

# HONORS COLLEGE

## 2018-2019 ANNUAL REPORT

1975 DeTrobriand Street, Salt Lake City, Utah 84113

Annual Report 2018-2019

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## **The Honors College at the University of Utah**

At the Honors College, dedicated teachers and motivated learners collaborate to build an innovative educational environment, where everyone is challenged to think, ask questions, take risks and explore the full scope of the world around them. The work is demanding, the standards are high, but here students acquire the intellectual tools that will enrich their lives and enable them to thrive in a rapidly changing global community.

### **PHILOSOPHY**

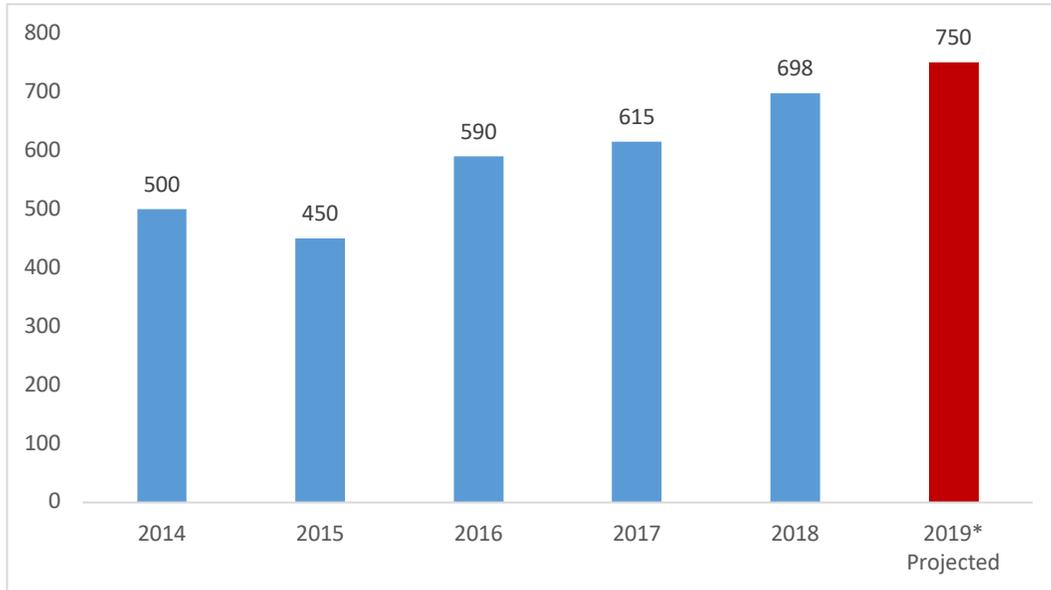
The Honors College provides intellectually curious, motivated students with the foundations of a rigorous liberal arts and sciences education within the context of a world-class research university. Honors College students engage the best of two worlds—an intimate liberal arts experience, including coursework and living-learning opportunities, joined with a world class research university and the opportunity to engage in independent research, working closely with top researchers and scholars.

The Honors College is designed for students who choose to complete a demanding undergraduate curriculum that includes both depth and breadth of study. Students graduating with an Honors Bachelor's Degree from the University of Utah will demonstrate distinction in their majors as evidenced by coursework and a research thesis or capstone project, and they will be able to situate their discipline within a larger University context, including a sophisticated understanding and articulation of how their discipline relates to other disciplines, both presently and in the past.

## HONORS STUDENT BODY

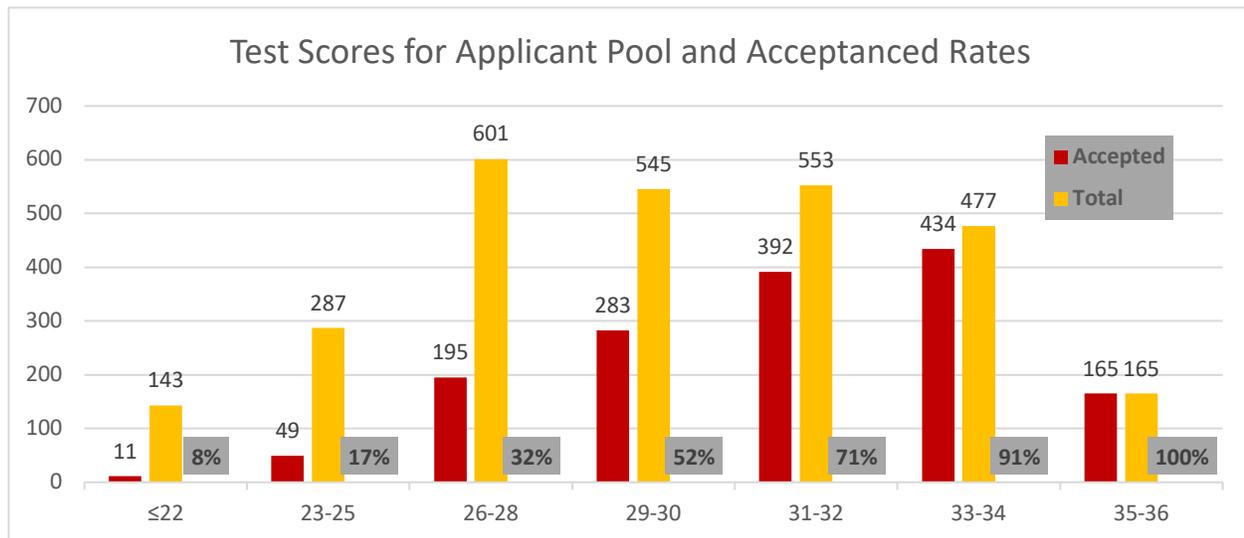
The Honors College has a student body of approximately 2300. For the 2018-2019 academic year, the College received close to 3000 applications for 700 spots. This number is a threefold increase over 2014. Applicants are reviewed on their high school CGPA, rigor of high school courses, test scores, essay quality and interest in a liberal arts and sciences education.

Figure 1. Incoming class size 2014-2019, including projected Fall 2019 numbers.



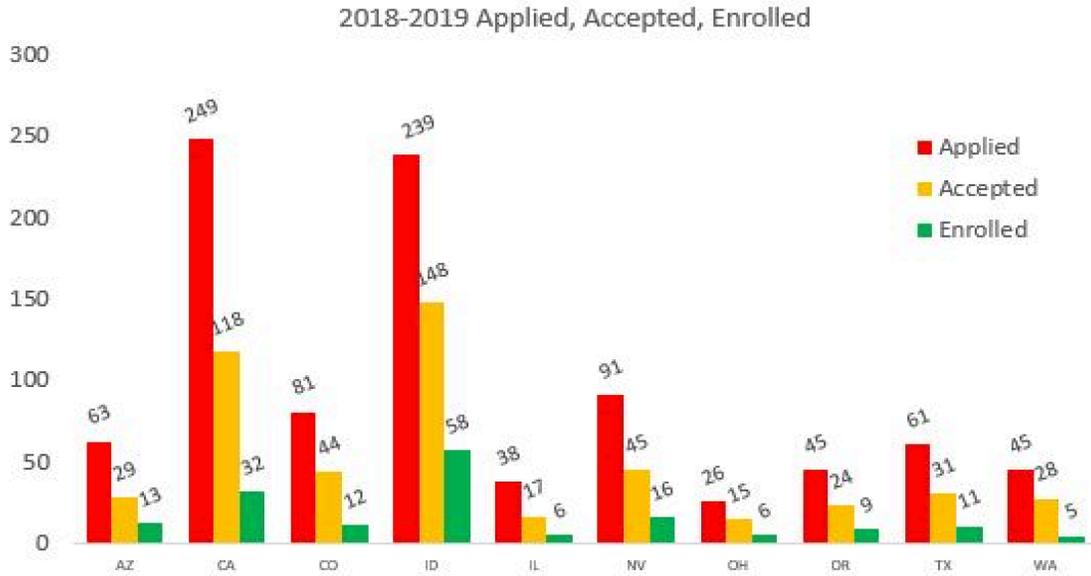
The caliber of students accepted to Honors is extremely high with the average high school CGPA at 3.9 and average ACT at 30 (Fig. 2).

Figure 2. 2018-2019 ACT Scores for Applicant Pool and Acceptance Rates.



Since 2012, Honors has grown its out-of-state population from 11% to 26%. Honors is expected to reach its goal recruiting and maintaining a 30% out-of-state student presence in Fall 2019. Although, the College typically receives applicants from all 50 states, Honors is currently focusing on having a greater yield from all states.

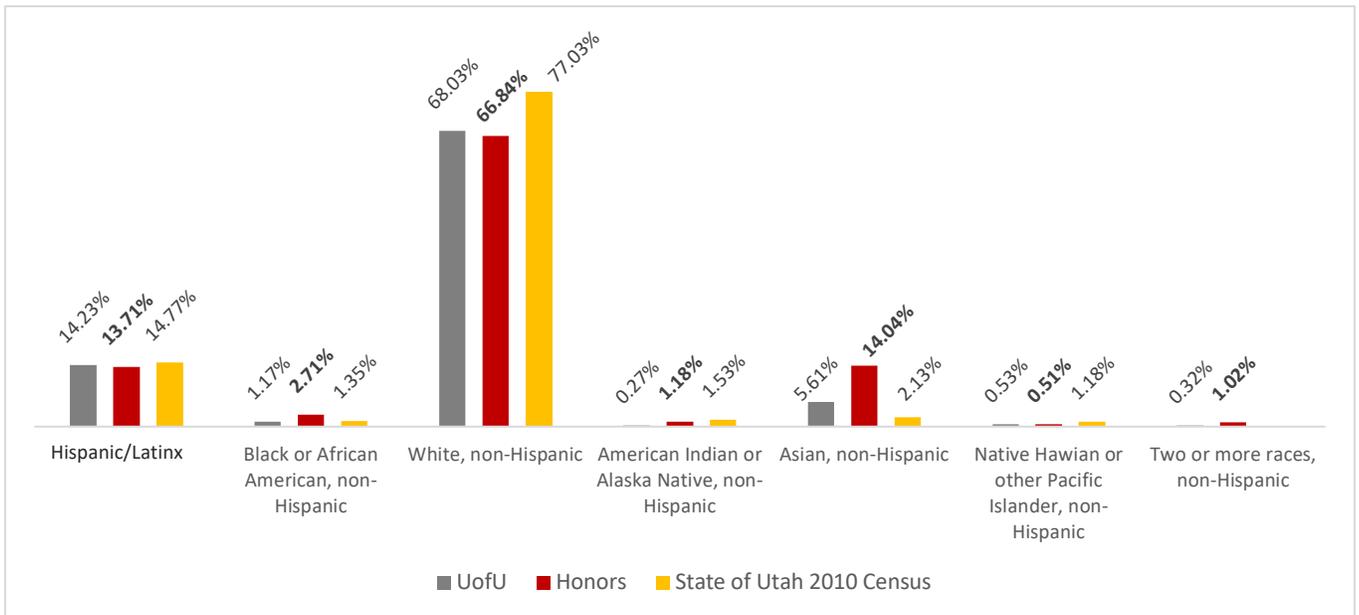
Figure 3. 2018-2019 Enrolled, Admitted and Applied Comparison by Top 10 States.



In-state students come from **22 different Utah counties** with Salt Lake county being the largest at 54%, followed by Utah county 13%, and Davis 12%. Other counties include Duchesne, Iron, Sanpete, Summit, Uinta and Weber, to name a few.

Our ethnic diversity generally mirrors that of the state. Given the expected increase in Hispanic 18-year olds, we are focusing our local recruitment efforts on this population (Fig. 4).

Figure 4. 2018-2019 Ethnicity in Honors compared to UofU and state of Utah.



## LIVING LEARNING COMMUNITIES

244

first-year students in Living Learning  
Community (LLC)

The Honors College has an unadjusted **98% Fall to Spring retention rate of first-year students** (Office of Budget & Institutional Analysis, hereafter referred to as simply OBIA). Our success is in great part to the various living learning communities (LLC) and learning communities (LC) the Honors College offers to its students.

Students living in Honors Housing participate in a Living Learning Community (LLC) or themed community, where each small cohort of students share living space, along with selected classes and/or activities. Honors offered **eleven unique first-year LLC** for the 2018-2019 academic year, two more LLCs from the prior year, and **two themed communities** for upper division students.

125

upper division students in Themed  
Community

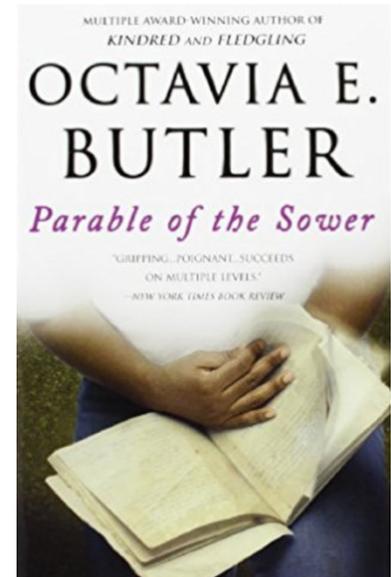
Studies have shown that students who participate in these types of communities tend to earn higher grades, graduate on time and feel more connected to their alma mater ([Price, 2005](#)).

Throughout the 2018-2019 academic year, Honors hosted a number of events for LLC students (and commuter students) such as the annual President's Reception, Night at the Symphony, rafting trips, meetings with elected officials, visits to scientific laboratory on campus, and lectures and performances at Kingsbury Hall.

Each Fall the Honors College collectively reads a novel and participates in small group discussions led by distinguished faculty, deans, and vice presidents.

This past Fall students discussed the novel, *Parable of the Sower* by **Octavia E. Butler**. Honors hosted a total of 12 book discussions—one for each of the LLCs and two additional sessions open to all Honors students—were attended by approximately 300 students.

Facilitators included Honors faculty, Associate Vice President Dr. Bradley, Honors College Dean Sylvia Torti, Associate Dean Parker, Associate Dean Pasupathi, and Assistant Dean Rohrer.



## ASSESSMENT OF FIRST-YEAR STUDENT EXPERIENCE

In Spring, the Honors Student Advisory Committee (HSAC) hosted a town hall meeting where students had the opportunity to share their experiences and concerns with Dean Torti and Associate Deans, Parker and Pasupathi. The Honors town hall, as well as staff, faculty, administrative, and honors student input point to gaps in students' grasp of the Honors program and sense of community within the college. Honors proceeded to survey all first-year students, 698, to assess their knowledge of Honors (e.g. leadership opportunities, definition of liberal arts, admissions process) and their perception of their first year (e.g. sense of community, self-efficacy, metacognition, interdisciplinary perspectives).

### Perceptions

Table 1 shows that students who participate in an LLC perceive that their first-year experience promoted all four outcomes more so than those who did not participate. We used a series of independent samples t-tests to evaluate whether the observed differences are likely to generalize to the population of students more broadly; these t-tests suggest that for meta-cognitive awareness, community connection, and self-efficacy within honors, that would be the case. Beyond providing a baseline for comparisons after implementing the hybrid course, these data also show that Honors LLCs are meeting the learning outcomes for LLCs (these are defined for a variety of campus programs including BlockU and LEAP).

**Table 1: Perceptions as a Function of LLC Participation**

LLC	Interdisc Perspective	Meta-Cognitive Awareness	Community	Honors Self-Efficacy
Yes (n = 75)	5.58 (0.90)	5.47 (0.92)	5.09 (1.14)	5.54 (0.87)
No (n = 55)	5.30 (1.17)	4.87 (1.30)	4.07 (1.42)	5.01 (1.36)
T(df), p-value	t(97.8) = 1.48, p = .143	t(91.5) = 2.90, p = .005	t(100.8) = 4.40, p < .001	t(85.3) = 2.54, p = .013

\*Means (standard deviations); degrees of freedom for t-tests reflect adjustments for unequal variances across groups.

Table 2 shows that student perceptions are also variable by housing. As seen there, students living in the MHC generally report the most positive perceptions about their first year. For interdisciplinary perspectives, off-campus students also report positive perceptions, but for other dimensions these students are more similar to the non-MHC campus residents. One-way ANOVAs were used to evaluate the likelihood that these differences generalize to the broader population, and suggest that they would do so for all four perception outcomes.

**Table 2: Perceptions as a Function of Housing**

Housing	Interdisc Perspective	Meta-Cognitive Awareness	Community	Honors Self-Efficacy
MHC (n = 66)	5.61 (0.86)	5.44 (0.90)	5.12 (1.20)	5.58 (0.85)
On-Campus other (n = 39)	5.12 (1.28)	4.88 (1.38)	4.17 (1.37)	5.11 (1.30)
Off-campus (n = 25)	5.62 (0.93)	5.14 (1.17)	4.23 (1.39)	4.95 (1.35)
F(2,127)	F = 3.25	F = 3.12	F = 8.39	F = 3.97
p-value	p = .042	p = .048	p < .001	p = .021
Post-hoc			MHC > others	

\*Means (standard deviations)/

### Knowledge

**Honors Program Knowledge Questions.** Table 3 shows the overall proportion of correct responses to the knowledge questions we posed. As seen there, some items received very few incorrect response (e.g., requirement for a thesis, optional nature of praxis labs, meaning of liberal arts, and primary goals of intellectual traditions courses). For other items, where there were more variable responses, we tested whether LLC status or housing location were related to the accuracy of participants answers using general linear models; generally, LLC status and housing made little difference to participants' level of knowledge. Noteworthy below are less than ideal levels of knowledge about the ability to complete the degree regardless of major, the fact that honors students typically complete **faster** than non-honors students, that admission is based exclusively on test scores, and the most effective person to contact about the thesis. A first-year course should devote some energy to addressing these issues. On the positive side, students are clear about the point of the IT courses and the meaning of liberal arts traditions.

<b>Table 3: Knowledge about Honors by Item</b>	
	Proportion Correct (overall sample)
Works with all Majors	.75
Takes longer to complete	.30
Admission = test scores	.54
Ecology & Legacy = all requirements	.62
Thesis isn't required	.90
Praxis labs are required	.99
No honors coursework in the major	.82
Who do I ask about thesis?	.39
Liberal Arts means....	.93
Intellectual Traditions Goals...	.91

## GRADUATION AND HONORS DEGREE COMPLETION

The Honors College has an overall **adjusted 6-year graduation rate of 90%**, compared to 69% for the University of Utah (OBIA). The 90% number includes students who graduated with the Honors Bachelor’s Degree and those who chose to earn a conventional Bachelor’s Degree. Additionally, on average, students graduate with a higher CGPA compared to their non-Honors peers.

In terms of the Honors Degree, the highest undergraduate degree conferred by the University of Utah, the last 4 years have shown a marked increase in the percentage of students earning Honors Degree (Fig. 8), as well as the number of colleges and majors represented by those students (Fig. 9). Honors continues to work towards its goal of having 50% Honors Degree completion of all graduating Honors students.

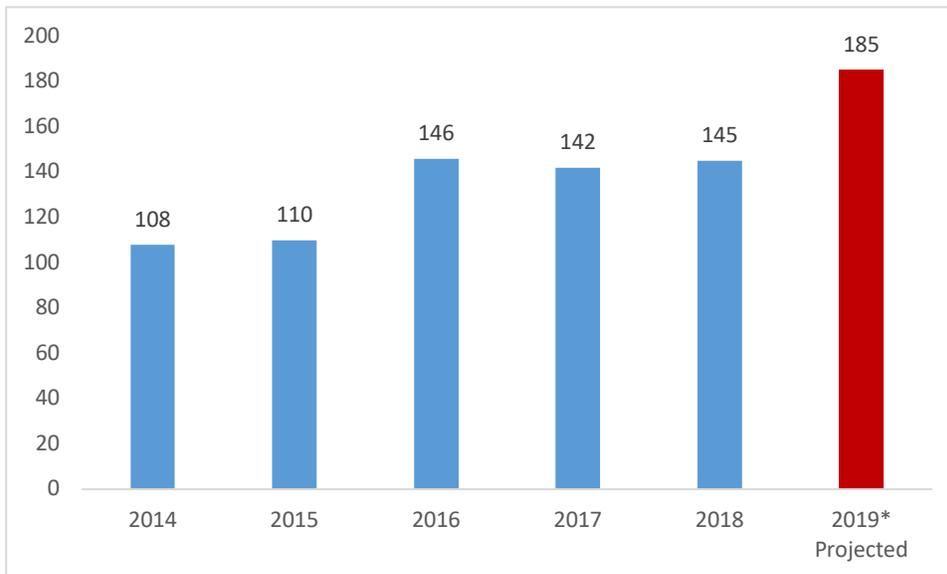
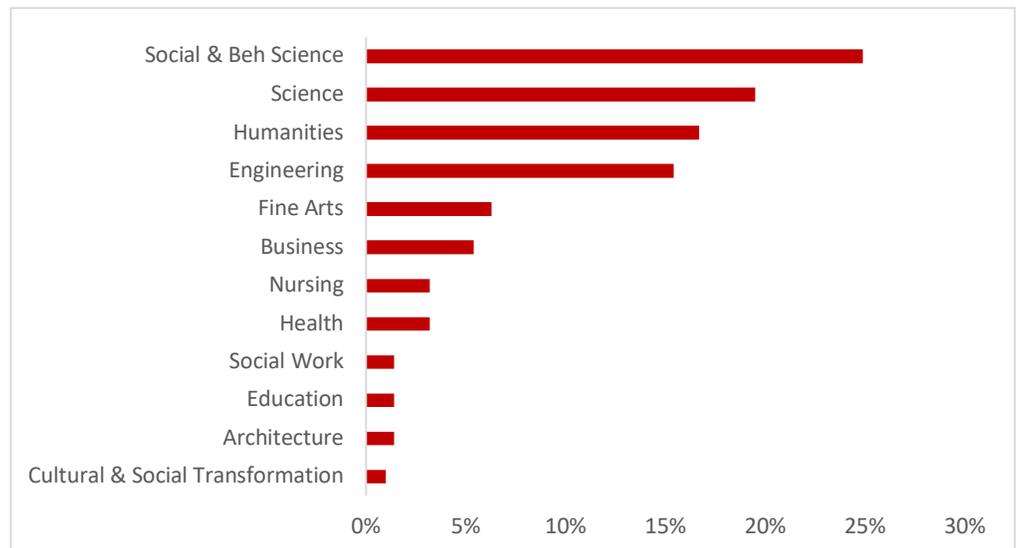


Figure 5. Percentage of Honors graduates who were awarded an Honors Degree, AY 2014 to AY 2019 (projected). This percentage is based on the number of students who at the time of graduation were still part of the Honors College structure.

Figure 6. Colleges represented based on the number of students who applied to graduation with an Honors Degree in AY 2019 (OBIA).



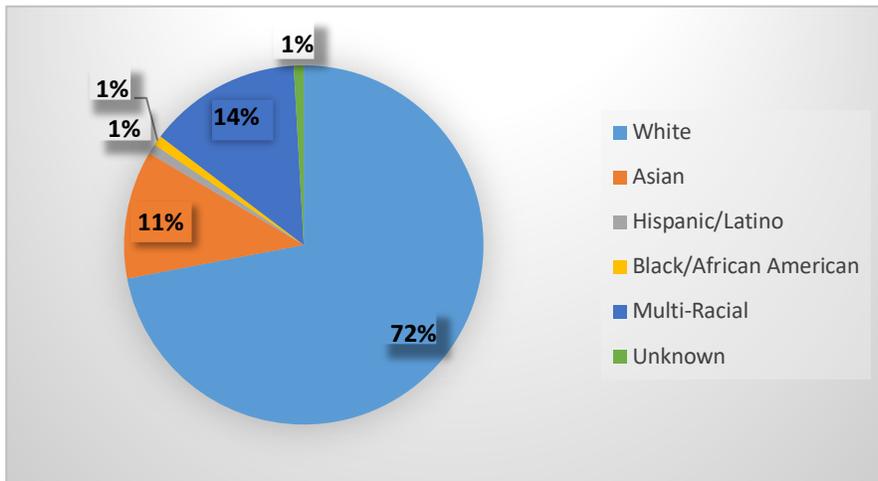
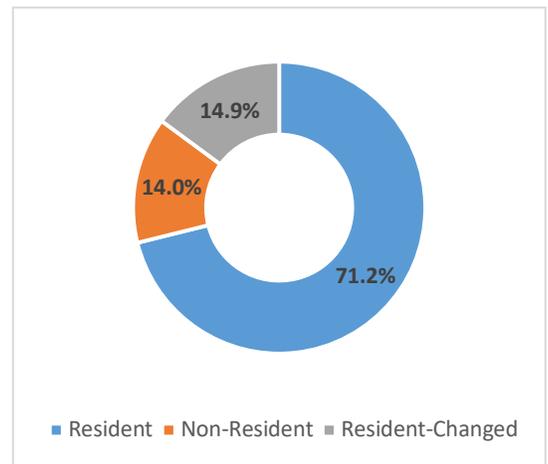
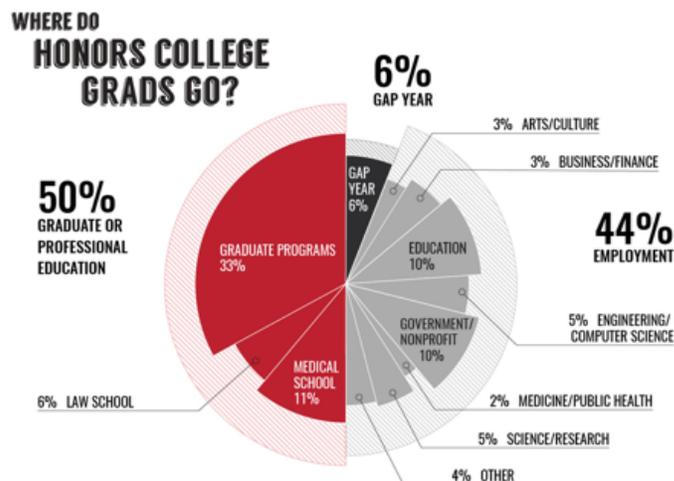


Figure 7. Ethnicity of Honors students who applied to graduation for an Honors Degree (OBIA).

Figure 8. Honors College geographical makeup of undergraduate majors who applied for an Honors Degree by Utah residency (OBIA).



A May 2019 survey of recently Honors Degree graduates, continues to show that half of our graduating students go on to pursue graduate studies. Students pursuing graduate study or professional schools were admitted to places like University of Oxford, Columbia University, Northeastern University School of Law, University of California Berkeley Law, University of Utah School of Medicine, and University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, to name a few.



## HONORS UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH

As part of the Honors Thesis, which is the culmination of the Honors Bachelor's Degree, students engage in undergraduate research in their disciplines under the supervision of a faculty member. For most students, working closely with a research faculty is the single most transformative experience of their undergraduate careers (Honors Alumni Survey, 2016).

*"My research experience has been really incredible, unlike anything I've done on campus. It has really helped me apply what I am learning in my classes to real life situations, get to interact with grad students and faculty members."*

—Honors Graduate

Honors collaborates closely with the Office of Undergraduate Research in assisting Honors students engage in independent, original research and to present their work at conferences. At this year's Undergraduate Research Symposium (URS), **215 Honors students presented their research, a 26% increase from the prior year.**

**Jasmine P. Robinson, recipient of the Marriott Library Thesis Award, presents her research at URS 2019.**

**Jasmine graduated in Spring 2019 with her Honors Bachelor of Science in Peace and Conflict Studies.**



The Honors College also supported over **40 students** to attend national conferences through **\$500 travel grants**. Students had the opportunity to travel to places such as California, North Carolina, and Washington, D.C. Additionally, faculty mentored and sponsored Honors students to present their research at national conferences. **Dr. Michael Gills** took students to the **Association of Writers & Writing Programs** annual conference where Honors students were recognized for their contributions to the field. **Dr. Laurence Parker** collaborated with several students who presented their research at the **Asian American Studies Association** annual meeting in Madison, Wisconsin and to the **Critical Race Studies** conference at University of California, Los Angeles Law School.

Additionally, in collaboration with the Tanner Center for Nonviolent Human Rights Advocacy, Honors sponsored **12 students** to attend the Oxford Consortium for Human Rights at University of Oxford, United Kingdom, and to do research on the topic of human rights after conflict. Below is a quote from an Honors student who participated in the Consortium last year:

*"The spring Oxford Consortium for Human Rights conference was one of the best highlights of my college experience thus far...As I am interested in the study of conflict, the most exciting section of the week was a lecture and discussion by Dr. Hugo Slim, director at the International Red Cross (IRC). I discovered how academic work is taken into consideration by the IRC for ongoing aid operations. **It was an insightful moment: learning that academic research on conflict actually informs the practice of aid work to war zones.**"*

## DISTINGUISHED SCHOLARSHIPS

### *Churchill Scholarship*

Every year the Honors College guides and mentors students throughout the application process for Rhodes, Marshalls, Gates-Cambridge, Boren, Udall, and Churchill, to name a few.

In 2014, the University of Utah became Churchill-eligible. This year **the University of Utah had its fourth Churchill Scholar**, chemistry and physics major, Cameron Owen.



### *Utah System of Higher Education 2019-2020 Student Appointment*

Governor Herbert appointed Sheva Mozafari, Honors Integrated Health Science, to the Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) to serve as the student regent for the state. Sheva will be a voting member of the Board on issues related to educational policy. Sheva was also the recipient of the Hinckley Institute of Politics Matheson Award.

### *The Eccles Distinguished Scholar Program*

Thanks to the generosity of the George S. and Dolores Doré Eccles Foundation, the Honors College recruits and supports **30** excellent students per year. The Eccles Distinguished Scholarship allows the Honors College to compete with Ivy-League schools. For the Fall 2019 class, we received 500 applications and interviewed 55 finalists for 30 spots. Eccles scholars participate in a cohort experience during their time as undergraduates.

As part of the mission and design of the Eccles Scholarship, 60% of Eccles scholars are Utah residents. Eccles scholars from out-of-state came from 10 different states including New York, New Jersey, and Nevada, to name a few. This year's cohort is quite diverse representing four ethnic and racial identities (Fig. 9). The average high school cumulative grade point average (CGPA) was 3.93 and 32 ACT.

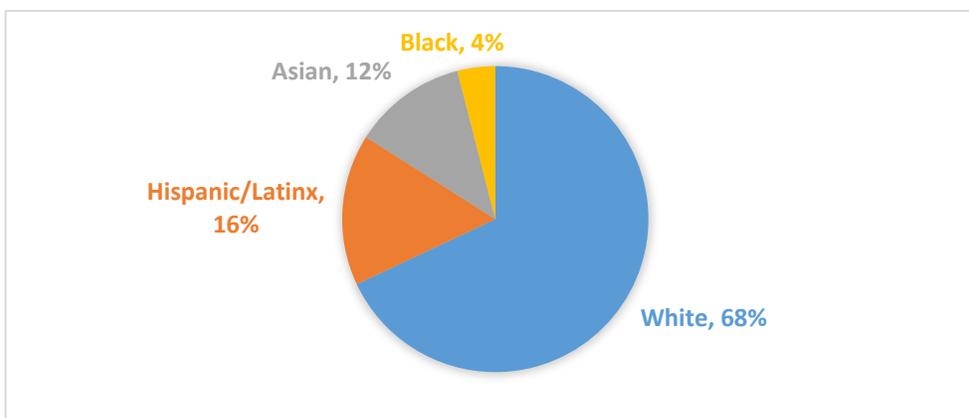


Figure 9. Ethnic demographics of 2019-2020 Eccles Scholar Cohort.

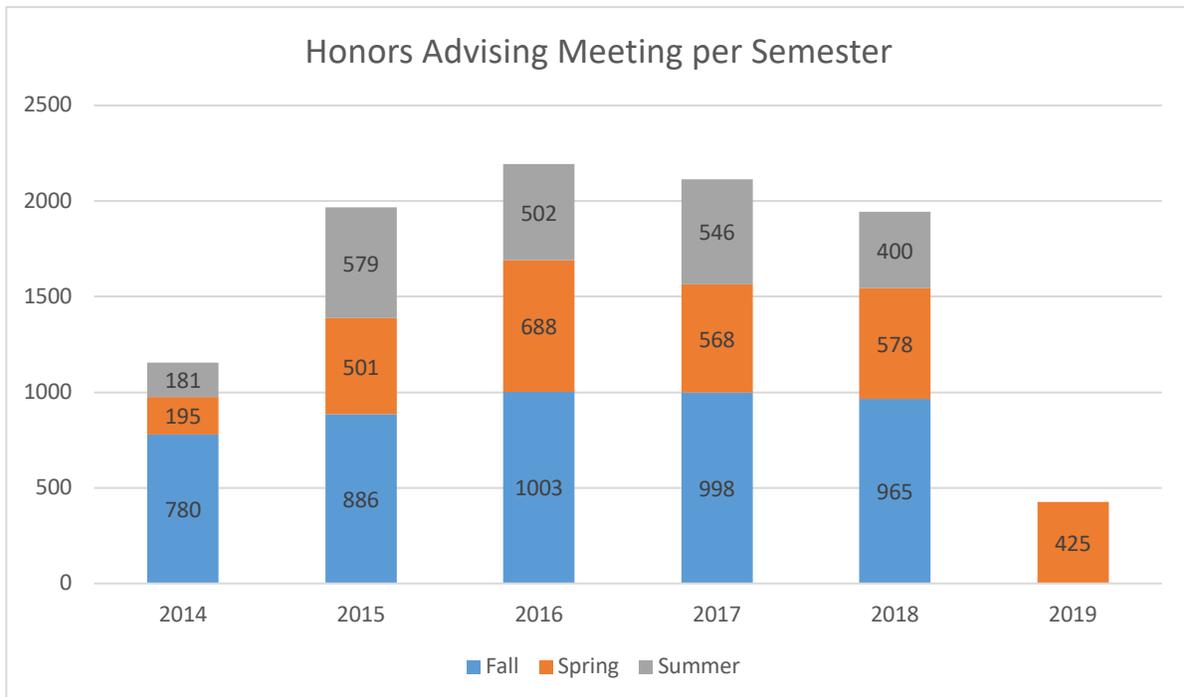
## HONORS ACADEMIC ADVISING



Advising Team: Sarah Dyer, Kelly O'Neill, Aaron Reynolds, Amber Thackeray

Honors Advisors are organized around University colleges. This “bridge-like” structure allows Honors advisors to know and understand the nuances of each major, as well as build relationships with advisors and faculty thesis mentors in each department, leading to better integration of the Honors curriculum and more personalized advising. Student response to this structure and to their advising options has been overwhelmingly positive. For the 2018-2019 academic year (Fall 2018 and Spring 2019), advisors **met with 1390 students**.

Figure 10. Number of Students seen by Honors Advisors, Spring 2014 – Spring 2019



## PRAXIS LABS: THEORY + ACTION 2018-2019

Honors College Praxis Labs are deeply-engaged experiences which draw students from all disciplines to collaborate on innovative project-based solutions to pressing societal issues.

Over the years, Praxis Labs have addressed a multitude of societal challenges in Health & Society, Energy & Environment, and Social Justice.

For 2017-2018, the Honors College offered

**4** Praxis Labs

and served

**39**

Students Participants

**Addictions: ‘Crack’-ing Open the Myths-** Students in this Praxis Lab deconstructed many of the myths surrounding addiction and explore how such stereotypical notions complicate addiction and recovery efforts. During the first semester, students and faculty addressed questions like: What is addiction? Is addiction a choice? Do drugs cause addiction? What do drugs really do to our brain? Can addiction be treated? Do people recover? How do we curb the addiction epidemic? They considered drug and alcohol policy, examined current intervention, treatment, and prevention strategies, considered personal and structural barriers to recovery including stigmatization, and discussed the individual and societal implications of addiction and recovery. Over the course of this Praxis Lab, students engaged with a variety of perspectives from persons in recovery, addiction psychiatrists, social workers, pharmacists, neuroscientists, and policy makers.

Empowered by knowledge gained in the first semester, students developed a multifaceted strategy to educate the University of Utah campus community and the surrounding area of Salt Lake City about the harmful stigma that negatively impacts people experiencing addiction. Specifically, they designed an education campaign and curriculum for high school students. A full report of their work is available at: <https://honors.utah.edu/praxis-labs/2018-2019-praxis-labs-2/>.



**Family Violence Across the Life Course: Child, Partner, and Elder Abuse-** During the 2018-2019 academic year, students examined multiple viewpoints and experiences of family violence including victims, perpetrators, witnesses or family members, and community professionals working with those affected by family violence. Fall semester was dedicated to learning about the intricacies of child abuse, the multi-layered forms and impact of intimate partner violence, and severity of elder abuse. Speakers included Detective Chris Walsh from West Valley City Police; Keri Jones-Fonnesbeck, chief operating officer of the YWCA; Deborah Mendez, trial attorney with Salt Lake Legal Defense; Judge Dane Nolan, juvenile court judge; and Tara Harris, child abuse pediatrician, to name a few.

To combat the problem of interpersonal abuse, students developed the “A.L.I.V.E in the Beehive,” which stands for “Alliance Lessening Interpersonal Violence Everywhere.” Students hosted several media outreach efforts, information sessions for the community, and produce a film centered around student mindsets post- interpersonal

abuse tragedies. The film was dedicated to the memory of students Lauren McCluskey, 1997-2018, and Sarah Hawley, 1991-2019. A full report of their work is available at: <https://honors.utah.edu/praxis-labs/2018-2019-praxis-labs-2/>.



***Refugee Resettlement in the U.S.: Contextualizing the Odyssey of New Americans***- During the 2018-2019 academic year, students develop a more thorough understanding about what it means to be a refugee in the current political climate, as well as what it means to be resettled outside of one's home and familiar country. Students developed an understanding of why "integration" is a key concept in working with individuals and families who are newly arriving Americans, i.e., refugees. Faculty and students benefitted from the expertise of service providers from Catholic Community Services, the International Rescue Committee, and the Refugee Education and Training Center, to name a few. Students are in the process of putting together an exhibit that will display at the Marriott Library and University Hospital Hallside Gallery and a documentary that will be submitted to the American Public Health Association film festival.



***Globalization and Inequality: Precarious Lives in Utah*** – The concurring trends of *deepening globalization* and *increasing inequality* permeate all aspects of our lives. Globalization has enabled unparalleled technological advances and economic growth. At the same time, inequality has increased dramatically. This Praxis Lab challenged students to connect the broad and all-encompassing trends of deepening globalization and rising inequality to two local constituencies: immigrants in the Salt Lake Valley, and poor white Utahans beyond it. The many differences between these two groups – with respect to race, class, geography, legal status, and political party affiliation, among others – allowed faculty and students to examine the complex interactions between socio-economic and

technological changes on the one hand, and the “populist” and nationalist upheavals of our time on the other.

Students began with an intensive study of trends in inequality, technology, and globalization, which culminated with them attending “The Great Polarization” conference hosted by the University of Utah Economics Department. After the conferences, students proceeded to explore how inequality shapes life in Utah through a number of guest speakers and fieldtrips throughout the valley. This exploration set the stage for students to identify aspects of the complex deepening globalization and increasing inequality in our state. Inspired by the stories of residents and the work of Arlie Hochschild on “deep stories,” students wrote two “deep stories” which served as the basis for interviews with residents across the Salt Lake valley. To bring awareness to these issues, students organized an art exhibit that featured two large canvases, quotes from interviewees, and a mechanism for visitors to record their reactions to the images and phrases. A full report of their work is available at: <https://honors.utah.edu/praxis-labs/2018-2019-praxis-labs-2/>.

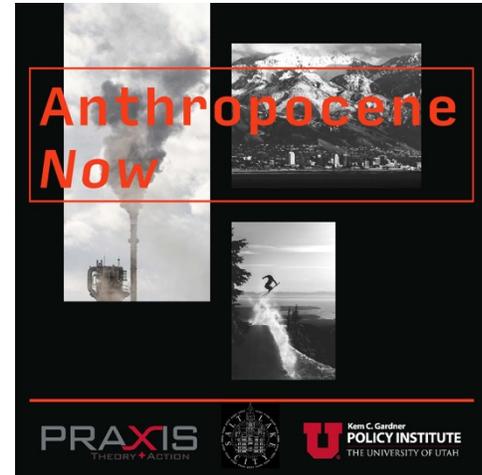


## 2019-2020 PRAXIS LABS

### Anthropocene New: Utah Snow, Climate Change & Social Resilience

Faculty: Jeffrey McCarthy, Ph. D., and Courtenay Strong, Ph.D.

Climate change is an urgent environmental challenge for the coming decades, and many of the expected impacts in Utah relate to snow. At the same time Utah's population surges, climate change is predicted to alter the Wasatch Front's patterns of snowfall and melt, with implications for recreation and water resources. How is this local case a model for global climate transformation? How can Utah communities model resilience for communities in Europe, Asia and South America? What can Utah learn from the changing snowpacks in the Himalayas, Alps and Andes? Past discussions of climate change have pushed impacts out to the year 2100 and beyond – snow shows climate change is affecting Utah now.



This Praxis Lab will look closely at the idea of the Anthropocene, at the concept of Resilience, and at the science and politics of climate change. This group will focus on local snowfall's economic, social and wildlife consequences. Our Praxis Lab will develop a participatory research project to share our conclusions and influence public policy and perception in our community.

### Automation

Faculty: Frank Drews, Ph.D., and Pratt Rogers, Ph.D.



One of the national fast-food chains in the U.S. recently announced the replacement of cashiers in 2500 locations with digital ordering kiosks. This "Experience the Future" initiative will also deploy mobile ordering at 14,000 locations. AI experts predict that by 2027 truck drivers will be redundant, AI will surpass human capabilities in retail by 2031, best-sellers will be written by AI in 2049, and surgeons will be replaced by 2053. In the next 100 years, all human jobs will be replaced by automation.

The goal of this praxis lab is to explore how automation may affect society, from a wide range of perspectives including, but not limited to the arts, humanities, social sciences, engineering, economics, policy, law and the sciences. After developing a basic understanding of the potential impact of automation, students will pursue a project on automation in contexts local to the Salt Lake Valley. While this will be a student-initiated project, possible projects can be on: user perspectives on building climate control automation, automated public service announcements, developing a city infrastructure for automated transportation, de-skilling after introduction of automation.

## Behaving Like Animals: How Other Species Mirror, Model, and Make What's Human

Faculty: Marco Bortolato, M.D., Ph.D, and Rachel Mason Dentinger, Ph.D

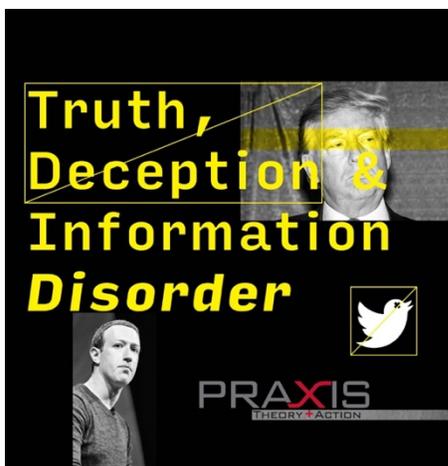
Most definitions of the “human” hinge upon the characteristics that distinguish us from other animals. Yet, human bodies and brains have far more in common with our animal kin than we often like to admit. In both respects, then—commonalities and differences—other animals are essential to defining and comprehending what it means to be human.

This Praxis Lab will begin with the late-19<sup>th</sup>-century origins of contemporary evolutionary thinking and experimental physiology. By the time that Charles Darwin published *The Descent of Man* in 1871, a rich tradition of comparing anatomical and skeletal features of humans and other animals had long existed. From these historical roots, students will proceed into the 20<sup>th</sup> century and beyond, where we will explore such topics as: the nature of human relationships with animal companions and workers; the construction of animal models for biomedical research; the threats of zoonotic disease transmission; the ethics of food production; our ecological entanglement with and reliance on other organisms; and the basic tenets of ethical animal care. “Behaving Like Animals” will focus particularly on the psychological and physiological parallels between humans and other animals that enable us to draw meaningful causal and therapeutic conclusions about the origins of human behavior, from the healthy to the pathological.



## Truth, Deception & Information Disorder

Faculty: Randy Dryer, J.D., and Avery Holton, Ph.D.



Are we witnessing a war on truth? Are we being so inundated with fake news, so victimized by coordinated disinformation campaigns and so manipulated by propaganda disguised as agnostic information that the line between what is true and what is false is increasingly difficult to ascertain? Is truth losing its currency in today's super saturated information age? In a social media dominated world, anyone can be a publisher, a journalist or a self-described expert and espouse their own version of the truth. Are neutral arbiters and gate-keepers of the truth a thing of the past?

And, what is “Truth”? Is truth an absolute and universally accepted concept? Or, is truth... like beauty, in the eye of the beholder? In our increasingly complex world, are answers to the question “Is it true” no longer a simple, binary proposition? Or, are answers to questions necessarily dependent on context, come in various shades of gray and may change with the passage of time? Does establishing legal truth in a court of law necessarily comport with factual truth in the court of public opinion?

## ECOLOGY AND LEGACY MINOR



Honors Students whale watching. Puerto Piramides, Peninsula Valdes, Argentina

*“What will my legacy be and how do I live my life now to better ensure my legacy comes to be?”*

In Summer 2015, the Honors College offered the Ecology and Legacy Minor for the first time. **Ten students**, along with Professors Andy Hoffman, Associate Dean Paret, and Dean Torti, participated in an intensive 6-week summer block. Students used science, arts, and humanities to critically think about interactions between humans and their world. They spent two weeks each in the Great Salt Lake, Centennial Valley, Montana, and the Peninsula Valdes in Patagonia, Argentina learning about the different ecological systems.

In Spring 2017, Honors offered the minor again, but this time spread over three semesters (Spring 2017, Summer 2017, and Fall 2017). **Eleven students** participated in this experience through Fall 2017. Students on average received \$2,000 in scholarship funding to facilitate their participation on this deeply engaged experience. As a result of its success and impact of students, Ecology and Legacy has grown to **15 students** for this academic year. The quote below captures the impact this experience has on students:

*“Participating in the Honors Ecology and Legacy program (E&L) was the best decision I have made in my college career. Calling this program a “transformational experience” is quite the understatement. This program completely changed the thinking and direction of every student who has participated in it, provided new perspectives that none of us could have gotten anywhere else, and created lifelong friends and mentors. The program brings together twelve or so students from any and every major to study ecology, the connection between all things, the human legacy on earth, and what these two things mean and should mean in each of our lives. The program combines art, science, and the humanities and is the most interdisciplinary program on campus because of this...”*

*-Ecology & Legacy Student*

## SCHOLARS GROUPS

Students from a variety of disciplines work with faculty and community members to explore their interests, consider career opportunities, develop professional skills and investigate and implement solutions to pressing problems in the community and in the world. Scholars Groups included the following:

- **Global Health Scholars Group** - The Honors College works with Dr. Steven Alder at the Office of Global Health/Division of Public Health to help students confront health-related issues of the present and future in a local and global context, and work one-on-one with local refugee communities.

During the 2018-2019 academic year, the group met every other week to discuss challenging global health topics, listen from experts in the field, and attend trainings and social activities. Scholars also supported a 'local' global health program working with adolescents from families who are going through refugee resettlement to improve reading skills at the Hser Ner Moo Community Center.



- **Legal Scholars** – Students who are interested in how legal issues interact with social, political, business and cultural realities meet with Randy Dryer to discuss contemporary legal topics, addressing current legal trends, observing actual court proceedings and interact with judges and practicing lawyers.

Legal scholars had the opportunity this year of learning from various guest presenters who are experts in the legal field, including practicing attorneys, judges, law professors, and judicial administrators.

# 76

distinct students benefited from a Scholar Group during the 2018-2019 academic year.

Students engaged in:

- Advocacy
- Service
- Discussions
- Project Development
- Mentorship
- Career Advising
- Networking Opportunities



**Urban Ecology and Sustainability Scholars**—Students who are interested in the long-term health of their communities work with Stephen Goldsmith to imagine and implement new energy-saving solutions on campus.

For the 2018-2019 academic year, Honors Scholars in Urban Ecology and Sustainability continued to make progress developing a campus-wide, pathway naming project. This project, being considered now by the University of Utah Board of Trustees

after gaining approval by Facilities Planning, ASUU, and the President's Office. The pathway project will improve navigability for visitors, faculty, and students, and improve public safety. Working with the Inter-Tribal Student Association, the first path names will be Noocheoo, the Ute word for "Ute," and Mique Tuhgooven, the Ute words for "Hello Friend". A third path name, "Common Ground," was selected to celebrate shared values. For more about their accomplishments, please visit:

<http://urbanecologyscholars.org>

**Art Community Museum Education (ACME)** – ACME Scholars work to develop new ways museums can better serve communities by being more inclusive, accessible, and relevant to diverse audiences. Investigating the ways art and activism can affect social change in their own neighborhoods, ACME Scholars are not about "doing for" the community but rather learning with, learning from, and collaborating with their communities.

In March 2018, ACME scholars organized the ACME Session "FEMINISTS UNITE! Building Community through Art & Activism," where female artists, curators, and educators engaged in a discussion of the challenges faced by women in and around Salt Lake City. In collaboration with the U's Office for Equity and Diversity and local community partners, ACME Scholars helped bring San Francisco based muralist Jessica Sabogal to SLC to paint a sixty-foot mural on 700 West North Temple. The mural, inspired by community leaders and their stories, reflects this diverse and thriving neighborhood. In addition to bringing Jessica Sabogal to SLC, ACME Scholars played a crucial role in connecting local activist Mariella Mendoza, who is depicted in the mural, and the artist.



## HONORS EDUCATION AT RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES (HERU)

The University of Utah Honors College was selected to host the Honors Education at Research Universities (HERU) conference. HERU is a bi-annual national conference that brings together faculty, administrators and staff from across the nation to discuss the needs of Honors students, as well as the unique role of Honors programs at research institutions.

The Honors College hosted this conference May 20-22, 2019 in historic Fort Douglas, bringing together a dynamic honors community composed of deans, directors, faculty and staff from over 70 institutions across the nation and abroad. The 208 attendees had the opportunity to choose from 65 different presentations over the course of two days on topics that addressed 21<sup>st</sup> century challenges; innovations in curriculum pedagogy and assessment; student life-cycle; civic/community engagement; and development and alumni engagement.

HERU, which began in 2013, was previously hosted at Penn State University, Oregon State University, and The Ohio State University in 2013, 2015, and 2017, respectively.



## GOALS FOR THE 2019-2020 ACADEMIC YEAR

The Honors College has developed a five-year, 2019-2023, strategic plan that includes:

### Support students through Honors Degree completion

- Expand the Honors College integrated minor, which allow for students to complete their Honors core curriculum around a them and simultaneously earning a minor;
  - Building on the Ecology and Legacy minor, efforts to develop two—one in **Utah/Ghana** and one in **Tanzania**—additional versions of this program with Health in Context and Global Education being the main broad areas of study are underway.
- First-semester hybrid class for first-year students what will them with the history and purpose of the Honors College; why it is important related to student success; and key points of information to know about the University of Utah campus;
- Third-year mandatory course that will connect student to others in their cohort major and keep them on track to graduation;
- Increase financial support to Honors students who present their research at regional and national conferences in their disciplines.

### Cultivate a diverse student body

- Increase the percentage of out-of-state students to 30%;
- Increase inclusion and diversity of student body—Utah rural counties, ethnic diversity, and first-generation students.

### Continue to strengthen the rigor and relevance of our curriculum and assess learning outcomes

- Honors has taken steps to evaluate its curriculum learning outcomes and impact of different programs;
- Associate Dean Pasupathi will be spearheading assessment efforts that focus on what makes the Honors College a transformative experience for students using mixed methodological measures.

### Elevate national profile of University of Utah Honors College

- Deans, faculty and staff will continue to submit proposals to present at national conferences.