I’m halfway through my second semester as Director of the University Honors Program at Cal U now and I promise you’re reading a note from a very happy man. Following in the tracks of a legend like Ed Chute is hard, but I’m having a great time.

Let me take this opportunity to let you know about some new developments, many of which are the subject of extended articles in this newsletter.

The biggest news to date is that we have the new Honors curriculum approved and will begin offering it in Fall 2009. Under the old system, we rotated Honors courses on a three year cycle among three disciplinary areas: Arts and Humanities, Social Sciences, and Science and Technology. Beginning in the fall, that will change and we will offer courses on a two year cycle among four areas—adding Education to the mix. Therefore, there will be two “lead in” courses each fall and two “centerpiece” courses each spring. Furthermore, we will start offering the Honors Excursions every semester, rather than just every spring. The first “new” Excursion will be to New York City in the Fall 2009 term. The regular excursion to Chicago will still be in place for Spring 2010.

With these changes, we will be offering new topics within the curriculum. For instance, the fall courses will be in Arts and Humanities and in Social Sciences, and the topics will be “Constructing Victorian Identities” and “Human Transformations to 1300”—both of which are wholly new to the Honors curriculum.

(Continued on Page 2)
A Note from the Director (Continued)

We continue to encourage student participation in professional conferences, both in the USA and around the world. We have students presenting papers for the first time at the annual Popular Culture Association meeting this spring, plus a record number of students going to the annual Northeast Regional National Collegiate Honors Council meeting.

Six students will be going to Montreal this July to participate in the Montreal Jazz Festival thanks to a generous outside grant. I hope this same funding will be available for summer 2010 for students to go to the Spoleto Festival USA in Charleston, SC.

We are working on hiring a permanent Assistant Director and Professor Marak will return to the University Honors Program again next year, both as a teacher in the classroom and in a completely new position, Interim Associate Director.

I think all the changes are exciting and I hope they will mean more opportunities and additional choices for students in the University Honors Program. I invite you to read about all the news with the Program in this edition of the Newsletter.
Upcoming Events by Jackie Davis

The university honor’s program is pleased to announce our spring science excursion to Washington, DC. The trip will take place from April 2, 2009 to April 5, 2009. Currently, the UHP’s curriculum works on a three year rotation between science, social science, and democracy and the highlight of this academic year is the Dibner excursion for the scientific piece in the program.

Eligible students for the trip are either enrolled in the centerpiece course, HON: 297 Scientific Inquiry or are in the process of completing a scientific related addendum in another university course.

The exclusive access given to the patrons during the Dibner excursion has made the trip a highlighting experience of UHP members, especially those majoring in natural sciences. Amongst the museums visited on the trip are: the Dibner Library of the History of Science and Technology, the National Civil War Museum of Medicine, the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History, and the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum, and concluding the trip with a tour of the Antietam Battlefield.

The faculty and students on this trip will be staying at the Holiday Inn Central, in the heart of Washington, D.C. Transportation is available within the city itself with the Metro day passes valid from 9:30am-3pm.

Attractions in the D.C. area that may interest you during your free time include: the numerous Smithsonian exhibits not planned in the programs itinerary, the National Gallery of Art, the National Cherry Blossom Festival, Walking Tour of the National Monuments, the Holocaust Museum, and the Library of Congress.

An anticipated event set for the fall of 2009 is a UHP trip to New York City, NY. While the itinerary has yet to be finalized, the accompanying faculty members have plans for incorporating trips to various theatres and museums. Those under consideration may include: the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the American Museum of Natural History, and of course one of the many Broadway shows playing. Further details will be announced as they become available.

All students are encouraged to become involved with the opportunities available to you here within the UHP. Please contact the UHP with any questions, comments, or concerns. We hope to see you soon!
HSAB Happenings by Megan Lapp

Just in case you don’t already know, the Honors Student Advisory Board (HSAB) is in charge of building a community within the University Honors Program (UHP) and bridging the gap between UHP faculty and the UHP student population. The current members of the HSAB are myself (Megan Lapp), Blake Schutte, Joshua Scott, Anne Blakeslee, Jackie Davis, and Alix Kunkle. I am the chair of the HSAB, and Anne Blakeslee is the secretary.

However, we will not be members of the HSAB for much longer. Elections for next year’s HSAB will be held soon, ideally by the end of March. The eight seats on the HSAB can be filled by new members and/or re-elected members. Two members of each class will be elected. Your class standing, or rank, is determined by credits that coincide with those in Cal U’s Undergraduate Catalog. When you vote, you will be voting for two people to represent your class on the HSAB. If you are interested in running for the HSAB, please email us at hsab@cup.edu. We will be holding a meeting shortly after spring break for those who are interested in running.

In addition to holding general meetings, the HSAB holds social events and Honors Composition Workshops. If you have any suggestions for social gatherings or requests for a workshop, please email us. We would love to hear your suggestions. The HSAB also has a say in what goes on in the UHP in general. The chair of the HSAB attends the Honors Advisory Board (HAB) meetings to contribute student concerns and ideas. If you ever have ideas or concerns regarding the UHP in general, please share those with us through email. We are always glad to answer any questions that you may have or share student concerns at HAB meetings.
New Honors Curriculum by Matt Warren

With the ushering in of a new era for the California University Honors Program comes a brand new curriculum that promises to extend its grasp further than anything seen previously, both on campus and off. New courses, a new rotation, and new professors are promising to re-shape the Honors Program in many ways, giving students a new experiences in more areas than the veterans of the program may be used to. With a wider variety of classes being offered, honors students will have the opportunity to experience more departments of the university, who will likewise benefit from being more included in the Honors Program.

Perhaps the largest change comes from the rotation of classes. In the past, there have been three sections of rotation for the Honors Program, offered once every three years. Now, a new section, Education, will be added to the rotation, and there will be two areas offered each year with a two-year rotation. As the number of Honors students increases, more sections and rotations may be offered.

Another exciting offering is the Honors Study Tour, a class that focuses on preparing for a short-term study abroad trip to occur right at the end of every semester. The specifics of this course are in the works, but some optimistic examples of future topics include a science course that will cumulate with a trip to Africa, a politics-based course with a short-term trip to Latin America, or an Arts rotation course that will cumulate in a two-week trip to study in Paris.

Some of the old favorites may be returning as well. HON 187: Research Methods may be returning as soon as next semester, and freshman will still have their regular Orientation and Composition courses. The traditional centerpiece courses will be seeing sporadic appearances as well, based on who is teaching the courses. As most of them are cataloged as “Topics in...." it will be mostly up to the staff member teaching the course as to the specifics of what will be discussed. As for those professors, all Honors Program participants can rest assured that the best staff from each department will be recruited to teach these classes.

The new Honors Program curriculum’s goals are to give students the best all-around experience they can have. The plan is to start students off by fine-tuning writing skills, and then giving them a chance to better utilize methods of research and the information gained from it. From there, the ever-increasing diversity of the Honors classes will allow students to get a well-rounded education from the best professors Cal U has to offer. Many will also have the opportunity for study abroad, rounding out an already strong education program that will look impressive both on graduate school and job applications. Look for these first changes in the Fall Semester.

Look for the first changes in the fall of 2009!
Conference Opportunities by Caitlin Sowers

All Undergraduate students in the Honors Program are encouraged to prepare material for conferences. The University gives students the opportunity to attend local, regional, national and international conferences throughout the academic year. Dr. Lawson, the Honors Program Director, is the advisor and supervisor over the conferences and student submissions. He was interviewed for the following information.

What and when are the future conferences?
- The National Collegiate Honors Conference in Washington, DC is October 28th-November 1st, 2009. The deadline to apply for the National conference was February 20th. The NCHC theme is “Honors in the Global City.”
- A conference about George Bernard Shaw will take place in 2009.
- Robert Morris University is holding a conference on April 24th, 2009. The deadline is March 24th to submit material. There will be two judging categories between freshman/sophomore and junior/senior work.
- The Northeast Regional Honors Conference will be held in Annapolis, MD from March 26th-29th, 2009. Honor students will have to wait until the following academic year for the next Regional Conference to attend.
- The Popular/American Culture Association is having a National Conference in New Orleans from April 8th-11th. Next year’s conference is in St. Louis, so students should be on the lookout for information.
- There is also an Undergraduate Research Conference in Mazola, Montana coming the following academic year.

What happens at the conferences?
- This all depends on the type of conference and the criteria. There are Honors and Regional panels for students, poster sessions, roundtable discussions, exchanging of ideas, question and answer sessions and displays of student and professional work. Many students can receive money from grants and also network with the professionals at the conferences.

What should students expect before they arrive?
- Students should expect questions about their work and be prepared to answer. At Cal U, Dr. Lawson and other students will have mock presentations where professors and students can critique others’ work.

Who can go?
- It depends on the conference- the University will take as many students who get accepted as possible. Faculty and Staff are welcome to attend the conferences and any level of undergraduate student can apply to present.

What will students gain?
- Students generally attend conferences to use on their resume and applications for jobs and internships. Students can also gain experience networking with other institutes and professionals in their field. Students can also increase leadership and public speaking skills. When faculty and students attend the conference, they also are able to see cultural and historical attractions in the area. Dr. Lawson also insists on eating very good meals.

Is this all paid for?
- Currently, in this semester, all conferences are paid for. Next academic year, all conferences are continually free. Following these years, it is unsure, but the only money students need is to spend on souvenirs or personal items.
International Opportunities by Matt Warren

A lot of students have visions of studying abroad, some desiring to study in cities full of culture and history, while others desire a more scenic experience ranging from snowy mountaintops to tropical, sandy beaches. Unfortunately, these visions can be clouded by the lack of funds to cover the insane expenses that come with these trips. However, it’s possible that the clouds of doubt will be blown away, thanks to a new program the California University Honors Program is working on. The international opportunities that are currently in the works have the opportunity to send students all over the globe for the same price they pay for going to Cal right now!

Besides the continuance of the PA-SSHE annual scholarship, more and more study-abroad programs are in the process of being implemented. The goal is to give students the opportunity to put the knowledge and practices they gain in a classroom setting to work in the real world. Although nothing is completely hammered out yet, there are a number of ideas in the works. Among the ideas: a trip to the Yucatan Peninsula and Belize to study the history and environment of the area, a Madagascar safari with emphasis on the environment and politics of the area, and a combination trip to Italy and Greece. The university is currently in discussions with Monterrey, Mexico, and even more areas of future interest include France and Jordan.

Some of these trips will go in conjunction with the new Honors Study Tour course, which will allow students to learn about and prepare for the place they’re going before taking a two-to-three week, short-term study program immediately following the end of the Cal U semester. Others will simply be international opportunities with hopes of giving students an edge in whatever they’re going on to next, be it graduate school or the workforce.

The program, interestingly enough, will not only be open to Honors Program participants. Of course, the Honors students will be given the utmost priority, followed by other students who can use the trip as a project of some sort towards their major or class, and then simply anyone who is interested. So if you have some friends who aren’t in the Honors program, this may be a good way for you all to have a unique, once-in-a-lifetime learning experience that takes you beyond the borders of the California campus.

But the best part about all of this? It won’t cost anything more than you’re paying now! The plan is that students will continue to pay the California University typical tuition and fees, and then go on an exchange program to one of the participating countries. This will give a lot more students the opportunity to go international, something that would have otherwise been out of reach for many.

It would be wise to keep in mind that all of this is simply a plan. As Dr. Marak said, “The rest of the semester is going to be spent putting trips into place. Nothing is finalized yet.” The hope is that by the end of this spring semester there will be at least a couple of programs in place for the next couple of years.
Dr. Gould Spotlight by Berajah Jayne

Reasoning its way to the top of the Honors semesterly switch-up of college courses, Scientific Inquiry stands strong as the main participant in logical processes and functional formulae. Dr. Gould has headed the class since Dr. Schuler retired round '95; though things change over time, Gould has maintained the solid basis laid down by his predecessor. While enriching their minds, students are required to create unique artifacts centering around ancient heralds of the scientific persuasion and explain the connections they've made over a hard term's study.

Gould intends his class to be educational, but undaunting to those not acquainted with the intricacies of scientific know-how. It's meant to be a good, solid basis in all things that are science, and, that said, he realizes that, while he's quite the chem-lab guru, he lacks extensive knowledge in all of the many branches of science. In order to provide content-area-savvy suppliers of information, Gould sends out a signal to the eager CALU faculty, imploring them to chip in a word or two for the sake of learning. These guest lecturers act as examples of real-life scientists; as students learn, they are expected to have insights about the scientific inquiry process and how different researchers use the same guidelines to solve their unique problems.

The point of the class is to promote thought, and Gould has students choose their own branch of study, allowing free roam among the vast works done by certain ingenuous researchers known as the Heralds of Science. Through the study of these earth-changing ancients, he hopes that students will at least walk away with a remembrance of the little nuances of science; he’d like them to notice things around them and say to themselves, “Hey, I remember that from Scientific Inquiry.”

Because this is the smallest class in Gould's history, he has high hopes about the quality of works which will be produced. He anticipates working one-on-one with students to perfect their ideas and aid in their endeavors, and looks forward to a series of interesting presentations when the end rolls around.
Every year, one of the fourteen state system schools hosts an Honors Program scholarship opportunity in the summer that begins in their school and continues on to an international trip to an interesting country to learn about a particular theme in a challenging Honors setting. This year’s PA-SSHE program is being hosted by Shippensburg University in Shippensburg, PA, and is going international in Belgium and France. The theme of the 2009 PA-SSHE scholarship this year is the construction from the Middle Ages to the present of European identity. Two students from each state system school are chosen for the scholarship and the chance of a lifetime to participate in this exciting program.

The winners of the 2009 PA-SSHE Summer Honors Program Scholarship are Laurie Hall and Andrew Brest. Andrew Brest is a freshman majoring in International Studies-Political Science and Laurie Hall is a sophomore majoring in Criminal Justice. In order to get information on the winners, how they achieved their accomplishments, and details on their trip, I conducted a short interview with each of them.

Melissa: How did you go about winning this scholarship?
Andrew: We had to fill out an application, prepare a portfolio and go through an interview with a board. I had a great interview, which won the board over.

Melissa: Do you feel that the scholarship opportunity will help your major in any way?
Andrew: Yeah, I feel it will help a lot because it falls right under what I want to do, which is work for the government overseas. You don't get many opportunities like this, so when I heard about the scholarship and what the topic of the trip was, I knew I had to go for it.

Melissa: What was the main idea you wanted to present in your desire to go to Belgium and France?
Andrew: The main idea I tried to hit on was the fact that this trip will help me down the road in my career and that I deserved to go because I'm different from everyone else who applied. I mean, I've had 5 years of French, I was part of the French Honors Society in high school and my major is international studies.

Melissa: What aspects of the scholarship program are you most excited about?
Andrew: I'm just excited to be able to fly over to Belgium and France. I could never afford a trip like this, so being able to actually study over there will be amazing. I'm also excited to be hanging out with people from all these other universities. This is something I will be able to remember for the rest of my life.

Melissa: How did you go about winning this scholarship?
Laurie: I spent a lot of time writing my essay because I wanted to express all the reasons and explanations for wanting to receive one of the scholarships. I tried to include an array of references in my portfolio so whoever would review my portfolio would be able to learn about my commitment to the different activities I'm involved with. I also spent quite a bit of time compiling my application portfolio. I didn't want to just slap my application essay, resume, and references in a folder and turn it in. I wanted my portfolio to show whoever was reviewing it how much hard work had been put into it, in order to demonstrate how interested I was in receiving the scholarship. Hence, over Christmas break, I talked to my parents about the scholarship. I learned more about a Choral trip to Europe my mother had gone on in high school and learned that my father had visited Europe while he was in the Coast Guard. I looked over their pictures with them and decided to personalize my portfolio with photos of their pictures and postcards. I made sure to explain where the photos had come from and why I had included them. Old habits die hard; I always made an effort to explain why components were in my portfolio in Honors Composition I and II with Dr. Chute. I was successful in his classes so I designed my application portfolio similarly.

Melissa: Do you feel that the scholarship opportunity will help your major in any way?
Laurie: I absolutely believe the PA-SSHE scholarship opportunity will be beneficial to my major. I am a Criminal Justice major and have always dreamed about working for the federal government. The knowledge I will acquire from traveling abroad will help me gain experiences that will be extremely useful for my future job(s), should I need to travel overseas or interact with foreign countries, which is highly probable.

Melissa: What was the main idea you wanted to present in your desire to go to Belgium and France?
Laurie: The main idea I wanted to present in my application portfolio was how much I have always loved learning and how hard I am willing to work to continue learning. This scholarship offers the amazing opportunity of continuing to learn about others, myself, and the world without being constrained by financial burdens.
Melissa: What aspects of the scholarship program are you most excited about?
Laurie: I am so excited about the entire program it’s hard to pick just one aspect! I grew up in a very modest, rural area so anytime I get the opportunity to witness the interactions of a large city, I am fascinated. I also think going to the World War I battlefields will be very humbling and special as well. It is incredible to be given the opportunity to visit where so many people have sacrificed their lives.

Last years’ winners of the PA-SSHE Summer Honors Program Scholarship, who obviously have a lot of experience with the prestige of winning such a wonderful award, were Joshua Scott, a senior majoring in biology with a minor in chemistry and California University former student and graduate Julie Lacey. The trip began at the hosting college, Bloomsburg University, and continued in China. Josh was happy to answer some questions about his amazing experience.

Melissa: How did you go about winning this scholarship?
Josh: It took me two years to win the scholarship. When I did not win it the first time I met with the professors who were the interviewers to see how I could improve my chances for the next year. When the time came around to apply again I took in all of the help from the previous year to make my packet better. I also practiced interviewing with my roommate.

Melissa: How did you enjoy your trip to China and what was your favorite aspect of it?
Josh: I enjoyed everything about China. The food, the company, and the places we went were all amazing. My favorite aspect of the trip, aside from experiencing China as a whole, was the people I met. I still talk to the friends I made on the trip and I expect them to be friends for life.

The students worked extremely hard to be chosen for such a prestigious award. Their work included submitting a portfolio including letters of recommendation and letters of intent, meeting all the qualifications needed for such a challenging program, and being interviewed by three members of the Honors Advisory Board. However, if chosen for the scholarship, the rewards are immense. The scholarship is all-expense paid and includes a week spent at Shippensburg University to participate in two three credit courses, European Identity in the Middle Ages and European Politics and Identity in the Modern Era, for six credits total. Then, the scholarship winners head to Belgium and France for a week to ten days with the chance to explore the areas, interact with Europeans, and apply what they learned in their two classes at Shippensburg to real-life situations with European culture. The PA-SSHE Summer Honors Scholarship is a wonderful opportunity and we congratulate both last year and this years’ winners on such a great achievement!
Dr. Ed Chute became a professor at California University of Pennsylvania in 1990 as an English Professor and became the Director of the Honors Program in the fall of 1996. Before Dr. Chute became involved in the Honors Program, there were only 20-25 members, and it was not a very prestigious program. During his first few years Dr. Chute not only recruited more students for the program, but he also expanded the programs budget, increased the amount of students allowed to go on the Spring Excursions, and involved some of the students in National Conferences.

One of these students who became more involved in the Honors Program was Erin Mountz, who became one of his star pupils. Erin started out as a freshman under Dr. Chute in the Honors program. It was under his guidance that she discovered her true potential as a student and a leader. She competed in several conferences and thrived in the program. After she graduated from CalU, she attended the Graduate Program at The University of Wisconsin-Madison. After she graduated from UWM in 2004, she came back to CalU and became the Assistant Honors Director to Dr. Chute. Between the two of them, they taught the majority of the Honors classes that the program offered, and continued to expand the program together. Erin also formed Honors Student Advisory Board (HSAB), which is another way for students to become involved in the Honors Program.

Erin left the CalU Honors Program to become the Assistant Dean of the Honors College at Towson University for the fall semester in 2007. Dr. Chute retired at the end of the spring semester in 2008. During their time involved in the CalU Honors Program, Dr. Chute and Erin Mountz have positively affected many students and revealed the potential in many of the students. Dr. Chute and Erin Mountz have contributed much to the Honors Program that one can say, without a doubt, the program would not be nearly as developed or prestigious as it is today without their help.