Creating Community in the University Honors Program

Sam Hahn, Events and Programs Coordinator
Ian Ringgenberg, Honors Advisor
Rebecca Aylesworth, Honors Advisor
Overview

- UHP Structure
- Challenges to Community Building
- Programming Committee
- University Honors Student Association
- Co-curricular Initiatives
- Orientation Community Building
- Next Steps
- Q&A
UHP Structure

- Pan-collegiate (CLA, CSE, CBS, CSOM, CEHD, CFANS, CDes, SoN, CCE)
- 2100+ students, annual class of 650
- Staff
  - Director
    - Associate Director for Curriculum and Outreach
      - Communications Specialist
      - Events & Programs Coordinator (Sam)
    - Associate Director for Admissions and Student Services
      - 11 Honors Advisors (Ian and Rebecca)
      - Student Services Specialist
    - Assistant Director of National & International Scholarships
      - Grad Assistant
Challenges of Community Building

- Pan-collegiate student body
- Diversity of student experiences
  - Middlebrook
  - Transfer & Post-Freshmen
  - St Paul vs Minneapolis
- Lack of designated student space in Northrop
- Secondary identity for many students
- Individualized interaction
  - Few common checkpoints
- Resources
The Programming Committee coordinates and oversees events that support academic and social community-building for UHP students, staff, and faculty. The committee provides tools to evaluate programming and assists staff in support of successful events.
UHP Programming Committee

Consists of 5 members
- Events and Programs Coordinator
- Associate Director for Curriculum and Outreach
- University Honors Student Association Advisor
- Honors Mentor Program Advisor
- UHP Office Manager

How we help create community:
1. Connect event themes to UHP and the greater university
2. Intrinsic programming
3. Evaluation
Connecting to UMN and UHP

- **Student Learning and Development Outcomes**
  - Guides student engagement inside and outside of the classroom
  - By connecting programming to these outcomes, we can ensure that events help build upon the academic and personal development community relevant to the mission of the University of Minnesota

- **UHP mission**
  - Guides the values and direction of the University Honors Program
  - By connecting programming to the UHP mission, we can ensure events build a sustainable honors community through the goals and values identified by the program
Intrinsic Programming

Core programs and events that are essential to the success of UHP

● Tied to the specific mission of UHP
● Help define the culture of UHP
  ○ “Traditions”
  ○ Milestones of shared identity
● Programs and events that will happen each year
● Examples:
  ○ Honors Welcome Picnic
  ○ Honors Mentor Program
  ○ Honors Recognition Ceremony
Evaluation

● Orientation UHP programming survey
  ○ Identify incoming student interest in specific themes
  ○ Helpful for creating first-year programming
  ○ Helpful for understanding the changing needs and values of incoming students after their first semester by comparing to results on annual programming survey

● Annual programming survey
  ○ Identify needs/wants of entire honors community
  ○ Day/time availability
  ○ Interest in programmatic themes
  ○ *2016-2017 survey found that nearly 90% of our students find an honors community important!*

● Specific program evaluation and theme chart
  ○ Helpful for making sure each program is relevant to our various missions
  ○ Ensure that UHP is intentional in how we support community
## Programming Theme Chart

### Information gathered from yearly student survey

### Program details

### Program categories

### Total number of programs in this category

### Rank in student survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Event Title</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9/9/2015</td>
<td>Talk</td>
<td>UHSA</td>
<td>UHSA Ramsey Tutor Training</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/10/2015</td>
<td>Training</td>
<td>UHSA/UHP</td>
<td>Mentor Program Kick off and Training</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/11/2015</td>
<td>Social Event</td>
<td>UHP</td>
<td>Law School Mentor Program Kick off</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/11/2015</td>
<td>Social Event</td>
<td>UHSA/UHP</td>
<td>Welcome Picnic</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/12/2015</td>
<td>Informational Session</td>
<td>UHP</td>
<td>ExxonMobil Info Session</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/13/2015</td>
<td>Panel</td>
<td>UHSA</td>
<td>Honors Edge</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/14/2015</td>
<td>Social Event</td>
<td>UHP</td>
<td>CFANS Animal Science Get-together</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/15/2015</td>
<td>Arts Performance</td>
<td>UHP</td>
<td>Meet me at Northrop: Evening with the Arts</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/16/2015</td>
<td>Networking</td>
<td>UHP</td>
<td>Pie with Professors</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/17/2015</td>
<td>Tour</td>
<td>UHSA/UHP</td>
<td>Mentor Program Hike at Minnehaha Falls</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/18/2015</td>
<td>Arts Performance</td>
<td>UHP</td>
<td>Meet me at Northrop: Honors and the Arts</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/19/2015</td>
<td>Outdoor Movie</td>
<td>UHSA</td>
<td>UHSA Movie on the Lawn</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/20/2015</td>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>UHP</td>
<td>Meet me at Northrop: Honors and the Arts</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/21/2015</td>
<td>Informational Session</td>
<td>UHP</td>
<td>CSE Statement of Purpose Info Session</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/22/2015</td>
<td>Social Event</td>
<td>UHP</td>
<td>Relax &amp; Recharge</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/23/2015</td>
<td>Arts Performance</td>
<td>UHP</td>
<td>Meet me at Northrop: Honors and the Arts</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/24/2015</td>
<td>Panel</td>
<td>UHSA</td>
<td>CSE Thesis Panel</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/25/2015</td>
<td>Networking</td>
<td>UHP</td>
<td>Pie with Professors</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/26/2015</td>
<td>Field Trip</td>
<td>UHSA</td>
<td>Federal Reserve Trip</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/27/2015</td>
<td>Social Event</td>
<td>UHP</td>
<td>The Medical School Experience Panel</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/28/2015</td>
<td>Social Event</td>
<td>UHP</td>
<td>Goldie’s Game room</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/29/2015</td>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>UHP</td>
<td>Honors Research Series: Language and Culture</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/30/2015</td>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>UHP</td>
<td>Honors Research Series: Global Issues</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/1/2015</td>
<td>Social Event</td>
<td>UHP</td>
<td>Volunteer and Service</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/2/2015</td>
<td>Social Event</td>
<td>UHP</td>
<td>Volunteer and Service</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/3/2015</td>
<td>Social Event</td>
<td>UHP</td>
<td>Volunteer and Service</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/4/2015</td>
<td>Social Event</td>
<td>UHP</td>
<td>Volunteer and Service</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/5/2015</td>
<td>Social Event</td>
<td>UHP</td>
<td>Volunteer and Service</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/6/2015</td>
<td>Social Event</td>
<td>UHP</td>
<td>Volunteer and Service</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Total number of programs in this category

### Rank in student survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Survey Rank</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Honors Ice Cream Social

- Coordinated with OFYP as part of Welcome Week
- 325 first year students in attendance
- Community building aspects:
  - First opportunity after orientation to meet as a community of first year Honors students
  - Special welcome from UHP Director Matt Bribitzer-Stull
  - After event, Honors students walked as a community to Welcome Week Speaker Jermaine Davis
Welcome Picnic

- Annual event held during the first week of classes
- All Honors students are invited to attend
- 650 students in attendance
- Community building aspects
  - DJ
  - Lawn games
  - Goldy
  - Food
  - Located on the West Lawn of Northrop
  - One of the only opportunities for all Honors students to be together for one large scale event
Relax & Recharge

- Simple and fun activities for extra self-care
  - Stress balls
  - Water bead bamboo planters
- Information on campus resources
- Community building aspects
  - Part of Honors LLC programming in Middlebrook Hall
  - Room is set-up in pods to help foster a community environment
  - Coloring and paper crafts so students stay longer
Honors Recognition Ceremony

- End of year ceremony for students graduating with Latin Honors
- Held in Northrop
- Reception after ceremony
- Community building aspects
  - Final opportunity for students to come together as an Honors community
  - Celebration of the past four years
  - Acknowledgement of the camaraderie students have formed together
University Honors Student Association

The University Honors Student Association is dedicated to creating a unique undergraduate experience for honors students at the University of Minnesota. In conjunction with the challenging and innovative academic offerings provided through the University Honors Program, the University Honors Student Association seeks to provide and promote a wide variety of programs and events that promote the growth and development of honors students. The University Honors Student Association seeks to nurture well-rounded individuals and prepare its members for future success, understanding, and achievement.
- Campus Life Program
  - Dual funded
- Board of 12-15 members
  - First-year representatives
  - College representation
- Programming
- Ramsey Tutor Program
- Honors Mentor Program
Differentiating UHSA Programming

- Student led and student chosen
  - Sometimes precarious and singular
  - Less emphasis on scaling
- Non-intrinsic
  - Some events have been taken over by UHP
- Social and community focused
  - Emphasis on fun and exploration
- Less university centered
  - Often off-campus
  - Co-curricular or extracurricular
Diana’s Garden Opera Rehearsal

- Final dress rehearsal for Minnesota Opera at Ordway
- 30+ students
- Interpretive talk
- Enthusiasts and beginners
Pumpkins & Pastries

- Carved pumpkins and ate donuts in Northrop
- 150+ attended
- 100 pumpkins purchased from CFANS student group
Honors Retreat

- Overnight trip to Camp Ihduhapi in NW Hennepin County
- ~40 students per year
- Faculty presentations, hands-on activities, as well as leisure
- Past topics
  - Inequality
  - Food Security
  - Big Data
UHP Co-Curricular Initiatives

● UHP Curated Honors Experiences
  ○ Developed by UHP’s director and the UHP Honors Experience Committee
  ○ Pilot programs for small groups of students
  ○ High-impact experiences outside of the classroom which will provide an opportunity for students to think deeply and make connections with faculty.
  ○ Six new experiences implemented during 2016-17 academic year

● Orientation Community Building
  ○ Developed by UHP’s Orientation Committee
  ○ For all students who participate in UHP’s summer orientation process (incoming first year students.)
  ○ Time for connection at the end of the college meeting on day one of orientation
UHP Curated Honors Experience - Dracula in Multimedia

- Twelve students and seven faculty members from various disciplinary backgrounds explored the story of Dracula through Hollywood films, classic literature, dance, television, graphic novels, and video games.
- Their experience culminated in seeing a performance of Dracula by the Royal Winnipeg Ballet and participating in discussion and reflection.
- One student response to the experience:

  “This was a very interesting experience that I don’t believe I would have been able to have in any other setting. It introduced me to professors from a variety of fields, and well as source material from a variety of fields all about one topic. It helped me see Dracula through several different lenses, which I doubt I would have been able to see on my own, and was a fun diversion from my normal classes. I felt that I learned a lot, but the experience didn’t add too much to my workload, so it was a nice way to step back from my ordinary coursework and become engaged in discussion of a fun and unusual topic as a way to “recharge my batteries” for my other classes, as well as helping me learn about a topic I would probably never have had the chance to study in normal classes during my college career.”
Twelve students and two faculty facilitators spend a week during the winter break reading and discussing the New York Times in depth.

Concentrated, timely experience dealing with current events from multiple perspectives.

One student response to the experience:

“While courses help with academic learning, I think there are other skills that go into developing intelligence and knowledge. Experiences that get people involved with their communities help people learn from one another and grow as people, and non-course academic work helps broaden understandings of critical thinking and engagement. This was my first UHP Experience and I thought it asked me to think a lot about ‘how’ I think -- that’s something that I think these experience can continue to provide.”
Orientation Community Building

- All UHP orientation students participate in 20 minutes of community-building time after their college meeting.
- Northrop West Lawn, 10-50 students.
- Activities:
  - Lawn games: kubb, bean bag toss, lawn dice, sidewalk chalk.
  - Button maker and coloring sheets.
  - Snacks.
- Allows for cross-collegiate connections between students, and informal time to chat with advisors and UHP staff.
What’s Next?

● Future outlook
  ○ Outreach to all undergraduate colleges
  ○ Offer unique programming and resources
  ○ Additional UHP Curated Honors Experiences
  ○ Equity & Diversity
  ○ Continuity in leadership and staff with UHSA