of their Honors Summer Research

Any Honors student who could use an extra $2,300 in their pocket may want to consider applying for one of the Summer Research Grants offered by the Honors program. Each year the Honors program offers three awards of $2,300 each in the spring.

Last year was the first year that these grants were given out. They provide a way for students to build a record of achievement during the summer, which will help students when applying for graduate schools and competing for national fellowships.

Last spring the first two grants were awarded to Shauna Walker and Mike Acord. Walker’s research explored “How myth affects the development of communities” and her mentor was Bridget Newell. Acord did collaborative scientific research with Bonnie Baxter on “Biodiversity in the Great Salt Lake.”

Walker is a junior seeking the Honors Degree majoring in Philosophy and minoring in History and Anthropology. She studied myth and how it has affected a large group of people. She focused on the “Rainbow Warrior Myth.” This myth says that when the Earth is dying, a group will rise up to defend the Earth. This myth has led to the formation of the Rainbow Family, a community and a movement from the 1960s made up primarily of hippies that lived on the road. Members of this movement meet in places all over the world once a year. The Rainbow gathering usually lasts about the first two weeks in July. The gatherings are much like peace gatherings. Walker attended the gathering this year, which took place in Northern California. She liked this research project because it combined a lot of different fields that she is interested in. If she has one piece of advice to people considering applying for the grant it would be “to pick something you are interested in, even if it is strange.”

Acord is also a junior seeking the Honors Degree and he is majoring in Biology with minors in Spanish and Chemistry. With Baxter, he focused on finding the bacteria that was living in the Great Salt Lake. Their research found a high percentage of viruses in the lake, a higher percentage than in most lakes. They even found viruses in the lake that have never been mentioned or studied before. Acord said that the grant really helped him out because he needs research like this in order to get into medical school. “And the bonus is that it was fun,” he said. His advice to other students would be to start early, make sure you know your topic, and get a good advisor.

To complete their projects Walker and Acord had to turn in a final paper of three to five pages detailing their research. That was the difficult part for Walker because she had about 30 pages to begin with. Then they each gave a 20-minute presentation of their findings on October 22 at noon in Nunemaker that was attended by about 20 students, faculty members, and parents.

For Honors students who are considering applying for the grants, applications will be emailed to students in January. Badenhausen advises potential applicants to start now locating a good mentor and looking into research projects that interest you.

-Jessica Shurtleff
Allison Owens

Allison Owens was the Co-Chair for last year’s Student Honors Council and a recent graduate of Westminster College. Owens is currently working on her first semester of a Masters program in Liberal Arts at St. John’s College in Annapolis, MD. “The Honors program was the inspiration for continuing in Liberal Arts,” said Owens, “St. John’s College promotes the same type of learning. It is interdisciplinary, with a heavy, heavy emphasis on learning through discussion.” She said that the program is perfect for Honors students. “If they enjoyed the Westminster Honors program, they'll love this.” Owens loves Maryland and she works part-time at City Dock Coffee in downtown Annapolis. So she’s been “caffeinat...
Hello Honors Students!

Greetings from your friendly neighborhood Student Honors Council! Welcome to a new year in the Honors program. A new year always brings a fresh start and so many opportunities. Some of our exciting events for this year are the Freshmen Honors Orientation, the National Collegiate Honors Conference (NCHC) in November and the Profs Pick the Flick activity series. We held our first, very successful Honors segment to Freshmen Orientation last August and look forward to the improvements that can be made with future orientations. Four students will talk about this experience in a session on the implementation of orientation programs at NCHC (New Orleans, baby!). We are also very excited to be using our new Honors space in Nunemaker Place and are always looking for good ideas on how to do so. One activity series that will be held in Nunemaker throughout the year will be Profs Pick the Flick where professors select their favorite movie and share it with the students. So, as the year progresses please get involved in the events that interest you. Remember, all students are always welcome at the monthly SHC meetings where you can express your concerns and desires for the future of the program. With your help we hope to make this a fun and exciting year in Honors.

Enchantedly Yours,
The SHC

Freshmen, Seniors Benefit From Honors Peer Mentoring Program

To strengthen our community of learners, the Honors program rolled out the peer mentor program this year for the incoming freshman.

The Peer Mentor Program matches each incoming freshman in the Honors program with an upper-class Honors student who shares similar interests in majors.

The mentors were selected last spring and then were paired with three or four freshmen “mentees.” Over the summer, the mentors sent a letter welcoming the freshmen to the program.

The peer mentor program was kicked into high gear during freshman orientation. Mentors led the book discussion groups, facilitated the hypothetical situation activity, and directed the “students only” introduction to Honors.

As a mentor, this was an exciting event to be involved in. It was great to be a part of the freshmen’s initial introduction to Honors and to each other. The freshmen’s enthusiasm for the program and the coming school year rejuvenated the returning students, and the experience of the mentors provided insight and showcased the great opportunities Honors offers.

Through the semester the mentors have kept in contact. Mentors and mentees have gone to events together. And mentors have even served as resources for advice on paper writing.

-Mary Dirks

Ask the Student Honors Council

Are there any majors that make it difficult or impossible to complete the Honors program?

Aside from the nursing program, which has a specialized curriculum and requires students to do most of their upper-class coursework off-campus, the Honors program works well with any field of study. There are some credit-intensive majors like Biology and Pre-Med where the full work-load and preponderance of labs makes arranging classes a bit tricky, but the Honors program is great preparation for students of all majors. With majors like Biology, you have to pay careful attention to your scheduling each semester, but it is done regularly by students each year. Similarly, some students in Education have found that scheduling their Honors classes can be tricky, but not impossible. We have a faculty in the Honors program at Westminster College and if you find yourself struggling and think you cannot fit everything in, simply talk to a faculty member and express your concerns. They will be more than willing to work with you to find the best way to get everything done. In fact, some majors like Biology have specific faculty members (Bonnie Baxter, in this case) who act as informal advisors to Honors students in that program. As always, planning ahead alleviates many problems down the road.

Senior Pepper Hayes and freshman Scott Tillett enjoy popcorn and Red Vines together at the SHC movie night. Although Hayes is not an Honors mentor, the peer mentoring program encourages this kind of interaction between freshmen and upper classmen. (photo: Nicki Blair)
**What do you think of Nunemaker? How should we use the building?**

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<th><strong>faculty response</strong></th>
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| **Doug Wright**  
*Assistant Professor of Art*  
Visitors to Westminster College discover a variety of architectural styles, some with clear formal relationships, and others which are unique. Perched over Emigration Creek near the south end of the Westminster campus is perhaps its most idiosyncratic building.

Nunemaker Place was completed in 1976, a gift of Mrs. Irene Nunemaker, a Presbyterian philanthropist from New York who made such gifts to colleges nationwide. It was primarily intended as a non-denominational religious retreat that could also be used for performing arts and other college functions.

Viewed from the front, which faces south, Nunemaker resembles the prow of a Viking ship that was not quite completed, with a roof that sweeps dramatically upward in a shape abstractly suggestive of praying hands.

Although intended as a chapel, it has a somewhat vernacular feeling, probably because of its purpose in welcoming all faiths. Its function as a spiritual retreat is suggested only by its shape — the ascending complementary external arcs of its roof, and the internal space, which invites thoughtful communication and an awareness of one's environment — the wood and stone interior, and the light and trees beyond the broad west windows.

The building is approximately the shape of a four-sided pyramid split on the diagonal. The west side opens on to a spacious, inviting patio, the north drops about twenty feet to the stream, and the front door on the southeast can be reached by a footbridge, which is easily defensible.

While the interior is essentially a large, single room, there are two balcony floors of receding depth overlooking the central space, and their west wall comprises almost all of the building's windows. The two eastern walls are expanses of unbroken cedar paneling which slope in to form an acute pyramid.

Nunemaker's intensely asymmetrical design yields both its strengths and its challenges. The openness of the west walls, which are almost entirely glass, is opposed by the opacity of the east walls. Since natural light comes from the west, the eastern part of the interior faces the problem of a lighting design that unifies the space. The interior spaces of each level terminate in unusually acute angles, which might be relieved and complemented by organic shapes. The wall surfaces of composite stone (pebbles set in cement) and cedar paneling lend themselves to strong material accents, such as glass, while their warm, neutral grays invite contrasts with saturated colors.

Many buildings are said to make a statement, but Nunemaker Place is more of a charming enigma. Students, faculty and staff have remarked that it is the perfect home for Westminster’s Honors program. It is an architectural forum for thinking, questioning, and expressing ideas — a place where one can feel at home sitting at a conference table in an elegant space, but not too far from the kitchen. And it is a place which seems to inspire idiosyncratic creativity, which is undoubtedly why the faculty has dubbed it “Delta House,” while students refer to it as “Moonraker.”

| **Seth Longhurst**  
*Freshman, majoring in marketing*  
Most human beings live in the present; taking every day as it comes, dreaming of what tomorrow has in store. In my opinion, the students at Westminster College, for the most part, are an exception. Everyone is here for a reason. Students are engaged, taking chances, and planning for tomorrow. This is what makes it different here.

During my experience in the Honors program, I have noticed that students sometimes do not engage each other aside from our ten-minute breaks in the middle of classes. When hanging around my fellow Honors students, I find myself talking about our readings or assignments but never about ourselves. I regret this. I don't feel like I have yet made any significant connections with my fellow Honors program students.

The Honors program is lucky to have a new addition. The issue at hand is this: how do we properly integrate this space into our program? When a firm acquires a new asset it is faced with the same problem: adapting its activities for the new acquisition and planning operations in that facility in order to get the most bang for their buck. How do we get the most “bang for our buck” with Nunemaker?

Nunemaker needs to become a place that Honors students can call home. A place where we can meet together and make connections and do things other than complain about our assignments. Nunemaker must become the type of environment where you can find a place to escape, whether you are hungry, angry, frustrated or tired.

We need to make Nunemaker a place that is interesting and fun and that attracts all of the Honors students. I would enjoy a nightclub atmosphere. Why drive all the way to Vortex or Area-51 when we could just stay here on campus? Honors students could escape from their troubles on Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and sometimes Tuesday nights! But if I look down deep inside and listen to the voice that I try to tune out so often (my conscience), I know what needs to be done. I just see a problem with the students and a new addition that I hope will fix it. I would like to see Nunemaker a place where we can have fun, relax, and get to know each other. Whether that entails having a dance in the basement, watching movies, or maybe even a Jell-O wrestling tournament (work with me here). Every person is going to have different needs and wants. I want a place where I can relax with my fellow students and get to know them on a deeper level. Others are not going to want exactly the same thing. We must find a proper balance and provide a slice of everything in order to include everyone.

I wouldn’t be the last person to admit that college students are lazy. It might be strenuous work getting them to use this space. If all else fails turn it into a bed and breakfast! We could make lots of money and everyone could buy me textbooks. Did I ever tell anyone how much I love textbooks, and quarters to do laundry? (My birthday is March 29.)
The news article, “Women’s Heart Guidelines Released,” appeared in the Salt Lake Tribune on February 5, 2004. This article by Steve Sternberg originally ran in USA TODAY. Sternberg reported the significant new finding by the American Heart Association with regard to the prevention of heart disease among women. The prevention guidelines were introduced to educate women of the lifestyle changes that should be made to maintain a healthy heart. His article was written with specific emphasis on aspirin and antioxidant therapy.

Some of the recommendations include regular exercise, proper diet, no smoking, healthy body weight, and ensuring your physician continually evaluates your heart disease risk and follows the recommended AMA guidelines. Statistics show that heart disease kills around 500,000 women each year. If women at risk for heart disease will follow the recommended guidelines presented, they may be able to dethrone heart disease as the leading cause of death for women.

Aspirin therapy, the use of antioxidants, and hormone therapy were specifically detailed in the report. The report concludes that women who are at low risk for developing heart disease should not be on the daily aspirin therapy that had previously been recommended. Women were also instructed to avoid using antioxidant vitamin supplements because they block cholesterol-lowering drugs. It was a long held myth that hormone replacement therapy offered women special protection against heart disease, but new studies have confirmed that hormone replacement therapy does not assist in the prevention of heart disease and can potentially be harmful.

The American Heart Association’s Report

The report released by the American Heart Association represents a major collaborative effort by representatives of the American Heart Association and 11 other organizations. The report consists of a 22 page document confirming new scientific research discoveries in the field of Coronary Vascular Disease. The new research studies contradicted information used as prevention guidelines by physicians when treating patients at risk for heart disease.

The American Heart Association report is a clinical report written to instruct physicians in the new guidelines that are based on the highest-quality evidence from all the available research related to Coronary Vascular Disease prevention. According to the new recommendations, the aggressiveness of treatment should be linked to whether a woman has low, intermediate, or high risk of having a heart attack in the next 10 years.

The statistics, quotes, and new medical finding disclosed in Sternberg’s article were accurate when compared to specific sections of the complete AHA twenty-two page report. His article closely follows the AHA report, dialogue from panel members, and the seven tables listing important statistics for Coronary Vascular Disease, risk factors, and proposed guidelines and recommendations.

Different Styles of Reporting Scientific Information

The AHA report is a clinical account of the research data gathered and written specifically as an educational tool instructing physicians and other medical personnel in heart disease prevention. For this reason, the report is written for medical personnel with a complete understanding and full comprehension of medical terminology, medical disease diagnosis, and medical disease abbreviations.

Sternberg’s news article attempts to inform the public of the main points of concern presented in the AHA release. His reporting technique differs greatly from that of the AHA research panel. The research panel presents a twenty-two page complete account of its research information. Sternberg briefly summarizes for the general public the important information which contradicts old myths and creates new guidelines for the prevention of Coronary Vascular Disease. He discloses only the important facts and highlights from the report. He successfully composes short articles that keep the information simple, interesting and easy for the reader to understand. The average layperson would not be interested in reading the complete twenty-two page report. The general public is only interested in the final analysis of the research data, the clinical recommendations, and the proposed new guidelines.

Problems Associated With Reporting

Technical Scientific Information to the General Public

When reporting scientific information to the public, it is important to realize that most of the population is not familiar with scientific terms, scientific abbreviations, technological references, or medical terminology. The journalist must use language and terminology the reader is familiar with and will clearly understand. It is extremely important when reporting medical information, that the information being reported closely follows the scientific research results. New medical information may cause an individual to change lifestyle patterns, how they take care of themselves, or may prompt them to alter medications, which could have serious results.

Reporting scientific information to the public is a complex responsibility. Each reporter must carefully read and then analyze the complete data they are using for their news release. They must then decide which information from the data is significantly important and should be passed on to the general population. In most cases, knowing which data carries the most significance would ultimately depend on the reporter’s knowledge regarding the subject matter he or she is reviewing. Therefore, some information that is extremely important and should appear in a general news report may be omitted if the reporter does not see the significance of that information.

Articles written for a major newspaper are usually given a restricted amount of space. Sternberg’s article concerning the AHA research data exemplifies this limitation. If the newspaper had allocated more space for this article, Sternberg could have written a more informative report and presented further data exposing the severity of the AHA information. Health officials acknowledged the importance of informing the public of the new landmark guidelines because most women know little about their risk for a heart attack or measures to prevent this incident. Just a few small additions to Sternberg’s article could have helped the reader understand more fully the importance of the AHA information.

Another potential problem with news reporting is the tendency for a reporter to use sensationalism to sell articles and newspapers. Reporters have a tendency to shape information so the material will sound more tragic, severe, exciting or dramatic than it really is. A reporter may want to spice up an article to make it more appealing and interesting to read. However, reporters should always follow the facts when reporting new technological or medical information in order to prevent unnecessary alarm among the general public.
From Your Editors...

Who was the first person to say, “time flies when you’re having fun”? Truth is, time flies whether you want it to or not. And while each passing day offers a chance at a new beginning, sometimes new beginnings are forced upon us. Take, for example, the transition from high school to college, and from college into the great unknown of “the real world,” that ambiguous place where all of our work suddenly counts toward our own personal goals instead of grades. The place where we will spend our time developing relationships with different types of people, completing projects we may or may not enjoy for the purpose of growth and experience, and creating our life stories, one day at a time.

Wait a minute, that sounds like college! As your fellow Honors students, we understand that college, while a transition, prepares us especially well for that real world environment, especially here at Westminster. In fact, there are a myriad of resources on campus available to help develop the skills necessary to make the change from college student to (fill in the blank here) easier. Check out Pizza with the Professionals on page 2 to get some insider advice on how to make it into and through graduate school. Also be sure to read about the Honors Resource Library, now housed in Nunemaker, to get your creative juices flowing about your bright, exciting and ever so looming future. Speaking of Nunemaker, what would you like to see our space used for? Turn to page 6 to see the wonderful ideas proposed in the Perspectives section. Don’t wait another minute to read this issue! Time is of the essence. Trust us, we know.

(A farewell from Teresa...) My last semester at Westminster has taken me a little by surprise, coming to a seemingly abrupt end this December. But I look back at my time with the Honors program and smile. I know I made it through a challenging set of courses and professors. But, more importantly, I realize how much I have grown on an intellectual level throughout my years here, not just from my amazing professors but from my awesome fellow Honors students. I am prepared for my future, and I am ready to take on the world, one day at a time. The transition from college to the real world is huge, but remember: new beginnings happen everyday…don’t wait until you graduate to take advantage of the opportunities each day brings your way.

Peace,
Pepper Hayes and Teresa Elias
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