STUDENT INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH PANEL

Emily Gilbreath

ABSTRACT

Ultimately, the end of historical analysis is to understand where we come from and how to avoid the mistakes of our ancestors. The former is pleasant and healthy, but in the modern age, the latter is vital. It has become apparent in the post-World War II era that the human race has the capacity to destroy itself, and in order to avoid this termination, we must learn to change. We must learn to avoid war crimes, not only those borne of fascism, such as the Holocaust, but those borne of democracy, such as the Dresden fire bombings. My work encompasses the immediate reactions of the Allies, the Nazis, the survivors, as well as the work of contemporary historians and the lives of modern Dresden citizens. I inspect past and present reactions to the Dresden attacks for evidence that our society is making a moral progression away from war crimes. With this search, I analyze not only the opinions of survivors, war officials of both sides, and historians, but the shifting paradox of remembrance that modern Dresdeners face. The complex web of ethics of the past and present, of citizen and official, forms a larger lesson regarding the path toward a world without war crimes.

DESCRIPTION

Reactions to the Dresden fire bombings form a complex web concerning ethics of the past and present. The opinions of survivors, Allied and Nazi officials, contemporary historians, and modern Dresden citizens reveal a larger lesson regarding the path toward a world without war crimes.
Title: The Many Faces of Facebook for Honors

Faculty mentor: Gene Kleppinger

Students:
Michelle Glass
Courtney Jackson
Megan Pigman
Lauren Rice
Katie Webber

Brief description:

How are Honors programs and students using Facebook? Can Honors programs develop strong faculty/student camaraderie through online friendships, groups and fan pages? Our review of Facebook sites from our own and other institutions provides tips for recruiting students, promoting events, building morale, keeping alumni informed, and much more.

(48 words)

Presentation abstract:

Honors programs and honors students must consider the potential for online social networks such as Facebook to enhance their communities’ identity, growth and coherence. We will review how honors programs and honors students at our own institution and other schools are using Facebook for purposes related to Honors. Through a lively discussion, the audience will receive tips to help any honors community use Facebook effectively. These strategies include helping students and instructors communicate through “friendships,” helping students and programs create effective groups, and helping programs create “fan pages” to attract the attention of current students, faculty, prospective students and alumni.

We also recognize many challenges and potential pitfalls associated with Facebook. Not everyone uses Facebook, or wants to do so. Facebook itself continues to evolve, often unpredictably. While online friendships can provide academic support and inspire collaborative projects, many students are puzzled by the idea of being “friends” with their instructors, and vice versa. Honors programs must always seek to use social networks to enhance learning, not merely to foster social interaction. We think that, with appropriate planning, honors programs and their instructors and students can develop very successful Facebook connections.

(191 words)

Strands: Nuts and Bolts, Diversity, General Interest

A/V Requests: None.
Idea Exchange Proposal

Title: Apps for Honors

Faculty Mentor: Steffen Wilson

Student Presenters: Andrew Holcomb  
Matt Stegman  
Michael Cannon

AV Requests: None

Description: Apps have become commonplace as everyone seems to have a Smartphone resting in their pocket, backpack, or briefcase. This session will give insight into Apps that can benefit Honors students, faculty, and administrators, as well as explain how one can create Honors relevant Apps.

Abstract: "Apps" have become ubiquitous as more students and faculty acquire Smartphone, and students and faculty alike can be seen using these Apps all over campus. As examples, student can check movie times as well as find directions to the nearest restaurant, while faculty can "Bump" one another to quickly download the contact information of colleagues. In addition to personal applications, Apps also have the potential to create a more technologically advanced Honors program, as numerous applications for academics have been developed as well. Apps that can be utilized by students, faculty, and administrators in Honors Programs will be presented to participants. In addition, the process of developing an App will be made available to participants, as Honors Programs could benefit from the creation of new Honors specific technology. Don't forget to stop by with your Smartphone!

Strands: Student General Interest, General Interest, Nuts and Bolts
Roundtable

* Title

Semester Rhythms, Class Flow: How to Catch the Current, Beat the Doldrums, and Reach Port

* Session Description (50 word maximum)

How can teachers harness students’ intellectual energy by using class or semester rhythms? How can instructors use the predictable time dimensions of a class period or a course to conquer paper/problem set overload, instructor monologue, and discussion drift? Solutions could include alternative media projects, student discussion leaders, and real-world applications.

* Number of Presenters

5

Co-presenter Information

Gaby Bedetti
Amanda Orloff
Kaitlin E. Staverman
Michelle Butler
Becca Reynolds

* Abstract (150-200 words)

Student perspectives will inform teachers how to harness honors students’ intellectual energy by using predictable semester and class rhythms. Our conversation will explore student-eye-views of their college courses that will update instructors (Duffy & Jones, *Teaching within the Rhythms of the Semester*, 1995)—including the honors instructors attending the round table. We hope to share our findings at a future honors conference or in print.

We may focus on class flow and/or semester flow. Our format could deal with a specific problem and solution or provide a more general explanation of student needs and wants at the beginning, middle, and end of a class period or semester. To offer diverse perspectives on the issue of class flow, discussion leaders will facilitate the conversation with student-generated Q/A. These discussion leaders include an elementary education, a special education, a middle school education, and a criminal justice major.

How can instructors help students use the time dimensions of courses to conquer, for example, paper/problem set overload, instructor monologue, and discussion drift? Student-proposed solutions could include alternative media projects, student discussion leaders, and real-world applications. The topic may be of particular interest to honors students who are future teachers or current honors faculty.

* Strand(s)

General Interest
Teaching & Learning
Nuts and Bolts
Title: Investigating the Mechanism of Thermophilic Enzyme Stability and Possible Applications to Biofuel Production

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Martin Brock

Student Presenter: Michael Mazzotta

Brief Description: The mechanism by which thermophilic enzymes are stable at high temperatures is not fully understood. Our research analyzes their physical and chemical properties in comparison to mesophilic enzymes. This data will be applied to the efficient digestion of polysaccharide chains for use in algal samples that will produce biodiesel.

Expanded Description: The research that we are currently engaged in includes purification of these thermophilic enzymes derived from high-temperature resistant bacteria, such as *Thermus thermophilus*. The chemical and physical structure of these enzymes will be studied through a series of experiments that will measure the activity of the thermophilic enzyme subjects. The activity of these thermophilic enzymes will be analyzed in a number of different solvents and environments. Solvents that will be used in this study will include acetone, ether, and a number of additional organic solvents that possess a lesser dielectric constant value in comparison to water solvent. This enzymatic activity found in various solvents will be analyzed using a number of different assays. The results of this research will ultimately be applied to advancement of alternative methods of fuel source development through efficient and expeditious digestion of polysaccharide chains for use in algal samples that will produce biodiesel.

Strand Choices: Science/Math General Interest Student General Interest