

**Kyler Brown**



**Early College Experience Program (ECE)**

**Associate's Degree in Business**

**Graduation Year:**

2025

**Honors Courses:**

Survey of World Literature

Music Appreciation

## Section 1: Community, Curiosity, and Diversity

Being part of the NWACC Honors Program changed the way I see education. It wasn't just about coursework; it was about real conversations, new perspectives, and stepping beyond the classroom to connect with people and ideas that truly matter. From the start, the program pushed me to think deeper and ask better questions.

My curiosity thrived in my two honors classes, which were Music Appreciation and Survey of World Literature. In Music Appreciation, we didn't just listen to Beethoven or jazz; we analyzed music through cultural and historical lenses. We looked into how art can be more than just entertainment.

In Survey of World Literature, we read classical books like *The Ramayana*, *Monkey King*, *Beowulf*, *The Aeneid*, and *The Iliad*. What was interesting about the books was how, despite being centuries apart, these stories answer the same universal questions. They describe heroism, morality, and fate. Comparing Rama's moral dilemmas with Achilles' impulsive nature made me rethink how stories shape culture and how literature can reflect different periods.

But the Honors Program wasn't just about learning; it was about connection. Through class discussions and collaborative projects, I got to experience diversity. There were conversations about how stories evolve across cultures and influence the way we see the world today. Learning about *dharma* in *The Ramayana* or transformation in *Monkey King* taught me about other cultures but also made me think about my own culture.



## Section 2: Prepared for the Next Chapter

The NWACC Honors Program gave me more than just academic knowledge. It prepared me for what's ahead, both in university and beyond. I got better at academic writing and public speaking. One highlight was a team project where we had to come together as a group and create a hero's journey. This experience pushed me to think critically and work collaboratively, which will help in my future career.

But just as important were the soft skills I developed. In multiple projects, we had to collaborate. This taught me how to understand different personalities, set tasks, and productively bounce ideas. Time management became second nature. I was able to balance coursework at NWACC, coursework at Rogers, and basketball at Rogers. More than anything, I built resilience and a growth mindset.

Through engaging discussions with honors instructors and peers, I also learned the value of meaningful dialogue. When we would talk about the stories we were reading, active listening and thoughtful responses were always at the core. Sometimes, someone would have an idea that never crossed your mind. These discussions made me more confident in my ideas while staying open to new perspectives. I believe this is a skill that will be just as valuable in university seminars as it will be in professional settings.



### **Section 3: A Memorable Experience**

If I had to choose one standout moment in the Honors Program, I would talk about when one of my teachers nominated me for the program. There were not many memories made in my Music Appreciation class because it was online. I also did not make many memories outside of class because of my dual enrollment at Rogers and NWACC. However, being nominated for the program will always stick with me.

I was nominated for the honors program by my Comp II English teacher, Jim Laughton. His classes were always engaging and thought-provoking. That class is where my academic career truly elevated. I was challenged in multiple ways and pushed to be better. One day, towards the end of the semester, Professor Laughton was very pleased with my work. As a result, he asked me if I would like to be a part of the honors program because of my work ethic and intelligence. I debated it for a while because I did not know if I was willing to put in the extra effort. It was not because I did not think I could do it; it was because I had to balance school at Rogers and NWACC, but also basketball. In the end, I decided I was willing to do it. This was one of the best decisions I have ever made. I thank Professor

Laughton for believing in me all the way. I did not know it at the time, but I would set my future up for success.

#### **Section 4: Advice to New Members**

If I were talking to new members of the program, I would say multiple things. First, be bold. Take a chance on yourself and be confident in your abilities. Second, be curious. Say yes to opportunities, even the ones that intimidate you. The Honors Program will challenge you, but that's what makes it so rewarding. Push yourself outside of your comfort zone, engage in those tough conversations, and never underestimate yourself. You will grow tremendously, and you will be better off in your future work. The moments that challenge you most will be the ones that shape you in ways you never expected. You will meet like-minded people and very good teachers along the way. You have a bright future, and you will see the benefits of the program in the long run.