



Zowe Decator
Honors classes

World Civilization to 1500 with Sevin Gallo
World Civilization from 1500 with Sevin Gallo
General Geology with Diane Phillips
Survey of the Universe with Katherine Auld
Introduction to Theatre with Ashley Edwards
Graduation date: May 2019

I am a non-traditional student. After dropping out of high school, I worked hard for twenty years to build a successful career in the food service industry. However, I always aspired to do more with my other abilities and interests. After completing my GED, I was awarded the Northwest Arkansas Community College Adult Education Scholarship; this gave me an opportunity to advance in my life and create a new career. I joined the Honors Program during my second semester at Northwest Arkansas Community College (NWACC) because honestly, one of my classmates overheard me saying we need a coffee machine on campus. She asked what my GPA was and if I would be interested in joining the honors program. Then she told me they had their own study area and a Keurig machine. I was sold and asked where to sign up- I do like my coffee! What I did not know was that I was going to be joining a group of people that have been great- and hopefully lifelong friends. I've met people that share interests with me and also people that are very different and I've enjoyed learning new things from all of them.

SECTION 1

Although I had taken the placement test that put me into honors composition, I was still afraid that I would not be able to keep up with the extra work since I'd been out of school for so long. It was not until Spring of 2017 as I started my second semester at NWACC that I decided to take an honors class. I was still unsure if I would be able to keep up with an honors class and all of the "extra assignments," so I was very intimidated when I first signed up. Now I regret not taking the extra honors courses because it turns out to be one of the best decisions I've ever made. I welcomed the extra assignments that had intimidated me. I found that they weren't extra, just different. They were more involved and maybe required little longer papers. I enjoyed the honors courses I took, and I found I was able to retain more of what I learned. As I am very

much a visual and hands on learner, honors classes allowed me to be involved in the class. I also enjoyed the smaller class sizes and being able to ask questions and get more complete answers with meaning behind it, other than just short answers that leave me wanting to ask more questions.

I am an active member in the Honors Student Association (HSA) as the vice president. I've been the HSA Vice President for the past two semesters. I've loved every minute of this position! As VP, I attend meetings, brainstorm ideas, give input on the projects we work on, assist any officer than needs help, volunteer at our activities and participate in many activities we do. Currently, we are responsible for street cleanup and we volunteer to spend time with the residents at the Magnolia Place Alzheimer's Residence. I also proposed that we start regular game nights for HSA members to give us time to connect and have fun. I encourage my fellow officers and members to always set the bar higher for the HSA because I believe that the HSA is a great, inclusive place for students of all backgrounds. I love that I can use my position as VP to let everyone know that we offer friendship and support and do great things for our community, while have having fun doing it!



SECTION 2

The diversity of the students and faculty and ways of thinking has made me more open-minded and willing to learn in different ways. Although I have many years of experience in the work force, I think this time I will be receptive to all types of people. Meeting the mixture of ages, cultures, degrees and talents has allowed me to step out of my shell and made me more confident when interacting with people in an academic environment. It also has given me the ability to take the next step after I leave NWACC by providing me with leadership skills.

SECTION 3

I have taken two honors World Civilization classes (to 1500 and from 1500) with Sevin Gallo. These were absolutely my favorite honors classes I have taken at Northwest Arkansas Community College. This class was perfect for me. I cooked for twenty years so in this class I learned the deep history of the staple ingredients, such as flour, sugar and ale. I used these basic ingredients every day in my career, so being able to learn in this unique way was amazing. I will never forget these classes. Both classes had less than 15 people and we went to many different restaurants as we talked about different cultures and events as we ate our way through history. For example, when we discussed the French revolution, we went to Crepes Paulette. For the Cuban revolution we went to a Cuban restaurant and one of my favorite restaurants was when we talked about Japanese imperialism and went to the Sushi House. We would discuss the time in history of the food and culture we were experiencing.



Another class that I enjoyed was General Geology. We went to Pitcher, OK to the Quapaw reservation to a superfund site and saw what was left after the military mined the lead for the war. Leaving a whole town devastated and contaminated it is now abandoned for the most part. The mines underneath were 3 semis wide and 2 semis tall and after the mines flooded, the water was not safe to swim, bathe, or drink. It was a very enlightening and heartbreaking experience.

Being in the Honors program gave me a place at North West Arkansas Community College where I felt like I belonged. Joining the program, having a place to study, and joining the Honors Student Association events I got to meet and become very close friends with people I never thought I would have in my life. Being able to talk with other honors students about classes they have taken and share experiences really can help pick the right class for a good fit. There are so many types of people in the program and we learn in all ways it is nice to be able to get to know other types of people I would otherwise never have gotten close to.

SECTION 4

My advice to future honor students is take advantage of the resources and connections the honors program offers. The program gave me an extended family. We share thoughts about classes, books, professors and so much more. Joining the program and volunteering in the community is not just a great way to network and build connections you can use after college. It's a way to give back to the community and it makes you feel good inside. Also, priority registration may not sound like a big deal, but I can say this was one of my most valued accommodations the program offers. I was able to sign up for the classes I needed and wanted with the professors I sought out. Take advantage of it. Being a part of the program also has great perks. I have been able to go to a play every semester and had the opportunity to go to an event at Brightwater featuring Chef Anton Abrezov for free.

