



HONORS COLLEGE

EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

ETSU Honors College Newsletter

January-February, 2015

Hey there,

I have been tasked with giving everyone a brief update on the Honors College Student Council. Let me start by saying that the Council spent the fall semester restructuring to become more focused on brainstorming, collaborating, and actualizing. We are doing our best to find a balance between wants expressed by the students and limits given by administration.

The planning for the social is nearing completion. The date is March 31st, and the location will be Mediterranean Garden. I know some of you were looking for a change of venue, but as we all know, money talks. I hope to see solid numbers there, and I hope that everyone has a wonderful time.

Please keep giving us suggestions and complaints if you have them. There are a lot of great things in the works for the Honors College this spring and next fall. I will continue to keep everyone updated. Thanks.

*Best,
Woodson Carpenter
HCSC President*

Professor spotlight: Daniel Hedden

by David Floyd

Daniel Hedden, a professor in the ETSU Honors College, said that among all the programs at ETSU, the honors college is one of the more unique institutions on campus.

"It turns out sort of all the students I really liked in my classes were mainly honors students anyways," Hedden said. "Now you're all collected in one place."

Hedden came to ETSU in 2007 to work in the university's philosophy department as an adjunct professor and lecturer. His position in the philosophy department eventually led him to teaching classes to students in the Honors College.

"I had a weird hybrid position where I taught in the honors and the philosophy department for a year," Hedden said. "Then when Dr. Zimmerman left, that's when I got my current job."

Hedden teaches Foundations in Research and Colloquium, advises the Honors College Student Council, and is currently the honors college's curriculum coordinator.

"Right now we're taking a comprehensive look at our curriculum, and I'm sort of leading that," Hedden said. "We actually just formed a committee that's going to collaborate with others in the college and outside of the college to look at our curriculum."

Hedden was born in Huntsville, Alabama. His family owned a

number of John Deere tractor dealerships in Tennessee and Alabama.

"My dad never wanted me to do that," Hedden said. "There was zero pressure to do that. He was like 'do anything but that.' They were pretty happy let me do anything I wanted — as long as I was supporting myself."

Hedden's interest in philosophy grew out of the coursework he did as an undergraduate at Auburn.

"I guess I kind of fell into it," Hedden said. "I've always been interested in those kinds of questions — religion and ethics and such — and so my very first semester as an undergraduate I took a philosophy class. I really liked it, so the next quarter I took another one and just kept taking philosophy courses until it was time to declare a major."

Hedden still remembers some of the work he did as a freshman.

"First paper I ever wrote in college was on a debate between Bertrand Russell and George Santayana on naturalism in ethics," Hedden said. "I'm happy I don't have the paper anymore because I'm pretty sure I'd be embarrassed by it, but at the time I thought it was profound."

After graduating from Auburn, Hedden enrolled in the University of Virginia graduate school to get his Ph.D in philosophy.

"I was an English major with a

concentration in creative writing, so the options were like MFA or a Ph.D program in philosophy," Hedden said. "It's one of the rare cases where philosophy is the more practical choice."

Hedden stayed at the University of Virginia as a student for several years before leaving to accept a job at ETSU.

"I really like ETSU generally and I like our students generally," Hedden said. "I always have since I got here. I came from UVA, where I was in grad school, very different students, and I've always told people I like our students much better. You guys are much more interesting on the whole than the students there — more diverse in a lot of ways."

Hedden said he believes the Honors College is developing in the right direction, but there are some aspects he'd like to see strengthen.

"I would like to see things in the college be more student-oriented, giving students more control over the college," Hedden said. "This is your college and we want it to seem that way and for that to be reflected across things — what we do in the curriculum, what we do socially, what the college is doing on campus...and I think we're moving in that direction."

Make a difference in the lives of current Honors students. Each gift is important in our mission to champion student success and achievement across all academic disciplines through the ETSU Honors College.

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Alumnus spotlight: Jonathan Hatcher

by Laura Traister

Alumnus Jonathan Hatcher grew up in Maryville and attended ETSU on a full scholarship as a University Honors Scholar. Although he started out pre-med as a biology/chemistry double major, he graduated in December 2007 with a bachelor's of science degree in philosophy and biology.

"The bonds I formed with my peers were priceless," Hatcher said. "The staff fostered exploration and critical thinking. I consider myself fortunate to have had time with Dr. Boland, a true character." Besides academics, he spent time trying out intramural sports and volunteering at various places, including Habitat for Humanity, Second Harvest Food Bank, Cherokee National Forest, and local nursing homes. More than anything, however, he spent time engaging with nature.

"Mostly I spent my out of class time in the woods looking for myself, which was a much more productive phase than when I was out clubbing or running the buck naked mile," he said. "I still have a child's heart. I like slimy things and making mud pies, pooping with a cool breeze on my buttocks, and watching a fire burn down to nothing. Some of the best

night's sleeps I have had have been on a bed of moss under unobstructed skies. Nature feeds our spirit."

He has a wealth of experience traveling and working outside Tennessee, from educating youth in Alaska and being a groundskeeper on an organic farm in Hawaii to teaching English in South Korea.

"With the relative ease of a free college education, I was allowed the freedom to begin to break down the social restraints that were influencing some of the most important decisions of my life. It is incredible how much control over who we are that we give to others," Hatcher said.

"All the time I spent as a nomad I was learning what I need for life and from life. I have been to some of the most remote and poorest places in the world, places recovering from genocide, places where farmers still have to worry if they will hit unexploded ordinances when they plow. I have also seen mudskippers, orangutans, beluga whales, and pit vipers in their natural habitats. I've seen the sun rise from the top of Haleakala, the sunset from the top of Hallasan, and ate breakfast watching a

brown beer graze for berries. The more I let go and lived in the moment, the more exposed I was to the human experience. I have gained a much deeper appreciation for life and how I choose to spend it."

Hatcher currently lives with his wife and fifteen-month-old daughter and enjoys gardening and hiking with his baby and dog. They live on The Farm, an intentional community in Summertown in Middle Tennessee.

His work these days is varied: he manages a dinner club, a wine maker, and a brewers cooperative. He also propagates tempeh molds for a lab and is interning at a brewery.

"Currently I am negotiating terms for opening a craft brewery. By the end of the year I should be getting paid for something I used to not do under my end tables on the ridge with gallon jugs and condoms from the campus clinic as airlocks. In five years I hope to have upgraded the brewery, possibly started the process of opening a distillery, and manage a vineyard/hop farm. Mostly I want to create jobs in a rural community."



Rentsenkhand Enkh-Amgalan, known as Handaa to her friends, is a junior Midway scholar who is majoring in marketing management with a minor in economics. Originally from Ulaanbaatar, the capital and largest city of Mongolia, she attended American University in Bulgaria, a liberal arts university that boasts a vibrant international community. The positive international experience she gained there was profound.

"Two years of international experience at this university helped me to understand the benefits of diversity and shaped me to become who I am now," Handaa said. As a freshman, she volunteered in Poland and Romania for commu-

Midway student seeks international experience

by Laura Traister

nity service projects. Another project involved working on social development projects with a team of international students from New Zealand, Poland, Japan, South Korea, Brazil, and Africa.

"These two projects are the most important and meaningful international experiences I have had," Handaa said. "It offered me an incredible opportunity to get to know many enthusiastic young leaders from all over the world."

In pursuit of more international experience and eager to experience American cultural values and education opportunities, Handaa decided to attend ETSU last semester. She has adjusted extremely well to American university, taking honors classes but also serving this semester as a resident advisor at Dosssett-West Hall and the fundraising chair for the National Society of Leadership and Success (Sigma Alpha Pi). She is also involved in International Buccaneer Buddies (IBB) and says one of her favorite places in Johnson City is World Cafe, a weekly meeting of international and American students sponsored by Campus House.

Being an international student at ETSU has been a very positive experience that has made

her academic and professional plans possible.

"Professors, classmates, colleagues, academic advisors, and friends give their valuable advice and encourage me to accomplish my goals," she said.

"All these honors classes and other academic classes I am taking have been developing me to become the person who I want to be in the future. Moreover, Honors College is offering me an opportunity to pursue a professional internship in marketing field over the summer. So, it is definitely preparing me for my future career path."

Her thesis topic is on "Consumer Behavior in Mongolia" and will test whether or not rural consumers and urban consumers exhibit different behaviors.

"Having grown up in both urban and rural lifestyles in Mongolia, I am interested in exploring the differences between nomadic and sedentary consumers' attitudes and the variables that affect them," Handaa said. "Rural parts of the country still keep the nomadic lifestyles, while the city residents have more modern lifestyles. Since I am the only one student from Mongolia, I want to add this research

work as valuable input to the thesis archive of the Honors College at ETSU.”

After her graduation in May 2016, Handaa plans to gain professional experience before pursuing a master’s degree in the United States and eventually returning to her homeland.

“In the long-term, I intend to return to Mongolia to contribute to the future prosperity of my country with the help of my experiences and knowledge from studying and working in the USA.”

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the formal creation of the ETSU Honors College. To commemorate this milestone, the Honors College Newsletter will be running three articles detailing the history of the college before and after its inception in 2005. This installment in the series details the birth of the institution.

In 2004, ETSU President Paul Stanton, Jr. called for a proposal to create an honors college at ETSU. Part of the motivation for this request was the success of current honors programs. The University Honors Scholars program had been created through a faculty initiative in 1992, with admission of the first class of 12 students in fall 1993 (20 students thereafter until 2005).

Another group of honors programs based in colleges and departments had grown up somewhat spontaneously beginning in 1995. The College of Applied Science & Technology created their own honors program and dedicated their group of Academic Performance Scholarships to serve as a funding base for students. The effort was duplicated by other departments and colleges so that by 2004 10 “honors-in-discipline” programs existed. These programs were loosely supported by the staff of the University Honors Scholars program.

In 2004, the provost, Bert C. Bach, took on the challenge of creating a proposal for the ETSU Honors College, pulling on the expertise of past and current directors, including Mike Gallagher (the inaugural director), Rebecca Pyles (director 1998-2002) and Jay Boland (director 2002-2006). The initial guidance for development of the ETSU Honors College came from the supervising principles of the National Collegiate Honors Council and the needs and wishes expressed by the university community.

The design and structure of ETSU’s honors college is unique among other honors colleges around the U.S. This is primarily owing to the breadth of its mission to serve all undergraduates at ETSU.

The university’s particular design and structure resulted from a year-long effort to consult

with faculty, staff and students (individually and in groups) representing different groups across campus. The consensus was that ETSU needed something different that would serve more of its undergraduate students. Consequently, the mission of the Honors College became focused on the goal of providing opportunities for undergraduate students to distinguish their educational careers at ETSU.

As a consequence of this process, it was decided to include two units – one new and one somewhat “orphaned” — in the new Honors College: one, Undergraduate Research & Creative Activities (new in 2004) and two, International Programs & Services. In addition, the university wanted to expand honors programming at the institution. Of particular interest were two programs — an honors program in an underserved academic area (Interdisciplinary Arts) and one that provided opportunities for exceptional students who wished to transfer to ETSU, either from community colleges or other universities. Thus, the Fine & Performing Arts Scholars Program and the Midway Honors Scholars programs were born.

Finally, the university addressed the need for structure and oversight of its Honors-in-Discipline program areas – the need for centralization sprang from departments, colleges, students, and also from a core principle from the National College Honors Council.

The ETSU Honors College proposal was approved during the spring of 2005 by various governing bodies across campus, the Tennessee Board of Regents, and the Tennessee Higher Education Commission, and on July 1, 2005, the Honors College at ETSU officially began operation.

Don't forget!

Boland Undergraduate Research Symposium - Tuesday, April 7 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the Millennium Centre

Spring Formal - Tuesday, March 31 at Mediterranean Garden

Deadline to participate and be included in the Academic Convocation program - Friday, March 20, contact Deanna Bryant:

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