



Re-Engaging Communities

2021 North Carolina Honors Association (NCHA) Annual Conference

Hosted in a virtual format by Catawba College

September 25, 2021



Welcome to the 2021 NCHA Conference

Greetings fellow members of the North Carolina Honors Association,

Like many of you, this summer we hoped the fall would bring the chance to meet in person and reconnect with friends in the NCHA and welcome new students and faculty into our community of learners. Also like many of you, we find that as measures taken to address this public health crisis necessarily continue farther than any of us could have anticipated in early 2020, the inherent human need to connect with one another as Aristotle's "social animals" has become more apparent with the passage of time.

Recognizing this need, and reflecting back on human history we can see patterns and themes discernible in the fog of the past. First, human beings and human societies of every era face challenges and demonstrate both individual and collective resilience. While tragedies of all size and scope undoubtedly occur, humanity always finds a way forward. Second, we consistently accumulate new knowledge of ourselves and our surroundings and leverage this knowledge into innovative solutions to the ever-evolving challenges we face as a species. While there are mornings in recent months and years where the dawn breaks on a world that seems a little bit dimmer, today's human being can always find hope in our track record of not just survival, but advancement as a species in the face of global crises.

Our conference and conference theme line up with both our talent for adapting and improvement, as well as our social nature as human beings. A year ago, it was hard for us to imagine what an online conference might look like and how that would even work, but we are now seasoned veterans of video conferencing. While there are undoubtedly costs to the transitions we have faced as learners, we have to be somewhat amazed at our flexibility, problem-solving, repurposing of existing tools, and development of new ones in the past year and a half. In the midst of our pandemic-imposed isolation, considerable resources focused on finding new ways to keep us connected.

"Reengaging communities" is conceived as both a call to action and a call to look back at what we have done. We all have strong feelings on how public health agencies, higher education, and our broader public institutions responded to the pandemic. As we reach the point where "returning to the way things were" is increasingly revealed as an illusion (as it always is), we must recognize our need to both find new ways to reconnect with our communities and to forge new ones dedicated to a changing world. Additionally, we must consciously work to identify the innovative solutions that best support resilience and improvement for individuals and societies. Not all ways of engagement are equally effective, and most are not value-neutral. An intentional re-engagement rather than the reactive problem-solving of 2020 is what we are called to do in late 2021.

The proposals submitted this year reveal our member honors programs and honors colleges continually encourage students to engage in the kinds of thinking that serve us well as we reconnect with one another, build new social institutions, and bring existing communities temporarily knocked off-balance back online to meet the challenges of today.



*Catawba College Honors
Program Director—*

*Dr. Maria Vandergriff-Avery,
Professor of Sociology*

NCHA President 2021



Associate Director—

*Dr. Norris T. Feeney,
Associate Professor of
Politics*

Schedule in Brief

8:30 Opening Welcome and Performance

9:00 Panel Session #1 (3 panels of 3 presenters)

9:55 Poster Session

10:30 Keynote Address: "The Divided Soul of America" by Dr. Michael Bitzer

11:30 Panel Session #2 (3 panels of 3 presenters)

1:00 Faculty Roundtables (3 simultaneous roundtables)

2:00 Directors and Coordinators Meeting

8:30am: Welcome and Preparation for Panel Session #1

Opening Remarks from the Catawba College Honors Program

Dr. Maria Vandergriff Avery and Dr. Norris Feeney

Opening Performance

Cultural Reconnections

Cristal Zeballos

University of North Carolina-Greensboro

An interactive performance that takes the Bolivian practice of making an offering to Mother Earth. This is to acknowledge everything we have and give comes from and will go back to her. We can recount our blessings and put forth manifestations for ourselves and others in the coming year. The performance will be the making of the offering with traditional materials and handmade Misterios, ceramic versions of the candies that represent specific manifestations or blessings. I can use the chatbox to include their asks and represent them in the offering. Through this performance, I can introduce an audience to a cultural practice of my country and reconnect them to their blessings and while creating a focus in the future for their goals and values.

9am-9:45am: Panel Session #1

Our Communities

Perspectives of Student Support from Honors Peer Academic Coaches in a First-Year Honors Transition Course

Jacob Lowman and Dr. April Tallant

Western Carolina University

Honors Peer Academic Coaches (H-PACs) are upper-level Honors students at Western Carolina University who support first-year students enrolled in USI 101 Honors Forum. One H-PAC is embedded in each section of USI 101, the transition course for first-time first-year Honors students. The H-PAC program intends to help first-year students connect to our university community and give them the tools to succeed as they transition to college life. We surveyed USI 101 students to evaluate perceptions of H-PAC accessibility and to ascertain the most common topics and issues that students desired help with from H-PACs. Suggestions for improving peer coach programming based on the results will be provided.

Small-Scale Agricultural Model for Growing Cherry Tomatoes at North Carolina Wesleyan College

Alyssa Brookhart and Allison Wichrowski

North Carolina Wesleyan College

North Carolina Wesleyan College (NCWC) can benefit from implementing small-scale agriculture on the College's campus. This proposal outlines the compatibility, costs, and benefits to growing cherry tomatoes at NCWC. Cherry tomatoes are regularly used in facilities such as the Hardee's Dining Hall, Internet Café and WoW Café. By using locally grown fruit, NCWC relies less on outside supply sources. The College will therefore see a reduction in the time and costs associated with acquiring the fruit elsewhere, while also reducing the emissions required to transport them to campus. Additionally, this proposal identifies ways to involve the local community. Seeing a successful, functional model of small-scale agriculture will increase awareness and interest in sustainable practices, inspiring others to complete similar projects at home.

Educational Opportunity For All: The Impact of 1960s Educational Programs and Policy on Western North Carolina

Joshua Burns

University of North Carolina-Greensboro

The Appalachian Region of the United States has long suffered from a lack of educational achievement. Particularly in Western North Carolina, education has lagged behind other parts of the state. In the 1960s, the federal government introduced educational policy and programs under the veil of the War on Poverty and Great Society initiatives. This included Head Start, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, and others. Also, the Appalachian Regional Commission contributed to the improvement of educational infrastructure. Before this, North Carolina had its own War on Poverty through the North Carolina Fund, which led to community action agencies being established in Western North Carolina. The educational programs and policies that developed during the 1960s had a profound impact in Western North Carolina.

Contemporary Challenges to Communities

The Prison System through a Global Pandemic

Lukas Tucker

University of North Carolina-Greensboro

With 75,000 people being placed in solitary confinement since the 1980s, how can we connect the time we spent in quarantine to the time prisoners spend in isolation units? Furthermore, how can we connect the pandemic to the prison system as a whole? My project aims to focus on how the pandemic is related to and effects those incarcerated in the United States. To explore the ethics of prolonged isolation and obsession with crime and punishment in terms of quarantine. I hope to show attendees how their lived experience is similar to those who remain incarcerated, and how it can change for the better.

Examination of College Students' Perception of the Usefulness, Fairness, and Risk of Artificial Intelligence

Miracle Etim-Andy

Catawba College

Artificial Intelligence is a tool that is increasingly used for the process of automated decision-making. Unfortunately, studies show that implicit biases are often embedded into programs which can cause severe consequences for its users. To begin working towards removing these biases, it is imperative to first understand how these biases are perceived by end-users. This research project aims to gauge college students' perception of fairness, usefulness, and risk of using Artificial Intelligence (AI) to address issues within the following domains: youth, education, economics, opportunity, family, racism, solidarity, crime, and incarceration. In a survey disseminated to Catawba College undergraduate students, results showed that perceptions of fairness, usefulness, and risk of AI usage in each domain varied based on race but not sex.

Group Membership Effects on the Positive Relationship Between Facial Trustworthiness and Likability

Caraline Malloy

University of North Carolina-Greensboro

Facial trustworthiness is a fundamental aspect of facial perception that affects social judgments. Faces that appear highly trustworthy influence approach motivations by being, evaluated as more likable than faces that appear highly untrustworthy. Many cues (e.g., group membership) also affect evaluating likability. To examine how such cues interact to affect evaluating likability, participants evaluated the likability of faces ranging in trustworthiness and were shown with Republican and Democrat labels or with no group information. In-group membership strengthened the positive relationship between trustworthiness and likability and outgroup membership weakened this relation. These patterns suggest that in-group cues and high facial trustworthiness are additive in relating to likability, such that a trustworthy face is evaluated as being especially likable when it belongs to an in-group member.

Movements

Celebrity Amplification of The Me-Too Movement

Jacob Aldridge

North Carolina Wesleyan College

This project explored how celebrities and their discussion of the Me-Too Movement allowed it to grow and become more well known in part due to the idolization that we have for celebrities in America. I use Google Trend data and qualitative data from a survey as well as my own research to examine the impact that celebrities can have on social movements and how that amplification may be temporary but during that time can lead to a lot of positive changes for society. Such as the legal protections that have been granted to survivors of sexual assault in no small part due to the Me-Too Movement.

Not for Entertainment: the Importance of the Animal Rights Movement for Big Cats

Sierra Joyner

North Carolina Wesleyan College

The Animal Rights Movement is essential when defending the lives and rights of animals that live within captivity from inhumane practices. Big cats are one of many that heavily depend on those within the movement for their protection due to how they are treated within roadside zoos. The popularity of Netflix's limited docuseries Tiger King: Murder, Mayhem, and Madness caused an uproar of concern for the treatment of the big cats that were filmed. Throughout the series, the docuseries depicts many occurrences of animal abuse and exploitation towards the big cats in means of boosting ratings. The paper analyzes occurrences within the show that showcase animal abuse and why bills such as H.R. 1380 should be passed in order to protect big cats in captivity.

The Evolution of Sentience throughout the Environmental Movement: The Value of Nature as Defined by Preservationist John Muir and Conservationist Gifford Pinchot

Emma Nantz

Catawba College

Environmentalism once had strong roots in the United States; however, a decline in environmentalism demonstrates need for a study of the movement throughout time. The history of the movement shows there are similarities and differences with conservationist and preservationist writers, which eventually morphed into the study of environmentalism itself. Environmental writings reflect what motivated environmental change, eliciting the question as to if this popularity can be risen again to combat the decline in interest. This presentation seeks to answer the question: How do writers such as John Muir and Gifford Pinchot define nature and the value of nature differently in terms of sentience in their defenses of the environment compared to environmentalist writers in the 21st century? By using psychological theory, current environmental writers, and Muir and Pinchot's perspectives to answer this question, the history environmentalist movement can be analyzed in order to find what worked in the past and what should be undertaken in order to reignite this movement.

9:45am-9:55am: Break and reset

9:55am-10:25am: Poster Session

The "True" Meaning of Love: An Evaluation of Different Connotations of the Word Love

Kayla Miller

Pfeiffer University

How you interpret someone else's words affects your perception of that individual. While there are dictionary definitions to create a standard within language, abstract words are intertwined with feelings and experiences to create a personalized meaning per word. This could lead to miscommunications and misunderstandings among individuals. This is an exploratory study that investigated the word "love" and how different meanings could affect miscommunications. The data showed that there are hundreds of different meanings for the word "love" and with so many different meanings, there are likely miscommunications associated with different levels of understanding for the same word.

Balloting Bishops: A Mission for Political Awareness

Allison Wichrowski

North Carolina Wesleyan College

Ballotingbishops.com was created with the goal to spread political awareness. Class members took on the role of accurately informing college students about the election process and studied 2020 election closely. The Balloting Bishops provided updates on political news and election results, as well as writing opinion pieces on various election-related topics. The website also provided a place for students to ask questions about the election process and how to register to vote.

Establishing Community: Brinson Honors College Board of Directors

Holly Miller

Western Carolina University

The Brinson Honors College Board of Directors is a student organization at Western Carolina University that serves as an advisory board to the Dean of the honors college. We also host community service opportunities and events for students in the honors college. Through these events, we're hoping to re-engage students in the local and honors communities after a year and a half of isolation.

10:30am-11:15am: Keynote—"The Divided Soul of America"

Dr. Michael Bitzer, Professor of Politics, Catawba College

Dr. Bitzer has been a faculty member at Catawba since 2002 and teaches in numerous areas of American politics and history. He also regularly teaches courses in the Catawba College Honors Program. His recent offerings in the Program include a travel course, *States of Killing: Genocide in the 20th Century*, and *The Divided Soul of America*.



He holds a master's degree in history from Clemson University, where he specialized in American political and legal history; Southern U.S. political history; and the history of Nazi Germany. He earned a doctorate in political science from the School of Public and International Affairs at The University of Georgia, where he specialized in American politics, public administration & policy, and public law.

He has published chapters on the politics of North Carolina in *The New Politics of the Old South* (both sixth and seventh editions) and *The Future Ain't What It Used to Be: The 2020 Election in the South*.

His new book, *Redistricting and Gerrymandering in North Carolina: Battlelines in the Old North State*, was published in the August 2021 as part of the Palgrave Studies in U.S. Elections.

11:15am-11:30am: Break and Reset

11:30am-12:15pm: Panel Session #2

The Individual (As and Connecting to) Community

Dear Loved One, How I Need You: An Empirical Study on the Relationship Between Attachment Styles and Depression.

Angela Groenevel

North Carolina Wesleyan College

Attachment styles have been researched by many researchers, in many different ways, but there is missing research in regards of the relationship between attachment styles and depression. This study aims to research attachment styles in four relationships (mother, father, friend, and romantic) and test whether there is a relationship between the attachment scores (using the Relationship Structures Questionnaire (ECR-RS)) and depressive symptom scores (using the Center for Epidemiological Studies-Depression (CES-D)) with 471 participants of all ages. It was found that attachment anxiety was significant for most relationships in most age groups. Attachment avoidance was found significant for the parents in the young adults. Sometimes attachment anxiety and avoidance were both significant for depressive symptoms. In this case, attachment anxiety was positively significant and avoidance negatively.

Interpretations and Prevalence of Demodex Face Mites in Science Major College Students

Wade Johnson

Wingate University

Parasites, especially ectoparasites commonly found on humans may be perceived negatively by most people. Among these, Demodex face mites are small microscopic arthropods common in many individuals, living within the sebaceous glands or hair follicles. Little information has been documented to understand the perception of students on parasites. This study examined the prevalence and perception (attitudes) of students on face mites across Biology majors sampled during biology laboratories. Scotch tape was temporarily applied to participants' foreheads and scanned for presence of Demodex mites following completion of a short survey gauging student knowledge and perceived attitude on these lesser studied human mites. While perceptions on parasites varied, further work needs to be conducted on student attitudes across college majors toward parasites which often co-inhabit humans.

Interventions for Geriatrics with Alzheimer's

Dee Brantley

Catawba College

Alzheimer's disease is a chronic and debilitating disease that targets memory and other important bodily functions. It became prevalent to me during my course and field work, that patients who suffer from Alzheimer's disease oftentimes need interventions to better fit their physical and mental needs than what is practiced. Finding interventions in which geriatrics can be benefitted in long-term facilities is essential in having a sense of contentment during the end of life stages. In this document, I will explore interventions that have been proven in the medical field to be beneficial for patients who suffer from early onset dementia and during the progression of Alzheimer's disease.

Communication

Mmm, Whatcha Say?: A Review of the Influence of Music on American Language

Delphia Borden

Catawba College

Music and language have a unique cooperative relationship. Music takes from language by paralleling English grammar, referring to structures within its form as “periods” and “sentences”. However, language benefits from music in a number of ways. Linguistics are influenced by the culture surrounding music, lyrics in popular songs, and even the tools or techniques involved in the creation of music. To prove the connection between music and linguistic development I've looked at the words and phrases that formed around jazz music, phrases that gained new meaning through music during the civil rights movement, and other notable additions to the American English language. Sometimes these words stick and other times they'll phase out, but inevitably music will continue to change what is found in dictionaries.

The Transfiguration

Daniella Umubyeyi

North Carolina Wesleyan College

The transfiguration is a painting by Rafael Sanzio. It is a depiction of when Jesus takes his disciples at the top of the mountain to reveal himself. The artist, Raphael Sanzio, uses texture, color, and perspective to emphasize the power of Jesus and that he is the bridge between heaven and the earth. The perspective of the painting forces the viewer to look up when looking at Jesus, which emphasizes that he is above all human beings. Furthermore, the bottom half of the painting is very congested and represents the chaos that exists on earth without a connection to heaven. Although 500 years old, the Transfiguration remains relevant because it shades light on the eternal need for divine intervention on earth.

A Cultural Immersion Experience

Isaac Carreno

Wayne Community College

Throughout the duration of the Introduction to Intercultural Communication course, students were enabled and encouraged to develop a global mindset and perspective in which to view the world. The final honors project revolved around a deep exploration of culture abroad. I worked with my team in order to develop a cultural exploration of Germany and the history of the Brezel. This specific and narrow aspect of German culture allowed the class to enjoy an immersive and engaging final presentation. Members from around the community came to our presentation and learned of German culture. However, this project was far more than a simple presentation. Instead, it was a moment for everyone to appreciate, understand, and admire culture from around the world.

Community Care

Baskets of Care

Guillermo Estrada
Wayne Community College
Baskets of Care was a service project directed towards helping the senior population in low income areas. Nutrition is a large concern in Wayne County where 72 percent of adults are overweight and over 30 percent are obese. Many gas stations are placed in low income areas, promoting foods that lack nutritional value. For many families, this is the only option for meals. This project serves those over 65 and teams up with North Carolina Cooperative Extension, USDA Steps to Health, and Meals on Wheels to provide nutritious snacks, recipes, reusable water bottles, and information on where to find resources to begin the healthy living journey. Over 26 seniors received these care baskets to help create healthier habits for themselves and their families.

Engaging the Community with a Menstrual Products Drive

Nicole Page
Wayne Community College
Menstrual products are some of the most needed but least donated products in community and homeless shelters. The Menstrual Product Drive was a service project for a Leadership Development class that involved educating the community about the struggles of menstruating individuals, collecting menstrual products around campus, networking with outside influencers for more donations, and a final donation to Wayne Uplift, a Domestic Abuse Treatment Center. It served as a way to help those in need while we're continuing on the longer journey towards tax-free and free menstrual products. This project engaged honors students and reengaged the entire Wayne Community College campus. Seeing collection boxes and posters encouraged students and employees to support community members in need. Everyone deserves access to menstrual products. Point blank, period.

Protecting The Ones That Teach Us

Janae Artis-Bass
Wayne Community College
A progressing issue that affects approximately five million elders each year is neglect and abuse. These acts of abuse and/or neglect occur in personal homes, nursing homes, and other facilities where elders are likely to be present. The central point of this project is to readily provide elder residents and/or family members quality access to accurate information regarding neglect and abuse. One hundred informational care bags were created and distributed across Wayne County to seven different nursing homes or facilities catering to seniors. These care packages included an informational card, an informational pamphlet, candy, a pencil, and paper. Hopefully this project encourages people to speak up about what they see because it is a duty to protect the ones that teach us.

12:15pm-1:00pm: Lunch Break

1:00pm-1:45pm: Faculty Roundtables

Pandemic-Driven Opportunities and Innovations in Honors

Dr. Angela Bolte and Eric Toler
University of North Carolina-Greensboro

Pandemic-related restrictions have required honors programs to engage in significant innovative leaps. From virtual international internships replacing cancelled study abroad trips, to international speakers participating in virtual symposia, to traditional conferences converted into virtual conferences, honors programs have had to shift nimbly in imaginative ways this past year. As we hopefully begin to return to normal, we now can evaluate these new elements and make decisions regarding which innovations will remain as a part of our honors programs and which will remain in the past. This interactive roundtable will discuss the various choices we have made in our honors college and our evaluations of what to keep in a post-pandemic world. We encourage participants to share their innovations and evaluative decisions too.

Continued Engagement: A Look at How Two HBCU Honors Directors Foster Academic Enrichment and Community Service Within Their Programs

Dr. Karen Keaton Jackson
North Carolina Central University

Dr. Margaret Kanipes
North Carolina A&T State University

In this presentation, the honors directors of North Carolina Central University and North Carolina A&T State University will share the historical contexts of our individual programs and then discuss more recent service projects in which our students have participated. Also included will be survey data collected from current students and recent graduates about their attitudes towards community engagement and the specific types of service in which they participated. Building upon the ideas presented by Dr. Jelani Favors in his 2019 work *Shelter in a Time of Storm*, we argue that HBCU honors programs are poised to contribute greatly to the conversation about community engagement as our institutions have a longstanding tradition of ensuring that our resources are shared purposefully with those around us.

1:45pm-2:00pm: Break

2:00pm-3:00pm: Directors and Coordinators Meeting
