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Major: A.S. Business Administration

Graduation: May 2025

Honors Courses:

English Composition II

Introduction to Philosophy

Programming Logic I



Section 1: In what ways did the Program help you “demonstrate engagement,” “cultivate curiosity,” and “explore perspectives” (community, curiosity, and diversity)?

I came to NWACC after I graduated from high school. I was excited, but also nervous before my first day of college. I did not know what college life was like, and I wondered how I could make my two years at college meaningful. In my first semester, I started getting involved in different student organizations and clubs while taking six courses at the same time. One day I noticed a large sign for the Honors Program in one of the buildings and it made me interested in the Honors Program. I visited the website to learn more about it and realized that it could be a great way to gain further experience.

In my second semester at NWACC, I was fortunate to have the chance to join the Honors Program. It took me a long time to decide whether to register for my first honors course. As a student whose native language is not English, I was nervous about the honors course will be too difficult. I was worried that it would be a big challenge for me to take an Honors course, and I was unsure what I would do if I failed. But after thinking about it for a few days, I decided to give it a try. I soon realized that the smaller class size gave me more opportunities to speak and share ideas. I felt more comfortable and that encouraged me to participate more. It also helped me to hear my classmates’ ideas and thoughts on a particular essay or topic, and this opportunity strengthened my sense of diversity and critical thinking. The three honors courses I have taken helped my ability to think outside the box, explore new ideas and other perspectives. For example, in professor Chesne’s English Composition class, I wrote a paper on a topic I was not very familiar with. Instead of simply completing the assignment for a grade, I tried to go deeper, seek out more sources and learn more than before. That experience helped me to be curious and motivated to learn beyond the class. In my Programming Logic I class, I had different and more complicated assignments than other students, and these assignments challenged me to write more complex code and understand programming logic more deeply. They also gave me a chance to see how other students think and solve problems, which helped me expand the way I think. Moreover, I attended a speaker event related to society and culture during Spring Art and Culture Festival, which opened my eyes to new ideas and inspired me to think more critically.

The small class size in honors courses also made me feel more engaged and build closer friendships. We had great conversations that were not just about schoolwork but also about interesting topics in life and community. I had also participated in several Honors Program meetings, and we talked about volunteering, community services, etc. This gave us more opportunities to give back to the community by volunteering to clean street and use our knowledge to help people someday. For instance, in my Programming Logic I course, I learned Python and our assignments are related to real-world scenario problems. One of the assignments involved creating a program that could encode and decode barcodes, which made me felt directly connected to real life. These projects made learning feel relevant and encouraged me to stay curious and passionate about gaining new skills in the future.

Section 2: How did this program prepare you for a university (or for a workplace, if you aren’t transferring at this point)? What hard or soft skills will you take with you?

I transferred to the University of Arkansas after I graduated from NWACC, and I really appreciate the Honors Program for giving me an invaluable journey in my beginning of college life. The program not only provided opportunities to gain more knowledge and skills but also

helped me develop broader perspectives on education and work. The honors courses encouraged me to think deeply about ideas and pursue excellence in everything I do. This mindset will help me in future academic and work by motivating me to research more thoroughly insights for a task. The program also helped improve my communication skills, which are essential for both school and career success. Through teamwork and discussions with classmates from diverse backgrounds, I have grown my ability to communicate effectively and gained new insights from others. I also made several great friends along the way. These interactions taught me valuable qualities and helped me grow personally.

Another key takeaway from the Honors Program was developing critical thinking. In today's AI-driven world, innovation and critical thinking are more important for not being replaced by AI. Overall, the Honors experience at NWACC prepared me with many skills that have been useful in my transition to the University of Arkansas, and I believe will continue to benefit me in the future.

Section 3: What is one experience you had while a member that you'd like to share?

In the Honors Program, I took three Honors courses, and some of the class activities and outside field trips were especially meaningful in helping me connect the course content to real life. I also participated in several meetings where we discussed community service projects and upcoming events. One of the experiences I enjoyed most was the field trip in Professor Chesne's English Composition II class to Crystal Bridges Museum for the *Exquisite Creatures* exhibition by Christopher Marley. The exhibition includes a variety of animal specimens, organized room by room according to different categories. The interesting arrangement of the exhibition captured my attention and made the entire experience fun. One point that really made the exhibition stand out for me is that the exhibition felt like a written essay because it had an introduction, body sections with examples, and a conclusion with reflections. It was a very instructive experience that connected directly to what we were learning in English Composition about writing structure.

I was also personally surprised by the impact this experience had on me. I was not interested to bugs and thought they were scary or insignificant compared to other animals. However, this exhibition helped me to understand that bugs can also be a beautiful, delicate part of nature that contributes to the world in their own unique way. It encouraged me to get closer to nature and to discover



more beautiful creatures. After that field trip, I felt a clear difference in the Honors experience. The course went beyond the classroom and provided a unique and memorable way to learn and experience.

Section 4: Considering all you have written for the above, what advice do you have for new members?

I really appreciate the chance to be in the Honors Program and am so grateful to all my Honors professors. I never thought about the impact the program would have on me when I first enrolled in Honors course. I really encourage you to take some Honors courses and be involved in Honors Program and you will find it a meaningful way to spend your time. The Honors Program is a great opportunity to explore new perspectives, get involved in the community, challenge yourself, and gain valuable experiences. It can also serve as a meaningful beginning for your next chapter after graduation, whether you pursue further education or enter the workforce.