BYU HONORS PROGRAM

CREATING NEW KNOWLEDGE

2019 YEAR IN REVIEW

Dani Hallows, current Honors student, aspiring meteorologist, intern at KUTV.
Fall of 2019 marked the beginning of my fourth year as the Honors Program Director. Students I started with are now progressing toward their Honors theses. In fact, we are on track to set a record in 2020 for the number of theses completed in a year. Our ultimate goal is to help students contribute to the growing body of new knowledge, art, and discovery. It's exciting to see an increasing number of our students doing just that! This 2019 report celebrates Creating New Knowledge.

The center pages feature Honors theses published this year and shows dissemination around the world. You will see an astounding number of downloads in over 115 nations. In addition, more students are presenting their Honors work at conferences and publishing in disciplinary venues. Funding from a recently formed endowment will help facilitate even more opportunities for dissemination of Honors thesis research going forward.

The report also highlights a few new initiatives to support students throughout their Honors experience. In the introductory course, top faculty from a variety of disciplines share how they create new knowledge and art. Students participate in ongoing thesis workshops to better understand the research and creative process in their respective disciplines. We continue to integrate student advisement and Honors curriculum to advance progress in Honors and develop leadership skills, and in 2019, we held our second annual Honors Conference allowing students to share their Honors Thesis and Great Questions research with others in the Honors community.

In offering the BYU Honors Experience, we enjoy the ongoing contributions of faculty across the campus, support from administration, dedicated staff and exceptional students. It is a pleasure to associate with such great people. Give me a call if you too would like to become involved!

Spencer Magleby,
Honors Program Director

Our mission is achieved by cultivating:

◆ Academic Excellence
◆ Community of Scholars
◆ Interdisciplinary Thinking
◆ Skills of Inquiry
Prestigious Scholarships

The mission of the Committee for Prestigious Scholarships is to seek out BYU’s most outstanding students and assist them as they pursue prestigious national scholarships to attend the top graduate schools in the world. Now housed in the Honors Program, our new Scholarship Coordinator, Audrey Hanks, works with the Honors Associate Director to advise junior and senior students in applying for top-tier scholarships like the Truman, Rhodes, Marshall, Fulbright, and Gates-Cambridge Fellowships.

New This Year

Thesis Workshops

This year we launched an ongoing series of thesis workshops designed to help students through each step of the thesis process. Advisors and experienced students provide instruction and advice on a series of rotating topics including Finding a Topic, Forming a Committee, Writing a Thesis Proposal, and Defending & Publishing Your Thesis. Our students particularly enjoy connecting and working with peer thesis mentors with expertise in their specific fields of study.

Book of the Year

We love the idea of a common read among our Honors community, so we introduced an Honors Book of the Year. Participating Honors students, faculty, and staff together are reading 1493: Uncovering the New World Columbus Created by Charles Mann. Our aim is to bring together a community of many differing disciplines and experts—to quite literally be “on the same page,” as we explore interdisciplinary connections from 1493 to today. A series of discussions, lectures, museum visits, and events focus on the text, culminating with an upcoming visit in 2020 from the author, Charles Mann.

2019-2020 Recipients of the Robert K. Thomas and Khona Awards

NATHAN COLEMAN
Statistics

“...I love Honors and writing my thesis has been an enlightening journey. The topic of my thesis centers around Portuguese author Sophia de Mello Breyner Andresen’s poetry. This scholarship not only helps me finish my undergraduate degree with Honors, but will help me pursue my dream of becoming a physical therapist.”

MEREDITH HANNA
Art History & Curatorial Studies

“...The Honors Program has been the highlight of my undergraduate experience. My Honors thesis explores persuasion in advertising. The scholarship goes a long way toward allowing me to focus on finishing school strong and maintain good financial habits.”

MADALYN LYMAN
Portugese

“...I love being able to see connections to other disciplines in my engineering coursework. My Honors Thesis compares multi- and single-class neural networks in segmenting knee cartilage. This scholarship is critical in achieving my future goals, allowing me to focus on my honors research and kick-start my academic and professional goals.”

BRYAN SAMUELSON
Marketing

“...For my thesis I am studying the development of social capital in the university setting using geo-data generated by mobile phones. Schools, corporations and other social organizations could benefit from this research. The scholarship allows me to do my best work on my thesis and focus on school.”

LOGAN THORNELOE
Computer Engineering

“...My experience at BYU is synonymous with the Honors Program. I have begun working on my thesis titled: "Cancer Mortality Risk, Fine Particulate Air Pollution, and Smoking in a Large, Representative Cohort of US Adults. This scholarship has helped me focus on my education and development as a student.”

JAMES WHITE
Information Systems

“The Honors Program is a cherished part of my college experience. My Honors Thesis is focused on a group of 18th century portraits by George Knaptor. With the prospect of an exciting, yet costly graduate education in the future, and a wedding this year, this scholarship helped alleviate pressing concerns.”
The Honors Program now publishes completed Honors theses online. Our students' work is available to scholars around the world at scholarsarchive.byu.edu. The map shows readership in 2019.

**Student Thesis Highlights**


- **Dallin Colgrove**, 2019 Honors Graduate in Mechanical Engineering. His thesis, "Steering System for SAE Baja," examines the different types of steering geometry for the BYU Baja vehicle. 566 downloads


Top researchers and artists from across campus introduce students in the **Honors 120** course to a wide variety of disciplines and perspectives. This year, twelve faculty shared great questions and experiences in their fields, demonstrating how they create new knowledge and artistic works. Here we highlight just a few:

**Jani Radebaugh** (Geology) discussed her ongoing work with NASA to prepare for its Dragonfly Mission to Titan, one of Saturn’s moons. NASA plans to send a drone to explore the surface of the planet.

**Ken Christensen** (Chemistry) presented his research on the tsetse fly, which transmits African sleeping sickness. Using biosensors, he monitored the parasites’ glucose levels in an effort to find a better cure for the sickness.

**Rosalind Hall** (Music) talked about her experience directing the largest collegiate male chorus in the country, BYU Men’s Chorus. She shared her insights on creating excellence in choral music.

**Brent Adams** (Animation) shared a short called “Grendel”, which won BYU’s Center for Animation its 6th Student Academy Award. He also talked about the amount of work and detail that goes into creating such a film.

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**NEW IN 2020**

Our Honors curriculum reflects the dynamic nature of the program and continues to evolve to meet contemporary needs. Changes coming in 2020 (in blue) are aimed to further enhance the Honors experience for our students.

Here’s what’s in store:

- **HNRS 120**: Intro to Honors Interdisciplinary Thinking, 2 credits
- **HNRS 310**: Foundations of Interdisciplinary Leadership, 1 credit
- **HNRS 320**: Great Questions Tutorial, 3 credits
- **HNRS 101/110**: Intro to the Honors Experience, 0.5 credits
- **HNRS 22X**: Making Unexpected Connections, 0 credits
- **HNRS 390R/391R**: Honors Leadership Practicum, 3 credits
- **HNRS 499R**: Honors Thesis, 9-6 credits

Learn more about the Honors courses on our website: honors.byu.edu

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**OBJECTIVES**

- Raise retention rates with an introductory course
- Define a credited leadership experience
- Assign appropriate credit for the Honors thesis
- Provide opportunities for disciplinary and study abroad credit
2019 STATISTICS

Enrollment and Thesis Trends

- Students Enrolled
- Students Committed
- Thesis Proposals
- Theses Defended
- Graduates

Students By College

- Physical and Mathematical Sciences: 13%
- Life Sciences: 14%
- Nursing: 2%
- Marriott: 4%
- Honors: 3%
- Fine Arts and Communications: 9%
- Humanities: 11%
- Education: 2%
- Engineering and Technology: 11%
- Family, Home and Social Sciences: 22%
- Open: 9%

Contributing Faculty

- Thesis Advisors (completed theses): 27%
- Late Summer Honors Faculty: 7%
- Honors 120 Guest Presenters: 8%
- Guest Lecturers & Speakers: 12%
- Alcuin Fellows: 10%
- Honors Coordinators: 36%

2019 STATISTICS

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GRADUATE PLACEMENT

- 62% Graduate School
- 38% Workforce
- Recent Graduate Schools
- Recent Employment

1249 Students
196 Faculty

2019 Honors Graduates
Alcuin Fellows | 2019 - 2021

Matt Bekker | Geography
Family, Home, and Social Sciences

Dean Duncan | Theatre & Media Arts
Fine Arts & Communications

Luke Howard | Music
Fine Arts & Communications

Jacob Rugh | Sociology
Family, Home, & Social Sciences

Kurt Sandholtz | Management
Marriott School of Business

Kerry Soper | Comparative Arts & Letters
Humanities

Alcuin Fellows | 2018 - 2020

John Bennion | English
Humanities

John Colton | Physics
Physical & Mathematical Sciences

Aaron Eastley | English
Humanities

Cynthia Hallen | Linguistics
Humanities

Julianne Grose | Molecular & Micro Biology
Life Sciences

Paul Richards | Civil Engineering
Engineering

Patrick Steffen | Psychology
Family, Home, & Social Sciences

Evan Ward | History
Family, Home, & Social Sciences

Alcuin Fellows | 2017 - 2019

Dennis Cutchins | English
Humanities

Michael Call | Comparative Arts & Letters
Humanities

Samuel Otterstrom | Geography
Family, Home, & Social Sciences

Brian Poole | MMBio
Life Sciences

Mark Purves | Russian
Humanities

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The Honors Program is part of
BYU | Undergraduate Education

BYU Honors Program
Brigham Young University

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