Principia Consortium: Honors Study Abroad
Westminster Joins an International Honors Consortium

Starting in spring 2010, Westminster Honors students will have the opportunity to discover just what is underneath the kilt. Westminster’s program was recently invited to join the Principia Consortium, a group of Honors programs from about two dozen other liberal arts colleges whose students can now study at the University of Glasgow in Scotland. This unique study-abroad opportunity provides a rich learning experience in a foreign country without sacrificing the benefits of an “Honors” education.

The University of Glasgow was founded in 1451 when King James II of Scotland convinced Pope Nicholas V to authorize the establishment of a university. It’s the fourth oldest post-secondary school in the English-speaking world. Eminent personages have studied at Glasgow over the years, including six Nobel laureates and a myriad of influential literary, political, and legal minds. Today, the school is ranked 79th in the world’s top 100 universities and is one of the UK’s largest campuses.

Honors students at Westminster can now immerse themselves in Scottish culture at this prestigious institution. The consortium offers accredited classes in all of the major disciplines, including classes for international pre-med, liberal arts, science, and business students. Glasgow will also offer a specially designed elective Honors seminar called “The Ideas and Influences of the Scottish Enlightenment: 18th to 21st Centuries.” This course illuminates how major figures and ideas from the Enlightenment in Scotland continue to be important in intellectual and cultural life today. The Principia Consortium also boasts access to upper level, major-specific courses which are not usually available to study abroad participants.

This overseas program is different from conventional study abroad learning opportunities. Because of the partnership between Principia schools and Glasgow, the normal Westminster financial aid packages, including scholarships, are transferrable. Additionally, the Honors curriculum in the Principia Consortium enables students to maintain the benefits of interdisciplinary approaches to learning that define their educational experience.

Caroline Hill (an English major/Political Science minor in her junior year) is Westminster’s first participant in this program: she will attend during the spring 2010 semester, which will mark the second class of Principia students. Along with 3,000 other international students from twenty-four countries around the world, she will travel to Glasgow to begin classes in January. Caroline has been overseas before (conducting humanitarian work in both Latin America and Thailand), however she anticipates a new and unique cultural experience in Scotland. She is eager to experience intellectual stimulation in a different, yet accessible culture with an entirely new group of people.

In a more general sense, Caroline believes that this opportunity will be a successful and beneficial addition to the Honors program. She says: “It’s important to establish a network of Honors students and to experience an international connection with different cultures.” Caroline looks forward to experiencing an environment that is both similar and yet measurably different from her own.

The Principia Consortium enables and encourages better communication between those of different geographic and social backgrounds. Students interested in applying for fall 2010 will need to fill out an internal Honors application in late February before submitting one to the Glasgow program. For more information, contact Richard Badenhausen (Honors director) or Sara Demko (Director of Student International Services).

-Michelle Duprey
Freshman Orientation
An Enthusiastic New Group of Minds Joins the Honors Community

On August 20, thirty-five freshmen Honors students settled down on campus and were ready for their orientation to college and to the Honors program. At 11:00 A.M, all of them joined their peer mentors in the Gore School of Business. To start orientation, Dr. Badenhausen, Director of the Honors program, gave a speech to the students and their parents. His speech conveyed the excitement of the upcoming semester. Then freshmen had a chance to listen to their peer mentors talking about their experience in the Honors program. Peer mentors tried to calm the apprehension of freshmen about the pressure of Honors by telling them funny stories about Honors classes and trips. Their stories were greeted with laughter and prompted interesting questions. After this session, parents were invited to a lunch with President Michael Bassis, while all Honors students went to Nunemaker Place to discover their Honors building.

This was the chance for thirty-five students from 14 different states in the U.S. and Vietnam to make friends with each other. They then had the opportunity to talk to the Student Honors Council about the diverse activities in the Honors program. Freshmen then participated in a sample seminar with David Goldsmith and Chris Cline. They asked questions and discussed challenging topics like the nature of belief, particularly as it applies to God and Science. Later, the incoming class explored the campus on the “Great American Honors Race.” They brainstormed together and found the places given in clues. All freshmen students were excited about this game because they had opportunities to know more about each other as well as the campus, even in the near 100-degree heat. Orientation ended with pizza and ice cream. Honors freshmen enjoyed food and the chance to talk to peer mentors and other freshmen. They left Nunemaker excitedly and were absolutely ready for the new, challenging year with the Honors program. –Mai Ho

Living Arts Spotlight
Embracing Learning Outside the Classroom

The night began in a typical way for a Living Arts session: students slowly filed in to Nunemaker, conversing among themselves about their various classes, classmates and other common topics. The Living Arts sessions are weekly, two hour ‘classes’ designed to introduce Honors freshmen to a broad range of topics in addition to the regular curriculum. This particular night’s topic was ‘Outdoor Utah’, and was intended to educate the students on the various outdoor activities Utah has to offer by taking a hike to Donut Falls. Initially, a three hour trek in the mountains, in cold weather, with midterms approaching seemed to be the last thing anyone wanted.

Dave Goldsmith, Assistant Director of the Honors program and Associate Professor of Geology, gave a brief introduction to the activity and introduced his co-host Liz Rogers, the Director of Outdoor Programs. With little ado, we set out for the night’s adventure, despite most people’s hesitancy about embracing the week’s activity. After a shorter hike than anticipated, we reached Donut Falls, where there was a nature-made snow slide to enjoy. Morale immediately and palpably improved. Conversation picked up and joking began; as one student remarked: “So this is what the not-internet looks like.” Dave gave a short lecture about how mountains are formed, informing us that we were standing on what used to be tropical beaches, and Liz spoke briefly about similar activities throughout the year. At this point everyone took the opportunity to enjoy the moment: a nearly full moon reflecting light off the untouched snow, the stream trickling down the mountain, fresh air, and good company.

What started out as a gloomy night turned into one of the best Living Arts sessions. It appears from this example that learning outside the classroom (or outside the Honors building) creates unique hands-on, social and bonding experiences. There is more to a well-rounded education than reading from textbooks, and this activity embodied the Living Arts goal of providing both an alternative place and method for learning. –Sara Rees
Pizza with the Profs
Free Food and Economic Discussion: A Financially Pleasing Evening

On September 30, Honors students gathered in Nunemaker Place, eager to participate in Pizza with the Profs, an annual Honors event. The attendees devoured free pizza, an effective bribe for poor college students, while absorbing useful information beyond the typical classroom setting and happily acknowledging the absent threat of quizzes and grades. This event’s featured speaker, Dr. Dick Chapman, professor of economics at Westminster College, delivered a humorous lecture describing the continuing trends of the economy. This talk addressed important issues involving the cause of the current recession and explored possible options for recovery. Despite the thoroughly depressing nature of the topic, given the current state of the economic situation, Dr. Chapman maintained a light-hearted atmosphere and kept the audience chuckling. This effective strategy made the evening both educational and entertaining.

While addressing the situation and possible reasons for it, Dr. Chapman highlighted the lack of production, describing a graph of U.S. importation as “Asia, it’s getting so big.” He stated that if one wanted to “point a finger, it’s across the board,” but he placed particular emphasis on American reliance on credit and the serious mortgage problems in our country. He also focused on the importance of higher education, suggesting that education essentially provides the only effective way to get ahead of other competitors during this crucial time period. He pointed out that households supported by two different incomes with a master’s degree or higher have a tendency to survive better and even thrive in these hard economic times. The students in attendance found this fact comforting.

In spite of the current recession, Dr. Chapman insisted that the American economy remains very strong. After a few thought-provoking questions posed by the curious students, the night ended positively. Each student left a little better informed and prepared to deal with the economic challenges in their future.

- Kellie Carrigan

S’mores, Costumes, and Ghost Stories
Halloween in Nunemaker

The party started out with Halloween themed music in the background and s’more-making at the fire pit. Kelsey Arcocha, a freshman Honors student, remarked that “The food is delicious, I’m really glad that I came.” The get-ups were even better than the mallow and chocolaty treats, ranging from an Indian princess to Peter Pan. Mai Ho, an Honors student from Vietnam, treated everyone by dressing up in her traditional clothing instead of a costume. Christina Della Iacono won the “best costume” award for her inventive and humorous depiction of “the ghost of an Honors professor.” Honors students’ creativity was on display as well as their ability to cut loose.

Initially, the scary aspect of a Halloween party was exchanged for laughter and smiles as everyone ate and mingled. However, the evening then took a more frightening turn as people settled in to the reputedly haunted building after discussing the ghostly past of Nunemaker and Westminster’s campus. The sleepover seemed to be a setting for a horror movie, and Nunemaker’s haunting seemed more probable at midnight after a round of terrifying films. However, the ghosts of Nunemaker’s past decided this evening to spare the Honors students, who shuffled home early Friday morning after a successful spooky soiree.

- Yvonne Clark

It wouldn’t be Halloween without sweets! Students making s’mores outside Nunemaker. Left to right: Garrett Schoonover, Lauren Johnson, and Taylor Hoffman.

On October 29th, a parade of costumed Honors students carrying pillows and blankets entered Nunemaker for a night of Halloween festivities. The Student Honors Council sponsored Nunemaker Halloween Party was a way for Honors students to relax after midterms with roasted marshmallows and ghost stories. Furthermore, this opportunity allowed them to get cozy with the home of Honors at Westminster.
The Natural Sciences of Hawaii
Honors and the May Term Phenomenon

A unique attribute of Westminster College, May Term allows book-burdened students fresh out of an entire year of classes to travel across the globe in search of an ideal environment to facilitate learning outside the classroom. By offering opportunities that span multiple disciplines and deviate from traditional curricula, Westminster's May Term prompts students to investigate topics and interests purely for knowledge's sake.

This past May provided an ideal setting to afford a cohesive expedition across the disciplines of Honors, Biology, and Chemistry by spending an entire week in Hawaii. Led by Professor of Chemistry Robyn Hyde, Professor of Geology and Honors Assistant Director Dave Goldsmith, and former veterinarian and Professor of Biology Judy Rogers, the diversity amongst backgrounds and interdisciplinary approach encouraged Honors students to explore all aspects of the island. Dr. Hyde’s poolside lectures detailing the calcium carbonate composition of corals and underwater photosynthesis illuminated the dangers of climate change currently affecting marine life—repercussions which all students noticed when snorkeling in the Wai’Opae tide pools. Dr. Goldsmith routinely encouraged students to grab single handfuls of sand in order to point out coastal erosion and techniques for determining the age of numerous beaches with the naked eye. With the help of Dr. Rogers at the Onomea Bay Nature Sanctuary, students broadened their understanding of intricate plant systems in addition to the physiology and perplexing behaviors of tropical wildlife.

Fortunately, student testimonials continue to reinforce Westminster's campus-wide praise and support for the May Term travel experiences. According to senior Honors student and Economics major Gus Paras, “the Honors May Term experience in Hawaii taught me specifically about the awesome power of nature, but more importantly, provided the necessary conditions for me to realize the crucial role scientists and society have in preserving and maintaining our jeopardized environment.”

Westminster’s 2009 Honors May Term in Hawaii represented learning outside the traditional classroom par excellence—whether scuba diving with exotic fish species, trekking to the 14,000-ft summit of Mauna Kea, adventuring through the world-renowned National Botanical Gardens, or analyzing the geography of the rarest beaches while riding the waves, thinking of something more satisfying and intellectually stimulating remains a difficult task.

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Demetri Coombs and Jorgeia Raftopoulos posing at the Hawaii Tropical Botanical Garden and Nature Sanctuary, Onomea Bay

Gus Paras snorkeling at the Wai’Opae Tide Pools.

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Mark Ortiz rode his bike from Canada to San Francisco this summer, traveling 1,200 miles in 17 days!

Stacy Blaylock and Tracy Hansford are leading the V-Day 2010 Campaign. Other Honors students on this year’s committee include Jillian Edmonds, Christina Della Iacono, Robin Hill, Cassidy Jones, and Amanda Ruiz. Last year’s campaign, led by Amanda Ruiz, raised $12,700 for the Rape Recovery Center.

Ali Monjar is the chair of this year’s ASWC Film and Lecture Series on sexuality.

Tracy Hansford, Natalia Noble, Josh Zollinger, and Andrew Waterhouse ('08) starred in Westminster’s production of *Macbeth*.

Brody Leven and Robin Hill spent the summer surfing, mountaineering, and skiing around South America.

Meghan Hekker interned for the Utah Humanities Council over the summer, and was volunteer coordinator for the Salt Lake City Utah Humanities Council Book Festival this October.

Ashley Pederson ('09) is interning for the Morris K. Udall & Stewart L. Udall Foundation with the Stewart L. Udall Parks in Focus program.

Garrett Schoonover, John Cook, and Fehmi Yasin are three of the five members of the Griffin Five, an a capella men’s choral group.

Yvonne Clark is the current Publicity Chair for Westminster’s National Society of Leadership and Success.

Amanda Ruiz has a public service internship as a Victim Advocate with the Salt Lake County Sheriff’s Office this year.

Jillian Samels is leading the Social Science Club this year with Trevor Beal and Jillian Edmonds.
Meeting with Ahmadinejad
Honors Students Learn Tolerance on a National Stage

For years Westminster College has advocated the idea of “learning outside the classroom.” In order to facilitate this motto thus far, it has long supported May Term classes and Study Abroad programs around the world. At the end of September, four Honors students, Camber Stoddard, Cooper Henderson, Tess Graham, and Tyler Sutton, had the opportunity to travel to New York to meet with Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad at the United Nations General Assembly. These students were part of a group of ten from Westminster. Only 30 students from all of Utah and 100 from around the country attended.

Students learned firsthand how important diplomacy and international and intercultural relations are. As President Ahmadinejad answered questions from the student assembly, it soon became apparent that questions outside the “realm of politeness” would be pushed aside gently. Camber Stoddard observed, “I didn’t realize how much effort it required to get even the smallest things communicated. It’s all politics, but if you’re persistent, there is a very real opportunity to learn incredible things.” Camber is ready to apply her new understanding of diplomatic collaborations to her own life, and has a new respect for the United Nations and the immense amount of work they put into international affairs.

Of course, as with any event involving more than two people, there were disagreements. “In some ways, a lot of what went on was a façade,” commented Tyler Sutton. “A façade that everyone participated in because it is the best way we know how to communicate in such fragile situations. It definitely benefitted everyone involved though, and a lot of eyes were opened.” He later went on to clarify just how difficult politics are. Sometimes the media skews certain facts, and politicians can use this to their advantage. Thankfully, more often than not, they are simply reporting said facts. Tyler was “disappointed, yet relieved, to see that most of the facts reported in the media are generally true.”

Learning to negotiate for one’s cause while at the same time working with dozens of other parties requires a delicate touch. “Diplomacy is much more subtle than most people would expect. It’s not just about being polite, it involves respect for everyone’s differences, and then accepting and celebrating those differences, not merely tolerating them,” according to Cooper Henderson. He is critical of recent events in Iran, but put them aside when he realized that he could accomplish more at the conference by acknowledging fundamental differences between our government and that of Iran, and exploring common interests rather than calling for new sanctions. “It’s much easier to get things done when you’re in an atmosphere of respect rather than hostility,” said Cooper. “The first step is always the hardest, but is essential to moving forward. Whether negotiating with foreign diplomats or arguing with roommates over dirty dishes, collaboration is the only hope for genuine progress.”

-Caitlyn Stringham

Student News & Notes

Chris Roundy and Tyler Sutton spent the summer in Uganda collaborating with Utah State University’s Engineers without Boarders program. They assisted Dr. Han Kim, professor and Assistant Director of Westminster’s Department of Public Health, with malaria prevention education.

Robin Hill and Tracy Hansford are traveling to the Indian village of Wai this winter to find a location for the library Westminster will build there.

The Honorable Mention took second place in this year’s NCHC newsletter contest. This is the fourth year out of the past 6 that the newsletter has won an award in this national competition.

Cooper Henderson, Tess Graham, Camber Stoddard, and Tyler Sutton are part of Westminster College Ethics Bowl Team A, which won the Wasatch regional qualifying competition, defeating Weber State A team in the finals 153 to 149!

Daniel Perez (’06) received a Howard Hughes Medical Institute Research Fellowship worth $38,000. He is participating in a research project to test a new chemotherapeutic drug this academic year.

Grant Rotunda (’09) was commissioned as an ensign in the U.S. Navy upon graduation from Westminster.

Amanda Hobbs is the editor-in-chief of Ellipsis, Westminster’s literary and art magazine.

David Mursener-Gonzalez is spending the semester studying in China at Nankai University.

Last spring, the Sudan Community Empowerment Project, led by Amanda Ruiz and Ben Rackham (’09), raised $2,700 for the construction of a school in Southern Sudan and collected 9 boxes full of school supplies for a local refugee youth education program.
The city of Washington, D.C. serves as the archival home to America’s political, historical, and cultural roots, while also functioning as a hub of international affairs. Similarly, the Honors experience seeks to combine insights from multiple disciplines and investigate ways that such knowledge might inform discussions of contemporary issues. Eight Westminster Honors students spent five days in October exploring these dynamic integrations at the annual meeting of the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC), held in the global city of Washington D.C.

Members of the Westminster group gave presentations on a huge range of academic and Honors-related topics, from medieval literature to clinical biology, from a ‘how to’ on leading student activism initiatives to an examination of Ben Bernanke’s response to the financial crisis. The mediums of participation varied from guided discussions to poster presentations to panel sessions. Presenting and attending presentations is a significant aspect of the academic conference experience, and Westminster students capitalized on both opportunities. Demetrius Coombs noted the kind of academically creative thinking and love of knowledge encouraged by an Honors education and celebrated at NCHC: “… many people expressed surprise that [Paula and I] conducted the research project ourselves, not under a graduate student or post-doc. The bottom line is that Westminster students…conduct research purely for knowledge’s sake and out of their own self-driven interests.”
Though the conference functioned as an idea exchange, the five-day stint in the global city also served as a memorable time for touring and exploring. The students maximized their trip to the nation's capitol by visiting D.C.'s many famous monuments and museums, researching graduate schools, enjoying Halloween festivities in the Nation's Capitol, and touring the Capitol Building guided by an aide in Congressman Matheson's office. Exploring the city of Washington D.C. affected students in some major ways. Upon visiting Georgetown University Law School and the Supreme Court Building, a glassy-eyed John Cook IV, first-time D.C. visitor and pre-law student, admitted, “[the city] frankly whetted my nerdy palate.” For Cassidy Jones, networking with other Honors students from across the country was an immeasurably rewarding feature of the NCHC experience: “I met students from Kentucky who gave me fantastic advice about studying abroad and preparing to apply for a Fulbright Language Scholarship. It blew my mind to discover the connections I had with other like-minded kids half a country away.” Westminster students participate annually in the NCHC conference, contributing advanced research, spirited debate, and innovative ideas about the Honors experience to a national audience. When it comes to learning outside the classroom, a conference experience like NCHC—presenting, attending sessions, losing oneself in strange cites, and discovering cultural landmarks—is certainly an incalculably valuable occasion.

-Cassidy Jones and Paula Porter
Living in your birthplace, speaking your native tongue, and eating familiar foods are just a few of the things that a typical college student might take for granted. However, Mai Hoang Ho is not one of those college students. A young woman from Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, Mai came to Westminster to start her education as a business major with an eye on hotel management, eager to learn in a completely different environment and experience college in an entirely new way.

Mai’s desire to become a hotel manager stems from the profession of her father, a hotel manager in Vietnam. Visiting the hotels in and around Ho Chi Minh City and Vietnam, Mai realized that the Vietnamese hotel system was not up to par with any of the European or American hotel chains. She hopes someday to start a Vietnamese hotel chain that would be just as reputable as those in Switzerland, which has some of the best hotels in the world. Switzerland is also where Mai plans to go for two years of management experience after her graduation from Westminster in 2013. Encouraged by her parents and aided by the Exemplary Achievement Award, Mai set out for Salt Lake City. “It wasn’t hard at all for me to move [to America]; I knew I was doing the right thing for my education and my parents supported my decision.” After her graduation and two years of business experience, Mai plans on returning to America to complete her MBA. She will then spend another year getting hotel management experience somewhere in the United States and return to Vietnam to start her own hotel business.

Mai faces challenges living in the United States when English isn’t her first language. “The hardest part of the language is the slang and the American jokes; people usually have to explain them to me or else I won’t understand them,” says Mai. The learning style is also very different. “In Vietnam, if you answered the question wrong that meant you didn’t know any of the material. Here, I’ve learned that I have the right to say what is right and what is wrong, and I’ve learned how to think critically and give my opinion in class, especially in Humanities I.”

An avid volunteer both in Vietnam and at Westminster, Mai is a member of the Circle K club, the Finance Club, the International Student Association, and she is an ASWC business senator. Some of her hobbies include shopping, reading, and watching horror movies. “American horror movies are not scary at all; the Japanese are the best.”

So far, Mai has thoroughly enjoyed living and learning at Westminster and is looking forward to the rest of her four years here. - Kelsey Arcocha

English professor Chris LeCluyse knew early on which path he wanted to follow and has stuck with his passions ever since. In seventh grade, after reading The Story of Language, he became interested in the history of English as a language. About this same time, he discovered his love of studying music.

In college, Professor LeCluyse pursued a double major in Music and English. After graduating from Oberlin College with degrees in English and Music Performance, he went on to receive his Masters and Doctoral degrees in English from the University of Texas at Austin; he decided to pursue English as a vocation and Music as an avocation.

Chris is new to the Honors program, teaching Arts in Performance with Doug Wright as his first Honors course. In this class, he and Doug have come up with a curriculum which confronts art as a primary text, helping students to develop and trust their own powers of perception so they are comfortable responding to art on their own terms.

Professor LeCluyse is relatively new to Westminster, coming to the college in 2006 from Texas. After a nationwide job search, his decision came down to two schools. When he met the students and heard how the faculty really cared about their students, and was also presented with the opportunity to teach, he knew that Westminster was the place for him.

Although Professor LeCluyse’s career path led him to choose English, he still performs all over the country with professional musical groups. In fact, one of the groups he sings with released a CD that was nominated for two Grammy awards in 2009. Chris travels to San Francisco about twice a year to perform with early music groups there. In June 2008, he began a professional early music group in Salt Lake City, called Utopia. When asked about his double pursuit of both Music and English in college, Chris says that they complement one another. “I find that people in either field are unaware of the other,” he says. Singers don’t know that what they’re singing is poetry, and English students treat songs as text: these two fields go hand in hand beautifully. In fact, Chris’ English dissertation was aided by his study of Medieval music, and his study of English helps him to interpret songs.

Whether teaching English classes or Honors seminars, Chris remains passionate about language and music, and applying his passions both inside and outside of the classroom. - Jackie Wilson
Describe a personal learning experience that shifted your view of higher education. Explain how learning outside the classroom affects students’ college experiences.

**Faculty Response**

Larry Anderson  
*Professor of Biology, Pre-Medical Advisor*

My life experience occurred when I was an Assistant Professor at a small Catholic college in New England. Up until that point, I had mostly observed academic individuals bent on enhancing their own careers. Success was seen as “graduating” to an administration job that paid well and where power served to replace more basic human values, like compassion and knowledge for knowledge’s sake. Then I met Sister Laura, a biologist and department chair, and quite as an aside, a nun. She was a teacher yes, and a good one, but she was much more. She was a caring human being that could see past one’s political and social views, to the heart of humankind. So when an unusual disease broke out in America, I shouldn’t have been surprised by her response. She didn’t write a grant for bench work that would have been beyond our laboratory means, she didn’t give lectures to the public, and she didn’t author a best selling book. Instead she opened, with the help of her contacts in Hartford, a hospice. She resigned her academic position at our college to take care of AIDS patients. I visited the hospice shortly after it was opened and saw her work in biology. The physical condition of her patients was, to say the least, alarming. Without someone like Laura, I can’t imagine how they would have taken care of themselves. Since there was little medical science could do for them in that period, they didn’t survive. However, they died well cared for and as comfortable as was humanly possible. And they were loved.

When I returned to the college and started my teaching schedule for the fall semester, I had a new perspective on our role as academics. Teaching was a gift you give to others, not a means to elevate your status in the community or comfort your insecure mind, but a gift of human sharing and caring. Each of us, no matter who we are, stands on someone else’s shoulders. Each of us, at some time in our lives, becomes helpless, like those AIDS patients in Laura’s hospice. Helping students understand microbiology and then also helping them apply this understanding to a socially beneficial career has been my small contribution to our society. It may come with little financial benefit and lots of headaches, but it is a rewarding and satisfying career when viewed in this context. I’ll never forget the good Sister. We might all benefit from following her example more often.

-Larry Anderson

**Student Response**

Cooper Henderson  
*Class of 2011*

The transition from high school to college presents a unique set of challenges and opportunities for any young adult. At Westminster, Honors students quickly realize the elevated academic expectations associated with the move to college. For me, the first two years of college served as an exercise in personal discovery. My initial foray into a world without curfews or mandatory school attendance offered a potentially destructive amount of freedom. The discretion to decide whether to complete my homework, attend class or party presented an agonizing dilemma. However, one experience permanently changed my view of college as an endless social gathering, my experience working for Governor Jon Huntsman Jr.

Throughout high school I excelled in debate; my weekends were spent arguing about everything from current events to philosophy to who would win a street fight between Oprah Winfrey and Paris Hilton. I could talk about any subject with precision and authority and never doubted the infallibility of my claims. Despite this training in public speaking and persuasive techniques I never learned how to listen. This aversion to considering beliefs different than my own caused me to smirk when a mentor suggested I apply for a position in the Governor's office. As a devout member of the Democratic Party struggling to abandon my disdain for a certain President, the prospect of working under a Republican made me physically ill. Luckily, I came to my senses and pursued an internship for Governor Huntsman despite my own political opinions.

During my time at the State Capitol I worked with a wide range of individuals with conservative opinions, seemingly irreconcilable with my own. In discussing our disagreements with these Republicans my old rhetorical tactics fell flat; these people legitimately disagreed with me and would not fall for such trickery. Eventually, I came to realize that these talented and intelligent individuals sacrificed lucrative opportunities in the private sector to apply their knowledge through public service. While I may oppose their ideology until the bitter end, my experience working collaboratively with Republicans for four months highlighted our areas of common interest and agreement. This learning experience outside the classroom prompted me to reevaluate my behaviors within academia. I hope to respectfully consider arguments or interpretations other than my own while contesting differences with civility.

-Cooper Henderson
Each year, at the Honors Parents Orientation Lunch with President Bassis, an experienced Honors parent addresses the new Honors families for a few minutes. This year’s speaker, Paul Henderson, has a son in the program (junior Cooper Henderson) as well as a daughter (Hailey), who was just starting at Westminster the weekend he spoke.

Thank you Dr. Badenhausen and the entire Honors program at Westminster for this opportunity to share just a few thoughts with you today. It is, indeed, an honor to be here. My name is Paul Henderson and I come today from Moab, Utah where I’m the Assistant Superintendent for Arches and Canyonlands National Parks. I’m also the very proud parent along with my wife Betsy of not one but two students in the Westminster Honors program.

For the last 30+ years I’ve had the privilege of working for the National Park Service. In addition to having lived and worked in some of this country’s most cherished landscapes, I’ve enjoyed the added benefit of mingling with college students throughout my career since many of our seasonal employees come to us either still in college or having just graduated. It’s given me the opportunity to watch the challenges and changes for today’s college students compared to what it was like for me some 35 years ago when I entered my freshman year of college, and as most of you know, it is indeed very different!

Each year Beloit College publishes their Mindset List which makes observations about the incoming freshman class. Their list for the Class of 2013 was just released this past Tuesday and I quote from the introduction: “If the entering college class of 2013 had been more alert back in 1991 when most of them were born, they would now be experiencing a severe case of déjà vu. The headlines that year railed about government interventions, bailouts, bad loans, unemployment and greater regulation of the finance industry. The Tonight Show changed hosts for the first time in decades, and the nation asked ‘was Iraq worth a war?’”

“Members of the class of 2013 won’t be surprised when they can charge a latte on their cell phone and curl up in the corner to read a textbook on an electronic screen. The migration of once independent media—radio, TV, videos and CDs—to the computer has never amazed them. They have grown up in a politically correct universe in which multiculturalism has been a given. It is a world organized around globalization, with McDonald’s everywhere on the planet. Carter and Reagan are as distant to them as Truman and Eisenhower were to their parents. Tattoos, once thought ‘lower class,’ are, to them, quite chic. Everybody knows the news before the evening news comes on.”

“Thus the class of 2013 heads off to college as tolerant, global, and technologically hip…and with another new host of The Tonight Show.” And we gather here today as we drop off our contributions to the Westminster College class of 2013.

Two years ago we were here dropping off our firstborn at Westminster to enter the Honors program and we couldn’t be happier with the experience that our son Cooper has had here. Today we are dropping off our baby to the same capable hands and we’ll drive home to Moab tonight as empty-nesters. That means rethinking the number of melons that we buy on the way home in Green River, relearning how to shop and cook for just two instead of an always fluctuating number of teenagers, and hoping that we still enjoy each other’s company. One thing we won’t have to worry about is the environment to which we are delivering our daughter Hailey.

Our children never really had a choice whether they were going to go to college or not. Like our parents before us, it was just a given. I can still hear my mother saying many times something to the effect of “I don’t care if you grow up to dig ditches, you’ll do it with a college degree.” Both Betsy and I come from families of educators and so both of our children had the basic college decision made for them literally before they were born.

What our children did get to decide for themselves was where they went to college. Oh to be sure Betsy and I both had our ideas and desires but we tried very hard to stay out of their thought processes in selecting a school. Our son started out with the sole criteria that it not be anywhere in Utah. He flirted with Stanford and he looked east on more than one occasion. Westminster was never really on his radar screen and I’ll admit that neither Betsy or I knew much about Westminster. When he made his decision to apply here, we supported that like we had all others, our role generally being relegated to paying application fees and letting him weigh the pros and cons on his own. He followed his general application with an application to the Honors program and soon heard that he had been admitted to both the school and to this unique program and he accepted both. I guess that’s when Betsy and I started to do our homework on Westminster.

Not only did we find a wealth of information on the web but as we discussed his choice with others in Moab we kept discovering more and more Westminster alumni – and to a person we never heard anything that wasn’t positive about the educational experience that they had received here. After having had our mailbox stuffed with offers from colleges and the military for what seemed like forever, we started to pay close attention to the mail from Westminster. And one of the things that pleasantly surprised us was that a lot of it was addressed to us. I don’t recall my parents ever getting much more
than invoices from my college and here we were getting invited to various orientation sessions and having many question answered even before we could ask them. As a parent it made it very easy to feel like our participation and contribution to our child’s education extended far beyond the checkbook. This school cares about the whole person when they admit a student and by extension that includes you.

I asked our son what he thought I should share with the parents of the incoming freshman Honors program, and this is what he told me:

1. The Honors program is a very supportive community of extremely motivated students. Parents of incoming freshmen should know that their son or daughter will be surrounded by other students with a desire to learn and excel. The program consists of roughly 135 students which represent a wide range of academic and extracurricular interests. Despite this diversity among Honors students, they are all leaders in their respective fields.

2. The freshman sequence in the Honors program, the Humanities classes, is an invaluable experience. Incoming freshman can expect to “re-learn” how to write. While their first papers may come back from the professors bleeding in red ink, Honors students become skilled writers during their freshman year. Humanities, like all Honors courses, have an interdisciplinary curriculum—which means two professors from different academic fields. This combination of subjects, whether it is English/History, Economics/Political Science or Biology/Philosophy, have been an invaluable learning tool.

3. Being an Honors student offers a variety of opportunities outside the classroom as well. For example, I became involved with Congressman Matheson’s campaign only after he came to meet with Honors students at Westminster. This event with Matheson was not open to the rest of the student population; it was Honors exclusive. Salt Lake County Mayor Peter Cooron and former Governor Jon Huntsman have also held Honors events over the past two years. Honors students also have immediate access to people within the Westminster community to help them pursue scholarships, admission to graduate school or studying abroad.

4. The Honors program can also be . . . fun. Our Honors student government, the Student Honors Council (SHC), plans events throughout the year. One of the most popular events is the annual Monte Carlo Night, in which students and professors get dressed up, have a Texas Hold-Em tournament, play other casino games and have a good time. Throughout the year the council also hosts multiple evenings of “Pizza with the Profs” and “The Prof Picks the Flick.” During these events a professor selects a film for viewing, watches the movie over pizza with the students and discusses the movie afterwards. With an annual softball game, the spring banquet and various guest lecturers, every incoming freshman should be able to find their own niche.

5. The Honors program has a beautiful facility in Nunemaker Place. The building is a great resource for incoming freshman with computer terminals, wireless internet access, a conference table, a resource library, love sacks and a kitchen stocked with snacks. Nunemaker is also where Dr. Badenhausen’s office is located. In short, this building can act as a great place to work on homework and unwind in a comfortable environment.

That comes from a third-year Honors student at Westminster – after about the fourth time I asked him for it!

The transition from high school to college is a difficult one for parents and students alike. It doesn’t matter as a parent if this is the first time you’ve had a child leave home or the fifth time, it can still be challenging, difficult and sometimes confusing. And of course for your child it’s their first time, no matter how many siblings may have left before them.

These feelings are understandable. As parents, we’ve fed, clothed, drove, enrolled and consoled this curious, intelligent, talented, creative, petulant genius that we’ve loved since we first heard the words, “you’re pregnant.” We want our kids to stay away from the beer keg, keep out of trouble and remain permanently on the dean’s list. The Honors program at Westminster will provide every opportunity for students and parents alike to realize their dreams.

We all send our children to college trusting that it will open doors to their future, and I assure you that the Honors program at Westminster will do just that. But just as important as the doors that will open for your children are the windows that will open for you. You’ll have new insights to your son or daughter with each conversation. When they return home over the holidays you’ll be amazed at what they are doing, how they are thinking, and what they are studying. Now to be certain they will also arrive with plenty of dirty laundry, a depleted bank account, and they will do a good deal of sleeping at first. But once those basic needs have been taken care of, you’re going to meet an amazing young adult. A young adult that is excited about their education, and thinking about their future, even though it can all be somewhat overwhelming at times. They will have made huge discoveries about themselves and the really cool part is that you’ll get to share in those discoveries.

Millions of parents have made it through this transition and you will too. Understand the new way your kids need you now. Assure them they will be fine, that you have confidence in their intellectual capabilities, that they will make lots of friends and that you’re only a cell phone call away.

Before you get into your car, pull out your calendar, put the first parent’s weekend on it, smile as you do, then confidently hug them goodbye. As you drive away, pray they won’t do what you did when you were their age, shout out the window to make Every Day Matter and promise them you’ll do the same! You did a great job giving them wings, Mom and Pop, now let yourself delight in their first solo flight, and rest assured that this program will provide a fine safety net beneath them.
Dear Colleagues,

As editors of *Honorable Mention* we have the unique privilege to observe all the exceptional things Honors students do. We must admit, we’re honored to call you classmates and friends. From Scotland to Hawaii to Africa and back again, Honors students expand their boundaries and learn in all sorts of settings.

The world is changing in new and exciting ways and Honors students are witness to this change. Discussing policy with President Amidenijad or economics with Professor Chapman, we all participate in the dynamic world around us. *Honorable Mention* has changed, too; we welcome Elizabeth Nelson, a supremely qualified freshman, as a new layout editor. For us at *Honorable Mention*, Elizabeth’s addition represents the stellar refinement Westminster Honors experiences with time and the addition of new fantastically talented students.

Honorably Yours,

Paula Porter        pjp0122@westminstercollege.edu
Cassidy Jones       clj0307@westminstercollege.edu
Meghan Hekker mlh0309@westminstercollege.edu
Jackie Wilson        jnw0421@westminstercollege.edu
Elizabeth Nelson ean1107@westminstercollege.edu
Co-editors of *Honorable Mention*

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Left to right: Jake Wayman, Vice President; Camber Stoddard, Secretary; John Cook IV, President; Tracy Hansford, Treasurer.

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**Student Honors Council**

Dear Honorables,

As we once again enter a new school year, we welcome those of you who are new to the Honors program as well as those who are back for yet another round of intellectual stimulation. We could not be more thrilled with the prospects of the program this year and hope that you share our excitement for the adventures and opportunities that are certain to arise. As the Honors Community continues to expand, we cannot wait to see what each of you will contribute. Please realize that this Honors program is made for and dedicated to every student! We want you to take ownership of it and make it work for you personally.

We look forward to the collaboration of thought between old and new talent and are stoked for the semesters ahead.

Your Student Honors Council

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**From Your Editors**

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**Honors Program**
Westminster College
1840 S. 1300 E.
Salt Lake City, UT 84105
www.westminstercollege.edu/honors

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