

Issue #4: Fall 2016

External Reviewer: “Be very proud”

For two days in September, the Honors Program hosted John Zubizarreta from Columbia College as he conducted an external review of the program. Zubizarreta was one of two reviewers who came to Elon in 2007 to review our program as it was transitioning to the cohort-based, 4-year, thesis-focused model we have in place today. The review went very well, with Zubizarreta finding our program to be based on industry best practices, functioning smoothly internally, and supported well by the administration. “Truly, the university should be very proud of the program’s high academic quality, achievements, and leadership” he noted in the introduction to his report. After meeting with Honors directors, students, teaching faculty and university administrators, including staff from Advancement and Admissions, as well as Provost House and President Lambert, Zubizarreta was able to make some suggestions for areas the program might explore in the future, including targeted recruitment, alumni development, and working to reduce the stress caused by initial stages of the thesis process. We are using the external review to map our next five-year plan for the Honors Program that will be implemented next year.



Honors Wins Big in LLC Challenge

This year the Honors LLCs placed first and second in the LLC Challenge run by Residence Life. First place went to the Honors Pavilion with 496 points, and second place to the Honors Floor with 449 points. Both were more than 100 points above the third place winner. On their way to this success, both LLCs placed in the mural competition, with the Honors Floor earning 2nd and the Honors Pavilion earning 3rd. The Honors Floor also tied for first in the video challenge. Congratulations to all our awesome LLC residents!

First Year Retreat Builds Community



This year we hosted our first annual First Year Honors Retreat, the brainchild of Honors Fellows Ben Bridges and Emily Petersen who recognized a disconnect among some of their peers, particularly those who did not live in one of the Honors LLCs. Our Honors Fellows Community Director Jacquie Lanphear jumped on board and worked with a group of volunteers and the Honors Directors to develop a retreat that would bring all the first year students together for fun and bonding. We took on the challenge of the Ropes course and a scavenger hunt, broke bread together, and developed creative and humorous ways to introduce Honors faculty and administrators to each other. Once the Directors left, the

students engaged in a “Break the Circle” exercise of self and group awareness, and wrapped up the day with a bonfire and s’mores. Surveys following the retreat made it clear that the event was a huge success. “The retreat definitely helped establish relationships within Elon 101 and made it more comfortable to interact not just with the other fellows, but also the directors,” said one student in their anonymous feedback. Another: “The retreat helped me learn about the goals and expectations of the honors program and make unexpected friendships.” We also received some excellent feedback to tweak this year’s retreat to make it run even more smoothly.



Winter Term Shifts to Italy

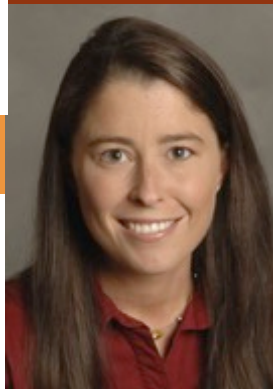
For the past three years, the Honors Program has taken a group of first year students to study in Turkey for Winter term...until this year. Due to volatility in the region, with terrorist attacks claimed both by the PKK and ISIS, we were forced to move our Honors Winter Term course from Turkey to Italy. Luckily, our two veteran faculty, Mike Carignan and Lynn Huber, have both taught in Italy in the past and were able not only to construct an excellent course in this new locale, but to continue to explore the theme of cultural crossroads that has made the course so intellectually and experientially stimulating. The course will be taught in Italy again this year, though our thoughts are with our veteran tour guide Sabahattin “Saba” Canliel and our other friends and colleagues in Turkey as they navigate this difficult time.



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Our New Associate Director: Dr. Barbara Miller Gaither



As many of you will remember, Associate Professor of Communications Barbara Miller Gaither was slated to begin her term as the Associate Director of the Honors Program in the Fall of 2015 when she found out she was having twins. In stepped her COM colleague Assistant Professor Lucinda Austin. Lucinda has been an incredibly effective Associate Director, not only executing her duties in a sensitive, thoughtful and timely manner, but serving as a true partner, visionary, and valued colleague. We are going to

miss her when she leaves for UNC after the summer but we are very excited to have Barbara step back in and continue the excellent work established by both Lucinda and Mike Carignan before her.

Barbara has served as Interim Associate Director twice already, has mentored numerous Honors students, and has served on the Honors Advisory Council. She is also an accomplished teacher and scholar, having received the Faculty Excellence in Scholarship Award in the School of Communications and numerous paper and poster awards at national academic conferences. She was also the recipient of Elon's full-year research sabbatical. Please join me in welcoming Barbara *back* to Honors. Keep an eye out for the next Honors Newsletter where we'll introduce you to Dr. Lynn Huber who will become the next Honors Director in Fall 2017.

Elon Heads to NCHC

This October, Elon will be sending a robust faculty contingent to the National Collegiate Honors Council annual conference to present some of the research they have been conducting to improve Honors education at Elon and around the country. Professor of Economics Steve DeLoach and Professor of Anthropology and Folklore Tom Mould will present a paper titled "Evaluating Alternative Measures of Success to Improve Recruitment." Former Honors Directors Maureen Vandermaas-Peeler, Professor of Psychology, and Mike Carignan, Associate Professor of History, will lead a conversation on "A Global Experience for First-Year Honors Fellows at Elon University" based on their work with the Honors Winter Term course. Associate Professor of English and Director of the Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning Deandra Little joins Mike Carignan and Tom Mould to lead a workshop on how to develop Honors Teaching Workshops for Honors faculty.

Homecoming Just Around the Corner

Make your plans now to join us for the 4th Annual Honors Tailgate at Homecoming this year: Saturday, October 22nd.



Check us out online

Asheville Service Trip: Elon University students participated in a January service project at the North Carolina Arboretum where they constructed natural shelters, built stick looms, and prepared children's garden and craft activity areas, among other assignments. <http://www.elon.edu/e-net/Article/125568>.



Achievements of our 2016 Grads: Read the stories of the impressive accomplishments of our most recent grads.

<http://www.elon.edu/e-web/academics/honors/Achievements.xhtml>



Honors Students Get Social and Get Involved:

Check out photos of recent Honors events, including a recent float trip down the Haw River and a service day at Loy Farms:

http://www.elon.edu/e-web/academics/honors/honors_events.xhtml.



HOME COMING: 4th Annual Honors Homecoming Oct. 22