

HONORS COLLEGE

2017-2018 ANNUAL REPORT

1975 DeTrobriand Street, Salt Lake City, Utah 84113

Annual Report 2017-2018

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The Honors College at the University of Utah

At the Honors College, dedicated teachers and motivated learners collaborate to build an innovative educational environment, where everyone is challenged to think, ask questions, take risks and explore the full scope of the world around them. The work is demanding, the standards are high, but here students acquire the intellectual tools that will enrich their lives and enable them to thrive in a rapidly changing global community.

PHILOSOPHY

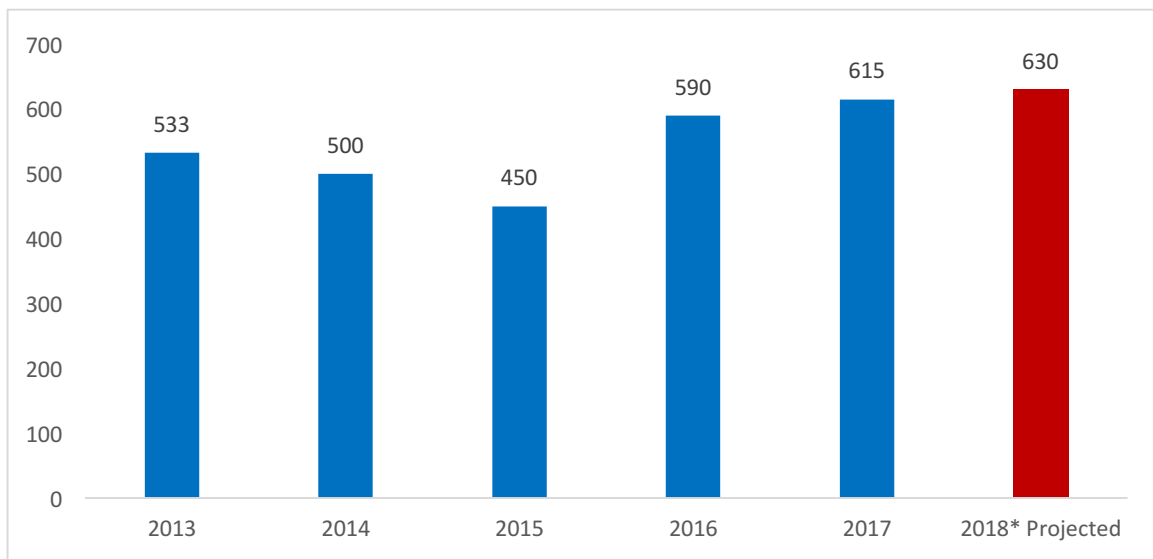
The Honors College provides intellectually curious, motivated students with the foundations of a rigorous liberal arts education within the context of a world-class research university. Honors College students engage the best of two worlds—an intimate liberal arts experience, including coursework and living-learning opportunities, joined with a world class research university and the opportunity to engage in independent research, working closely with top researchers and scholars.

The Honors College is designed for students who choose to complete a demanding undergraduate curriculum that includes both depth and breadth of study. Students graduating with an Honors Bachelor's Degree from the University of Utah will demonstrate distinction in their majors as evidenced by coursework and a research thesis or capstone project, and they will be able to situate their discipline within a larger University context, including a sophisticated understanding and articulation of how their discipline relates to other disciplines, both presently and in the past.

HONORS STUDENT BODY

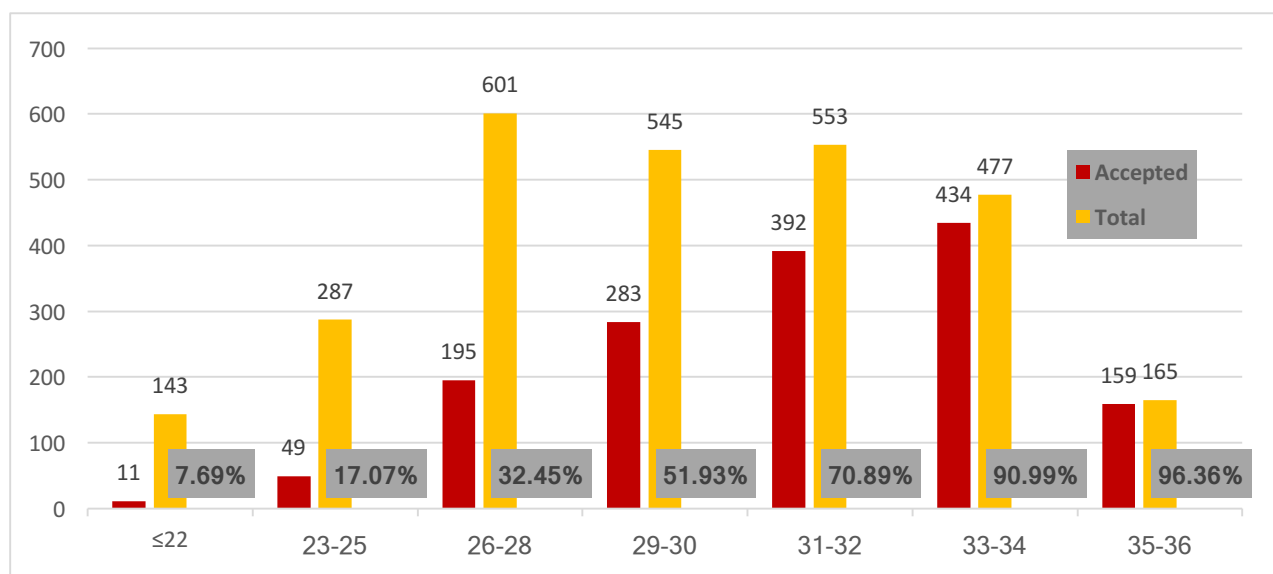
The Honors College has a student body of approximately 2300. For the 2017-2018 academic year, the College received close to 2800 applications for 600 spots. Applicants are reviewed on their high school CGPA, rigor of high school courses, test scores, essay quality and interest in a liberal arts education. To ensure impartiality and reduce subjectivity, two readers review each applicant and approximately 30% of applicants go on to a third reader.

Figure 1. Incoming class size 2013-2017, including projected Fall 2018 numbers.



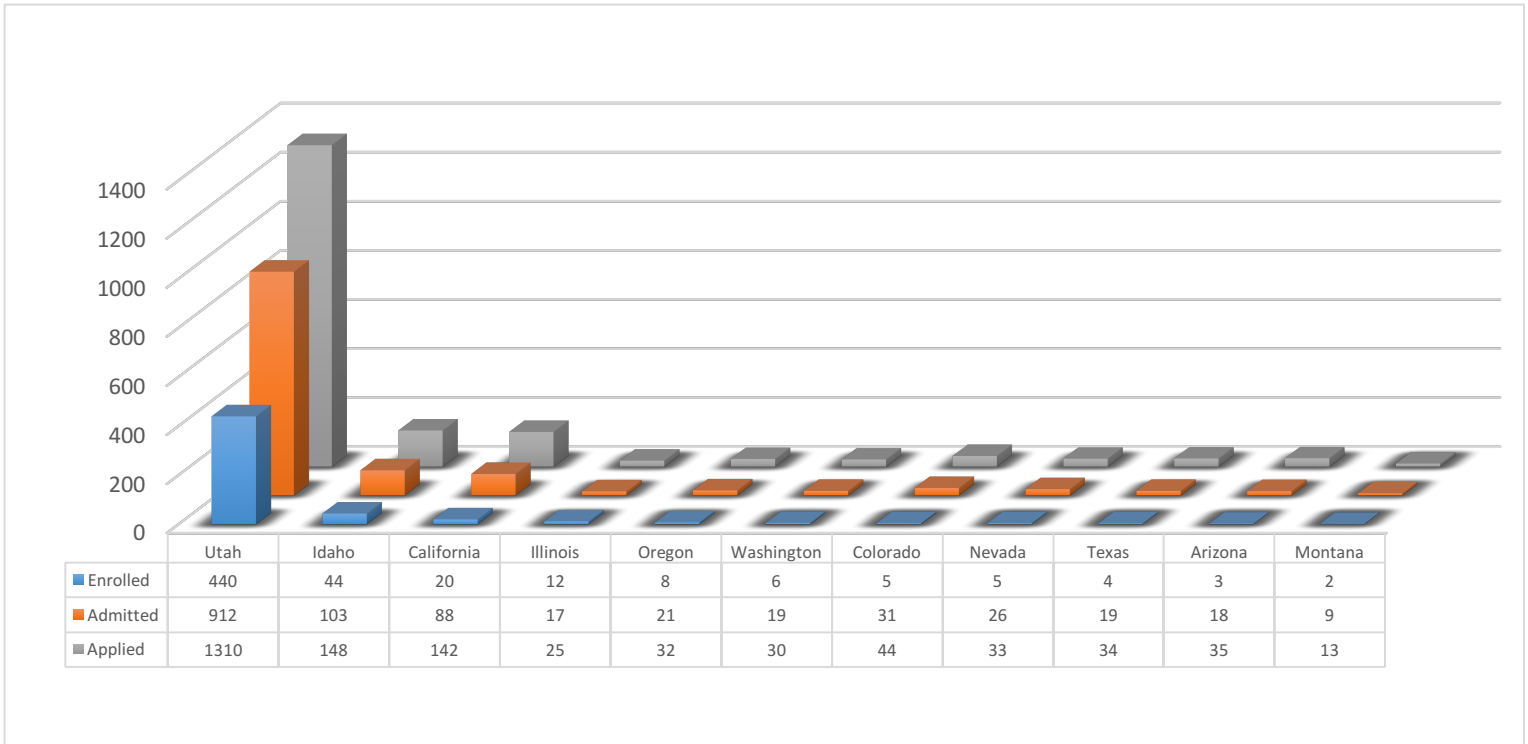
The caliber of students accepted to Honors is extremely high with the average high school CGPA at 3.9 and average ACT at 30 (Fig. 2).

Figure 2. 2017-2018 ACT Scores for Applicant Pool and Acceptance Rates.



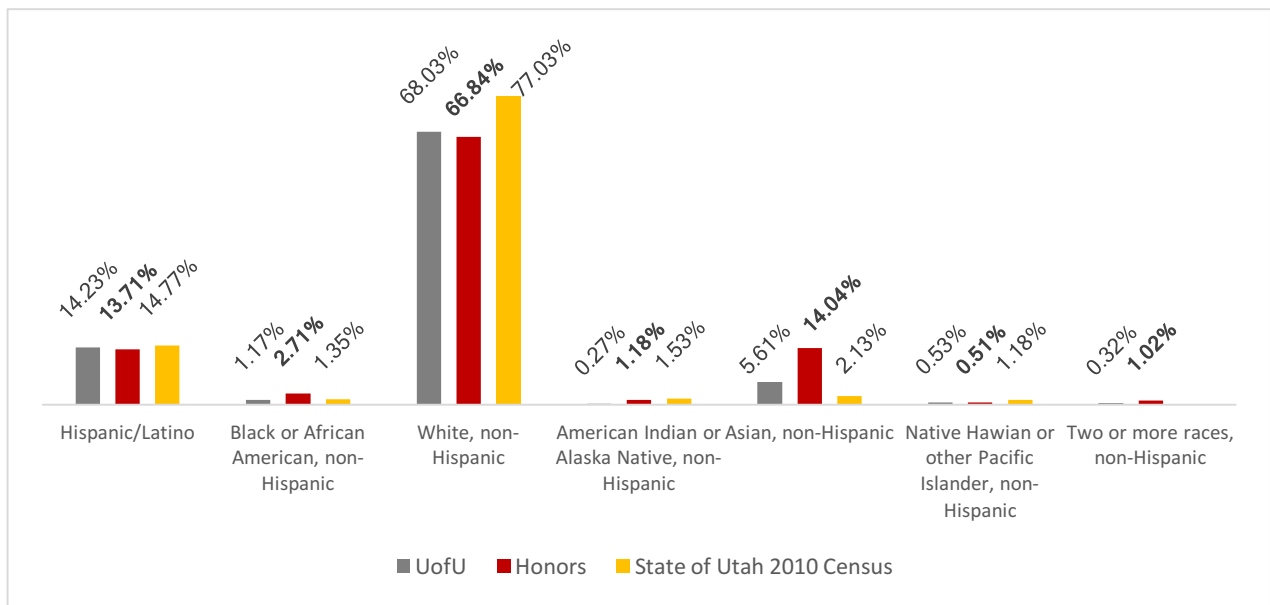
Since 2012, Honors has grown its out-of-state population from 11% to 26%. Our goal is to have an out-of-state population of approximately 30%.

Figure 3. 2017-2018 Enrolled, Admitted and Applied Comparison by Top States



Our ethnic diversity generally mirrors that of the state. Given the expected increase in Hispanic 18-year olds, we are focusing our local recruitment efforts on this population (Fig. 4).

Figure 4. 2017-2018 Ethnicity in Honors compared to UofU and state of Utah.



LIVING LEARNING COMMUNITIES

219

first-year students in Living Learning
Community (LLC)

The Honors College has an unadjusted **97% Fall to Spring retention rate of first-year students** (Office of Budget & Institutional Analysis, hereafter referred to as simply OBIA). Our success is in great part to the various living learning communities (LLC) and learning communities (LC) the Honors College offers to its students.

Students living in Honors Housing participate in a Living Learning Community (LLC) or themed community, where each small cohort of students share living space, along with selected classes and/or activities. Honors offered **nine unique first-year LLC** for the 2017-2018 academic year, and **two themed communities** for upper division students.

Studies have shown that students who participate in these types of communities tend to earn higher grades, graduate on time and feel more connected to their alma mater ([Price, 2005](#)).

125

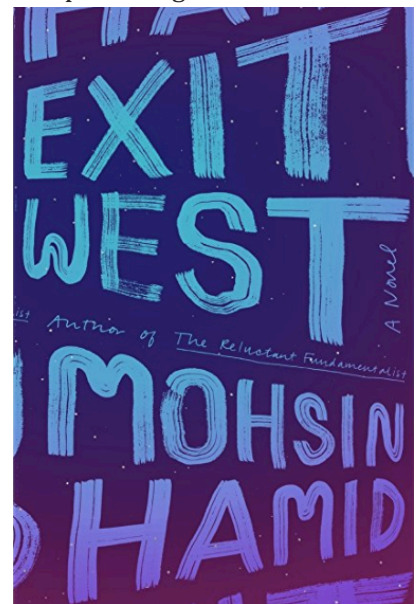
upper division students in Themed
Community

Throughout the 2017-2018 academic year, Honors hosted a number of events for LLC students (and commuter students) such as the annual President's Reception, Night at the Symphony, rafting trips, meetings with elected officials, visits to scientific laboratory on campus, and lectures and performances at Kingsbury Hall.

Each Fall the Honors College collectively reads a novel and participates in small group discussions led by distinguished faculty, deans, and vice presidents.

This past Fall students discussed the novel, *Exit West* by Mohsin Hamid. Honors hosted a total of 11 book discussions—one for each of the LLCs and two additional sessions open to all Honors students—and were attended by approximately 300 students.

Facilitators included Honors faculty, Honors College Dean Sylvia Torti, Associate Dean Paret, and Assistant Dean Rohrer. Community members, Dr. Sarah Munro, Director of University Neighborhood Partners, and Dr. Caren Frost, Director of the Center for Research on Migration and Refugee Integration, also facilitated a few of these book discussions.



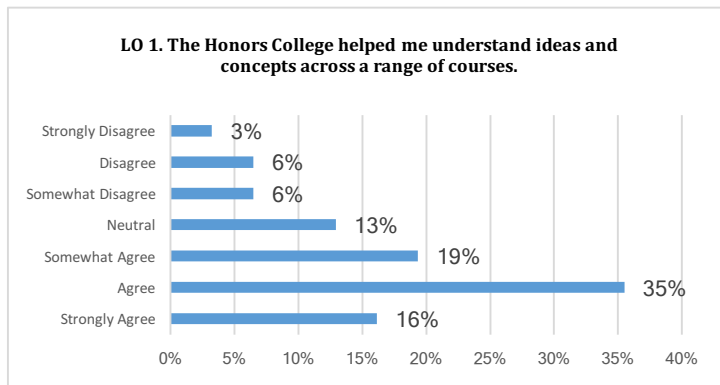
ASSESSMENT OF LIVING LEARNING COMMUNITIES

Honors surveyed its LLCs to assess the three integrative learning outcomes (LO) of living learning communities, as previously defined by the UGS Learning Communities Assessment Committee, specifically:

1. *Intellectual Connections*: measures student capacity for making connections among disciplines, experiences, perspectives, etc.
2. *Reflection/Self-Assessment Connections*: develops ability to self-assess (e.g. introspection, directional learning, self-authorship)
3. *Community Connections*: anchoring students to campus and community (e.g. feeling they belong, knowledge of where to find resources, etc.)

Overall, students in LLCs appear to meet the above learning outcomes, especially intellectual connections. The data collected has helped us identified areas for growth.

Figure 5. Intellectual Connections



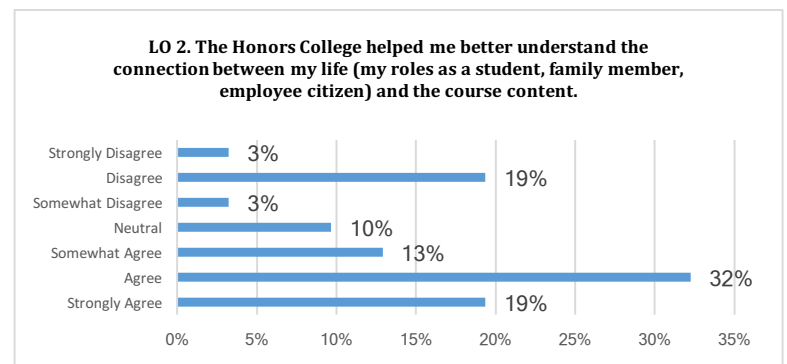
Answer to Open-Ended Question about intellectual connections:

"The necessity to use community based learning has helped me incorporate others in my pursuit of knowledge. For example, I have taken this mindset to other non-honors classes and have found that it enriches everybody's learning experiences."

Figure 6. Reflection/Self Connections

Answers to Open-Ended Question about reflection/self-assessment connections:

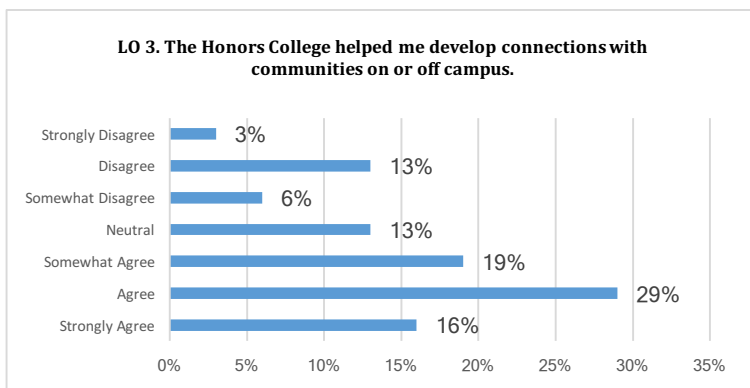
"I believe that my connections in IT, AI, and Civil Rights Law have truly empowered me to rethink the individual's involvement in systems of government and the social contracts we make between the divine, the authority, and the community."



Answers to Open-Ended Question about community connections:

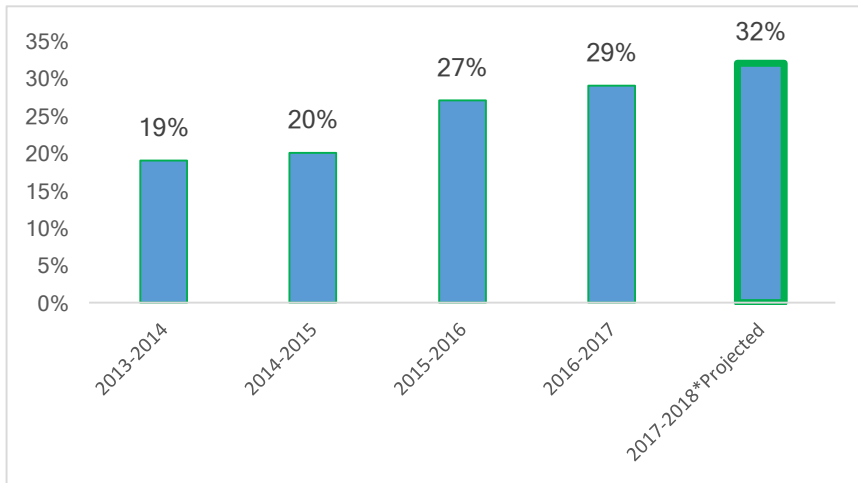
"Living near those with similar interests allows a stronger bond and community feel to occur and create a friendlier environment."

Figure 7. Community Connections



GRADUATION AND HONORS DEGREE COMPLETION

The Honors College has an overall **adjusted 6-year graduation rate of 86%** (OBIA), this includes students who graduated with the Honors Bachelor’s Degree and those who chose to earn a conventional Bachelor’s Degree. Additionally, on average, students graduate with a higher CGPA compared to their non-Honors peers.



In terms of the Honors Degree, the highest undergraduate degree conferred by the University of Utah, the last 4 years have shown a marked increase in the percentage of students earning Honors Degree (Fig. 8), as well as the number of colleges and majors represented by those students (Fig. 9). Honors continues to work towards its goal of having 50% Honors Degree completion of all graduating Honors students.

Figure 8. Percentage of Honors graduates who were awarded an Honors Degree, AY 2014 to AY 2018 (projected). This percentage is based on the number of students who at the time of graduation were still part of the Honors College.

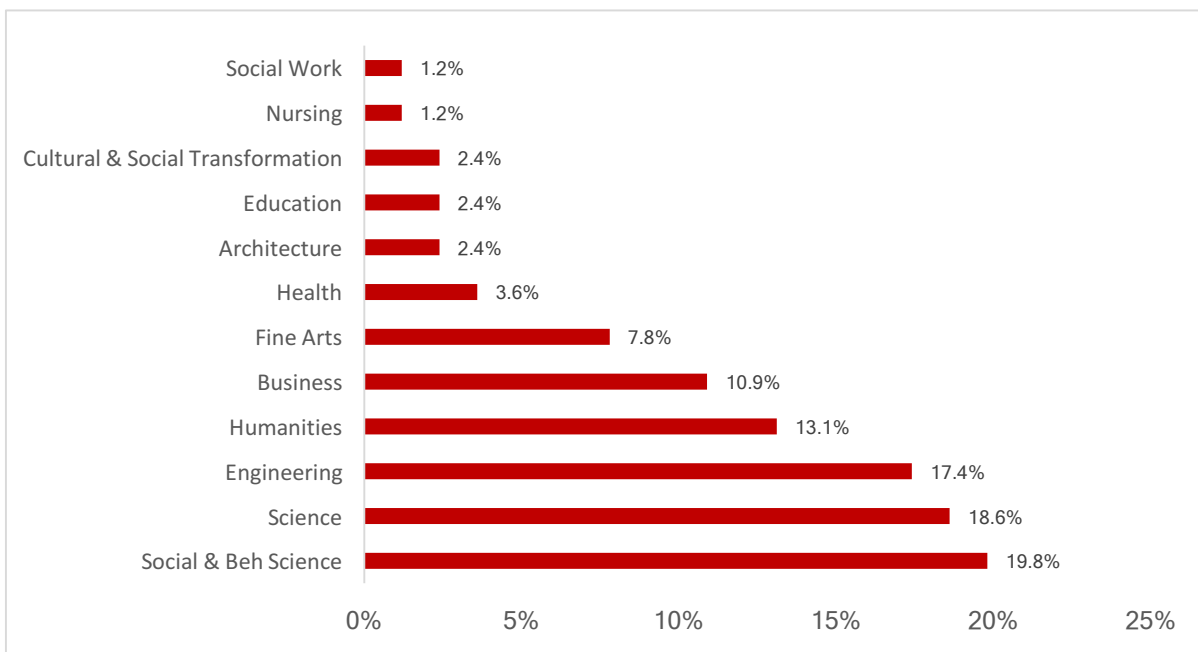


Figure 9. Colleges represented based on the number of students who applied to graduation with an Honors Degree in AY 2018 (OBIA).

Figure 10. Honors College geographical makeup of Undergraduates majors who applied to graduation for an Honors Degree by Utah Residency (OBIA).

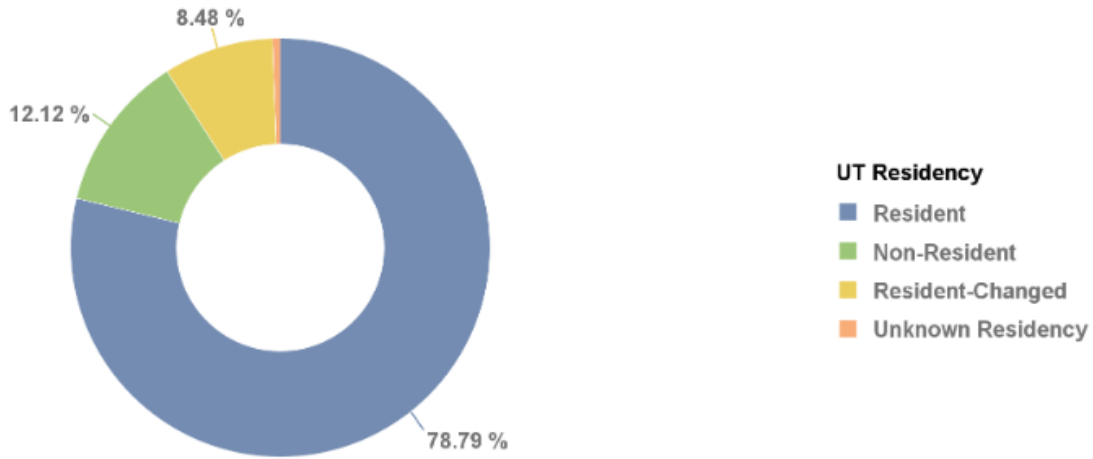
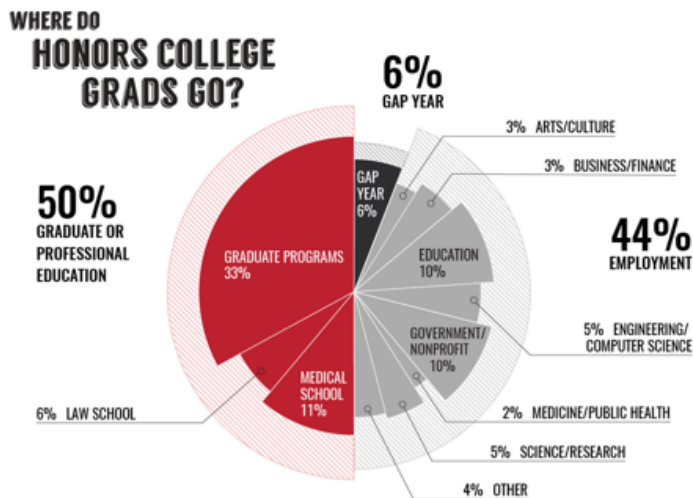
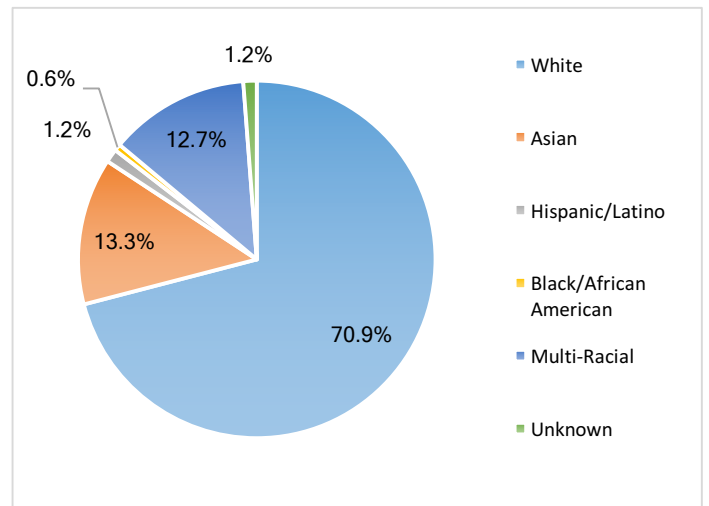


Figure 11. Ethnicity of Honors Students who applied to graduation for an Honors Degree (OBIA).



A May 2018 survey of recently Honors Degree graduates, continues to show that half of our graduating students go on to pursue graduate studies. Those pursuing a graduate study program were admitted to places like University of Oxford, Columbia University, Northeastern University School of Law, University of Utah School of Medicine, and University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, to name a few.

HONORS UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH

“The spring Oxford Consortium for Human Rights conference was one of the best highlights of my college experience thus far... As I am interested in the study of conflict, the most exciting section of the week was a lecture and discussion by Dr. Hugo Slim, director at the International Red Cross (IRC). I discovered how academic work is taken into consideration by the IRC for ongoing aid operations. It was an insightful moment: learning that academic research on conflict actually informs the practice of aid work to war zones.”

Oxford Consortium Participant

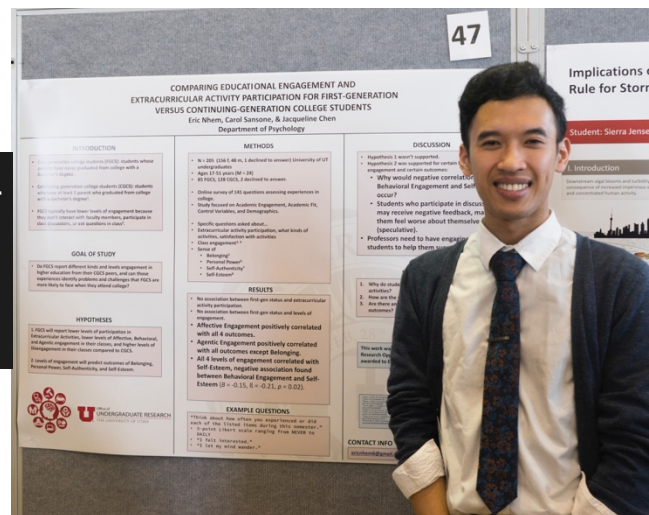
As part of the Honors Thesis, which is the culmination of the Honors Bachelor's Degree, students engage in undergraduate research in their disciplines under the supervision of a faculty member. For most students, working closely with a research faculty is the single most transformative experience of their undergraduate careers (Honors Alumni Survey, 2016).

“My research experience has been really incredible, unlike anything I've done on campus. It has really helped me apply what I am learning in my classes to real life situations, get to interact with grad students and faculty members.”

Honors Graduate, Class of 2018

Honors collaborates closely with the Office of Undergraduate Research in assisting Honors students engage in independent, original research and to present their work at conferences. At this year's Undergraduate Research Symposium (URS), **170 Honors students presented their research.**

**Eric Nhem
Honors Bachelor
of Science in
Psychology,
presenting his
Honors thesis at
URS 2018**



The Honors College also supported over **25 students** to attend national conferences through **small travel grants**. Students had the opportunity to travel to places such as California, North Carolina, and Washington, D.C. For the 2018-2019 academic year, Honors will work towards increasing this number.

Additionally, in collaboration with the Tanner Center for Nonviolent Human Rights Advocacy, Honors sponsored **three students** to attend the Oxford Consortium for Human Rights at University of Oxford, United Kingdom, and to do research on the topic of human rights after conflict.

DISTINGUISHED SCHOLARSHIPS

Churchill Scholarship

Every year the Honors College guides and mentors students throughout the application process for Rhodes, Marshalls, Gates-Cambridge, Boren, Udall, and Churchill, to name a few.

In 2014, the University of Utah became Churchill-eligible. This year **the University of Utah had its third Churchill Scholar**, mathematics and computer science major, Scott Neville.



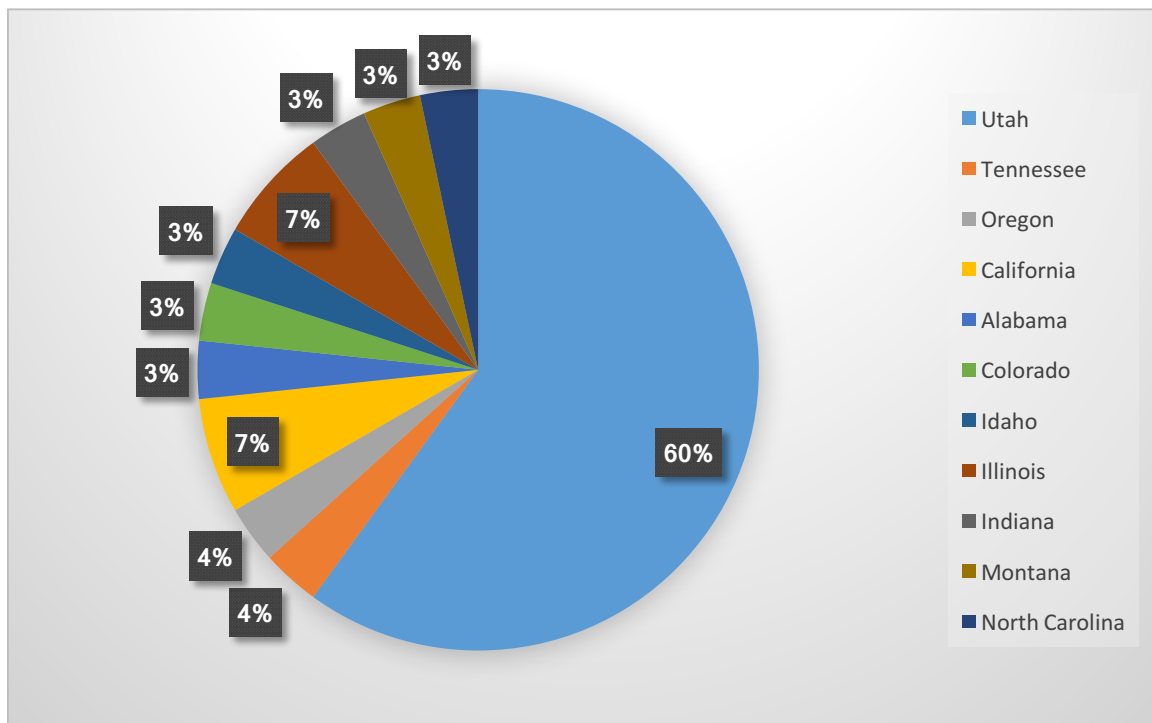
Photo Source and News Release:

<https://attheu.utah.edu/facultystaff/churchill-scholar-2/>

The Eccles Distinguished Scholar Program

Thanks to the generosity of the George S. and Dolores Doré Eccles Foundation, the Honors College recruits and supports **30** excellent students per year. The Eccles Distinguished Scholarship allows the Honors College to compete with Ivy-League schools. For the Fall 2018 class, we received 360 applications and interviewed 58 finalists for the 30 spots. Eccles scholars participate in a cohort experience during their time as undergraduates.

Figure 12. 2018-2019 Eccles Scholars State of Residency



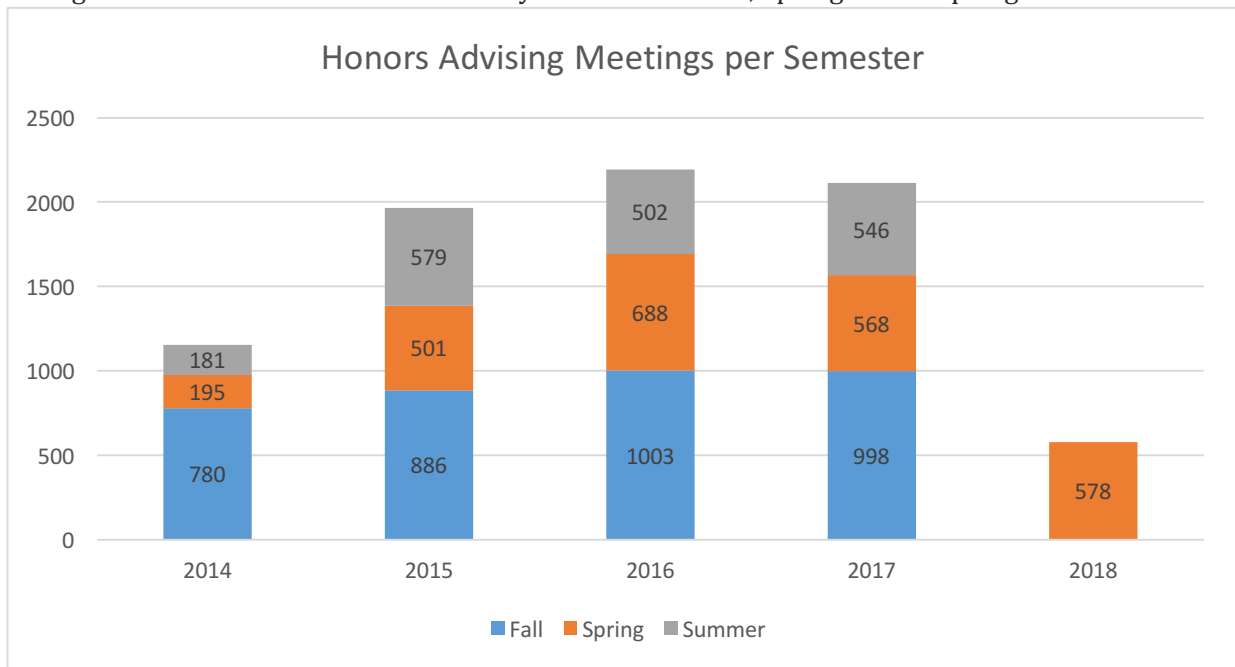
HONORS ACADEMIC ADVISING



Honors Advisors are organized around University colleges. This “bridge-like” structure allows Honors advisors to know and understand the nuances of each major, as well as build relationships with advisors and faculty thesis mentors in each department, leading to better integration of the Honors curriculum and more personalized advising. Student response to this structure and to their advising options has been overwhelmingly positive.

For the 2017-2018 academic year (Fall 2017 and Spring 2018), advisors **met with 1576 students**. In addition to continuing with First-Year and Second-Year Mandatory Advising, advisors implemented a Third-Year Advising program.

Figure 13. Number of Students Seen by Honors Advisors, Spring 2014 –Spring 2018



PRAXIS LABS: THEORY + ACTION 2017-2018

Honors College Praxis Labs are deeply-engaged experiences which draw students from all disciplines to collaborate on innovative project-based solutions to pressing societal issues.

Over the years, Praxis Labs have addressed a multitude of societal challenges in Health & Society, Energy & Environment, and Social Justice.

For 2017-2018, the Honors College offered

3 Praxis Labs

and served

35

Students Participants

Beginning of Life- Students in this Praxis Lab examined the scientific and cultural roots of human hopes and fears from conception through the early days of life, as well as the profound decisions that individuals make on behalf of potential, unborn, and newborn children. By employing historical and contemporary sources, faculty and students explored each phase of life's beginning from a variety of perspectives including perinatologists, embryologists, ethicists, religious thinkers, and their own experiences.

After considering multiple perspectives, students developed a multifaceted strategy to improve contraception education and access to University of Utah students. At its core, the group aimed to empower the University of Utah community to make the best-informed reproductive choices for themselves. Out of this desire to educate and empower the UU community, Allied Student for Contraception (ASC) was created. A full report of their work is available at: https://d1pncpx48jiw7e.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/BeginningOfLife_PraxisLabReport.pdf.



Drugs and Us - During the 2017-2018 academic year, students addressed issues in drug classification, drug policy, drug regulation, and practical measures for dealing with drugs of all sorts. As part of their exploration phase, students delved into historical reasons for drug classification, considered cultural and religious factors, and drugs in specific contexts such as pain management and law enforcement. Additionally, students considered performance enhancing drugs, used in a vast range of contexts from the musical concert to the long-haul military flight; sought to decipher complex issues about addiction; looked at institutions like Drug Court and various 12-step programs; and explored seemingly everyday issues about matters like pain and pain relief, drugs and driving, and the use of hallucinogens from religious experience to palliative care.

The broad spectrum of topics formed the background for the call of action students embarked on during Spring semester. With the aim of capturing all sides of addictions and the stigma that surrounds it, students used social media platforms to create "Stories of Addiction" to tell the stories of people who have experiences with addiction.

Additionally, students hosted a Naloxone training event for the Salt Lake City community and distributed over 180 naloxone kits. Students will continue raising awareness and hosting Naloxone training in collaboration with the UU Bennion Center. A full report of their work is available at: https://d1pncpx48jjw7e.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Drugs_and_Us_Full_Report.pdf.



Worlds Apart? Accessing Utah's Urban-Rural Divide – The 2016 election put into sharp contrast the political and social divisions that exist between rural and urban areas in this country. In Utah, this divide is marked in social, political, and policy divergence between areas of urban growth like Salt Lake and Utah counties, and rural areas of the state that are struggling to keep jobs and families in their communities. Sponsored by the Kem Gardner Policy Institute and Salt Lake City Corporation, students in this Praxis Lab investigated the nature of this divide and explored several perspectives that focused on bridging the gap.

This exploration set the stage for students to identify aspects of the complex Rural/Urban divide. After evaluating several proposals, students focused on bridging the educational gap that exists in rural Utah compared to urban areas. Specifically, students addressed retention rates of rural students at University of Utah and evaluated post-secondary educational opportunities for students living in rural areas. To bring awareness to this issue, students organized “Rural Day” where Lt. Governor Spencer Cox participated in a panel discussion. A full report of their work is available at: https://d1pncpx48jjw7e.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Two_Utahs_Final-Report-Honors-Praxis-2018.pdf



ECOLOGY AND LEGACY MINOR



“What will my legacy be and how do I live my life now to better ensure my legacy comes to be?”

In Summer 2015, the Honors College offered the Ecology and Legacy Minor for the first time. **Ten students**, along with Professors Andy Hoffman, Associate Dean Paret, and Dean Torti, participated in an intensive 6-week summer block. Students used science, arts, and humanities to critically think about interactions between humans and their world. They spent two weeks each in the Great Salt Lake, Centennial Valley, Montana, and the Peninsula Valdes in Patagonia, Argentina learning about the different ecological systems.

In Spring 2017, Honors offered the minor again, but this time spread over three semesters (Spring 2017, Summer 2017, and Fall 2017). **Eleven students** participated in this experience through Fall 2017. Students on average received \$2,000 in scholarship funding to facilitate their participation on this deeply engaged experience. The quote below captures the impact this experience has on students:

“Participating in the Honors Ecology and Legacy program (E&L) was the best decision I have made in my college career. Calling this program a “transformational experience” is quite the understatement. This program completely changed the thinking and direction of every student who has participated in it, provided new perspectives that none of us could have gotten anywhere else, and created lifelong friends and mentors. The program brings together twelve or so students from any and every major to study ecology, the connection between all things, the human legacy on earth, and what these two things mean and should mean in each of our lives. The program combines art, science, and the humanities and is the most interdisciplinary program on campus because of this...”

2017-2018 Ecology & Legacy Student

SCHOLARS GROUPS

Students from a variety of disciplines work with faculty and community members to explore their interests, consider career opportunities, develop professional skills and investigate and implement solutions to pressing problems in the community and in the world. Scholars Groups included the following:

- **Global Health Scholars Group** - The Honors College works with Dr. Steven Alder at the Office of Global Health/Division of Public Health to help students confront health-related issues of the present and future in a local and global context, and work one-on-one with local refugee communities.

During the 2017-2018 academic year, the group met every other week to discuss challenging global health topics, listen from experts in the field, and attend trainings and social activities. Scholars participated in the UU Global Health Case Competition and presented at the Spring Symposium of the Center for Research on Migration and Refugee Integration. Scholars also supported a 'local' global health program working with adolescents from families who are going through refugee resettlement to improve reading skills at the Hser Ner Moo Community Center.



- **Legal Scholars** – Students who are interested in how legal issues interact with social, political, business and cultural realities meet with Randy Dryer to discuss contemporary legal topics, addressing current legal trends, observing actual court proceedings and interact with judges and practicing lawyers.

Legal scholars had the opportunity this year of learning from 12 guest presenters who are experts in the legal field, including practicing attorneys, judges, law professors, judicial administrators and a member of the Utah Board of Pardons.

76

distinct students benefited from a Scholar Group during the 2017-2018 academic year.

Students engaged in:

- Advocacy
- Service
- Discussions
- Project Development
- Mentorship
- Career Advising
- Networking Opportunities



Urban Ecology and Sustainability Scholars—Students who are interested in the long-term health of their communities work with Stephen Goldsmith to imagine and implement new energy-saving solutions on campus.

For the 2017-2018 academic year, Honors Scholars in Urban Ecology and Sustainability continued to make progress developing a campus-wide, pathway naming project. This project, being considered now by the University of Utah Board of Trustees

after gaining approval by Facilities Planning, ASUU, and the President's Office. The pathway project will improve navigability for visitors, faculty, and students, and improve public safety. Working with the Inter-Tribal Student Association, the first path names will be Noocheoo, the Ute word for "Ute," and Mique Tuhgooven, the Ute words for "Hello Friend". A third path name, "Common Ground," was selected to celebrate shared values. For more about their accomplishments, please visit:

<http://urbanecologyscholars.org>

Art Community Museum Education (ACME) – ACME Scholars work to develop new ways museums can better serve communities by being more inclusive, accessible, and relevant to diverse audiences. Investigating the ways art and activism can affect social change in their own neighborhoods, ACME Scholars are not about "doing for" the community but rather learning with, learning from, and collaborating with their communities.

In March, ACME scholars organized the ACME Session "FEMINISTS UNITE! Building Community through Art & Activism," where female artists, curators, and educators engaged in a discussion of the challenges faced by women in and around Salt Lake City. These open talks brought over 50 participants together in appreciation of shared experiences, which informed ACME Scholars' next project with San Francisco based muralist Jessica Sabogal.

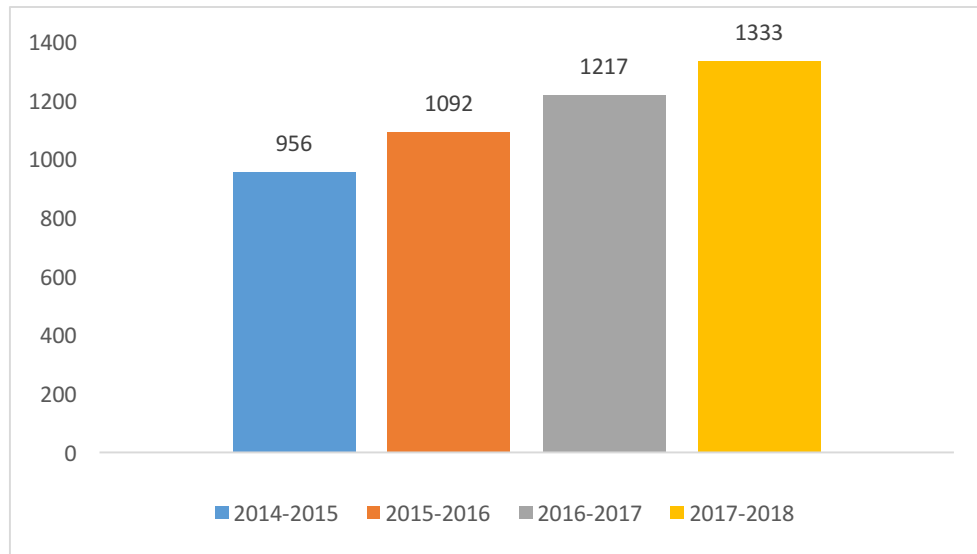
In collaboration with the U's Office for Equity and Diversity and local community partners, ACME Scholars brought Sabogal to SLC this summer to paint a sixty-foot mural on 700 West North Temple. The mural, inspired by community leaders and their stories, reflects this diverse and thriving neighborhood.



CURRICULUM

The Honors College has seen an increase in its enrollment (Fig. 14) and demand for courses compared to previous years. In 2017-2018, Honors offered a total of 63 sections of Honors Writing, Intellectual Traditions (IT), and Science courses, which form the core of the curriculum, a **11% increase** in two years. The increase in course offerings (and enrollment) is higher when elective courses are included.

Figure 14. IT, Writing and Science Enrollment for AY 2015 to AY 2018



During the 2017-2018 academic year, Honors continued to make strides towards its goal of strengthening the rigor and relevance of Honors education, specifically:

- Honors faculty met regularly to re-invigorate Intellectual Traditions through thematically based topics;
- Re-wrote its “Honors Statement of Academic Unit Rules and Curriculum Management Policy,” which established a curriculum committee tasked with evaluating new Honors core courses;
- Led a working group focused on innovative curriculum and strategies for faculty to engage students beyond the classroom;
- Explored the idea of first-year colloquia and developed two new courses that will be offered in the 2018-2019 academic year;
- Assessed the effectiveness of courses taught outside of the traditional 16-week semester. Students who took Professional Negotiations in Spring 2018 positively responded to the new format (13 weeks with an intense all-day Saturday class), reported a strong sense of community, and overwhelmingly requested for more courses that break away from the traditional 16-week model.

LOOKING AHEAD: 2018-2019 ACADEMIC YEAR

HONORS COLLEGE LEADERSHIP

After serving for six years as Associate Dean in the Honors College, Dr. Monty Paret, is returning to his department in Art and Art History. In Spring 2018, after completing a campus-wide search, Honors announced the appointment of Dr. Monisha Pasupathi, Department of Psychology, and Dr. Laurence Parker, Department of Education Leadership and Policy, as new Associate Deans. Dr. Pasupathi and Dr. Parker will be joining Honors on July 1, 2018.



Dr. Monisha Pasupathi
Honors College Associate Dean, Academic Affairs
Image: psych.utah.edu/people/faculty



Dr. Laurence Parker
Honors College Associate Dean, Student Affairs
Image: elp.utah.edu/faculty/index.php

HONORS EDUCATION AT RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES

The University of Utah Honors College was selected to host the Honors Education at Research Universities (HERU) conference. HERU is a bi-annual national conference that brings together faculty, administrators and staff from across the nation to discuss the needs of Honors students, as well as the unique role of Honors programs at research institutions.

The Honors College will be hosting this conference May 20-22, 2019 in historic Fort Douglas. HERU, which began in 2013, was previously hosted at Penn State University, Oregon State University, and The Ohio State University in 2013, 2015, and 2017, respectively.

GOALS FOR THE 2018-2019 ACADEMIC YEAR

Support students through Honors Degree completion

- Continue to collaborate with other academic units on campus
- Increase the financial support to Honors students who present their research at regional and national conferences in their disciplines

Cultivate a diverse student body

- Increase the percentage of out-of-state students
- Increase inclusion and diversity—Utah rural counties, ethnic diversity, and first-generation

Continue to strengthen the rigor and relevance of our curriculum and assess learning outcomes

- As previously mentioned, Honors has taken steps to evaluate its curriculum learning outcomes and impact of different programs. These efforts will continue

Raise national profile of University of Utah Honors College

- We will host the Honors Education at Research Universities (HERU) Conference in May 2019
- Dean and staff will continue to submit proposals to present at national conferences