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Congratulations to the newly elected student leaders of Honors Student Government for next year!

President: Kurt Edlund
Vice President: Elizabeth Whitcomb
Academic Representatives: Zachary Cherian & Ali Arsalanuddin
Communication Director: Lauren Berry
Ambassador Co-chairs: Natalie Semaniuk & Bhavi Vashi
Service Committee Co-chairs: Bethany Kujawinski & Gia Pappas
Social Committee Co-chairs: David Taullahu & Ben Stumpe

On the cover: The closed-off Quad of DePaul University during Spring Quarter.

Content Editor: Paige Gilberg
Layout and Design Editor: Ben Stumpe
Advisor: Jennifer (Kosco) Reichle
Cover Photograph: Ben Stumpe
Words from the HSG President
By Maya Baker

In January, I went to Merida, Mexico to study abroad. I had no idea when I left that my world would be so different when I got back.

Before getting on that plane, normal was trying to get to the Bean with only ten minutes between classes. Normal was meeting with my friends in DePaul Chicago Area Peace Action for a tabling in the Student Center. Normal was Chartwells pizza every other Friday at HSG meetings.

Landing in Mexico, I began a transformative experience that, in some ways, prepared me for what I would come home to. Being away from my friends and family was a lot harder than I anticipated. Culture shock was a real hurdle, communicating with my host family went much further than speaking and understanding Spanish, and navigating a new city (literally and figuratively) was often confusing and daunting. While there, I also had the opportunity to work with a wonderful group of kids in an impoverished area of Merida. In the process of talking to them and playing with them, as well as teaching them English and basic computer skills, they taught us about patience, curiosity, and finding order in chaos. Unfortunately, with the rapid escalation of the COVID-19 crisis, I had to leave Mexico before I could say goodbye to them and tell them how much they meant to me. I miss them all the time, and I hope that one day I can go back to see them again.

Returning to the United States, I was shocked. The normal I left behind was replaced with a new day-to-day that we all have been grappling with. Our professors and staff are doing their best to support us and check in on us while still coping with their own families and issues at home. As students, we are getting through an incredibly difficult time with varying degrees of access to technology and stability at home. We are living through a massive collective moment, the likes of which have not been seen in modern times. But from what I have seen and heard from my fellow students, we are getting through it. It is hard. There are bad days and good days and mediocre days. But we are pushing through. My advice to you all is to put your mental health, your physical health, and your personal relationships above all else. As an honors student you might be tempted to force yourself to skip that group Facetime with your friends, or hide yourself in your room until your final paper is perfect. Remember what things are most important in life and keep track of your priorities.

Although self-care is important in these stressful times, it is also of utmost importance that we stand up for those around us as well. Racial injustice is ingrained in our society. This was made all too clear through the murder of George Floyd by law enforcement, as well as the murders of Sandra Bland, Michael Brown, Breonna Taylor, and many others. For those of us who are not people of color, we must be allies for those who face racism as their normal. Attending protests (if you’re able), donating to bail funds and grassroots organizations, and reaching out to elected officials are all ways in which we can support racial justice.

The quarter is coming to a close, and we face the rest of the year with a great deal of uncertainty. Even though it is difficult to find a sense of community at a distance, the staff and student leadership in the Honors Program are working hard to find a way to bring us together. I myself will be graduating after winter quarter of 2021, so I won’t be serving a role on the HSG e-board next year. But I will continue to keep in touch with my friends in the Honors Program and at DePaul as a whole. The Honors Program has meant a lot to me. When I joined Honors mid-way through my freshman year, I was anxious about not knowing the other Honors kids, some of whom had gone through Immersion Week together, or were neighbors on the Honors floor. But the Honors Program helped me feel welcome and find my role at the university, and I’m so grateful for that.

Maya works with local children in Merida, Mexico.
Graduating Seniors

Congratulations to the extraordinary Honors Program graduates of 2020! You have persevered and made it to the finish line. We are all very proud of you!

Aidan Acosta  Bryan Hernandez  Isabella Patak
Hadiya Afzal  Grace Hoegler  Anjali Patel
Brianna-Paige Alegbeleye  Samantha Hollis  Katrina Phild
Emma Allen  Katherine Holmes  Maciej Pwowarczyk
Connor Altier  Danielle Hurley  Miles Plurad
Grace Archibald  Ryan Hurley  Priyanka Podjale
Thomas Ashby  Izabella Jablonska  Margaret Polley
Ashlyn Kelley  Azora Jallil  Bryce Pritchard
Carmen Ayala  Camille Jordan  Michaela Pullara
Anujin Batbold  Agni Kallinicou  Callie Rafferty
Sydney Begerowski  Madison Kalvoda  Radhwa Ramadan
Michelle Blahnik  Sarah Kamin  Elena Rangal
Marina Blough  Kayla Kascht  Olivia Ravenscroft
Lily Boland  Camille Koch  Hannah Reed
Maiwenn Brethenoux  Margaret Kosholoke  Emma Reilly
Brad Brewington  Andrew Krueger  Simone Rhodes
Spencer Brinkman  Aleksandar Labovic  Ena Rizvic
Julia Callahan  Sedona LaMarre  Paul Roach
Peter Cary  Blake Laymon  Katherine Rocca
Elizabeth Cassidy  Sean Lebens  Margaux Rocha
Alexandra Cavalier  Samantha Lehman  William Roelke
Cristina Cazares  Nathaniel Leonhardt  Judy Rogel
Jinan Chehade  Alexis Lim  Claire Rohrbach
Sophie Chishty  Emma Littel-Jensen  Nikolaos Rojas-Elcadi
Ronan Clague  Wren Lively  Nicolas Romero
Nicolas Clarisse  Nicholas Lonsdale  Jessica Rosato-Wyan
Mary Ellen Combs  Matthew Lopez  Maxwell Rowe-Sutton
Lydia Connolly  Samantha Lopez  Annaliese Ruhe
Julia Coop  Mia Lorentsen  Christopher Schafale
Matthew Cooper  Janna Lyhus  Angelina Schulist
Miriam Cortinovis  Ekaterina Makaveyev  Marin Scott
Cole Craghan  Madeline Mathie  Anna Shapiro
Olivia Crouch  Madeleine Mathie  McKenna Sheehan
Omar Cruz  Grace McKay  Christopher Silber
Nicholas Darlington  Erin McMillen  Sydne Syver
Prajall Desai  Charlotte Meffe  Olivia Simons
Regan Desautels  Meredith Melland  Emily Slevin
Alana Dickens  Alejandra Mena  Sam Smiley
Meher Din  Hailey Menkus  Dylan Smith
Nora Drew  Kate Meulemans  Eryk Soltys
Connor Druhan  Kate Meulemans  Margaret Sorensen
Kristen Durkin  Devon Miller  Danya Soto
Niloofer El-Maissi  Selena Miller  Elisabeth Stanis
Esmahan Elsmar  Jose Mogollon Duran  Caroline Stasica
Sara Elksaevic  Allison Moser  Fezji Sulejmani
Julie Eng  Quinn Mutroy  Mary Takgbajouah
Katie Esslinger  Michela Murray  Edyta Tarczynski
Elise Fong  Ryan Napue  Peter Tease
Isabelle Gallant  Twyla Neely-Streit  MaryKate Tobin
Grace Garbrecht  Claire Newby  Amanda Tournillon
Gabriella Gasparini  Emma Nippe  Sampson Traenkle
Elise Gerskovich  Isabella Noyes  Brandy Valdes
Paige Gilberg  Derek O'Neill  Sarah Vissers
Jenna Gonzales  Sarah Wasilczuk  Jared Walsh
Paul Gordon  Stella Wasilczuk  Timothy Walsh
Devon Graham  Quinn Mutroy  Cara Word
Jonathan Grey  Michelle Murray  Anna Waclawicz
McCrey Guillory  Ryan Napue  Anabel Watson
Zaynah Habibi  Twyla Neely-Streit  Matthew White
Paige Hall-Petry  Claire Newby  John Waywod
Kylie Harakawa  Emma Newby  Andria Wu
Megan Harris  Isabella Noyes  Nicole Zawilinski
Vanessa Hasbun  Derek O’Neill  Molly Zisook
Claire Hefflin  Abigail Oberdick  Anna Wasilczuk
Lauren Heise  Kyle Ockerlund  Anabel Watson

Congratulations to the extraordinary Honors Program graduates of 2020! You have persevered and made it to the finish line. We are all very proud of you!
We have exciting news! The Honors Program office will be moving out of the 990 West Fullerton building to the second floor of Arts & Letters Hall. The move will happen some time in late summer when it is safe to return to campus. Besides new office space for Honors Program advisors and administration, there will be a new lounge area for students. Watch your email for updates and more information.

New lounge space for Honors in Arts & Letters Hall.

New Honorable Mentions Editors

We would like to thank Paige Gilberg and Caroline Schlegel, our current newsletter editors, whose work on Honorable Mentions over the last two years has been nothing short of brilliant. Caroline is stepping down as Layout Editor and Paige will be graduating later this month. We wish you both the best and we thank you for all of your hard work on the newsletter.

We would also like to introduce the new team behind Honorable Mentions! Welcome to our new Content Editors, Julia Matuszek and Sara Shahein, and our new Layout Editor, Ben Stumpe. We look forward to your work on the newsletter!

Julia Matuszek
Content Editor

Sara Shahein
Content Editor

Ben Stumpe
Layout Editor

Thank You, Dr. Martha Martinez!

The Honors Program would like to thank Dr. Martha Martinez for her service as Honors Program Director over the past three years. During her time as director, Dr. Martinez supported students in a variety of ways by encouraging research and campus engagement. She also created an Honors Program alumni group. Dr. Martinez has taught several Honors courses over the years, including HON 201 and HON 207. She will continue to do so when her term as Honors Program Director comes to a close in July of this year. We look forward to her continued contributions to the Honors Program.
Interview with Dr. Jennifer Conary

By Jade Ryerson

Recently, I had the pleasure of chatting with Professor Jennifer Conary, the new Honors Program director. Professor Conary began teaching in DePaul’s English Department in 2008 and has served as the Director of the Undergraduate Program in English for the past 6 years. Though she has taught at DePaul for a while now, her experiences as a Blue Demon began far earlier—during her own undergrad years.

Until the end of her junior year, Professor Conary studied clarinet performance at our very own School of Music. However, the onset of a self-described “existential crisis” was enough to convince her to switch gears completely. Inspired to become an English professor, she graduated from DePaul, studied English in grad school, and received her PhD from the University of Southern California in 2008. Although she no longer plays the clarinet, Professor Conary is still a lover of classical music and subscribes to WFMT, Chicago’s classical music station. Sometimes she’ll even have it playing before class starts.

Professor Conary has taught various Honors courses including Honors World Literature (HON 101) and two iterations of Honors Interdisciplinary Arts (HON 205). She has also taught classes on the history of the novel, late Victorian age fantasy, art, and fiction, and nineteenth century British literature. A Victorianist at heart, Professor Conary’s interests include British women’s writing and issues related to gender, as well as works by Jane Austen and Charles Dickens. Her research focuses on working class literature that deals with social problems throughout the mid-nineteenth century. She’s currently working on an article about fallen women and mistresses, which is difficult to research because, according to Conary, “women hated to talk about sex.” Although the works were popular and important at the time, they are now “fairly obscure” to the extent that they are often only available as “scanned copies in Google Books.”

Although Professor Conary recognizes that lots of students have “horrible high school experiences reading Dickens,” when asked what book(s) she believes everyone should read, she recommended Dickens’s novel Bleak House and “anything written by Toni Morrison.” She stresses that “the most powerful thing about literature is it allows us to occupy the psychological space of someone else and get inside someone else’s head.” As a result, books can change how we see the world and change us as people. Because the Victorians were concerned with bridging the gap for issues of poverty and injustice, Victorian literature is a particularly effective vehicle for thinking about contemporary social issues.

Professor Conary would even argue that “reading Victorian novels makes you a better person.” Still relevant today, the Victorian penchant for thinking about equality and empathy can help us to think about “what it’s like for someone to be systemically stuck in positions that make their lives horrible and what we can do as responsible citizens who are in more privileged positions to effect social change.” The themes of Bleak House are all timely too, as they explore social problems and the interconnectedness of all walks of life in the context of a smallpox pandemic. In the novel, Dickens illustrates that “we can’t divorce ourselves from our vast social network” and ultimately, because smallpox isn’t just a disease associated with poverty, we’re all in this together for better or worse.

Professor Conary finds that the liberal arts grounding of the Honors Program is an effective way of helping students think through social problems. With their myriad of majors, Honors students can provide so many different perspectives, which makes teaching in Honors interesting, productive, and rewarding. Recognizing that World Literature or Honors Interdisciplinary Arts may provide some students’ only exposure to the humanities, Conary takes this seriously and considers how theorizing about gender relations in Victorian era Britain and literature’s explicit function in culture can fill the gaps and have value beyond the classroom. As the Honors Program Director, Professor Conary is eager to support the cultivation of an excellent education that “prepares students as responsible citizens with rich fulfilling lives.” She’s most eager to get back into the classroom after quarantine, although she is also drawn to the problem-solving, organizational side of academia she has experienced as an administrator. One of her main goals is to make the program more visible and to “raise the profile” of the program. She is also committed to making sure the Honors Program serves all students, especially students of color and first-generation students, and will be proposing new mentoring initiatives and curricular changes to support that goal. She welcomes any suggestions and stresses that the Honors staff are here for students. As we approach finals week in the midst of the pandemic, Professor Conary offers this final piece of advice: “Be kind to yourselves!”
HONORABLE EVENTS

Virtual Honors Conference

Like all of us, the Honors Program has had to modify and adapt to our changing world. The annual Honors Conference, usually held in early May, was cancelled. This is our yearly event where we showcase and highlight the work of our students who completed an Honors thesis, or completed an outstanding paper in one of their classes.

This year’s event was moved online to a Wix site where we are providing both visual and audio representations of our students’ work. A team of Honors Program student assistants, supervised by Program Assistant Elizabeth Woodruff, have worked incredibly hard to create the new platform. Senior Theatre Arts major Charlotte Meffe, junior Management major Anissa Patterson, and junior Political Science major Hannah Reed all put in countless hours to learn a new system to be able to create a virtual showcase for student work.

The website link will be distributed by the Honors staff when the site goes live in July. We encourage you to explore the projects hosted on this site and check out the wonderful efforts of your fellow Honors students.

Congratulations to all participants and everyone who completed this academic year under extraordinary circumstances! The Honors Program continues to be in awe of your hard work and perseverance.

Conference Participants
Caroline Aceves
Rafia Afzal
Anna Andler
Tuyet Anh Lê
Ciara Asonve
Deyana Atanasova
Amanda Bozzetti
Spencer Brinkman
Katherine Burnett
Grace Burnett
Elyse Colihan
Ezra Constante
Jamie Davis
Alex DiCenso
Zoharia Drizin
Alyssa Filicicchia
Maya Fitzgerald
Sydney Frank
Vanessa García
Gillian Hadding
Rachel Hannigan
Daniah Hasan Ibrahim
Sophie Heussner
Gabriella Hoover
Lexi Jackson
Miki Kainuma
Carolyn Kedryna
Kacie Koenig
Eleni Kritikos
Jake Lukwaski
Rebecca Mahannah
Bridget Maston
Gracie McKay
Joe Mertes
Jane Mikula
Ars Nurlanov
Liam Owen
Maya Parekh
Anissa Patterson
Katrina Phidd
Radhwa Ramadan
Harika Reddy
Christina Rosheger
Megan Salloum
Meg Sampson
Linette Sanchez
Mya (River) Sanchez-Dudik
Natalia Semaniu
Sara Shahein
Ben Stumpe
Genevieve Swanson
Hana Tesfaye
Avery Tunstill
Sarah Vissers
Claudie Wilkie
Caroline Yu

Thesis Projects
Connor Altier
Thomas Ashby
Sydney Begerowski
Spencer Brinkman
Nicolas Clarisse
Mary Ellen Combs
Matthew Cooper
Isabelle Gallant
Jenna Gonzales
Paulina Gryzbowicz
Kylie Hamakawa
Grace Hoegler
Hannah Hyman
Izabella Jablonska
Emmaline Kelly
Mia Lorensten
Hailey Menkhus
Kate Meulemans
Twyla Neely-Streit
Emma Nippe
Abigail Oberdick
Katrina Phidd
Maciej Piwowarczzyk
Elena Rangai
Simone Rhodes
Ena Rizvic
Max Rowe-Sutton
Christopher Schafale
Mary Takgbajouah
The Show Must Go On!

By Ben Stumpe

How many students have heard from a professor or advisor something along the lines of, “We are living in unprecedented times”? Although true for a majority of professions, the pandemic proves to be beneficial for playwrights and writers in general. As a mostly solitary art form, playwriting has helped me to stay busy during quarantine. Even when theatres across the globe are closing their doors for months on end, submission deadlines and opportunities for playwrights and theatre enthusiasts still exist.

At the beginning of the quarantine, I felt like a motivated machine—ready to produce as many scripts as possible and read countless numbers of books on playwriting, theatre, directing, and comedy. Quarantine felt like an endless winter break. Like any school break, though, my motivation was high in the beginning but had dwindled by week two. Although I mastered the art of Netflix binge-watching and Facebook commenting, these skills did not line up with my initial intentions. This goes to prove that social distancing can be discouraging for those writers who need busy schedules and constant social interactions to be motivated to write. Quarantine provides all the time in the world to write ten-minute plays, one acts, two acts, and musicals, but that time is worthless if you rely on social encounters and “people watching” to gain inspiration. A single word that you hear a person say in the park, in the Student Center, or in the classroom can trigger an idea for a two and a half hour long musical. Needless to say, without these interactions, I needed to kick it into gear.

In order to fuel my playwriting activity, I researched theatres across the country to catch up on how a staged art form that relies heavily on in-person performances adapts to these changing times. In a matter of minutes I joined several Facebook groups focused on playwriting, online theatre productions, and quarantine cabarets. I also interviewed and became a member of the Chicago Playwrights Group, a collective of playwrights, actors, directors, and theatre enthusiasts who read and workshop original plays. With the help of my roommate, a Music Composition major at the DePaul School of Music, I wrote my first ten-minute musical to submit to my favorite black box theatre in Missouri. The musical includes three comedic songs that are all about a couple fighting over whether or not to sell their couch!

Not to sound like a total theatre kid, but even in the darkest of times the light of theatre shines on. But honestly, there are plenty of reasons to be hopeful for theatre right now and in the future. High schools, colleges, and community theatres might now adapt their productions to the digital world so that people from all over can enjoy the show. Maybe the DVD of your high school production of The Wizard of Oz will actually have high quality sound and the camera operator will zoom in on the character who is delivering their monologue—instead of focusing in on the Munchkins in the back! A performance recording of Lin-Manuel Miranda’s hit musical Hamilton will be available for streaming on Disney+ on July 3rd! Six the musical plans to return to the Broadway Playhouse in Chicago in November! The Theatre School at DePaul recently launched their Wrights of Spring original plays on Spotify and the DePaul Theatre Union is planning for a 2020-2021 hybrid season of online and in-person performances. Big or small, theatres in Chicago, and around the U.S., are creatively concocting ways to engage with their artists and patrons whether it is online or in-person. The theatres may be empty, but the show must go on.
Quarantine Movie Watchlist

By Julia Matuszek

Quarantine can be a lonely and depressing time, but sometimes watching a feel-good film can help put a smile on your face—or at the very least distract you for two hours. Here is a list of the top ten films I have watched during quarantine in order to help keep my spirits up. Happy watching!

1. Ferris Bueller’s Day Off (1986)
   Director John Hughes is known for his ability to make films that capture all of the best parts of being young and carefree. Being able to live vicariously through a character can be therapeutic, especially if that character is as charismatic and fun as Ferris Bueller. This film follows Ferris, his girlfriend, Sloane, and his best friend, Cameron, as they play hooky from school in order to spend the day exploring Chicago and all that it has to offer. Although many DePaul students can’t explore the city right now, this film allows them to still visit it through a screen.

   Being able to travel around a city without leaving the comfort of your bed becomes possible in this Richard Linklater film, in which strangers Jesse and Celine decide to spontaneously spend a romantic twenty-four hours together in Vienna. As the hours go by the romantic tension increases, as do the deep talks and comedy shared between these two characters. Before Sunrise is a romance film but it’s one of the few that is realistic, making it all the better. It is also part of a trilogy, allowing you to have more to binge watch during quarantine.

   Anything with the late Robin Williams in it is always a safe bet to put a smile on your face, and Mrs. Doubtfire is no exception. This movie follows Daniel who, after his divorce, dearly misses his three children Lydia, Chris, and Natalie. He decides to secretly transform into Mrs. Doubtfire, an elderly woman, in order to be hired as his kids’ nanny. With a plot this endearing, as well as stellar impressions from Williams and classic 90’s comedy, there is no possible way to watch this classic 90’s movie without a smile on your face.

   Football, friendship, feuds, and Denzel Washington, what more could you ask for in a film? Set in 1971, this biographical flick tells the story of The Titans, a formerly all-white high school football team in Virginia. When Herman Boone, a black man, becomes the new coach of the now-integrated team, tensions rise among the players both on and off the field. This movie does everything a good sports movie should do—it will make you laugh, it will make you cry, and it will make you a football fan by the end of the film.

   No feel-good movie list would be complete without a musical, especially one that uses ABBA songs throughout. This film follows Sophie as she invites three of her mom’s past boyfriends to her wedding. Her goal is to figure out which one of them is her father so she could be walked down the aisle properly. A wedding, a second chance at love, a best friend reunion—this movie just oozes positivity from the singing to the dancing to everything in between! If that’s not enough to entice you, the soundtrack alone on this film will cause you to drop everything you are doing and sing along.

   Although there are two versions of this film, one from 1961 and one from 1998, the latter version is the superior of the two. The movie tells the story of twins, Hallie and Annie, who were separated at birth by their parents because they had a nasty break-up. Through fate, the twins meet at a summer camp and decide to switch places in a plan to reunite their entire family. To this day, I am still shocked as to how Lindsay Lohan was able to play these two roles at the same time. If you are looking for a fun activity to do after the film, I challenge you to learn Annie and Martin’s complex handshake!
CREATIVE CONNECTIONS

   Disney films are a must at any time, especially during a global pandemic. Tangled tells the story of Rapunzel as she strikes a deal with a thief named Flynn Rider. Her goal is to leave her tower for the first time ever and find the lights that appear on her birthday each year. As the two go on their innocent adventure, Rapunzel learns more and more about her mother—or at least who she thinks is her mother. Besides an amazing plot and one of the best Disney soundtracks, this film also has the funniest and most realistic Disney love interest of all time.

   Although some might not see this classic movie as a feel-good film because it has some moments that might cause a tear to be shed, its overall message is heartwarming and therefore it counts as a feel good film. The movie tells the life story of Forrest Gump, a man who has a low IQ but a large heart and a whole lot of luck. As Gump lives through large historical events such as the Vietnam War and Watergate, all he cares about is the wellbeing and happiness of his best friend and love of his life, Jenny. As one of the most quotable movies of all time, this is a must-watch if you haven’t seen it already!

   This underrated comedic gem follows the story of the Hoover family as they attempt to drive their daughter, Olive, across the country to a beauty pageant. Along the way, they run into some surprises and roadblocks. Although the movie is labeled as a comedy, it’s a film about compassion more than anything. This family flick is a perfectly-made movie about an imperfect family that will make you cry just as hard as it makes you laugh.

10. Wonder (2017)
   Inspiring stories can often be the most heartwarming ones as well, and this is the case with Wonder. The film focuses on fifth grader Auggie Pullman, who has been homeschooled his entire life because of his facial deformity. After his parents decide it’s time for him to start attending school with other children, Auggie is forced to learn a lot about other kids his age—as well as about himself. As Auggie learns to start seeing the good in the little things, you as a viewer do too.

Professor Laura Kina’s Painting for Honors Office

Outgoing Honors Program Director Martha Martinez commissioned Art, Media & Design Professor Laura Kina to create a piece of art for the Honors Program office. The painting, entitled, The Long Hall, is featured below. Here are Professor Kina’s thoughts on her work:

“The Long Hall features the last group of students I saw in person on March 11, 2020 just before DePaul closed the campus due to COVID-19. Set in the 3rd floor hallway of the Arts & Letters building on DePaul’s Lincoln Park Campus, the painting features Honors students Claire Heflin, Caroline Yu, Paul Roach, Tuyet Anh Le, and Claire Newby who had just finished working on a final group project for my Winter 2020 HON 301 Mixed Race Art and Identity course. When I took the goodbye photo this painting is based on, I had no way of knowing what was to unfold in the weeks and months that followed and just how long this haul was going to be.”

Please make sure you stop by to see her work when the Honors Program moves to its new quarters in Arts & Letters Hall.

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Please make sure you stop by to see her work when the Honors Program moves to its new quarters in Arts & Letters Hall.
Quarantine Survey Responses

Midway through spring quarter, Honorable Mentions sent out a survey to Honors Program students to see how everyone is coping with the global pandemic and doing classes remotely. Here are the responses we received.

How have you been feeling this quarter?

“I’m very overwhelmed, but I don’t feel like I have much right to be.”
- Elizabeth, Creative Writing, Junior

“I’ve been feeling very overwhelmed with projects which makes sense as I’m working on my animation capstone, among other things. But despite the fact that I haven’t left the house in a few weeks, there’s something thrilling and equally nerve-wracking about this whole situation. With such an historic event as this, my grandma called to tell my sister and I to write every day. Maybe in the distant future someone will find our journals and learn a little bit about what it was like back in the year 2020.”
- Katie Keblursek, Animation, Senior

“I have been feeling quite bored, unmotivated, and uncreative.”
- Sarah Huth, Film and Television, Freshman

“It’s been super overwhelming. I’m lucky for so many reasons but it is still hard not knowing what is coming next. In my environmental classes, we talk a lot about the prevalence of issues like this and how we can’t go back to normal. It makes me anxious to think that going back is likely what we will be doing. Nevertheless, I feel that I am still learning a lot—just in a more fragmented and scribbly way. I think we all grow from experience and COVID-19 is making us really think about it harder than ever.”
- Maddie Fernandez, Environmental Studies, Sophomore
How have you been passing time during quarantine? Do you have any recommendations for other students (movies, books, recipes, new hobbies, etc.)?

“I am student-teaching this quarter! Yikes! Although things did not go as planned, I pushed myself to make the curriculum accessible for all my students. I feel that this experience has made me a better educator. I have also been applying to teaching positions for the upcoming 2020-2021 school year. This week, I accepted an English teaching position at Evergreen Park High School. Wish me luck!”
- Grace Garbrecht, Secondary Education English, Senior

“I’ve been reading fan-fiction and rewatching British TV shows.”
- Maiwenn Brethenoux, Health Sciences, Senior

“I’ve been learning how to write music and plays and books! I’m also learning how to cook new food so that I don’t spend too much on Mo’s delivery.”
- Ben Stumpe, Communication and Media, Freshman

“I’ve been watching a lot of reality TV and I have been reading and reviewing teen dystopian novels. I recommend watching ‘Married at First Sight’ and ‘Too Hot to Handle.’”
- Sarah Huth, Film and Television, Freshman

What is the first thing you want to do when quarantine ends?

“I want to go hear live music and give everyone a hug!”
- Priya Fink, Flute Performance, Sophomore

“There are a lot of other things I want to do, but this is the first thing I think of.”
- Maddie Fernandez, Environmental Studies, Sophomore

“I want to see my girlfriend! We only live ten minutes apart but we obviously haven’t been able to see each other.”
- Lauren Watson, Game Design, Sophomore

“I want to go used-book hunting.”
- Maiwenn Brethenoux, Health Sciences, Senior

“When quarantine ends (if it is actually safe for us to go out into public spaces), I will go to a coffee shop, order myself a fancy drink that I could never make at home, and do work there or simply people watch. I miss this part of my pre-quarantine routine so much!”
- Jessie Rosato-Wyan, Public Health, Senior

“Take the CTA to a stop I’ve never gotten off at before.”
- Maddie Fernandez, Environmental Studies, Sophomore

“I want to go used-book hunting.”
- Maiwenn Brethenoux, Health Sciences, Senior

“Every school break we have, my high school friend group has a bonfire or a murder mystery party and I’m really missing their energy. I mainly can’t wait to make more memories with my friends in person. I’m so tired of playing cards against humanity online.”
- Marie Florov, English and Communication and Media, Freshman
For this painting I wanted to create a lush landscape for my character Redino (reh-dee-no), a small red dinosaur just making his way in the world. The forest may be slightly chaotic around him, but he can still relax by the light of the moon.
Poetry
By Deyana Atanasova

Curbside

Fine lines in the corners of my room, 
walls textured with pores, 
ridges and skid marks. 
The drywall feels like sandpaper, 
but this is my home.

It’s strange to learn so fast, 
grow and seek comfort in the new, 
only to settle back in the debris of 
unlearning, and in the gaping void of 
old tragedies.

Padded with my comforter as protection, 
childhood sheets and ancient perfumes 
stuffed in the back of the bathroom cabinet 
wait to engulf me in regression, 
but this is my home.

It’s a day like any other, I suppose. 
With the not-so-fine lies and the concrete 
carrying the nostalgia that never lived. 
We stop on the way home to get gas, 
just to light it.

But this is my home.

Quarantine - a dream

Unprecedented times, 
but my bumper is still dented 
waiting to be presented with 
a state of repair.

It’s an interesting affair, 
two tablespoons of sugar and 
instant coffee, and in an 
instant being transported 
to relatives abroad.

A broad schema of the 
Balkans, the rugged 
balcony awaiting those 
romantic epiphanies one 
breathes by the sea.

See, I stay where I lay 
and for the better part of the day, 
I’m not really here or there. 
I walk the line of my scratched- 
off to-do list.

Crossing in an out 
of what seems like a lucid 
dream.
“Make it a practice to judge persons and things in the most favorable light at all times and under all circumstances.”

Saint Vincent de Paul