

Honors Scholar

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Nathan Griffith, Editor

A Look Back At Last Semester

(Nathan Griffith)

During the Fall 2004 Semester, the University Honors Program was able to accomplish quite a few things.

The semester was kicked off with a get together that allowed all of last year's Honors students to see each other after what, for some, was an entire summer's time without seeing each other. It also allowed the older students to meet those who were new to the program, whether they were freshmen or sophomores who signed up last year. Also, nominations for positions on the Student Honors Council were accepted during

this meeting.

After the elections were held, the Student Honors Council met for the first time and discussed our goals for the semester. The big issue was fund-raising. Ideas were tossed around the table, and eventually we decided on what we would do for the semester.

As well as fund-raisers, the SPSU Honors Program was able to send two of its students to New Orleans to attend the National Collegiate Honors Council's annual conference. Harita Patel and I were the two students selected to represent our program.

The semester

was brought to a close with one final get together before the students and faculty were to go on their winter break. This party was organized with the help of Dr. Reichert and the program's social director, Todd Yost.

Students, Honors faculty and members of the Honors Committee enjoyed chicken fingers and other treats as a break from their studies. Last semester was a great one for the program, but I only have more hope for what we can accomplish in the spring.

Fundraising Efforts

(Amanda Hyde)

The Honors program got off to a wonderful start this year. We had a host of new students who brought a great new energy to the pro-

gram and to the Honors Council. In fact, four of the ten members of the Honors Council are entirely new to the program itself and their fresh ideas were very welcome as we began

to think about our fundraising plans for the year.

"Fundraiser" always seems to be a

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Highlights of Last Semester

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word that brings a feeling of dread and time consuming effort to the students, teachers, and any parents who might become involved! However, this was not the case for this year's Honors Council. We immediately began to collectively brainstorm and our ideas began to take shape. We did learn, however, that time seems to sneak up on you, especially for the students! Most of us have jobs, are taking a full load of classes, and are devoting a good bit of time to making this program better for our fellow students.

As a council, we knew that we wanted to do fundraisers that no other program or club has done at Southern Poly. Todd Yost, our social director, was pushing for a popsicle sale while the weather was still warm, but somehow that one didn't quite work out! Maybe next semester! Our next focus turned to us to October. We talked about setting up a haunted house, but realized we would need a little more funding. Finally, we decided to do a Halloween Candy Sale! We bought

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Halloween bags, which were a big hit, and candy to fill them. We set up selling sights all over campus and had volunteers from the program serve as our Honors Student sellers. It was a lot of hard work and we couldn't have done it without those volunteers. We sold every single bag of candy!

Our next idea was a little more

community based and a lot more involved. With the election in our sights we decided to lean toward to campaign of "You don't have to support the war, but you should always support our troops". We wanted to do something that the community might be interested in, along with our students. We came to the idea of selling "support our troops" car magnets. This was definitely something that no one else had tried.

Of course, this fundraiser was a little more time consuming than our candy sale and we ran into several obstacles. Near Thanksgiving our students really began to get into study mode, as our exams were right around the corner.

The fundraiser turned into more of an individual effort as each student from the council took magnets to sell to their friends and family outside of the school. With much thanks to them we

are now making a profit on the magnets as well. Next semester, we plan to continue with the sale, reaching out to our students at

Southern Poly and to our surrounding community.

We are planning to use part of the profits made from this sale, to make donations to the American Red Cross, who will set up care packages in the Honors Program's name to send to our troops overseas.

It is wonderful to have a program that supports so much. As



One of the five different types of magnets we are

students, we are supported academically, and as many of us voted in a Presidential Election for the first time this year, as citizens we are supporting our nation. The Honors Program has already come a long way since last year's fundraising efforts, and we will continue to do our best!

Thank you, to all the students, faculty, and parents who helped us pull these fundraisers together. Our volunteers were also a tremendous help. If you are in the Honors Program and have not volunteered yet to help out in these fundraisers please try to do so in the coming semester. We have all had a wonderful time getting to know each other and we wouldn't want you to miss out!!

Honors Students In New Orleans

(Nathan Griffith)

From November 10-13, two students, representing the Honors Program, and the Program's Director, Dr. Reichert, attended the 39th Annual Conference of the National Collegiate Honors Council, which was held in New Orleans at the Hyatt Regency. The two students who attended were Harita Patel and I.

The conference was, in one way, a means to getting representatives of other Honors Programs around the nation to get together

and share ideas for the betterment of each program. Ideas were shared in small lecture settings on fundraising, newsletters, and ways to be a better student in general.

Not only was the conference an opportunity to share ideas, but it was also a way

to learn a bit about the city of New Orleans itself. Our first morning at the conference, we were treated to a live performance of authentic Creole music. There was a session devoted to Creole dance techniques, as well as various opportunities for students to get out see the city of New Orleans itself.

The second morning, John M. Barry, author of the award-winning novel of the 1927 flood of the Mississippi River *Rising Tide*, gave a fascinating lecture



Downtown New Orleans From My Hotel Window



Harita Patel and Nate Griffith

on the topic. Another lecture was devoted to the history of how so many different cultures came to live in New Orleans and how it had become a “city of contrasts.”

For me, I felt the conference was a success. Not only did it expose me to what other honors programs around the nation were doing and what was working, but it also gave me the chance to get a better insight into the city of New Orleans and all of its oddities.

A Look At This Semester's Classes

While the Honors Program here at SPSU offers opportunities for its students to get together and better know each other, sometimes you forget one very important aspect of the program, the classes. Here is a look at two of the honor's classes that will be taught during the course of this semester.

Calculus II *Meighan Dillon*

Honors Calculus II is a fast-paced, problem enriched version of the usual Calculus II course that we teach at SPSU. We spend much less class and homework time on rote material, allowing us to explore deeper mathematical ideas in the prob-

lems and expository material in the course.

The curriculum varies a bit from the standard Calculus II course, as well. Students coming from Honors Calculus One have already seen exponentials, logarithms, inverse trigonometric functions, L'Hopital's Rule, and parametric equations so these are not developed from scratch, as

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they are in the standard Calculus II course.

A bright, motivated student who has not had Honors Calculus I will catch up on these topics as they arise in problems.

By the end of the course, students in Honors Calculus II will have seen deeper material related to sequences and series than in the standard course-- for example, error analysis--- and may have had some exposure to linear algebra, differential equations, and vector methods, depending on the interests of the students in the class.

Latino/Hispanic Ethnic Studies

Dr. Nuhfer-Halten

NARRATIVE

The first thing we think of when we speak of anyone Latin or Hispanic is the question of the name. Is there ONE name for this sea of immigrants flowing to the US? Is there one people or many? What is the nature of these people? What historical, political, social, economic, linguistic, psychological, geographical, etc., forces formed these people? What is their artistic, literary, cultural, etc., product? The purpose of this course is to help students to understand

the "abanico" (Spanish fan—one fan, but many parts) of Latin/Hispanic ethnicities. The goal for the students is to become more effective professionals, more empathetic, in their interaction with these groups. They are at the same time unified and diversified in their formation and their influences. Why are there cultural conflicts with the dominant culture? Why are there cultural conflicts among the Latin/Hispanic groups? This course seeks to open up a dialogue among these groups and especially between these groups and the dominant culture.

HONORS VS. REGULAR ES1100

As opposed to a regular classroom-bound course in Ethnic Studies of Latinos and/or Hispanics, the Honors course will include *experiential* contact with several of those communities in our locality.

There will be a class visit to the Latin American Association, to the Mexican Consulate, to individuals of other Latin/Hispanic groups. The students' experiences will also include readings from influential writers of literary and journalistic genres. They will include personal contact with daily events in the

target cultural life—birth, death, religion(s), dating, marriage, foods, dance, etc.

For those students who are monolingual, the interpretive and translation services of advanced students of Spanish will be made available for interviews and readings. This will provide the *interdisciplinary component*.

Collaborative work will play an integral part of the course. Each student will play the role of informant for one of the target ethnic groups. Written reports, panel discussions, business and professional simulations will provide opportunity for *oral and written communication*. *Critical thinking skills, creative thinking and problem solving* will be tested when the students are asked to explain the representation, practice and product of Latin/Hispanic Civilizations and cultures ("big C" and "little c") to each other's represented ethnic group, and to the dominant Anglo-Protestant culture of the U.S.