

# Alexandra Suarez

Graduating Summer  
2022

Associate of Science



## Honors classes:

ENGL 1023H Spring 2021 English  
composition 2 with Professor M. Looney

PHIL 2033H Fall 2021 World religions  
with Professor D. Krueger

ARHS 1003H Spring 2022 Art  
appreciation with Professor E. Gardner

COMM 1303H Spring 2022 Public  
speaking with professor C. Knies

## Section I: community, curiosity, diversity

My first semester at NWACC was intimidating, but exciting. I took basic classes such as English Composition, Pre Calculus, Biology, and Chemistry. English has always been a difficult subject of mine, but my professor, Matthew Ullman, changed the subject for me entirely. After finals, he recommended me to the honors program. I was taken aback and hesitant to add anything more to my plate. I was a 21-year-old living in Dallas, who was diving back into school after a 6 year hiatus. Looking back as an almost 23-year-old, new mother, living in Northwest Arkansas, I am so elated that I not only joined, but took the classes I did. My first honors class was the following spring semester, an English Composition 2 class with the wonderful professor Looney. The extremely small class size, unique projects, and involvement in the National History Day, added unparalleled excitement, challenge, and engagement. As my classes were all remote synchronous due to the pandemic, the ability to more intimately partake in class discussions, projects, made the virtual learning experience unforgettable in the best way. I felt as if I had an opportunity to become more acquainted with my fellow students and our instructor. As most of

the classes I had taken to fulfill my pre-med and medical laboratory science prerequisites are biology, chemistry, social science, mathematics based, I utilized the diverse honors class options to enjoy classes of different types. I am not a creative or artistic person by any measure. However, one of my most favorite classes taken at NWACC has been my honors art appreciation class with professor Gardner. I would have never imagined taking, let alone thoroughly enjoying a class like this. While registering for my classes for this spring, I was intrigued by the options available for me to branch out of my usual STEM focus and find intrigue in new topics. The range of options for honors classes has been one of my favorite things about the program.

## Section II: skills gained from the honors program

I will be transferring to UAMS for the remainder of my education after finishing a semester at the University of Arkansas. I am thankful for being a member of the NWACC honors program as it gave me the space to grow confidence in deeper interaction. In typical classroom settings, it is easy to become timid, shy, and afraid to speak up and participate fully. One of my professors from a previous college instilled upon me that there is no reason to fear looking stupid for asking questions, for you're at least attempting

to broaden your knowledge or further understand. I knew this, but do not feel as if I truly placed this ideology within my conscious mindset until my experience in the honors program. As the class sizes are much smaller, it allows for deeper exchange and more personal communication. This takes some of the anxiety and fear off of your shoulders, which provides a place that feels less intimidating when questioning or discussing subject matter. I am appreciative of this attribute for it has taught me to be confident, giving me the opportunity to speak up and contribute significantly more. Not only does this make class time more enjoyable, but it makes the difficult task of staying focused while learning in such a familiar, distraction-filled environment such as your home less of an arduous task. I intend to take this mindset with me not only to University of Arkansas and UAMS, but hopefully, within every social environment I enter.

### **Section III: memorable honors member experience**

As mentioned previously, as a part of my first honors class, English composition two, I had the opportunity to participate in National History Day. National History Day is an annual event that encourages students in middle and high school to delve further into a specific theme relating to history in some fashion, utilizing a creative platform. I had the pleasure of accessing websites created

by young students. It was incredible and inspiring to see the imaginative and innovative submissions of the participants. It was our position as judges to be positive and constructive. I enjoyed taking in and learning so much information in a completely new manner, but also getting to work on a team with people from other areas to aid in these students' experience as contributors. I actually went into labor in one of my honors classes. Again, due to the very small class size, my professor and peers were well aware of my pregnancy and that it was coming to an end. They were so kind, understanding, and helpful to me during my transition into being a mother as well as a full-time college student. From taking and sending me notes of missed lectures, to the patience, it was one of the kindest experiences I have had.

### **Section IV: advice for new honors members**

If I could stress one thing to anybody contemplating, or who has been recommended to the honors program at NWACC, it would be that fear is the thief of joy and success. It can be awfully intimidating seeming, but the comradery, opportunity, and to be quite realistic, the boost on potential university applications, is well worth it. Whatever your major, focus, or program type, use the opportunity as an honors student, or even just a student taking honors classes, to have fun and venture out into

different, interesting subjects. Use the intimate class sizes to engage with people. Understand your professors on deeper levels, as well as your fellow classmates. Walk into this opportunity with a positive mindset, and you will reap the many benefits that it can offer.