

Allison Davidson



Graduation: May 2025

Major: Chemical Engineering

HONORS COURSES:

Art Appreciation

History

English Composition 2

Philosophy

Section 1: In what ways did the Program help you “demonstrate engagement,” “cultivate curiosity,” and “explore perspectives” (community, curiosity, and diversity)?

The night before I started my first day at NWACC I had a lot of emotions. I was both nervous and excited to finally start my college career, which had been a dream of mine since I was little. The nervousness came from the unexpected: “What if I don’t make any friends?” “How am I supposed to juggle 4+ classes at a time without crashing out?” “When am I supposed to be immersed with clubs and activities?”. It was a lot to process, because I had not been in a public-school setting since I was homeschooled from the fourth grade until I graduated high

school. After my first successful semester I applied to the Honors Program with the hopes to network with like-minded people, engage in the community, and challenge myself with more difficult classes. I was sitting in my Human Growth and Development class when I finally got the email that I was accepted into the Honors Program. I knew from that moment on this was going to be the start of something very rewarding in my life. In my first year with the program, we brainstormed ideas on how to fight the food insecurity issue on the campus by working with the NWA food bank and the Arkansas Hunger Alliance. We conducted a few surveys throughout the semester to get to the root of why food insecurity was such a big issue for our school, and after intensive research was put into it, we placed a food bank on campus for faculty and students to use. To cap off that semester, we got the opportunity to speak on a panel in front of our peers at the Spring Arts and Culture Festival. The second year we focused on how we could take education outside of the classroom and we did this by engaging more with our community by hosting outreaches and more surveys. Throughout this year we also went beyond our college and helped pick up trash on J street, and we had the opportunity to go to Oklahoma State University to speak on a panel about education. The honors classes I took really helped to broaden my mind and explore different topics that I otherwise would not get in a non-honors class. They have smaller classrooms so that there is more engagement with your classmates and teacher, which was interesting because it feels more like a big conversation with everyone rather than a more traditional setting. Out of all the honors classes I took, surprisingly Art Appreciation was my favorite. Not only was it fun, but it made me see art from a different perspective and diving into all the intricacies involved with studying an art piece was fascinating. At the Honors Gala in the Spring of 2024 I won a Cooper Honors Program Award for outstanding work in Arts that was nominated by my professor. That moment made me realize had I not taken the step to venture out to take a different class, I would not have discovered my passion for art and gained the knowledge I did.



Section 2: How did this program prepare you for a university (or for a workplace, if you aren't transferring at this point)? What hard or soft skills will you take with you?

This program gave me the opportunity to be in several different leadership positions throughout my time at NWACC that I felt equipped to handle a job better. I started out as the secretary my first year and I recorded thorough meeting minutes and sent out multiple emails updating everyone in the program about meeting time/dates, as well as project dates. That role equipped me to have a level of efficiency and solid communication with my peers. The next role I was voted into was Vice President, and there I worked side by side with our President and Honors Coordinator Sabrina Chesne to give input on important decisions and maintaining peace

within the Program. Stepping into both of those roles prepared me to work with my team on a board to make important campus decisions and grow as a person to see how I work with others. Now that I am reflecting back on my time and am getting ready to launch into the University of Arkansas, the Honors Program and the classes I took made me more confident to step out into the unknown and take risks that could positively alter my future. Had I not wanted to climb into many different leadership positions, I would not have the experience or confidence to be better than my present self and reach for greatness.

Section 3: What is one experience you had while a member that you'd like to share?

I had so many great memories that I could write a book about, but if I had to pick one it would be the trip we took to Oklahoma. That trip made me so much closer to my peers than I already was, that it is emotional to look back on. From staying up super late to finish our PowerPoint in education awareness, to venturing out about the college, and the pizza party we had in the hotel afterwards playing card games was the most memorable time. Outside of that one particular memory was going into the Hub everyday after or in between classes to talk and laugh about something. I had such a strong connection to my peers while I was there and felt like I had a sense of belonging within the college. We all would come together for each other not only



school related but personally too. Another fun experience was preparing for our Honors Gala for months leading up to it. Kelly Smothers (our President at the time) and I worked closely to get all the details organized for the event, such as the food catering, decorations, and invitations. It was such a fun time working with everyone so that all of the students and faculty could enjoy a night of relaxing and being awarded for their hard work. I want to give a few recognitions to: Kelly, Yullyana, Tate, Braiden, Adeola, Ana, and Max for giving me the most fondest memories of Honors and being my close friends.

Section 4: Considering all you have written for the above, what advice do you have for new members?

My advice would be to take the leap and jump into honors, even if you are nervous about it. The classes are not more difficult than a traditional class, they are just more engaging. Network with everyone around you and grab at any opportunity you can get your hands on, because that is how you will make your time at NWACC and the Honors Program worthwhile. Step into those difficult positions so that it can help prepare you with your future, no matter if you are transferring or jumping straight into the workforce. Make good connections with your professors, because they will help you more than you know. Good luck!