

THE SPOUTER

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UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS DARTMOUTH

Message from the Honors Director

Professor Robert Darst

Greetings from the UMass Dartmouth Honors Program! Let me take this opportunity to highlight some of the most noteworthy recent developments in the Honors Program.

New Honors students. First, it is my great pleasure to welcome the 111 new students—104 freshmen and seven transfer students—who joined the Honors Program this fall, bringing the total number of currently enrolled Honors students to 373. I look forward to meeting each and every one of you!

New Honors Center. I am delighted to announce that we have completed our long-awaited move to the new Honors Center on the 4th floor of the University Library. The Honors Center has a seminar classroom and a student lounge, as well as office space for the Honors Program staff. Honors classes now meet in the Honors Center around the clock. However, because of plans in progress to renovate the entire Library, our renovation is not fully complete. We will keep you updated on its progress!

New Honors classes. We also launched a pair of important changes to the Honors Program curriculum this year. The first is Honors 101, "Scholarship in Community." This three-credit course is designed to help first-year Honors students make a successful transition to life at UMass Dartmouth. It combines in-class exploration of the meaning of "community" with work on real-life projects in the local and university community. Honors 101

made its debut this semester, led by Professor Jennifer Mulnix, Associate Director of the Honors Program. Students in HON 101 had the opportunity to tutor third and fourth grade English language learners at the Letourneau Elementary School in Fall River.

The other new addition to our curriculum is Honors 301 & 302, "Honors Research Across the Disciplines." This junior-year seminar is designed to support Honors students as they begin thinking about their senior-year theses and projects. The seminar meets once per week and is worth 1.5 credits per semester. All Honors students are now required to take at least one half of the 301/302 sequence by the end of their junior year, and we strongly encourage all students to take both semesters of the sequence if possible.

New Honors Program Bookstore Award. I am also pleased to announce the introduction of the Honors Program Bookstore Award. Beginning with the Fall 2009 entering class, eligible students in the Honors Program now receive \$300 per semester for the purchase of books and supplies at the Campus Bookstore. For those students who joined the Honors Program before Fall 2009, a one-time-only competition was held in May 2008. Over 80 students successfully applied—congratulations to all of you! For more information, see the Honors Program website.

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Spouter is

Editor-in-Chief

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We welcome articles from students and faculty.



The Honors Student Association is committed to serving the interests and needs of all students at UMD, including those who are in the Honors Program.

HSA presents ‘Pizza with a Professor’

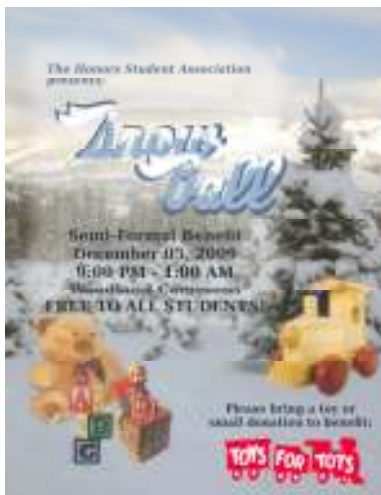
**Monday, November 30th at 5:00pm
Honors Center, LIB 402**

Please join the HSA in welcoming Professor Avedikian from Sociology, Professor Baum from Political Science, and Professor Nulty from Philosophy, as we aim to learn more about our favorite professors' academic interests and research projects over pizza in an informal setting!

HSA presents the ‘Snow Ball’ to benefit Toys for Tots

**Saturday, December 5th at 9:00pm
Woodland Commons**

On December 5th, the Honors Student Association is holding a Semi-formal in the Woodland Commons featuring DJ Jules. The special thing about this event is that all the proceeds are being donated to Toys for Tots. At only \$5 a ticket, this event makes it easy for UMD students to have some fun and be charitable this holiday season. The HSA looks forward to the Winter Ball, and most of all, to helping children across America who are in need.



Fall 2009 HSA Officers

President - Elise Gilbert
Vice President - Colleen Stewart
Treasurer - Charles Lu
Social Events Chair - Samantha Bailey
Community Service Chair - Margarita Rojas
Public Relations Chair - Sarah Gregg
Faculty Advisor - Professor Jennifer Mulnix

HSA Community Service Events

Amongst all the hustle and bustle of daily college life it is easy to forget the importance of volunteering and serving our community. Luckily, the Honors Student Association has members who are not only eager to learn, but eager to serve. Every year, the HSA organizes a wide variety of community service activities designed to serve both the campus community and local surrounding communities.



April 2009 HSA Relay for Life Team

On September 24th, a group of HSA and nursing students went to the Market Ministries Soup Kitchen in New Bedford and gave a little bit of time to the community by serving a hot meal to those in need. It truly was an eye opening experience that really helped them appreciate everything that they have.



Market Ministries Soup Kitchen, New Bedford

Honors Student Interview with Elise Gilbert

By Charles Lu, Accounting and MIS



Elise Gilbert, a senior English and Philosophy dual major in the Honors Program, has her eyes set on the future as she works diligently this semester to achieve her dreams. Unlike most book worms, Elise has taken the presidential role of the new Honors Student Association (H.S.A) in order to contribute to and improve the campus community. She sees the position as an awarding opportunity to assist in the development of campus community while gaining leadership experience, improving organizational skills, meeting new people, and learning how campus organizations work both individually and as a function of a larger network of organizations. Nearing the end of her undergraduate career, Elise is currently working on her undergraduate thesis: two fifteen page short stories centered on the theme of mother-daughter rela-

tionships. On top of her academic and co-curricular activities, she is applying to nine Grad schools to get her M.F.A. in Creative Writing.

If all goes well, Elise will graduate as a Massachusetts Commonwealth Scholar, a just reward for all her outstanding academic achievements and contributions, as she proceeds to the next level of her academic career. Last week, I had the pleasure of learning about her college career and plans for her developing thesis.

Society stereotypically views English and Philosophy majors as fields that offer few job opportunities. Elise plans to transcend the masses' opinions as she aims to teach Creative Writing at the college level and publish original work. Her decision to enter the English field sprouted from her lifelong interest in literature and curiosity about the nature of the world. She added the Philosophy track after passing two philosophy courses with flying colors and realizing that both English and Philosophy explore the subject matters she is most interested in. She admits her academic career was overwhelming at times, but being a first generation college student and the will to set a good example for her younger sisters drove her push herself forward and to never let the bad moments get the best of her.

Aside from her academics, Elise recently joined Spinner Publications for an internship this semester. She also has three jobs, which include substitute teaching at Fairhaven High School, tutoring at the Writing and Reading Center, and working at the circulation desk

in the library. Although she admits that she is not confident in teaching her own class without proper graduate training, she asserts that all of her previous and present teaching practices have boosted her confidence in becoming a great teacher in the future.

Elise had begun developing her thesis ever since her birth, as she described how her own life has always been the overarching influence in her writing. She plans to take a diplomatic approach in revealing the lives of women through mother and daughter relations by exploring the theme of “expectations” from various angles. She seeks to incorporate critical theories from her women's studies, literature, and philosophy courses in her thesis to extend the image of the mother/daughter relationship beyond the historical stereotypes of repressiveness. Although inspired by real-life people and experiences, the stories themselves are completely fictional.

Her research material consists of canonical literature on the relations between mothers and daughters, which include the novel *Annie John* by Jamaica Kincaid and short stories by Tillie Olson, Amy Tan and Alice Walker. She will also read literary criticism about these and other pieces in order to understand them through various lenses. She currently feels all sources have equally played a helpful role in her paper. With one story halfway finished and the other just begun, Elise and her faculty sponsor, Professor Anupama Arora, look forward to presenting the stories at a reading in early Spring.

Photograph: “Providence”*by Elizabeth Friar, Photography***Poem: “Writer's Helix”***by J.P. Andreason, English*

ive been trying to word, mouth, tongue, grope
 poems;
 but it seems that
 all.i.can.do.
 is read, look, see, watch
 poems.
 and you.
 i can read your lips
 with my own,
 and your hips
 with my palms,
 and your voice
 with my everything,
 and hope you read mine too.
 poems
 together.
 Yes, that's what we are.
 two lines of verse
 entrapped in a double-helix
 our DNA is
 Inescapable.

Honors Thesis: “Dawn of the Drone - US Targeted Operations in Pakistan”*by Matthew Fricker, History*

In 2004 the US began the most extensive targeted killing campaign in the history of the world. Armed with the Predator Drone, the US could target militants from the air without risking any lives. The Predator, equipped with a camera so powerful it can distinguish faces from three miles high came standard with four AGM-114 Hellfire missiles.

With al-Qaida and the Taliban fleeing from Afghanistan in 2001, Pakistan became the 'nexus' of terrorist facilities. Pakistan, which had supported the Taliban pre-9/11, lacked the initiative to route them out of their territory. Starting in 2002, the US sent drones into these areas for surveillance; and in June 2004, the first US targeted killing in Pakistan occurred. The target of the strike was Nek Mohammed, a Taliban militant who was publicly defiant of negotiations with Pakistan.

Throughout the years, the targeted killings in Pakistan have increased exponentially: The number of strikes increased by 1200% from 2007 to 2008. Reports have indicated an absurdly large amount of collateral damage. In light of these reports, I created an objective database under the supervision of Dr. Avery Plaw. This database, consisting of over 300 sources, divides the deceased of US targeted operations into three categories - militants, civilians, and unknowns - as defined by these sources. This database shows a very different story of the Predator's tactical strength.

My honors thesis is a comparative analysis of this database with other relevant issues, showing how the different tactical options compare. I broke down the data into monthly, quarterly, yearly, and total data sets. I calculated ratios of militants and unknowns to each civilian, as well as the

average number killed per strike, strike frequency, and high value targets per civilian ratios. Obama's first nine months of attacks were compared to Bush's last nine months to create an understanding of how the two campaigns differ. In an effort to weigh whether the US campaign is tactically sound, the data of US targeted strikes was compared to that of Israel during the Second Intifada. With boisterous outcries from the Pakistani public for the US to abandon this program, data of the US program was compared to Pakistani Operations.

A summary of the US strike history in concurrence with events relevant to Pakistan was created in order to show that although the US program is tactically and legally sound, there are indications that their current strategy is failing. I conclude my thesis with an outline of an improved strategy for the US targeted campaign in Pakistan.

Faculty Interview with Dr. John Chopoorian

By Paul Weston, English



When asked what he wanted to be when he grew up, young John Chopoorian answered “a chemist, a naval officer, and an FBI agent.” Admittedly these could be any boy’s future aspirations, but there is something quite different about Chopoorian. By the time he received his doctorate from Florida State University, he actually lived out two of his childhood fantasies by becoming a world class chemist and a navy alumnus...AND although he has yet to experience the thrill of becoming an FBI agent, I would hesitate to count him out.

Football star. World class chemist. Fulbright Program scholar. Committed college professor. Navy alumnus. Marketing consultant. Successful business owner. Aspiring novelist. Each of these descriptors accurately paint the illustrious portrait of Dr. John Chopoorian. After speaking with Dr. Chopoorian, it is clear how much hard work and dedication it must have taken to accomplish so many amazing, meaningful things. Chopoorian is a humble man proud of his many accomplishments; he’s full of knowledge, ideas, and once in a lifetime experiences.

As an Undergraduate

Chopoorian received his Bachelor of Science degree in Chemistry from Brown University, and describes his tenure at the prestigious ivy-league school as “bittersweet.” His classes were “miserably tough and challeng-

ing,” yet football gave him the enjoyment and excitement that he recalls with noticeable fondness. Throughout Chopoorian’s freshman and sophomore years he played the left guard position for Brown University’s football team, the Bears. But when his studies began to intensify and his course schedule conflicted with his athletics, Chopoorian was forced to quit the football team that he loved so much.

At Brown, Chopoorian also enrolled in a Naval Science course that forced him to go through ROTC training and exposed him to naval life for two years. Chopoorian describes his experience in the Navy as a “great vacation,” one in which he had the opportunity to travel to all kinds of beautiful locations. While serving in the Navy, Chopoorian got his first taste of management, when he was put in charge of managing dozens of his peers in their nautical excursions. His experiences in the Brown football program and in the Navy were thoroughly enjoyable; and although his classes were extremely challenging, they prepped him for the next step in his life—working towards a doctorate at Florida State University.

As a Graduate Student

While his chemistry classes at Brown were extremely challenging, his experience at Florida State was quite different. Chopoorian pursued a degree in Chemistry with a concentration in Physical and Organic Chemicals. Comparatively speaking, his courses at Florida State were more manageable and he enjoyed his time much better. Chopoorian was always an extremely hard worker, a trait that was consistently displayed in his grades - he was a straight “A” student. He recalls having great professors, including a chemist that discovered the final three elements on the periodic chart of elements. This professor in particular reinforced to Chopoorian that grades aren’t everything when it comes to school, and taught him to

“loosen up” a bit and not worry too much about grades.

After attending Florida State University, Chopoorian attended the University of London where he was a Fulbright Program Scholar—one of the most prestigious academic honors in the entire world. In London, he was mentored by world famous chemist Sir Ronald Nyholm with whom he co-wrote scholarly papers. One of which Chopoorian is particularly proud of is a study on “Computing Stability Constants” which dealt with computers before computers were fully understood or amply researched. Also while in London, Chopoorian became interested in the possibility of separating algae into food grade protein and cellulosic material. He regrets not having pursued this study beyond his educational experiences. Chopoorian feels it could have unfolded into an exciting career dealing with world hunger as well as the potential that algae represents as biomass for conversion to hydrocarbon fuel.

Professional Career

Chopoorian has experienced many different career paths; enjoying considerable success in the field of Chemistry (he actually owns patents for his discoveries) and as a business owner. Straight out of school, he was employed by two different chemical companies. At these locations he held various titles, which included a position as a Technical Representative of international markets and ultimately Marketing Manager. When Chopoorian left these companies, he experimented with owning companies and unleashing his entrepreneurial spirit. His initial investment ultimately went out of business, which prompted him to move on and own/operate his father’s family owned Nursing Rehab Center. He currently oversees the financial growth and responsibility of the center.

(continued on next page)

At UMass Dartmouth

Chopoorian has thoroughly enjoyed his 32 years at UMass Dartmouth. It seems as if everywhere Chopoorian goes he quickly makes a mark, and this is no different when it comes to his teaching and administrative duties. In his early years, Chopoorian oversaw the formation of the Small Business Institute, which was a project that survived for 14 successful years. With the SBI, he and his students would take on business related consulting projects for small businesses in the community. He also headed the International Business Association for 10 years. On top of these student-focused associations, Chopoorian also served as the Interim Dean of the College and Chairperson for both the Management and Marketing and Management Information Systems departments...quite the prestigious track record.

Although Chopoorian has served in many of these prestigious administrative positions, he maintains that being a professor and teaching are his absolute favorite duties at UMD. He added that he has a particular affinity for his business students because they are “the most well-rounded and energetic members” of the University’s community. It is clear that he is passionate for his profession and loves imparting knowledge and teaching these students. Throughout his tenure here at UMD, Chopoorian most enjoys teaching a Marketing Management class because he has career experience and a thorough knowledge of the subject, and the students get to participate through presentations and applied learning.

Chopoorian invests a great deal of time and effort at UMD. In addition to his many accomplishments and courses taught, he also finds time to serve on Honors thesis committees and partake in research efforts in conjunction with other UMD professors. When asked about particular Honors theses that he was involved with, two of them came to mind. The first, “Benchmarking Alternate Energy to Petroleum,” tackled a true to life issue and attempted to make a significant change in the way society thinks about fuels, while the second made recommendations regarding information systems at schools.

In terms of personal research for Chopoorian, he claims to have slowed his pace a bit, (although he sometimes consults by giving business and marketing advice to University professors in various departments for their own research projects). In the past five years, Chopoorian has worked in conjunction with several other business professors in the creation of a series of papers with the topics of various real-life business and marketing related strategies. Each of these papers were creative and interesting in their own way, and Chopoorian says that he is always open to assisting fellow professors in terms of consulting on business related matters for any research projects.

The Future for Dr. Chopoorian

So what’s in store for the future with Dr. Chopoorian? What could he possibly conquer next in a lifetime full of honors and achievements? “I’m thinking about writing a book” he proclaims. It will be inspired by the James Bond series with a CIA or FBI agent as the protagonist, called “The Pretender.” Perhaps Chopoorian can vicariously live out his final childhood dream of becoming an FBI agent after all...

Honors Program Events

Honors Pizza Movie Nights

Play It Again, Sam – Sept. 22nd

Much Ado About Nothing – Oct. 1st

Modern Times – Oct. 22nd

One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest – Dec. 1st



In conjunction with Professor Richard Larschan's Honors course, ENL 216 - Comedy and Satire, Honors students gathered together to watch comic and satiric masterpieces like Shakespeare’s *Much Ado About Nothing* and Kesey’s *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest*, as well as classic films such as *Modern Times* and *Play It Again, Sam*. While enjoying pizza and camaraderie, honors students also analyzed these great films and considered their ongoing relevance.

Honors Bus Trip to NYC to see the Metropolitan Museum of Art

Sunday, Nov. 1st

In conjunction with Professor Michael Taylor's Honors course, ARH 125 - Renaissance to Modern Art, Honors students had a chance to first-hand experience the art studied in his course, which focused on the architecture of Western Europe 1250-1860, a period of exceptional change in the theory, practice, and purpose of art, as well as a primary touchstone for modern and contemporary arts. Students spent their Sunday afternoon touring the MET and enjoying the sights of New York City.



Honors Program Frequently Asked Questions

I'm about to graduate this Spring. Is it too late to start an Honors Thesis?

Absolutely not! Here is the timetable for completing an Honors Thesis/Project in the Spring 2010 Semester:

Step 1: Submit Proposal to Honors Director	By Mon, Feb. 8
Step 2: Submit Prospectus to Honors Director	By Mon, Mar. 8
Step 3: Submit Progress Report to the Honors Director	By Mon, Apr. 5
Step 4: Submit draft for evaluation by supervisor and committee	According to date set by your supervisor
Step 5: Defense/public presentation of thesis	By Tues, May 11
Step 6: Submit final text and signed thesis approval form to the Honors Director	By Wed, May 19

For more information about the Honors Thesis, including guidelines and downloadable forms, please visit: <http://www.umassd.edu/specialprograms/honors/thesisguidelines.cfm>

What is Honors Contracting?

An Honors contract is a negotiated agreement between a student, an instructor, and the Honors Director that enables a student to take a non-Honors course for Honors credit. The Honors Contract is a commitment to a learning experience above and beyond normal course requirement. Courses contracted for Honors credit count toward graduation as a Commonwealth Scholar, provided the final course grade is B or better.

Keep in mind that the following restrictions apply:

- No more than 6 credits of Honors contract coursework may be counted toward the minimum 15 hours of Honors coursework.
- 100-level courses cannot be contracted for Honors credit.
- Do not select the pass/fail grading option. Honors Contracted courses must be completed with a grade of B or better.
- Once an Honors contract has been approved by the Honors Director, it cannot be “undone.” There are no exceptions.

For more information about Honors Contracting, including guidelines and downloadable forms, please visit: <http://www.umassd.edu/specialprograms/honors/welcome.cfm>

The deadline for contracting a course for Honors credit for Spring 2010 is Friday, February 12th.

Where is the Honors Center located?

The Honors Center is located on the Fourth Floor of the Main Library, Room 402. The Honors Center includes a seminar classroom, a student lounge, and office space for the Honors Program staff.

Who are the Honors Program Staff?

Director: Professor Robert Darst

Office: Modular #1, Room 9
508.999.8989, rdarst@umassd.edu



Associate Director: Professor Jennifer Mulnix

Office: Liberal Arts, Room 399L
508.910.6869, jmulnix@umassd.edu



Program Secretary: Cindy Pisapia

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What is the UMD Honors Program?

The mission of the University Honors Program is to promote a lifetime love of learning and creative activity; to encourage the spirit of community responsibility; and to enable students to undertake original research or creative work in their chosen field, so that they will be well prepared for graduate study and/or professional employment.

The Honors Program curriculum consists of three parts: Honors courses, a junior-year thesis-preparation seminar, and an independent Honors thesis or project, usually completed in the senior year. Students who complete the Honors Program graduate as Commonwealth Scholars, a statewide recognition of exceptional academic achievement. Graduating Commonwealth Scholars are recognized at the annual Honors Convocation ceremony in May and at graduation in June. The Commonwealth Scholar honor is also inscribed on the diploma and transcript.

For more information, please visit our website:
<http://www.umassd.edu/specialprograms/honors/>

Save the Date! Upcoming Honors Events**Honors Program Spring Reception**

Tuesday, February 2nd
UMass Dartmouth Woodland Commons

Honors Program Informational Session

Tuesday, February 9th
UMass Dartmouth Library Browsing Area

2010 Margaret Mullany Panos Essay Contest

Deadline: Friday, April 5th

16th Annual Massachusetts Statewide Undergraduate Research Conference

Friday, April 23rd
UMass Amherst, Amherst, MA

2010 University Honors Convocation

Wednesday, May 5th
UMass Dartmouth Woodland Commons