

Chesick Scholars Program  
Summer Institute Director's Report  
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The Chesick Scholars Program (CSP) is a new mentoring initiative funded for five years by a grant from the San Francisco Foundation. The Program's aim is to attract promising and talented underrepresented, under-resourced, or first-generation college students to Haverford, and then to support them through intensive faculty mentoring. Goals of CSP include

- academic accomplishment and satisfaction -- we want our Scholars to find disciplines/ majors in which they can thrive, in the sense of inclusion and attainment. Scholars should feel both ownership and belonging at the College, while achieving high GPA and honors commensurate with potential.
- quality mentoring/academic advising -- we want Scholars to build a deep and productive working relationship with their faculty mentors; to develop trust and forge realistic goals for coursework and extracurriculars; to practice self-reflection and metacognition.
- maximum resource use -- we want Scholars to be actively seeking out and using College resources, both for course-related needs (Office of Academic Resources, Writing Center) and other academic opportunities (Career Development Office, Fellowships, Internships, Mellon-Mays Undergraduate Fellowship, Center for Peace and Global Citizenship).

This report concerns the first part of the Program, the 5-week summer institute. The long-term mentoring is the second, and most important part of the Program, and will be covered in a later report from the Office of Academic Resources, which is overseeing the mentoring implementation, and is charged with evaluation of both parts.

### **Recruiting for CSP**

The current budget limits the cohort to 15 students. Selection for CSP participants in the class of 2016 proceeded in two phases:

1) After students were admitted to the College, but before the matriculation deadline of May 1, we sent offers to join the Chesick Scholars Program to students who were identified by Admissions as very high-achieving students who met the CSP demographic. We also convened a breakfast during Open Campus weekend, in which the Program Director and two of the summer program instructors met with potential CSP students, to discuss the summer courses and answer any questions -- 9 students attended. A total of 4 students from this first round chose to attend Haverford and all 4 also chose to be Chesick Scholars.

2) After May 1, we sent out a second round offers to apply for the remaining 11 spaces in CSP. These went out to matriculating students on financial aid whose academic ratings were among the highest of those in the CSP demographic. The application asked for students' summer course choice, some indication of academic areas of interest, and for two short essays with the following prompts:

**In a paragraph or two, and in specific detail, please write about an academic experience that you found especially exciting, and explain why you found it inspiring. It could be a topic studied in a high school course, from some reading that you've done on your own, a project that you've worked on, an experience in a laboratory or summer research, etc.**

**Why do you want to be a Chesick Scholar? Which specific aspects of the Chesick Scholars Program do you think will be most important to you? Describe in a paragraph or two.**

We received 24 applications in this second phase, and a committee consisting of the Summer Program Director, the First-Year Dean and the Dean of Admission used a modified lottery to select the 11 remaining students from this group, with an eye to balancing interests, demographics and gender. The resulting final CSP cohort had 6 African-American, 7 Latino, and 2 white students, of which whom 9 had neither parent finishing college. Chesick Scholars hailed from all over the US, including CA, TX, KS, MT, IL, FL, MD, NY, PA. About half were intending to major in the natural sciences. There were 7 women and 8 men.

### **Summer Institute**

The summer program was 5 weeks in duration (July 2-August 3), and students were housed in single dormitory rooms in Lloyd Hall. All travel expenses were paid by the program, as well as expenses for room, board and textbooks/supplies. In addition, each Chesick Scholar received \$100 in cash at the beginning of the program, and a check for \$1900 at the end of the program, which is the summer earnings expectation for students on financial aid.

One Haverford graduate lived in the dorm with the students and served as Residential Director. She supervised two Haverford upperclassmen who also lived in the dorm serving as Residential Assistants. Together the three of them conducted orientation activities, supervised study sessions in the evenings and weekends, and were responsible for conducting Saturday field trips and other extracurricular activities, as well as serving as role models.

The main focus of the summer program is the coursework, which takes up most of student participants' time. However, to model appropriate balance between work and leisure, many field trips were planned. Students went off-campus most Friday afternoons and Saturdays, to learn about resources in the surrounding area, or just to have fun. In addition to College vans, students also learned to use Septa trains to access the city. Destinations/activities are listed at the end of this report.

As a further introduction to College resources, lunchtimes on Tuesdays and Thursdays included guest appearances from students, staff and administrators, to talk about issues such as summer research opportunities, campus life, and to introduce the Career Development Office, Office of Academic Resources, Deans' Office, Honor Council, etc.

### **Summer Courses**

There were six courses offered, and each student signed up for three: a one-credit course meeting 8 hours per week, a half-credit writing-intensive course meeting 3 hours per week, and a half-credit quantitative course meeting 3 hours per week. All courses were graded, with students obtaining prematriculation credit (similar to an Advanced Placement credit) if they received a final course grade of 2.0 or higher. Thus, students could earn a maximum of two course credits for their work in the summer institute.

Students chose both the one-credit course and writing-intensive course when they applied; they were placed into the quantitative course based on a placement test. Course descriptions are included at the end of this document.

Courses were approved for inclusion in the summer program by the Chesick Scholars Committee, which designs and oversees the summer and mentoring parts of the CSP. The level of rigor and coursework required was commensurate with regular term-time courses.

Both of the one-credit courses had a required research/oral presentation component. Students in Tracey Hucks' course conducted research using primary sources from the College Library Special Collections, and presented their work in a public symposium attended by students, faculty and staff at the end of the summer.

All of the Scholars were required to attend two 30-minute sessions with an undergraduate writing partner each week of the summer program.

### **Faculty Mentors**

The summer program leads into the long-term mentoring aspect of CSP. Ideally, each of the instructors in the summer courses would take on some of the students as mentees. However only three of the six summer instructors were available to serve as mentors this year. Faculty Mentors are expected to meet with their mentees individually for a minimum of 15 minutes each week, to attend a 4 hour training session, and to meet periodically as a group to discuss progress.

### **Evaluation**

Chesick Scholars completed a short midterm evaluation of the summer program at 2.5 weeks, and a more comprehensive evaluation at the end -- these are available from the Office of Academic Resources (OAR), which is charged with the evaluation of the program. From the students' perspective, the summer was a great success: they were challenged academically, gained important time-management skills, learned how to use important resources such as office hours and the writing center, formed partnerships with their fellow Scholars that will last during the term-time, and got familiar with the campus and the surrounding area.

Faculty who taught in the summer program have submitted evaluations as well, and these will be analyzed by the OAR as part of the ongoing evaluation process. Faculty participants seemed to enjoy the opportunity to teach the Chesick Scholars over the summer, and several mentioned wanting to do it again.

### **Summary**

This first cohort of Chesick Scholars is impressive. All of them rose to the formidable academic challenges of the summer, as they faced full versions of courses squeezed into five weeks, with the inevitable crunch of readings and assignments. Instructors were impressed by the engagement and talent of these students. The community was able to share in this appreciation at the research symposium, where the Scholars showed poise and confidence, as well as intellectual passion and rigor.

In the student evaluations, many of the Scholars described the summer experience as building their confidence, as they engaged with more ideas in a deeper way than they had been used to, and survived reading and writing assignments that were intense. Moreover, they praised the summer institute as helping them forge academic partnerships with their peers, so that group work fell into place naturally. Finally, it was clear from the Scholars (and instructors) that regular required use of writing partners was critical to making measurable progress in writing skills in such a short time, and as a side benefit removed any stigma related to asking for academic assistance.

From both the Scholars and their instructors, then, an overwhelmingly positive appraisal of the pilot version of this new program. As the Scholars enter their first semester under the guidance of their mentors, they seem fully prepared and ready to assert themselves to realize both great academic and personal promise.

## Summer 2012 Course Descriptions

### **Introduction to Neuroscience, Wendy Sternberg, Professor of Psychology (1 credit)**

This course will serve as an introduction to the study of the brain and to the relationship between brain and behavior. Through class lectures, discussions, and lab activities, students will:

- gain mastery of basic biological, chemical, and biophysical processes that are relevant to understanding the nervous system, including:
  - cell structure and cell life-cycle
  - gene expression, protein synthesis, and protein structure
  - ion diffusion and electrical potential
  - principles of evolution by natural selection
  - principles of embryonic development
- apply evolutionary analyses to behavioral phenomena
- gain a deep understanding of the structural and functional organization of the brain
- understand how neurons work through electrical and chemical mechanisms
- gain insight into how drugs affect behavior through their activity at synapses
- understand how the nervous system is formed during embryonic development
- understand how the nervous system changes in response to experience

### **Reading Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin: A course in Religion, Literature, Race and Gender, Tracey E. Hucks, Associate Professor of Religion (1 credit)**

On the 160th anniversary of Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin, the course will examine this landmark text as one of the formative literary texts of the Atlantic World. Second only to the Christian Bible in publication sales throughout the entire nineteenth century, Uncle Tom's Cabin is a work in classical literature which explores the themes of religion and social reform; race and representation; gendered authority and domesticity. The course will examine the impact of what scholars have labeled the "Transatlantic Stowe" and the global impact of the novel, particularly its reception throughout North America and England. As a course in religion, literature and representation, students will be exposed to important primary and secondary sources that span from the nineteenth to the twenty-first centuries

### **The Past as Laboratory for the Present, Darin Hayton, Assistant Professor of History (1/2 credit)**

According to the French philosopher Etienne Gilson: "History is the only laboratory we have in which to test the consequences of thought." In other words, in history we can see the results of human actions and, at the same time, history provides the evidence, the raw data as it were, needed to predict the consequences of our own thoughts and actions. This course explores the ways that contemporary authors have used the past as a laboratory for understanding their present conditions. In this course we focus on fictional works—plays and films. This course also introduces students to broader issues in history, historical representation, memory, and the uses of history in the media. We will read theoretical essays on history and theater and history and film.

Students will learn how to analyze different source material, understand and assess different interpretations of readings and visual sources, develop their ability to construct arguments, and polish their writing for an academic audience.

There are three written assignments each week: a summary, an interpretation, and an analysis. We will discuss each assignment in class, working through drafts. Students will work in small groups and with a partner to revise their drafts.

Readings and films include: Bertold Brecht's *The Life of Galileo*; Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* with film adaptations by Sartre and Miller; Ingmar Bergman's *The Seventh Seal*; Herzog Werner's *Aguirre: The Wrath of God*.

### **Poverty, Affluence and the American Dream, Matt Ruben, Visiting Assistant Professor in Writing (1/2 credit)**

Whether dramatized by images of the Great Depression and post-Katrina New Orleans, stories of poor immigrants working hard and "making it" in a new land, or today's crisis of student debt, the American Dream remains one of the most powerful and controversial ideological forces in the United States. The American Dream is about poverty, wealth, individualism, and aspiration. It has a wide variety of political and cultural meanings, which have both shaped and been shaped by larger historical trends. Through a selective, critical examination of scholarly and popular, multimedia works addressing the related themes of poverty, wealth, and class in America from colonial times to the present day, this course will explore cultural meanings of poverty, affluence, and the American Dream.

As a half-credit writing course, this seminar will make use of brief or excerpted readings. Writing assignments will focus on close, detailed analysis of the course materials, and students will have the opportunity to revise their work, through a draft-revision process.

Readings will include excerpts from: James Truslow Adams, *The Epic of America* (1931), Malcolm X, "Coming to an Awareness of Language" (1965), Benjamin Franklin, "The Way to Wealth" (1758), A Horatio Alger, *Ragged Dick* (1868), Jacob Riis, *How the other Half Lives* (1890), Jane Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull-House* (1910), Richard Wright, *12 Million Black Voices* (1941), Michael Harrington, *The Other America*, Oscar Lewis, "The Culture of Poverty" (1966), Sandra Cisneros, *The House on Mango Street* (1984), Thomas Pynchon, "A Journey into the Mind of Watts" (1966), Barbara Ehrenreich, *Fear of Falling: the Inner Life of the Middle Class* (1989), Barbara Ehrenreich, *Nickel & Dimed* (2001).

### **Applied Probability, Rob Manning, Associate Professor of Mathematics (1/2 credit)**

An introduction to both discrete and continuous probability, including permutations and combinations, basic probability laws, probability density functions, and the normal distribution.

### **Applied Calculus, Jeff Tecosky-Feldman, Senior Lecturer in Mathematics (1/2 credit)**

This course is an introduction to the basic concepts of calculus, with a strong emphasis on applications. The course will review some precalculus topics as well, and focus on modeling real-life situations using mathematics.

### **Summer Field Trips/Destinations**

Philabundance for Community Service  
Go Vertical Indoor Climbing Gym  
Reading Terminal Market  
The Mutter Museum  
Rafting on the Lehigh River  
King of Prussia Mall  
University of Pennsylvania Campus, Hospital and Medical School  
Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine Open House  
Haverford House  
Six Flags Amusement Park  
Suburban Square in Ardmore  
The Franklin Institute