# SHINEGRISE





























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#### Nathan Smith

I found an image of a kid with his hands covering his face and a seatbelt across his torso. Short hair, clear-framed round-lensed glasses, and that awkward in-betweens haircut that's too short and too long. For a moment, everything is clear and his eyes are calm, the road behind him stays the same. I put myself in his seat, and I played it out in my head.

While driving to and from Houston, moving out, the claustrophobia of a car packed with more belongings than I'll need for my dorm room, the fear of finding new friends and the unadulterated excitement of the upcoming adventure, I wished myself good luck and knocked on the woodgrain. The next morning college would begin.

A few years and a few car rides later, I've walked the graduation stage, taken a full-time job and realized the first steps of my professional career — someone far from that earlier kid in the backseat. I find it romantic, being so soon nostalgic of my time with the Honors College.

My memories are in the last-minute scrambles of Human Situation, the FEET Scholarship, Model United Nations and laughter with friends. The Honors College became a home, and the family I met moved me out of claustrophobia and into a wide-open world. Surprisingly, it's my favorite part of life so far as the current phase is what I was asking the cosmos for when I was a kid. Maybe it had its rough stretches too, but in my rearview mirror it's getting small enough to convince myself it was all good. And really though ... It's still all good.

### Ashley Cruz

Marhaba! How can I ever forget this simple Arabic greeting? Although my understanding of the language is very minimal, this seven-letter word was the start of many of my most memorable conversations in Jordan with merchants, taxi drivers or any random stranger I came across. A week before this service-abroad program, I was terrified to go and almost backed out. Even now, two years later I reminisce often over this experience, which allowed me to build my greatest friendships and mentorships as well as open my eyes to the field of humanitarian health care.

This experience with the Honors College was the first of many which allowed me to explore things I never imagined I would be able to. Coming to the University of Houston as a transfer student, I thought I knew what I wanted to accomplish by the time I graduated, but the Honors College played a critical role in reshaping my aspirations and my future. My first opportunity with the Honors College was as a Bonner Leader which aid the foundation for my understanding of project-based service. From there, my interest in health and service work led me to minor in Medicine & Society and becoming a certified Community Health Worker. Now, I am on my way to Mexico to be a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant, and I aspire to eventually be a physician assistant, two things I had no idea I could even do. Not only did the Honors College provide me the tools to be successful, but they encouraged me to step out of my comfort zone and do the extraordinary.



# Honors Programs and Minors

Bauer Business Honors Program Honors Engineering Program Data & Society Global Engagement and Research Energy and Sustainability Creative Work Leadership Studies *Phronêsis*: Politics and Ethics Medicine & Society

# Bauer Business Honors Program

The Bauer Business Honors Program combines a solid liberal arts foundation from the Honors College with specialized business curriculum, academic services, social and networking events. The program is available to members of the Honors College who are also business majors or minors. Students are provided one-on-one academic advising sessions that are tailored to the individual's need.

The Honors classes of less than 25 students also provide students with many opportunities to get to know each other, their professors, alumni, and potential employers. Connections with Bauer Honors graduates and Houston employers can make the difference in a future job or internship search.







# Honors Engineering Program

This challenging program focuses on fostering creative, open-ended thinking in team-base, project-oriented learning in small classes.

> Since 2010, the Honors Engineering Program (HEP) has served engineering majors from the Cullen College of Engineering who are also students in the Honors College.

> Designed to promote innovative thinking and encourage a sense of community, the HEP offers students Honors engineering courses in smaller classroom settings taught by leading Cullen College faculty. Students test the engineering concepts they learn through hands-on activities such as building an infrared detector or programming and constructing a robot, all within a rigorous academic engineering curriculum.

HEP participants are first in line for competitive internships and other opportunities and make industry connections through mentoring opportunities with industry professionals, meetings with industrial partners, and field trips to engineering companies and sporting events. To join HEP, students must be accepted into the Honors College and into the Cullen College of Engineering.

# Data & Society

Most importantly, the research and community activities of the new Data & Society minor are all firmly entrenched in the new ways of thinking about data science.

> Launched during fall 2020 and quickly growing, the Data & Society minor explores the social impact of data science, including how new techniques reflect broader economic and political systems and how these approaches impact humanity's informed decision-making.

Our courses are project-based and encourage students to explore the role of data across a broad range of fields as they define their own lines of inquiry with guidance from our instructors. As students narrow their interests and define their projects, they become members of student teams working on similar topics with support from faculty with relevant expertise.

Current Data & Society students are working on projects on a wide set of topics, including incarceration and reentry, educational equity, social media and information transfer, and vaccine access. As with all minors in the Honors College, the courses are grounded in cross-disciplinary approaches and open to all UH students, regardless of affiliation.









# Global Engagement and Research

Never before has the world been as connected as it is today.

Understanding this hyperconnectivity begins in our own communities. In the interdisciplinary Global Engagement and Research minor, global is not defined as international, but more broadly, as a mode of inquiry and exploration that includes Houston and its region, the nation, and the world.

Through meaningful engagement with the communities that they are studying and seek to understand, students develop a global focus that explores the questions, "What difference does 'here' make? How does a specific place and its physical, political, economic, social, historical, and cultural topography matter to people, their values, and their relationships?" The Global Engagement and Research minor, first offered in the fall 2020 semester, is open to baccalaureate students in all majors and degree programs at UH.

# Energy and Sustainability

The minor takes an aggressively interdisciplinary approach to the study of sustainable energy systems.

By integrating perspectives from engineering, economics, business, architecture, design, public policy and education to address the complex issues of energy security, global climate change and environmental stewardship, the Energy and Sustainability minor delves deep into utilization strategies of energy sources, fossil fuels, and the future of energy.

Students learn to think creatively and independently about the most significant issues of the 21st century through courses in an array of disciplines, including business, engineering, the natural sciences, architecture, economics, political science, and history.

The program provides students with opportunities to meet and learn from industry innovators and leaders through its vibrant visiting scholars and speaker series. Graduates have found that the interdisciplinary approach and academic rigor of the Energy and Sustainability program prepared them well for careers in the energy-dominated economy of the Houston region.



















# **Creative Work**

The Creative Work minor is a pre-professional program that helps students bring ideas from inspiration to realization. It encourages interdisciplinary, collaborative approaches.

In 2020, Creative Work's co-curricular FrameWorks Program published its first edition of *FrameWorks: A Journal of Undergraduate Research in the Interdisciplinary Humanities.* The culmination of a yearlong program of peer workshops and one-on-one faculty mentorship, FrameWorks contained nine fantastic articles that interpret the theme "Wall." In the fall, a second cohort of fellows set to work, bringing varied and intriguing responses to the theme "Unknown."

In early March, students traveled to Los Angeles, the subject of our signature capstone class, Artists & Their Regions. The group visited various iconic landmarks and institutions, including the Venice Beach Boardwalk, The Hammer Museum, and downtown locales featured in the works of Raymond Chandler and Charles Bukowski. The trip culminated in a showcase of creative responses. Inspired by the famous L.A. noir aesthetic, these student projects used diverse forms such as photo collage, video, and docupoetry. The work also reflected on the fragility of a pandemic-shadowed urban landscape.

The Creative Work year began with a pop-up film festival, featuring the work of producer Jeffrey Brown, and ended with "Houston Voices," a multi-media virtual event, with contributions from poet Martha Serpas, composer Misha Penton, and actor Greg Dean.

# Leadership Studies

The goal of the minor is to prepare students to serve effectively in formal and informal leadership roles in campus, local, national, and global contexts.

The Leadership Studies minor promotes college student leadership development by educating undergraduate students for and about leadership in a complex world.

In 2020, the pandemic brought a variety of new challenges for leadership in organizations across all industries, and they had to react swiftly to the changing world and adapt (at least temporarily) to work and school from home. During this time, many Leadership Studies students transitioned from in-person internships and field experiences to virtual settings and were pivotal in designing different types of undergraduate opportunities in the virtual workspace. Students from majors ranging from business to engineering to computers to psychology assisted in developing new communication procedures, hierarchy maps, and information flow protocols under short timelines.

Students minoring in Leadership Studies were the recipients of major awards such as Fulbright and the Critical Language Scholarship and were successful candidates to law schools, medical schools, and doctoral programs.





# *Phronêsis:* Politics and Ethics

Students reflect on profound and enduring questions associated with virtues and duties of civic life, which informs current debates.

*Phronêsis*, the Honors College's minor and program in politics and ethics, prepares students to be prudent leaders and active citizens of a self-governing political community. Through coursework, reading groups, seminars, and co-curricular events, including lectures by invited national scholars and study away trips, the minor provides students a strong foundation of classic texts in philosophy, political theory, literature, and history.

The *Phronêsis* program is open to students of all majors and especially recommended for

those interested in public service, engaged in pre-law studies or considering graduate studies and law school.

In 2020, *Phronêsis* offered over 30 academic courses, a study away trip to Washington D.C., a day-long seminar on the political thought of Frederick Douglass and live webinars on Jane Austen, James Madison, and James Baldwin. Students also partnered with the Tocqueville Forum on American Ideas and Institutions, the Jack Miller Center, and the Institute for Humane Studies to host additional speakers and events.

# Medicine & Society

The Medicine & Society minor aims for each student to achieve individual excellence in an environment dedicated to collaboration and scholarly community.

> The nationally-recognized Medicine & Society program and minor, the oldest and largest of the upper division programs in the Honors College, was founded in 2005 to provide students pursuing pre-health professions a perspective of the health sciences through a humanitiesinformed lens. With the whole student at the center of its mission, Medicine & Society staff and faculty integrate teaching, advising, academic mentoring, undergraduate research, and off-campus learning experiences to focus on the student experience.

> In 2020, Medicine & Society faculty developed new courses in mindfulness and meditation and introduction to global health. The minor partnered with the new UH College of Medicine and the Texas Medical Center to create new internship and research opportunities for our students, as well as with Interfaith Ministries for Greater Houston to launch Serve Houston, which gives Honors College students the opportunity to lead teams serving our Houston neighbors by meeting some of their most pressing needs.



A Program of Interfaith Ministries for Greater Houston





# Honors Co-Curricular Programs

Learning Abroad and Learning Away Programs Service Learning Programs M-Level Programs UH Speech and Debate Programs Office of Undergraduate Research and Major Awards

# Egypt

Co-Curricular Programs: Learning Abroad

### Osgood Center for International Studies

# Washington, D.C.

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Co-Curricular Programs: Learning Away



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# SERVICE

## **Bonner Leaders Program**



In spite of the coronavirus pandemic, 85 students in the Bonner Leaders program were actively involved in civic engagement, consistently devoting 5-10 hours a week to service work centered on issues such as food insecurity and educational inequality to improve lives within the Houston community. The students were able to migrate online where possible and enhance their service, even serving people not previously reached. The Bonner Leaders program presents students with an opportunity to learn and utilize critical skills such as teamwork, project planning and resource allocation. COVID-19 provided students unique opportunities to apply those skills and see the after effects in the community they serve.

# LEARNING

Forming leaders sensitive to the suffering of their community, students advocated for mission opportunities, logging in almost 5,000 hours of service during the fall 2020 and spring 2021 semesters; some students served 100-200+ hours.

Simultaneously working to transform four out of the five Bonner projects online to continue serving those in need, Honors partnered with Stephen F. Austin High School, KIPP Sunnyside High School, and Shearn, Briscoe, and Foster Elementary schools to offer STAAR, ACT and SAT mentoring and tutoring in elementary writing and science.

The Food Insecurity Team (FIT) tirelessly worked alongside the Houston Food Bank, Riverside Methodist Church, and New Hope Housing Inc. to partner and collaborate in leadership, creating and completing projects centered on food redistribution and serving the Third Ward community, primarily through Food for Change pantry operations. By continuing face-to-face service throughout COVID-19, the program expanded and provided the community inspiration. FIT quickly adapted in collaboration with partners to transform their existing food pantry site into a disaster distribution site for those devastated by the financial impact. FIT built upon this model in fall 2020 to expand and host weekly and sometimes twice-weekly distribution sites throughout the pandemic, providing much needed service to Houston families.

Many of the Bonner students were recipients of Outstanding First Year Student Awards and the Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship program. Many were also finalists and semi-finalists for the Fulbright English Teaching Assistantships and the Fulbright Study or Research grants, and some were named Action Research in Communities fellows, chosen by the Office of Undergraduate Research and Major Awards.





# SERVICE Data Analytics in Student Hands

Data Analytics in Student Hands (DASH) and the Pharis Fellowship provide students with co-curricular research opportunities focused on applying the collection, management, analysis, and interpretation of real-world data to address local issues. Students work in small interdisciplinary teams and in partnership with community organizations to understand and better represent through data existing barriers to health and well-being within the communities surrounding the University and across the Greater Houston area.

Each summer, Pharis Fellows receive support to conduct research full time on self-directed projects in areas of interest to our partners, and DASH provides ongoing support for students conducting longer-term inquiries.

Current project partners include the Primary Care Intervention Center, Community Family Centers in Harrisburg, Humana, Restoring Justice and the Center for Research, Evaluation & Advancement of Teacher Education.





# LEARNING Honors in Community Health

Honors in Community Health (HICH) is a student organization that coordinates community-focused education and outreach projects related to social determinants of health. Working closely with the UH Community Health Worker Initiative (CHWI), HICH projects grow close connections with local organizations and the articulated needs of community members.

With over 80 active members across four projects, HICH projects make a substantial real-world impact by providing project-based mentoring for high school students (PEERS), asthma and respiratory health education for elementary students (BREATHE), physical and mental health support using art and self-expression activities (Creative Care) and resource identification and matching to support CHWs and their clients (Responsive Resourcing). HICH also regularly acts as an incubator for new student-led projects with two new initiatives around food insecurity and environmental education planned for launch during 2021-22.



# **M-Level Programs**



Participation in model debate programs — Model G20, Model United Nations, Model Arab League, and Model World Health Organization — provides students the invaluable opportunity to research and debate the many social, economic, cultural, political, and global health issues facing world leaders as they work to build strong, sustainable and balanced economies for their citizens.

Students develop and hone their skills in multilateral negotiations, public speaking, consensus-building, and diplomacy, while also attaining a richer understanding of the dynamics of international affairs. Model debate is open to students of all academic majors. Through their participation, delegates become leaders with competencies that will serve them well in their professional lives.

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Honors College added Model World Health Organization (MWHO) to the model debate programs lineup. The inaugural MWHO team competed in the American Model World Health Organization conference hosted

virtually by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Honors College students represented countries as ambassadors to the World Health Assembly and as representatives of nongovernmental organizations and the health care industry. Delegates collaborated to adopt policy focusing on migrant and refugee health amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. The policy recommendations they put forth will be forwarded to the actual World Health Assembly for consideration.



# **UH Speech and Debate**

As a co-curricular program of the Honors College, UH's Speech & Debate Program welcomes all students to engage in competitive speech and debate on campus and at the intercollegiate level. Debaters develop leadership qualities through research, argumentation, and policy development on the many challenges facing contemporary society. In addition, students build community in Houston and beyond through their mentorship of local high school debaters.

The Speech & Debate team fosters community building through partnerships with high school debate programs, such as the Houston Urban Debate League, and through the high school debate tournament, the Cougar Classic. Held annually in January, the Cougar Classic was hosted online. The Cougar Classic brings over 300 high school students from four states together to participate, along with 100 judges, coaches, and observers. On campus, debaters foster student engagement by hosting public debates on public policy, leadership, and other topical issues.

UH Speech & Debate ended their season as the first place finisher for the sweepstakes competition for its region and as the second place finisher in the national novice sweepstakes championship. Despite enduring the trying times from the global pandemic, our debating Coogs continue to strive forward and dedicate themselves to their hard work and successes.





## Office of Undergraduate Research and Major Awards



Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the Office of Undergraduate Research and Major Awards (OURMA) has remained committed to advising UH students about undergraduate research and applications for national fellowships. In response to the advent of remote learning in mid-March, OURMA began to transition all of its programs to a virtual format. OURMA's remote platforms have not only prepared students for high levels of academic success, but they have also improved accessibility to the Office's programs.

OURMA supported 87 students pursuing faculty-mentored summer research projects through the 2020 Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship (SURF), 56 students during the 2020-2021 academic year through the Provost's Undergraduate Research Scholarship (PURS) and established the Action Research in Communities (ARC) program for community-based participatory research. Many of these students not only completed intensive research projects and presented at Undergraduate Research Day (URD), but also went on to receive national fellowships and major awards.

The third cohort of 20 Mellon Research Scholars participated in a two-week graduate school preparation boot camp and pursued faculty-mentored summer research projects in 2020. They rose to the challenge of remote research, participated in URD and received support for their graduate school applications in the fall. In 2020, the University received a new grant of \$500,000 from the Mellon Foundation to continue the Mellon Research Scholars


Welcome to University of Houston - 2020 Undergraduate Research Day! Hosted on Symposium by ForgerOne

Welcome to the 15th Annual Undergraduate Research Day Access the 2020 Undergraduate Research Day Book Here



program and its work toward building a diverse academy in the humanities.

OURMA remains a vital resource for younger students looking to become involved in undergraduate research. Nearly 50 rising sophomores and juniors learned about the fundamentals of research through the Houston Early Research Experience (HERE) in August 2020. The program explored the theme of urbanization in Houston during a two-week intensive workshop that culminated with student presentations to faculty and peers.

The Houston Scholars welcomed its second cohort and doubled the size of the program to 24 students. Houston Scholars investigated the theme of "Inequality: Creating a More Equitable Houston" and participated in the first ever Houston Scholars Research Week in early January. The Houston Scholars showcased their findings and solutions to real-world problems virtually at URD in April 2021.

UH achieved another record-breaking year in 2020. For the first time since 1984, and only the second time ever, a UH undergraduate received the prestigious Harry S. Truman Scholarship. UH students were also honored for the first time in a number of competitions, including the Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Graduate Fellowship, PBK Key Into Public Service program, and DAAD RISE PRO. Students continued a pattern of success for the Fulbright U.S. Student Program and the Critical Language Scholarship (CLS) in 2019-2020. In addition, five Coogs earned CLS honors, and eight were named Fulbright recipients. Twenty UH students have been awarded Fulbrights in the last two years, establishing the University of Houston as a Fulbright powerhouse in Texas.

# Letter from the Dean

Dear Students, Alumni, Colleagues, and Friends,

As we review calendar year 2020 for the Honors College, we are proud that our students, faculty, staff, alumni, and supporters have continued their good work despite unprecedented difficulties. Their having overcome so much makes their achievements shine ever brighter. We believe that the Honors College and the University of Houston are stronger now and that our resilience bodes well as we look to the future.

As we celebrate the achievements of individuals and the performance of programs in the pages of *Shine & Rise*, we want to stress that only teamwork and collaboration make such impressive accomplishments possible. We invite you to imagine the interdependence of individuals, teams, offices, and programs. The readings in the Human Situation course, for example, plant the desire to do a learning abroad experience; three years after the Human Sit oral final, poster presentations at Undergraduate Research Day in the M.D. Anderson Library feel more natural.

A freshman student is mentored by a junior in her first year and becomes a mentor in her third. An open-Honors Medicine & Society course heightens the awareness of global health disparities in a student not a member of the Honors College, and through the Community Health Workers program, he partners with Third Ward families to reduce health disparities in his hometown. An undergraduate research project leads to a competitive application and the winning of a Goldwater Scholarship, participation in Bonner Leaders and the Speech & Debate program contribute to a Truman Scholarship application, and a month of service learning in Jordan leads to a Fulbright or a Critical Language Scholarship.

A creative project on the Great Migration in an American History class prepares a student to write, with the help of a faculty mentor, a prize-winning essay in the *FrameWorks* journal; that same student is accepted into the Mellon Humanities Program and receives the offer of a full fellowship at an internationally renowned graduate program in ethics. And the journey of every person we encounter can be traced in similar ways.

R.J. Kaufmann, a great teacher and scholar, liked to say that "Nothing is ever lost." By that I think he meant that what we read, say, write, do, and experience becomes a permanent part of who we are. In the Honors College, we try to remember that our individual and programmatic achievements derive not only from our own laudable efforts but from a culture of mutual encouragement and support. We are together in this, and, whoever and wherever you are, if you are reading *Shine* & *Rise*, we invite you to join us.

Warmest Regards,

William Monroe, Dean

# Congratulations Graduates!



2020 Honors College graduates were honored with a virtual celebration recognizing their perseverance, outstanding accomplishments and awards!

## The Great Conversation



The College launched Evening with Honors, a monthly virtual event appealing to alumni and friends. The 38th Great Conversation seamlessly moved to this platform and held its successful fundraiser for the College. Attendees gathered individually or in private groups for lively discussion on various topics and fellowship.

# 2020

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# The Life of the college





#### MINORS

Creative Work Energy and Sustainability Leadership Studies Medicine & Society *Phronêsis*: Politics & Ethics Global Engagement and Research Data & Society

### CURRICULAR PROGRAMS

Honors Engineering Program

**Bauer Business Honors Program** 

3+2 Honors Medicine & Society/Nursing Dual Degree Program (UT-Houston)

> 3+2 Honors *Phronêsis*/Law Dual Degree Program (UH Law)

3+2 Honors *Phronêsis*/Public Policy Dual Degree Program (Hobby School of Public Policy)

> The Houston Premedical Academy (Baylor College of Medicine)

### CO-CURRICULAR UNDERGRADUATE EXPERIENCES

**Bonner Leaders Program** 

Grand Challenges Forums

Learning Abroad and Learning Away Programs

Service Learning Programs

Data Analytics in Student Hands (DASH)

Honors in Community Health (HICH)

M-Level Programs (Model G20, Model United Nations, Model Arab League, and Model World Health Organization)

Ross M. Lence Master Teacher Residency

Houston Early Research Experience

Houston Scholars

Nationally Competitive Scholarships

Provost's Undergraduate Research Scholarship

Senior Honors Thesis

Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship

UH Speech and Debate Program





# The Life

### OF THE COLLEGE





### ACADEMIC HONOR SOCIETIES

Phi Beta Kappa Phi Kappa Phi Omicron Delta Kappa

### STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Bleacher Creatures Club Theater Great Conversation Student Committee Honors Advocates Honors Ambassadors Honors College Mentorship Program Honors in Community Health (HICH) Honors Dodgeball

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Common Ground Teachers Institute Bridge Builders Houston Arts Alliance Clemente Course in the Humanities Combined Arms The Telling Project Houston Independent School District's Miles Ahead Scholars Program The African American Library at the Gregory School Houston Metropolitan Research Center The Heritage Society San Jose Clinic Houston Fire Department EMS Yates High School Class of 1958 Bread of Life

**Community Family Centers** Harris County Youth Collective City of Houston's Mayors Office of Education Texas Workforce Commission City of Houston Financial Empowerment Center City of Houston Health Department Harris County Health Department New Hope Housing Patient Care Intervention Center Houston Food Bank Fundacion Latinoamerica de Accion Social Houston Independent School District Power4Life / Kids Lives Matter Texas Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church **Riverside United Methodist Church** Vecino Health Care Centers **Restoring** Justice Harris County Public Defender's Office Harris County Justice Administration Department Angela's House Amaanah Services Stephen F. Austin High School Breakthrough Houston Briscoe Elementary School Chrysalis Middle School Houston Food Bank **KIPP Sunnyside High School KIPP Houston High School** Navarro Middle School New Hope Housing Yates High School Shearn Middle School Interfaith Ministries for Greater Houston Serve Houston



### College is about discovering how great you can be.

- John King ('92) Honors College Alumnus America's Vice Chair-Assurance Ernst & Young LLP

### The Human Situation course was where I realized I could have a unique voice, if I worked hard to develop it.

- Jeff Lerner ('06) Honors College Alumnus CEO, ENTRE Institute

### I have Honors to thank for lifelong mentors.

- Safa Ansari-Bayegan ('13) Honors College Alumnus Attorney

#### For us, Honors is a calling.

- Bill Monroe Dean, The Honors College O'Connor Abendshein Professor













### UNIVERSITY of **HOUSTON** THE HONORS COLLEGE

uh.edu/honors









