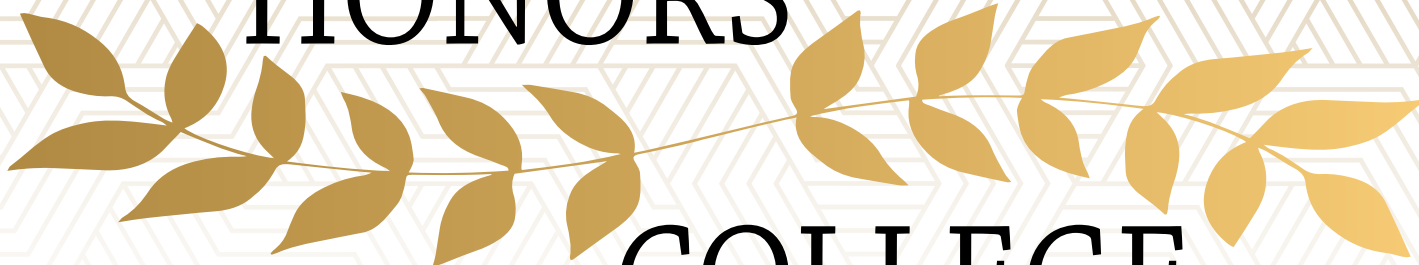


THE HONORS

COLLEGE NEWSLETTER



Semester in Review

By Lisa K. Perdigao, Ph.D.,
Assistant Vice President, Honors College

The Florida Tech Honors College has gone virtual in Spring 2020! While we miss the community and camaraderie found in live meetings, events and activities, we are embracing our creativity during these unprecedented times.

We have had the opportunity to develop online platforms, using Canvas and Microsoft Teams to host activities and meetings. Our inaugural Honors Symposium, co-hosted by the Honors College and Evans Library, recognizing student research has been transformed into a virtual showcase featuring ePosters. Online honors activities include reflections on leadership, explorations of arts and culture, and professional development. Our communities—the larger Honors College and individual subsets—are thriving.

Leadership and mentorship remain at the core of the Honors College experience. Student leaders such as Martine Fredrickson, Laura Guidugli, Sam Kaynor, Alecea Nelson, Olivia Baldino and Thomas Mathey are initiating and supporting efforts to keep Honors College students engaged in spring, summer and fall semesters. Our Peer Mentoring Program, led by Martine, will officially launch in fall 2020 as we welcome new students to the Honors College. We are also collaborating with the Office of Development on a new Alumni Mentoring Program, which pairs Honors College students with Florida Tech alumni mentors, in summer 2020, making virtual yet concrete connections to help them prepare for internships, graduate school and careers. The Civic Engagement Committee, led by Alecea, is ready to launch activities in fall 2020 within university, local and global communities. Fall 2020 will also mark a return of the Leadership Lecture Series where distinguished leaders in academics and industry provide insight into the skills and experiences



that led to their successes. Opportunities abound for students developing their leadership skills and putting them into practice.

We are excited about new additions to the honors curriculum in fall 2020, including HON 2001: Honors Seminar (social science elective) on the topic of technology and civil liberties, CHM 2001: Organic Chemistry 1, COM 1102: Writing about Literature, COM 2223: Sci/Tech Comm and an honors section of HUM 2551: Survey of Ancient and Medieval Philosophy (Humanities Core A). We are also introducing Honors Research Experience courses. HON 2990 and HON 2991 are one- and two-credit pass/fail courses and HON 4991 is a three-credit graded course that requires a semester project (e.g., conference presentation, poster presentation or paper for publication). Honors options are also great opportunities to earn honors credits.

As we approach the end of our first year in the Honors College, I want to thank you for all of your efforts. Your accomplishments, activities, leadership and mentorship define the Honors College and allow it to grow and evolve. We look forward to seeing more from each of you in fall 2020—in any medium.

Spring 2020, Issue 2

IN THIS ISSUE

Looking Forward to Fall 2

Seraph Brass Concert ... 2

Peer Mentoring Program 3

Civic Engagement Committee 3

Honors Path 3

Student Reflections 4

Honors Convocation Awards 4

Faculty Fun Facts 5

Student Highlight 5

Free Speech Week 6



FLORIDA'S STEM UNIVERSITY®



Looking Forward to Fall 2020

- Orientation for new Honors College students
- Welcome Back Social
- Leadership Lecture Series
- Research panel discussion
- Workshops:
 - » Abstracts and Proposals
 - » Presentations
 - » Publishing
- Disney Youth Education Series Leadership Strategies trip
- Development and implementation of an online honors journal
- Quantum computing lecture presented by Steven Atkin, Ph.D., Distinguished Engineer, Chief Technology Officer and Master Inventor, IBM
- Social events



Seraph Brass Concert

By Thomas Mathey

In February 2020, guest artist group, Seraph Brass, played multiple brass instrument musical works in the Gleason Performing Arts Center. Seraph Brass performed many classics, including "Holberg Suite," "Horra Staccato" and a rendition of "Csárdás" that was reworked for the tuba to be the main instrument, as opposed to the violin. This concert provided Honors College students with the opportunity to enrich their college experience not with an informative lecture, but with a captivating artistic performance.

Honors College Faculty and Staff, Spring 2020

Faculty

Lisa K. Perdigao, Ph.D., *Assistant Vice President*
Margaret B. Moore, *Administrator*

Faculty Fellows

James Brenner, Ph.D., *Department of Biomedical and Chemical Engineering and Sciences*
Alan Brown, Ph.D., *Department of Biomedical and Chemical Engineering and Sciences*
Travis Conradt, Ph.D., *School of Psychology*
Kastro Hamed, Ph.D., *Department of Mathematical Sciences*
Cecilia Knoll, Ph.D., *Department of Mathematical Sciences*
Csaba Palotai, Ph.D., *Department of Aerospace, Physics and Space Sciences*
Ronald Reichard, Ph.D., *Department of Ocean Engineering and Marine Sciences*
Matthew Ruane, Ph.D., *School of Arts and Communication*
Michael Slotkin, Ph.D., *Nathan M. Bisk College of Business*
Brooke Wheeler, Ph.D., *College of Aeronautics*

Student Honors Council

Dylan Barnes, *Department of Aerospace, Physics and Space Sciences*
Jake Cole, *Department of Aerospace, Physics and Space Sciences*
Kayla Decker, *Department of Aerospace, Physics and Space Sciences*
Martine Fredrickson, *School of Psychology*
Luis Mantilla Garcia, *Department of Aerospace, Physics and Space Sciences*
Connor Geran, *Department of Aerospace, Physics and Space Sciences*
Grace Harrington, *Department of Biomedical and Chemical Engineering and Sciences*
Sam Kaynor, *Department of Computer Engineering and Sciences*
Alecea Nelson, *Department of Biomedical and Chemical Engineering and Sciences*
Caroline Sisko, *Department of Aerospace, Physics and Space Sciences*
Kelly van Woesik, *Department of Mathematical Sciences*

Honors College Student Ambassadors

Laura Guidugli, *Department of Biomedical and Chemical Engineering and Sciences*
Sam Kaynor, *Department of Computer Engineering and Sciences*

Honors College Student Intern

Martine Fredrickson, *School of Psychology*

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Editor: Laura Guidugli | Co-editor: Thomas Mathey

Thank You

Special thanks to those who contributed to this issue of the *Honors College Newsletter*: Olivia Baldino, Martine Fredrickson, Thomas Mathey, Alecea Nelson and Kelly van Woesik

Connect With Us



Florida Tech Honors College



@fltechhonors



Peer Mentoring Program

By Martine Fredrickson

This fall, the Honors College will be launching our Peer Mentoring Program. The Peer Mentoring Program will pair incoming Honors College students with Honors College students who have completed at least a year of their time in the program. As an incoming honors student, I had an abundance of questions about what was expected of me, how to get involved and how to forge connections with fellow Honors College students. Through the hard work of our administrators, along with help from the Student Honors Council, the Honors College students have reached a position where they feel secure in reaching out to incoming students and aiding them in the start of their honors journey at Florida Tech. Peer mentors will be a gateway into an even more vibrant and active community for honors students. Peer mentors will be guiding new honors students, who opt to participate this fall semester, through their first semester by attending events with them and building a strong connection with them. The Honors College Mentoring Program aims to connect with, encourage and aid new students as they transition into the Honors College. This program will help make new members more comfortable and active in the Honors College at Florida Tech.

Civic Engagement Committee

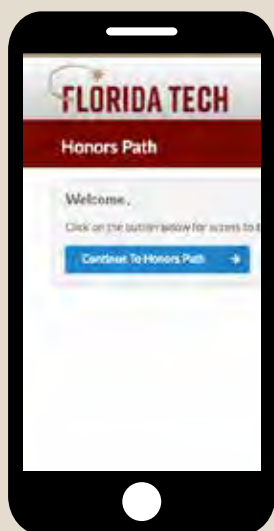
By Alecea Nelson

This semester, one of the goals of the Student Honors Council was to establish a concrete plan to host civic engagement events specifically for students in the Honors College. Working together with Margaret Moore, I have focused on building a foundation for civic engagement within the Honors College and hope to see it continue to grow long after I graduate. We wanted to make the civic engagement activities cater to the students' interests and involve as many students as possible. Based on survey results, it was clear that many Honors College students were interested in conservation as well as charity-based health organizations. This semester, the Honors College Civic Engagement Committee (HCCEC) was organized and established, and I am honored to accept the position of committee leader. While it has been a large undertaking, it will surely be a rewarding one.

Beginning fall 2020, Honors College students can look forward to various civic engagement activities, such as a volleyball fundraiser, beach cleanups, local elementary school volunteering and more. It is our goal to help students discover and participate in a project that they are passionate about while helping others, the community and the planet. We are always open to new ideas for civic engagement as well as looking for those interested in participating.

If you have a civic engagement project idea or would like to be a part of the committee, please feel free to email me at anelson2017@my.fit.edu. I look forward to the launch of Honors College Civic Engagement next semester and hope to see you all there.

Honors Path



Honors Path, a proprietary software program, enhances honors students' education at Florida Tech so that high-achieving students can make the most of their potential. The software portal encourages honors students to plan ahead so they graduate from Florida Tech with a career profile that goes beyond a degree and a great GPA. Below is a tutorial on how to submit your activity hours into the portal.

STEP 1:
Access the website:
apps.fit.edu/honorspath

STEP 2:
Log in to the Honors Path Portal using your Florida Tech email and password.

STEP 3:
Click on "Continue to Honors Path" on the confirmation page.

STEP 4:
Click on "Activities" on the home page.

STEP 5:
Fill in the basic information about the event.

STEP 6:
Use the scroll down menu to select the Activity Hours Type.

STEP 7:
Answer each of the following questions in the "Reflection" section:

- Describe the activity and your level of participation.
- What did you learn from your experience? Reflect on how the activity increased your knowledge or appreciation of the topic.

STEP 8:
Click on "Submit New Activity Hours," and wait for an honors faculty member to approve.

Student Reflection On Online Classes

By Thomas Mathey

The switch to online classes for the remainder of the spring 2020 semester created mass confusion and concern among the student and faculty bodies. For me, the switch to online classes was more frustrating than stressful. The courses were all being revised, yet my professors all had different ideas on how to conduct their online classes. Some professors increased the workload, saying that it would make up for the lack of lectures, while other professors reduced the workload so that we would not be overwhelmed during this transition. They were all over the place, and it was frustrating trying to put all the new information that was being thrown at me in order.

My frustration came from the same place where I assume many other students' stress, frustration and fear came from. A place of confusion. Just like the professors, we were not ready for the sudden change in how we would learn. Students were now taking college classes without the college experience. The

graduating class could not spend their last semester together with the friends they had met throughout their college career. Schedules were all thrown out the window. No one was prepared to immediately change his/her life.

It is not all doom and gloom though. As the weeks go on, getting into the new schedule of doing online classes becomes more familiar. Students can now work on their own time, and depending on how a professor is teaching the class, a student might not have to wake up for an 8 a.m. lecture. I have yet to meet a college student who complains about having more time to sleep. While this is a stressful time in our lives, I have complete faith that we will all continue to adapt and excel. It took us all a lot of effort to get into college, and I see no reason to give up our effort. Stay safe and keep up the hard work.

Student Reflection On the Honors Collegiate Conference

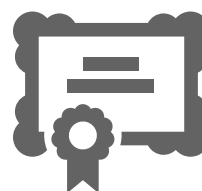
By Kelly van Woesik

On Feb. 7 and 8, I had the pleasure of attending the annual 2020 Florida Collegiate Honors Council Conference, which was themed "SoFloMind: Reclaiming Hope and Change." The trip started early Saturday morning when a group of seven honors students, Dr. Wheeler and Dr. Ruane traveled in a minibus down to the Embassy Suites Hotel in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, where the conference was being hosted. Upon entering the lobby, the ceiling opened up into a four-story-tall atrium with large pillars, a sweeping staircase up to the second floor conference rooms and a pond with a bridge surrounded by live foliage, which was home to two royal swans named Bach and Beethoven.

Fifteen member institutions were in attendance, including community colleges and universities with honors programs from all around Florida. The conference consisted of an art exhibit and poster session Saturday

and multiple "breakout sessions" Saturday and Sunday where students did presentations about their research or on topics that interested them. From Florida Tech, Kayla Decker did a presentation on black holes, Dylan Barnes presented information about the newly formed Living Learning Community at Florida Tech, and I read excerpts from an essay I wrote titled "Preserving Life in 'Planet Ocean': Optimal Systems of Governance with Examples from Around the World." The writing contest winners were announced during lunch on Saturday, and I was really excited to receive first place in the "Junior/Senior Documented Research or Critical Thinking" category!

I enjoyed participating in the conference and getting to know other Honors College students, and I learned a lot of interesting facts during the presentations. Overall, I thought it was a good experience and would recommend the event to others next year.



Honors Convocation Awards

By Lisa K. Perdigo, Ph.D.

Each spring, the Honors Convocation recognizes the accomplishments of Florida Tech students and faculty. This year, a number of Honors College students received Distinguished Student Scholar and Outstanding Student of the Year awards. Distinguished Student Scholars have completed more than 55 credit hours at Florida Tech with cumulative GPAs of 3.8 or higher. Outstanding Student of the Year awards are presented to undergraduate and graduate students selected by their academic units. The Honors College recognized four students: **JAKE COLE, MARTINE FREDRICKSON, LAURA FRONCHETTI GUIDUGLI** and **DANIELA TOLOSA**.

One junior and one senior were selected as recipients of the Outstanding Junior and Outstanding Senior awards. I am pleased to announce that Honors College student **KELLY VAN WOESIK**, a biomathematics major, received the Outstanding Junior Award. Kelly's accomplishments include an award from the Florida Collegiate Honors Council, five Taking the Pulse of the Planet awards from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), a five-week internship at NOAA's Earth System Research Laboratory Global Monitoring Division, and a paper published in the scientific journal *PeerJ*. Kelly has made a significant impact on Florida Tech as a student leader; she is as a member of the Student Honors Council, member and treasurer-elect of the Phi Eta Sigma National Honors Society, member of the Honor Society Phi Kappa Phi, and founder and president of the Florida Tech Swim Club.

We congratulate all the students recognized this year.



Faculty Fun Facts

The Honors College invited one of our faculty fellows, **BROOKE WHEELER**, Ph.D., to answer some questions for this issue's Faculty Fun Facts.

What was your dream job when you were my age?

“I had several dream jobs at varying points during college: psychologist, ecologist, professor, conservation biologist, botanist, writer, food critic, water polo player and photographer.”

Why did you go into this career?

“I became a professor because I enjoy teaching and love learning.”

What career accomplishment are you most proud of?

“As a professor, my proudest moment was receiving an email from a first-generation college graduate who had been in my aviation research course. He wanted to thank me for my support and encouragement because he had just received an award for his research poster, an outcome that he claimed to have never imagined was possible.”

Who would you say is your role model?

“I have several role models, but professionally, my father and grandfather are my role models. They exemplify hard work, excellence and patience and value ongoing learning and education.”

What do you enjoy in your spare time?

“I enjoy hiking, reading and gardening. My favorite sport is water polo, although I have not played much since graduate school.”

Student Highlight

The Honors College Newsletter editor invited Honors College student **MICHAEL BARDIN** to answer some questions about his life and aspirations.

Why did you choose your degree program?

“I decided to major in computer science because I really enjoy coding, and I think I can make a big difference in the world with it and always be working on something new and interesting. I am not the biggest fan of repetitive jobs, so needing to solve all the different problems that can come up in computer science really appealed to me.”

What is your biggest aspiration?

“Right now, my biggest aspiration is to graduate college feeling good about myself and the work that I have put in to walk across that stage during graduation. Of course, I would love to work for a company or on a piece of code that is well known so I can say, 'Hey, you know that really popular thing? I work on that.' But I feel like that is the next step and focusing on school and what is going on right now is the smart thing for me to do.”

What quality do you think all honors students have in common?

“I think all honors students have a love for learning, because they probably wouldn't be here if they didn't. When I was a kid, I loved school because of all the interesting things I learned and hated missing even a single day. I think that many honors students probably feel the same.”

How do you balance your schoolwork and social life?

“Honestly, this is a really tough thing for me to do. Recently, my method has been to get all of my work done by Friday, so I can relax at the start of the weekend and go to my club meetings with no stress or deadlines over my head. I think it has worked out pretty well for me so far. Sometimes it makes the earlier parts of the week more of a grind and stressful, but putting all of my books and notes away so I can relax on Friday evening makes it worth it.”

Who would you say is your role model?

“I've never been much of a person to have a bunch of role models, but if I had to choose, it would be my parents. They are hardworking and amazing people, and I wouldn't be where I am today without their love and support.”

What do you enjoy in your spare time?

“Currently, two things have been taking up my time: card games and Warhammer. I love any and all card games because of the decisions and strategy required to be good at them, and I want to keep getting better. Warhammer is a tabletop wargame where you build and paint models and play the game with them. I love the creative aspect of the painting (I think I would go crazy if I did nothing creative in my life), and the game also requires a lot of planning and strategy that keeps me coming back.”



Free Speech Week

By Olivia Baldino

The week of Feb. 17 was Free Speech Week at Florida Tech, and it encompassed a celebration of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and a synopsis of why freedom of speech is so important. The members of *The Crimson*, Florida Tech's only student-run newspaper, and its advisor, Ted Petersen, Ph.D., organized events throughout the week to educate students on the issue of free speech and to allow the campus community to embrace their rights in as many ways as possible. I attended two of the presentations during the week: one on the sexual abuse cases surrounding Jeffery Epstein and one on the Parkland shooting. Both presentations were a mixture of informing about the story and then describing the journalism behind the story.

The *Miami Herald* investigated and reported on the horrific things Epstein did that went unnoticed and were greatly diminished in severity once brought to light. The story behind Epstein is one that truly lessens your faith in humanity and the moral compasses of today's society and, even worse, today's politicians. The corruption of politics is commonly known to exist but is completely unacceptable, especially when it comes to things like this. I highly suggest you take the time to either read the article, "Perversion of Justice," or watch the 20-minute Perversion of Justice video (miamiherald.com/news/local/article238237729.html). A recurring theme during the week was a refusal to deny the truth. As people living in a society where

every news story and every live event is at our fingertips, we tend to ignore getting to know a story intimately. It is easy to read a headline or see a blurb in a tweet that brushes over a story and move on, but there are some stories where it is important—not only culturally, but for our own moralities—to take the time to hear the entirety of an important story so that we as people can grow in wisdom and in righteousness.

The *Sun Sentinel* presented an important story from its coverage on the Parkland shooting. That story resonates with most college students because it happened when most of us were in or had just graduated from high school. School shootings usually make a lasting mark on the media long after they occur. Parkland was no exception; in fact, students who attended Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School led a movement for an end to gun violence and used the media as a platform unlike any other students had before. Their message was strong and struck an emotional chord with their audience. The articles the *Sun Sentinel* published about the Parkland shooting were different than the average news coverage. They covered the reasons why the shooting could have been prevented if just one single line of defense for the school had properly done its job. The speaker emphasized the backlash that the journalists received for their work. As everyone knows, the system doesn't like it when it's used against itself, which is exactly

what the *Sun Sentinel* did to conduct the research they needed in order to give a true and accurate report on the failures that occurred that day. You can read their article, "Unprepared and Overwhelmed," at projects.sun-sentinel.com/2018/sfl-parkland-school-shooting-critical-moments.

The main focus of the week was to remind the Florida Tech community that the students have been given the freedom to report whatever they see fit to report in *The Crimson* so that students get to hear from fellow students without any outside source constraining or limiting the material that can be shared with the whole student body. This was further amplified with the huge, white, canvas boards that were up in the library for the last few days of the week, allowing students to write whatever they felt compelled to say without limitation in any way. This was a true expression of free speech. This week was a time to reflect on the freedoms we possess as citizens of America that people in other countries do not have. The ability journalists have—and every American has—to share and learn information, opinions and, sometimes, disturbing truths is a freedom we must not take for granted or downplay. As James Madison said, "Knowledge will forever govern ignorance; A people who mean to be their own Governors must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives."

