

# Message from the Faculty Director



**The University Honors Program at UNH.** seeks to integrate the strengths of a small liberal arts college with those of a major state research university. Our students participate in small discussion-based courses that enable them to get to know their professors and fellow honors students. Because of this personal connection, our students often go on to collaborate with these same professors and high-achieving students on research projects in a field of their interest. The result is that our students often graduate with significant research experience in their chosen majors and a life-long network of mentors and colleagues!

This annual report highlights some of the accomplishments and events that took place in the University Honors Program during the past academic year. These highlights include students, faculty, alumni, and donors! The report also gives readers a preview of some of the new courses and student activities that will be offered in the coming 2015-2016 academic year!

With best wishes for an excellent year ahead,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J Marx".

Jerry D. Marx, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor and Director

## Honor Roll

The following alumni, parents, and friends of the University Honors Program made generous contributions in 2014-2015:

Julie A. Fuller  
Frank Bonsal  
Jennifer Latham  
Sun Life Financial  
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Harvard Community Gifts  
Patricia Grennen  
Mary Wolbers  
Nicole Wallace  
Kristin Brodeur

Several anonymous benefactors

Donations of all amounts help us to provide enhanced opportunities for UNH Honors students. To make a donation, please visit [unh.edu/honors-program/donate](http://unh.edu/honors-program/donate) or call (603) 862-3928.

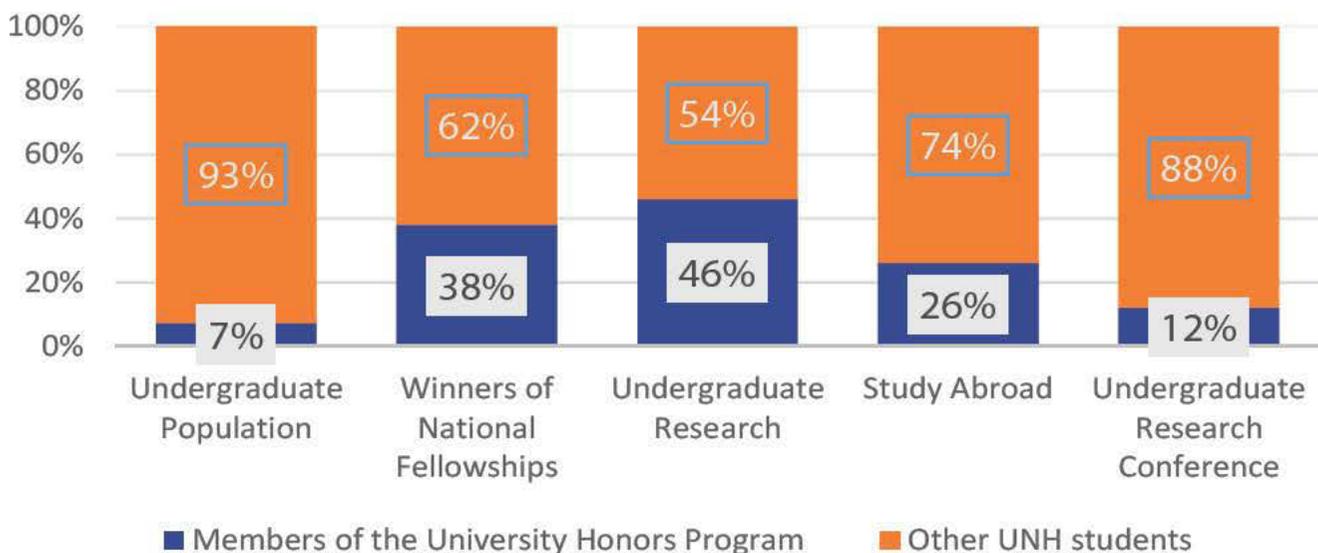
# 2014-2015 by the numbers



**68** Honors courses  
**11** students per course (average)  
**3.72** GPA (average)  
**303** new admits  
**934** total enrollment  
**110** graduates

## High-Impact Experiences

University Honors Program (UHP) students take part in high-impact learning experiences at exceptionally high rates. Making up only 7% of the undergraduate population, UHP students account for double-digit proportions of students taking advantage of the following opportunities.



Source: UNH High-Impact Database

# The University Honors Program at the University of New Hampshire

Now in its 31st year, the University Honors Program began with 200 students in 1984. It now boasts over 2500 graduates, with almost 900 current students. Members of the program come from departments across the university, with majors from art to engineering to business to nursing.

The University Honors Program recruits top students from New Hampshire and beyond, helping to ensure that UNH has a world-class undergraduate program. Students and faculty alike appreciate the small, engaging courses that make up the Honors Program curriculum. Honors students know their faculty especially well, and can work closely with them over an extended period of time.

Freshmen and Sophomores complete an enhanced version of the University's Discovery Program, the set of course requirements that ensures a broad foundation of academic knowledge for students in all majors. Honors Discovery courses are intimate and highly participatory, and are designed for students who embrace academic challenges.

In the Junior and Senior years, students follow more specialized curricula as they focus on their chosen fields. The Honors in Major program entails individualized work in selected classes, which students work with their professors to design. The program culminates with the Honors Thesis, an extended research project conducted under the supervision of a faculty advisor.

Challenging academic courses are the core of the University Honors Program, but members also enjoy social events, cultural opportunities, speakers, and service projects sponsored by the UHP and its affiliated student groups, as well as special access to advising. An Honors Exchange with University College Utrecht in the Netherlands offers Honors-level education in the heart of Europe.

The Honors Program also helps students prepare for post-college life, steering UNH's best students toward international fellowships like Fulbrights, Marshalls, and Rhodes; graduate programs in medicine, law, and the arts and sciences; and employment in a full range of fields in New England and across the globe.

## Our Mission

The University Honors Program embraces the values of **Discovery, Engagement, and Community** that are articulated in the Academic Plan of the University.

We affirm our commitment to provide academically ambitious, motivated, and able students with a coherent, challenging academic experience and a strong sense of **intellectual community**.

We seek students who actively commit to those ideals: they strive for excellence; they embrace intellectual life with energy and a **sense of adventure**; and they share the desire to pursue their academic work in diverse venues, communities, and contexts.

Essential to our effort is a community characterized by **active cultural exchange**, one that values a range of backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives.

We seek to create a community that is **broadly representative** with regards to race, ethnicity, gender, economic background, first-generation college students, geographical region, specific talents, and all those qualities that make people **unique and valuable** in a community of learners.

## Patrick Closson '95 Wins Honors Program Alumni Award



The University Honors Program presented its inaugural Alumni Award to Patrick Closson, Class of 1995 (left, with Provost Lisa MacFarlane and Honors Director Jerry Marx). The award is presented to “an exemplar for the students of the University Honors Program, in celebration of a distinguished career, dedicated service, and generous support.”

The fellow alumnus who nominated Mr. Closson for the award wrote that “Pat is a passionate and ardent supporter of UNH. I’ve often heard him speak of his experience in the Honors Program, how it augmented his academic achievement at UNH and also gave him skills which translated into his professional life. He is a very smart guy who is also a great friend and a wonderful reflection of UNH and the Honors Program.”

Mr. Closson graduated with University Honors in History in 1995. He went on to Boston College Law School and became a business lawyer with the firm of McLane, Graf, Raulerson, and Middleton, where he is now Managing Director of the Portsmouth office and chair of the healthcare group.

In addition to his active professional life, he has offered his time and expertise to organizations including City Year, Child and Family Services, and the Greater Portsmouth Chamber of Commerce. He is a past participant and present board chair of Leadership Seacoast. He is also a past lecturer at UNH and has joined the Alumni Board of Directors.

He attended the May 5th ceremony with his wife, Angela, a healthcare-administration consultant who is also a graduate of UNH. Provost Lisa MacFarlane presented the award before an audience of Honors seniors. Mr. Closson counseled the graduating students to appreciate the special scholarly opportunities afforded by the thesis, recalling an instance in which his seemingly esoteric work on European history had enabled an unexpected connection.

The Honors Program will solicit nominations for the 2016 Alumni Award next spring.

## Honors Scholarships Celebrate Science, Service, Leadership



In April of 2015, the Honors Program awarded a total of \$81,100 to support 45 current students in the 2015-2016 academic year. The scholarships were awarded to students of exceptional academic achievement and recognize a variety of accomplishments, including service to the community and excellence in academic research.

A special scholarship of \$5000 was designated to recognize a female student with outstanding achievement and potential in the STEM disciplines (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math). It was awarded to Sarah Piet, a sophomore from Goffstown, NH (left, with Honors Director Jerry Marx). A biochemistry major, Piet works as a lab technician in a reproductive biology laboratory headed by Professor David Townson. She also tutors fellow students in biology, and serves as the President of the Student Honors Council.

“Through my experiences, all of which I was introduced to through the Honors Program, I think I have found where I belong at UNH,” Piet says.

Among the awards were several Hamel Scholarships, endowed by Dana Hamel to promote service and leadership among the rising generation. More about the growing Hamel Scholars Program can be found on the next page.



# Hamel Scholars Program

Endowed in 2007 by a generous gift from philanthropist Dana Hamel and his family, the Hamel Scholars Program supports students with an exceptional record of academic achievement, leadership, and service, helping to create the next generation of citizen leaders. Each year, a cohort of entering Honors students is inducted into the Hamel Scholars Program; their time at UNH is shaped by leadership training, service experiences, and the opportunity to connect with a group of outstanding students. In addition to the students who join the program as Freshmen, a small number of Juniors is selected to receive Hamel Scholarships on the basis of their achievements at UNH.

In the past year, the Hamel Scholars:

- Collaborated with Friends in Action in the Wildcat Friends program, hosting adults with developmental disabilities on campus
- Volunteered in the food pantry at the Waysmeet Center
- Ran a popup thrift store to support Friends in Action
- Created afterschool programming for Woodman Park Elementary
- Participated in ongoing leadership development

## Ready to Grow

In the fall of 2014, Mr. Hamel presented the Hamel Scholars Program with a remarkable gift: an additional donation of \$10 million. With this funding, the program will expand to up to double its current size. Increased scholarships will help to recruit New Hampshire's top students to UNH. The University Honors Program is overseeing the development of new programming that will benefit both the Hamel Scholars, as they grow as leaders, scholars, and citizens, and the community at large.

“This gift will make an enormous difference in the lives of so many of our students,” said UNH President Mark Huddleston. “Thanks to Dana’s generosity and commitment to the state of New Hampshire and its people, we can compete for the state’s best and brightest students. Access and affordability are the two single most important challenges we face as an institution, and it is partnerships like this one that will help us succeed.”

# Looking Ahead

## New initiatives for the University Honors Program

### Introducing the Honors Symposium

In 2015, the University Honors Program is piloting a new kind of course. Each Honors Symposium consists of four or five courses that share a common theme. Individual courses are capped at 20 students, in the tradition of the small seminars that are essential to the Honors experience. At the same time, the courses within a Symposium will enable the formation of a larger intellectual community, with shared content across courses as well as “plenary sessions” for the entire Symposium that bring together students and faculty to share perspectives across disciplines. The Honors Symposia represent the Honors Program’s continuing efforts to offer stimulating, innovative academic experiences, and create connections between Honors students and UNH’s most exciting faculty.

#### Fall 2015

##### Reinventing Healthy Communities Nationally and Globally

Health is a crucial issue to all of us, on levels from the individual to the global. This symposium brings together four of UNH’s dynamic researchers and teachers to explore the connections between health, place, and society.

This Symposium includes:

- **Anthropology of the Body: Science, Technology, and Medicine** (with Anthropology professor Sara Withers)
- **Global Public Health Issues** (with Health Management and Policy professor Rosemary Caron)
- **Healthy Communities: Personal Accountability and Social Change** (with Social Work professor Jerry Marx)
- **Who Makes your Health Care Decisions?** (with History professor Marion Dorsey)

#### Spring 2016

##### Reckoning with Race and Justice

Recent events have brought to the fore the troubling relationship between the ideals of justice and the realities of racial prejudice and entrenched segregation. These courses engage with the difficult question of racial justice on individual, national, and global levels.

This Symposium includes:

- **Global Justice** (with Political Science professor Alynna Lyon)
- **Theater & Social Justice** (with Theater professor David Richman)
- **Martin Luther King, Jr. & the Struggle for Racial Justice** (with History professor Jason Sokol)
- **Collective Guilt & Collective Responsibility** (with History professor Jeffrey Diefendorf)
- **On Race** (with English professor Petar Ramadanovic)

### Honors Welcome Program

Thanks to the generosity of Honors Program donors, the UHP is welcoming the Class of 2019 with two activities designed to help students engage in local cultural life while laying foundations for friendships that may last through college and beyond.

#### Boston Field Trip

Students will take an Amtrak train from Durham to Boston, participate in a special tour at the Museum of Fine Arts, and spend the day exploring the great city to our south while getting to know one another and their Honors Program chaperones.

#### Virtual Book Club

During the month of August, students will participate in an online discussion of Patti Smith’s award-winning memoir *Just Kids*. The reading will form the basis for a discussion event on campus in the fall, and a trip to see Ms. Smith discuss her new book, *M Train*, at the Portsmouth Music Hall in November.



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