



HONOR GRAM

LA SIERRA UNIVERSITY
HONORS PROGRAM NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 18, ISSUE 2



THE HONORGRAM

is a newsletter designed to inform and update Honors faculty and students as well as those who are interested in the La Sierra University Honors Program. If you have any questions or comments concerning the newsletter, or ideas that you would like to contribute, please email us: honors@lasierra.edu

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HONORS FIELD TRIPS

ALIX LOPEZ

This winter quarter, the students and teachers of UHNR 214: The Arts and UHNR 324: Science and the Future took field trips to various locations in order to learn the material of the course through first-hand experiences.

UHNR 214: THE ARTS

PROFESSOR ANDREW HOWE

Our first field trip of the quarter was to downtown Riverside. We visited the Riverside Art Museum, where we experienced an exhibit titled "Storm Clouds." Jeff Soto, the artist, presents a dark vision of suburban California, replete with palm trees, power lines, and voluminous smog.

Our second stop was at Tio's Tacos, a local restaurant where the owner has decorated several lots adjacent to his eatery with "junk art." This place has it all: life-sized figures made out of barbie dolls, common household items embedded in the sidewalk, and a chapel made of beer bottles where services are held. The second field trip was to Los Angeles. We spent the morning at the Watts Towers, a small group of structures constructed by Simon Rodia during the first half of the twentieth century. After enjoying this famous landmark of urban art, we went to the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), where we immersed ourselves in the artwork of many of the luminaries of the post-World War II art world.



UHNR 324: SCIENCE AND THE FUTURE

PROFESSORS JAMES WILSON AND DAN TINIANOW

Ramona Bahnam: The Honors field trip to San Diego was an amazing educational experience. We visited museums and science exhibits and studied them in an attempt to reproduce our own exhibit for our final class assignment. I was afraid the trip was going to be a boring and educational extension of a classroom, but it was the most academically enriching weekend in the funnest way possible! We went to the zoo, and got to try the different science games at the exhibits... for research purposes :) We spent time with our two amazing professors and had long, meaningful conversations with one another. This event was extraordinary in every way possible, and I felt so grateful for being a participant.

Meliseanna Gibbons: This field trip to San Diego was the most fun I had since Christmas break. The people on the trip were awesome and I laughed until my stomach hurt. On Saturday morning, some of us worshiped at the Point Loma Seventh-day Adventist church. They were very



HONORS FIELD TRIPS

Honors students have the opportunity to get off campus and see some of the finest exhibitions throughout Southern California. This year students went to San Diego as part of their science studies.



welcoming to us. The afternoon was spent gawking at Okapis, waving at orangutans, and holding our breath with swimming hippos at the zoo. Sunday was a day at the Natural History and Science museums. As well as educational, the weekend was relaxing and amusing...we're Honors, what did you expect?

Nelly Montoya: The Science and the Future was truly nothing like I expected it to be. It was above and beyond. It was great to be able to get hands-on experience in the exhibits and to observe how the whole system worked. I think this is what it means to be an Honors student: to go above and beyond expectations in the search for knowledge. We could be reading from a textbook on how it all works. Instead, we took a trip, and I really think that's the best way to learn. I can't sum up the weekend without including that the Honors students who went on the trip were among the best people I have met here at La Sierra—all of them. I couldn't ask for better classmates and now friends. I'm really blessed.

Patrick Garrett York: Community is a paramount pillar in the foundation of Honors education. In learning from and contributing to our fellow students' scholarship, our "liberal education" at La Sierra University can truly reach its full potential.

As a member of the Junior Honors class for the 2008-2009 school year, I have had ample time to get to know my fellow students. Yet, in our recent trip to San Diego with the third-year Science and the Future class, our comradeship was further strengthened, ensuring our opportunity to work with friends and not just with colleagues.

The premise of the course associated with the trip is that each group in the class must create a proposal for their own traveling science exhibit. Interactive displays, unanswered scientific questions, and the relationship between science and the layperson will all be examined throughout our collaboration. The trip was an effort to stimulate some ideas based on exciting scientific exhibits.

Our trip involved visits to the San Diego Zoo, the Ruben H. Fleet Science Museum and the San Diego Natural History Museum, all of which held engaging, informative exhibits with abundant and useful information for our own plans. Yet, in my opinion, the value in the trip was in the collective observations and thoughts of future collaboration between our fellow students. We learned together and now we will work together. We know each other and thus we can communicate more clearly.

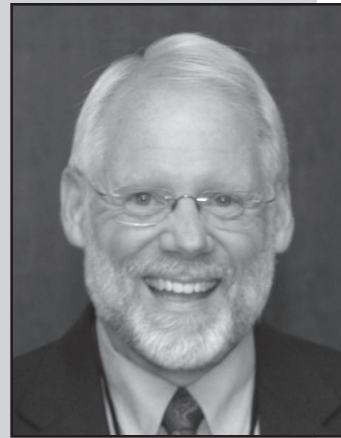
The Freshman Honors trip abroad was almost two years ago, but something as little as a three-day trip (to a local place an hour and 45 minutes away) ignited the friendship that developed overseas. I have new inspiration and motivation to work as a part of this group.

FROM THE DIRECTOR:

DR. DOUGLAS CLARK

THREE "R"'s

While I, like most school kids I knew as a child, grew up on the three "R"'s of education – Reading, wRiting, and aRithmetic – I have since discovered another set of "R"'s, which have proven helpful to me. In the context of an Honors education at a Christian university like La Sierra, I would recommend the following three elements of a quality Christian higher education.



The first "R" has to do with how Responsible we are in undertaking the educational enterprise. We cannot afford for our approaches to academics to be slipshod or substandard. Mediocrity is not an option if we hope to be credible in our task. Only our best efforts will suffice. We owe this to ourselves and to others on curiosity's quest who are looking over our shoulders. "Christian faith," according to Elton Trueblood (as cited by Arthur Homes in his *The Idea of a Christian College*), "is the sworn enemy of all intellectual dishonesty and shoddiness. The Christian believes that in all that she does intellectually, socially, or artistically, she is handling God's creation and that is sacred." I would argue that we cannot call what we do education if it is not responsible to our highest principles, to God, and to the honest search for truth.

A second "R" in our quest to understand and safeguard and thereby celebrate curiosity in the Christian university is tied to Redemptive perspectives and behavior. Arthur Homes addresses this issue by noting that a Christian college, while part of a church, is not the same thing as a church. Nor is it the same thing as non-religious schools. He argues that "the Christian college is distinctive in that the Christian faith can touch the entire range of life and learning to which a liberal education exposes students." We cannot call ourselves Christian, I would argue, without the redemptive dimension of our task.

Finally, the third "R" of our trilogy. If our work needs to be responsible and redemptive, then to bring both of these "R"'s into the service of today's world and its needs, we should aim for Relevance. Relevance forms a bridge between our best academic efforts and religious affirmations, on the one hand, and, on the other, the world in which we live, helping us define who we are and how we can best contribute to those around us. It ensures that what we do speaks not only to our own community in ways that address current issues and needs, but also to the rest of our ever-shrinking global village.

Thus, a new set of three "R"'s, these of Christian higher education: Responsible, Redemptive, Relevant. Being responsible suggests a vocation of integrity and honesty in which we care for the mind. Being redemptive suggests a vocation of faith and goodness—and caring for the soul. Being relevant suggests a vocation of service and generosity in the here and now. It implies caring about and for the world in which we live.

READING THE BIBLE AS A REVOLUTIONARY CULTURAL FORCE

BY ROBERT DUNN

In the past twenty years or so Bible courses taught in Adventist colleges and high schools have begun to add a new dimension. Rather than regarding the book only as a handbook of salvation, they have also seen it as great literature. All levels of Adventist society have begun to benefit from this approach. Seeing the Bible from this perspective has helped students and adults appreciate God's word as a document that reaches the heart as well as the mind.

Unfortunately, classroom discussions and sometimes Sabbath School sessions often fail to go beyond the theoretical. Too often one senses that participants in a discussion hope to accumulate points for profound observations rather than to share deep experiences of God and neighbor. They approach the text from a distant, critical stance, never quite getting into it. Fortunately a few show their classmates a way to proceed. I recently received from a student this wonderful analysis of Jesus' response to his disciples who would not allow children to interrupt him:

When Jesus says [in Mark 10:15] 'Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it,' for the first time in my life I hear the words of Jesus as a threat or a warning rather than a kind moral. Verse 14 indicates that the disciples' response to the children made Jesus indignant. . . . The verse suggests that Jesus may have possibly felt annoyed, resentful, angry, offended.

While reading the Bible we usually tend to notice the very positive aspects of Jesus' behavior. But this time I have noticed the negative sides of his disposition, which, in fact, poses and in itself confirms the notion that Jesus was a human being with human feelings and sometimes even human reactions to different events. Or we could also attach these attributes to God, for Jesus simultaneously was of divine origin. Interestingly, that allows us to assume that healthy anger might be a natural response to human phenomena and there is nothing wrong for us as humans to feel angered or annoyed.

This student allows her attitudes and values to be tested against an ancient text. She says that the tradition she has received resists annoyance, resentment, and anger, but that when she reads the text again she questions her first reading of it. She comes, as Marcus J. Borg suggests we should do, to read this passage again for the first time. Can any reading in any of our classes do better than that?

Compare the traditionally distant response typically heard in a classroom to that of the first hearers of the word. The disciples are so taken with the living Word, with Jesus, that they abandon jobs and homes to follow him. Jesus meets them in their ordinary occupations, not in text or synagogue. Out of love for Christ they

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come, and out of their responses the church grows.

One early saint listens carefully on a Sunday to the reading of the gospel, "If thou wouldest be perfect, go and sell that thou hast and give to the poor; and come follow Me and thou shalt have treasure in heaven." St. Athanasius tells us that St. Antony "went out immediately from the church, and gave the possessions of his forefathers to the villagers—they were three hundred acres, productive and very fair—that they should be no more a clog upon himself and his sister." Out of St. Antony's response the monastic movement grows, a movement that preserves Christian civilization in the Dark Ages and for the next thousand years.

The same is said to be true of Martin Luther, who hears the voice of St. Paul as he devoutly ascends the steps in Rome, "The just shall live by faith." John Wesley feels "strangely warmed" as he hears Luther's comments on Romans read in a Moravian meeting on London's Aldersgate Street. The American Quaker John Woolman remembers: while my Companions went to play by the Way, I went forward out of Sight, and, sitting down, I read the 22d Chapter of the Revelations: 'He showed me a pure River of Water of Life, clear as Crystal, proceeding out of the Throne of God and of the Lamb, etc.' and, in reading it, my Mind was drawn to seek after that pure Habitation, which, I then believed, God had prepared for his Servants" (141-42).

Social gains are achieved through the work of all three. Luther overthrows the clerical abuses of the late middle ages and renews Christianity on the basis of grace. Wesley invigorates a dormant religion and starts a movement that establishes hospitals and schools. Woolman's Quakerism is one of the first witnesses against slavery in the United States. Each of these hears the Bible again for the first time.

So what moves you as you read the Bible once more, as it were, for the first time?

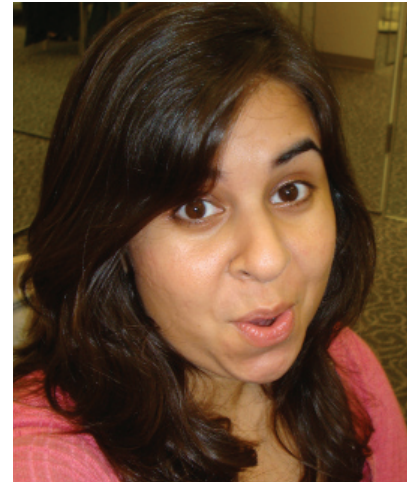
BRANDSTATER GALLERY EXHIBITIONS

Need to take a break from studying? Do you have a curious, open-mind? Are you ready to be challenged? If your answer to any of these questions is yes, then come visit the Brandstater Gallery! There is something in the gallery all the time. The first one displayed during the winter, titled Book as Sculpture, featured the work of 15 celebrated book artists such as Susan Porteous, Rachele W. Chuang and Genie Shen. Let me explain how this show was one that proved challenging and stimulating.

Ann Tucker (an artist) once said: "All art requires courage." Walking into Brandstater Gallery a couple of weeks ago, I knew that was true. Although the exhibit featured books, they weren't ones you would find in a library. The books in this gallery were books that have been altered in amazing, innovative ways to become sculptures. I realized that these artists have had the courage to be different and defy the notions of what a book should be. They have cut, painted, pressed, glued, carved, and/or scraped to create pieces that provoke thought and wonder. But perhaps I had a biased view on everything since I have been an art-lover for a long time. So I spent some time observing visitors' reactions as they examined various pieces. While looking at a particularly tall book sculpture, Frank Runnels exclaimed, "It just excites me that it's still standing and it looks like it's gonna tip over!" Another student, Susan Porteous, summed up her experience

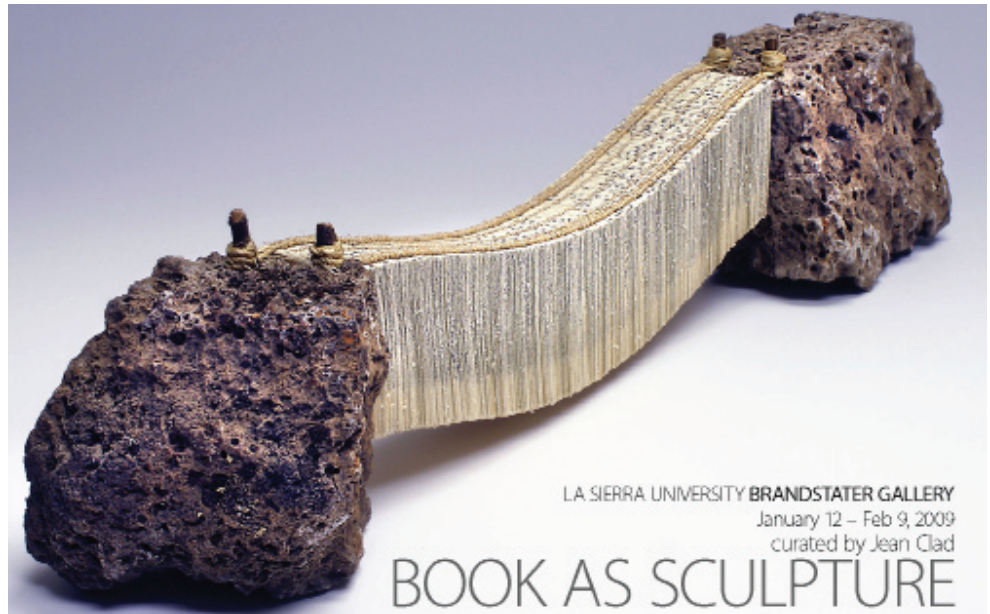
there by saying, "The artwork is inspiring. It shows you people can take simple things like a book and make something really cool out of it."

We tend to listen to intelligent people, so it might be good to remember the words of Albert Einstein when he said: "He who can no longer pause to wonder and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead; his eyes are closed." Don't close your eyes by not coming to Brandstater Gallery. Come and let yourself stand in awe of the way various artists can each bring a unique perspective on what it means to read a book, to paint, to do art, to be inspired. It will be well worth your time!



BY NELLY MONTOYA

*Gallery hours are Mon. – Thurs., 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. and Sun., 2 p.m. – 5 p.m. A campus map can be found at <http://www.lasierra.edu/resources/campusmap/index.html>.



LA SIERRA UNIVERSITY BRANDSTATER GALLERY
January 12 – Feb 9, 2009
curated by Jean Clad

BOOK AS SCULPTURE

HONORS OFFICE



(Pictured: Julie Muchinyi, Student Secretary; Mary Gamiño, Student Secretary; Zulema Ibarra, Secretary; Douglas Clark, Honors Director; Alix Lopez, *Honorgram* Editor. Not Pictured: Nina Park, Public Relations)

OFFICE HOURS

MONDAY
1pm – 5pm

TUESDAY & WEDNESDAY
9am – 12pm & 1pm – 5pm

THURSDAY
1pm – 5pm

FRIDAY
9am – 12pm

INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

(PRECURSOR TO THE HONORS PROGRAM)

GARY GILBERT

An oral examination ended my first quarter of the Inter-Dip program. Before being released for Christmas vacation in December of 1972, we students, in groups of three, faced Dr. Ronald Numbers, Dr. Fritz Guy, and Dr. Al Smith. They sat about the South end of a table – in a room on the second floor of La Sierra Hall – and asked questions of us. I remember the view of the grass and trees framed by the window behind Dr. Smith. These were more interesting than usual because none of us were prepared... reading not completed, day dreaming during discussions... and our lack of preparation became more obvious with successive questions. For 15 or 20 minutes we guessed and grabbed at obscure facts, proposed constructs to explain these facts. Finally, Dr. Numbers looked at me and said, “Well, why don’t you tell us when the Renaissance began.” I looked quickly at Dorothy and Mark; both shrugged. “Well, I think it began around the time of Isaac Newton... maybe around the 1700s...”

“I see,” Dr. Numbers said. Then he looked out the window and quit asking questions. Until that moment, I had known that the small craft carrying our first-term evaluations was in rough seas. When Dr. Numbers looked out the window I realized that our dory had taken on too much water and that Dr. Numbers was not going to watch it flounder.

I survived my first quarter in the Inter-Dip program, in spite of my dismal showing on the oral exam. During that first year I read many books, wrote many book reviews, discussed scientific discoveries and historical context. I knew that the other freshmen at La Sierra weren’t reading the same books or having many of the discussions. However, it was only in the course of subsequent years that I have come to realize how unusual the experience was. For example, when I was a hematology/oncology fellow at Tufts University-New England Medical Center I recall a discussion about how scientific knowledge changes. I had relatively strong, articulate views and it became clear that I was the only one—of the faculty and fellows in the discussion—who had read the dominant book on the subject “Structure of Scientific Revolutions,” by Thomas Kuhn – something I had done as part of interdisciplinary studies.

The first publication listed on my curriculum vitae came from an essay that I wrote for Dr. Delmer Davis, in my second year of Inter-Dip. The topic was death after we had studied the treatment of death in the arts. I wrote about the loss of my father during the prior year. Dr. Davis’ comments on my narrative indicated that he thought it was not only good, but might be suitable for publication. He then helped me with some revisions and wrote a cover letter that accompanied



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the submission. I went skiing with the author’s honorarium.

My Inter-Dip experience – the reading, writing, discussion, and field trips – remains a key foundation of my current skills and my outlook on how they should be used. Above all, it was the exposure to original work and high expectations about how I would process and respond to the work that have been influential on me and helpful to me. I credit the experience with giving me the insight that I could understand and appreciate art and history, that I could participate in public dialogue about faith and about science.

(Gary Gilbert is a Honors alumni of La Sierra University, and currently resides near Boston, working as Deputy ACOS for Research and Development at VA Boston, Harvard Medical School)



The Honors Student Council consists of an Honors student representative from each class. From dessert hours to procrastination parties and vespers to Sabbath outings, the council works fervently to plan events for the staff, faculty, and students of the Honors program. The council meets every Wednesday at 6:30pm. This year's council members include Mary Gamiño (chair), Alix Lopez, Meagan Miller, and Stirling Spence. If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions for future events, please do not hesitate to talk to any of the council members.

Pictured (Left to Right): Alix Lopez, Meagan Miller, Mary Gamiño, Sterling Spence.

WINTER QUARTER HONORS CLASSES

The following is a list of Honors classes that are offered Winter Quarter:

UHNR 114/114L: The Scientific Process (4 units)

Models science as practiced by the profession, with an emphasis on the process of science. The class asks the questions, "What is science?" and "How is science done?" while focusing on selected topics in science in their social and historical context.

UHNR 214/214L: The Arts (4 units)

An analysis of the structural elements of various visual and performing arts, and the study of the form, content and context as it relates to aesthetic response. Selected primary texts or classics of Western and Eastern literature, art, music, or other forms of aesthetic expression are examined.

UHNR 264: Honors Scholarship Colloquium (1 unit)

The preparation and presentation of a proposal for the Honors Scholarship Project (UHNR 464). This class is offered Fall and Winter of the Sophomore and Junior year.

UHNR 324: Science and the Future (4 units)

Examination of one or more subjects in the science and

emphasizing the current "state-of-the-art" and future directions in the field. Includes social and historical context; moral, political, and legal implications of scientific development; and connections with religion and philosophy.

Prerequisite: One quarter of calculus or statistics

UHNR 354: Honors Community Involvement (1-3 units spread out throughout entire Junior Year)

A project that engages the student in a community as he/she seeks to transform and build that community. Culminates in a written summary of the ways the community involvement has changed the student and the community, with an analysis of each. May be repeated for additional credit up to 3 units total; 3 units is required to fulfill the graduation requirement. It is recommended that this course be taken immediately following UHNR 314/314L: Changing Communities.

UHNR 414: Religion and the Future (4 units)

An examination of contemporary issues facing the Christian community and the Seventh-Day Adventist Church in their social and philosophical contexts. Attention will be given to the process of critical, constructive and contextualized philosophical, ethical, and theological thinking.

Prerequisite: UHNR 224

HELP MAKE THE 2009 INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE HAPPEN!!

Funding comes from:

1. Honors students
2. The Honors Program
3. Generous donors like YOU!

PLEASE DONATE ONLINE: www.lasierraconnect.org

or write a check today to: La Sierra University, noting "Going Global" in the memo line
and send to:

Honors Program, La Sierra University, 4500 Riverwalk Parkway, Riverside, CA 92515.

[To strengthen the development program at LSU, 5% of all gifts will be used to defray fundraising costs.]

THANK YOU! *Your donations are greatly appreciated!*

CONTRIBUTIONS WANTED. Interested in the *Honorgram*? If you enjoy writing, taking pictures, or you simply want to be tuned into what's what and who's who in Honors, then be a part of the Honors newsletter. Teachers and students are all welcome to participate and contributions will be greatly appreciated. Also, if you have any questions, comments, or suggestions, please e-mail alixlopez@gmail.com.

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NELLY MONTOYA
PATRICK GARRETT YORK
Honors Field Trips

THE HONORS PROGRAM began at La Sierra University in 1983. It strives to give special attention to undergraduates of outstanding intellectual and creative ability and aims to charge the imagination in an environment where student initiative is the guiding force. Students are given the opportunity to recognize their potential through encouragement, discussion and interaction. The overall objectives of the program are focused on the La Sierra University mission
"to Seek, to Know, to Serve..."

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HONORGRAM 8



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