

HONORS NEWS AND NOTES

SPRING 2016

PLAGUES THAT CHANGED THE WORLD: COLLOQUIUM SPOTLIGHT

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Colloquium Spotlight	1
Majors Honors	1
Medal Ceremony	2
SHO	2
Honors League	2
Graduates	2



An original colloquium entitled “Plagues that Changed the World” was co-taught by biology professors Dr. Jason Baker and Dr. Kristen Walton. The class covered a total of thirteen different plagues which ranged from the Irish Potato Famine to Ebola. Even though the course was taught by two biology professors, the main focus of the class was not on the microbial basis of the disease. Dr. Walton stated, “The biology of the microbes and mechanisms of the disease are important topics, but we also wanted to focus on how epidemics of these diseases drove biological discovery, as well as how they affected medical practices, immigration, government policy, cultural stereotypes, and the arts.” The class aimed to please students from all different disciplines which allowed all students to actively participate in the class. Additionally, the course was taught differently than a traditional academic lecture. Dr. Baker said, “We wanted this class and the class discussions to be wholly student-driven.” Each week, groups of students would present on a predetermined topic and lead the rest of the class through discussions. This colloquium encouraged communication and discussion between students and professors and aimed to build leadership and public speaking skills of the students. If offered again, the colloquium promises to fill quickly and enrich another group of eager students.

IMPORTANT DATES:

- **April 29:** Last day of classes
- **April 30 – May 6:** Final Exams
- **May 7:** Commencement
- **May 31:** Summer Semester Begins

MAJORS HONORS

Sean Callen, mathematics, completed his Majors Honors Project, titled, “Application of Hidden Markov Models to Stock Prediction” this Spring. The project attempted to use hidden Markov models to predict future changes in stock prices. Many hours of work were put into this project by Callen and his faculty advisor, Dr. Gavin Waters. Callen has accepted a research assistantship offer at the University of Wyoming and will begin that after graduation.



Jessie Thorup, psychology, also completed her Majors Honors project this Spring. Her project, titled, “The Relationship Between the Understanding of One’s Own Mental Process and Perception of Individuals with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder,” focused on disability perceptions depending on how one understands the self. Thorup worked with her faculty advisor, Dr. Benjamin England, on the project. She plans on going to physician’s assistant school after graduation.

MEDAL CEREMONY

The Honors Program hosted its first semi-annual Medal Ceremony this Spring. The medal ceremony was created by the Honors Director, Dr. Deka, and committee members Neil Lawley and Jim Mulder. The goal of the ceremony is to recognize graduating students who have completed General Studies Honors and/or Majors Honors. Students who successfully completed General Studies Honors received a silver medal and students who earned Majors Honors received a gold medal. The medals presented to the students were created by Neil Lawley and can be worn by students during the graduation ceremony. Provost Daffron delivered a congratulatory address to recipients. Recipients received their medals from Dr. Deka and were congratulated by the Honors Committee, as well as their most influential professors, President Vartebedian and Vice-Provost Davenport.



SHO

This semester, SHO set out on replacing their “SHO Us Your Smarts Trivia Night” with a new fundraiser. The members decided to host a “Video Game SHOWdown”, which was hosted on April 12th. The majority of the semester was spent on planning the project. This semester also became the first year SHO was present at the Heart Your Union celebration in upstairs Blum in February. Through this event, SHO brought in new members for the Spring semester. Fun and games also occurred throughout the semester which included a Valentine's Day party during one of their meetings. During the party/meeting, members snacked on candy and sweets as well as swapped Valentine's Cards. SHO also had a trip to Worlds of Fun in April.

HONORS LEAGUE

The newly established MWSU Honors League aims to unite all honors societies on campus. The organization wrapped up the end of the semester with elections for the Vice President and Treasurer positions. Shelby Hicks was selected as the new Vice President and Jennifer Kieser was approved for the Treasurer position. President, Maggie Lee, and Secretary, Eli Dodge, will continue to serve until December. The main goal of the organization for this semester was to generate interest from the societies on campus. For the fall, the organization plans to continue generating interest, participate in Western Warm-Up, and host one major event for all societies to participate in.

GRADUATING SENIORS

Congratulations & Good Luck to the following students!

- | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Sean Callen (Math) | Crystal Poole (Wildlife Conserv.) |
| Kelly Cochran (Biology) | Mike Quaney (Biotechnology) |
| Pauline Ford (Marketing) | Jordan Snook (Biology) |
| Amanda Francis (Animation) | Erin Sprenger (Education) |
| Toni Gardner (Comm & Span) | Alex Stearns (Finance/Accounting) |
| Ida Haefner (Biology) | Lauren Stewart (Biology) |
| Krystal Hicok (English Ed.) | Genevieve Stoops (Music) |
| Allie Holland (Biology) | Ian Storck (Theatre & Cinema) |
| Derek Hulett (Biochem/Mol. Bio) | Jessie Thorup (Psychology) |
| Brock Kimball (Finance) | Elizabeth Young (History & French) |
| Alex Luke (Biochem/Mol. Bio) | |

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