



**CHARLOTTE**

# **HONORS COLLEGE COMMUNIQUÉ**

Issue 7

December 2021

*Honors students participating in a ropes course with the Venture Outdoor Leadership Program, October 2021.*



# WELCOME FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Welcome to our annual Honors College Communiqué!

While you may have found last year's Communiqué stashed at the bottom of your office mail pile once you returned to campus, I hope this year's gets into your hands without any COVID-related obstructions.

The Honors College has fared well during the past year, providing honors students a full return to campus living this fall with a majority of classes meeting in-person and a robust range of activities. In the spring of 2021, ingenuity and can-do team spirit marked our staff efforts. We managed to offer some events in-person or hybrid, such as our first combined All-Honors Graduation and Awards Ceremony in April (see photo), at which some students



were recognized virtually while others walked to receive their honors certificate(s) on stage with me. I enjoyed teaching my spring semester honors seminar at first via Zoom and then in-person beginning in March. Dr Adnot's class employed an outdoor classroom set-up under the Levine Hall archway for maximum safety. Countless activities moved fully online without a hitch, and we recruited and retained 141 students, making our largest incoming UHP cohort ever.

I have been truly impressed by how the Honors College staff has met and surmounted the obstacles presented during the past year, always with the goal of providing an excellent honors experience in academics and programming. As you read these pages, please pause now and again to think of the Honors College professional staff who made this all possible in 2021, despite COVID. My fullest appreciation goes to them: Dr. Mindy Adnot, Mrs. Gretchen Bagley, Dr. Liz Hanie, Ms. Denise Lynch, Ms. Shannon Zurell-Carey. And, a warm welcome to our new Scholars Advisor, Dr. Andrew Keener, who has jumped right in!

I hope you enjoy this issue!



Dr. Malin Pereira  
Executive Director | Professor of English



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# THE MARTIN SCHOLARSHIP...

## IMPACTING OUR STUDENTS' FUTURES

The Martin Scholars Program is one of UNC Charlotte's leading merit scholarship programs, established in 2016 through the generosity of UNC Charlotte alumni Demond T. ('97) and Twakia "Kia" ('98) Martin. Martin Scholars are promising, motivated students from underrepresented groups who demonstrate the highest level of financial need in pursuing a college education. Awards are renewable and amounts range, with the purpose being to eliminate the burden of student loans for Martin Scholars.



## WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

### Martin Scholars Who Have Graduated From UNC Charlotte



#### Marc Moore

Spring 2020

Marc's success in the Martin Scholars Program positioned him to attend UNC Chapel Hill in pursuit of a Master's of City and Regional Planning (MCRP) degree. He was also awarded a \$10,000 Merit Chair scholarship. Marc currently works remotely as a Planning and Development Intern for the Charlotte Center City Partners.



#### Dawn Sebastian

Spring 2020

Soon after graduation, Dawn landed a job at Atrium Health as a Neurosurgical Intensive Care Unit Nurse. She also is on the committee to help improve geriatric care and outcomes in her unit. Dawn was able to achieve her career goal with the assistance from the Martin Scholars Program.



#### Misty Morin

Spring 2019

Thanks to her experiences in the Martin Scholars Program, Misty was offered a 1-year English teaching assistant position in Spain as a Fulbright Scholar, living in Logrono, La Rioja, Spain. Since then, she has worked in the finance world and plans to one day return to graduate school to continue her education.



# DEMOND T. MARTIN

## THE DONOR BEHIND THE SCHOLARSHIP

Coming from a family that worked hard for what they had, Mr. Martin grew up knowing the importance of education and hard work. His parents, who didn't have much themselves, worked hard to send him to college. Mr. Martin and his wife, Dr. Kia Martin, share the same passion for helping their community and living a life filled with faith and service.



While attending UNC Charlotte, Mr. Martin made his mark all around the campus. He became the SGA [Student Government Association] President as a sophomore, joined the Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity and later served as the chapter president. Mr. Martin went on to receive many awards and recognitions during his time at UNC Charlotte. Graduating in 1997, Mr. Martin received his Bachelor of Science degree in Accounting.



Mr. Martin has left a positive mark on the Honors College through his commitment and success. He has learned from his experiences what it's like to earn the better things in life, and has used that mindset to help others. Mr. Martin has graciously funded the Martin Scholars Program, designed to help financially support highly promising students in the Honors College.

“

*“I stand on the shoulders of giants. Without them and so many others, my life's journey would not have been possible. And so I've spent a lifetime preparing my shoulders to be among those that others can now stand on.”*

*- Demond T. Martin*

”





# BUILDING AND UNDERSTANDING COMMUNITY:

## THE IMPORTANCE OF TEAMWORK IN UHP

The Venture Outdoor Leadership Program is designed to provide students the opportunity to experience and learn guiding principles such as:

- Experiential Learning
- Personal Development
- Group Involvement
- Leadership Development
- Natural Environment



**Bryonna Gray**

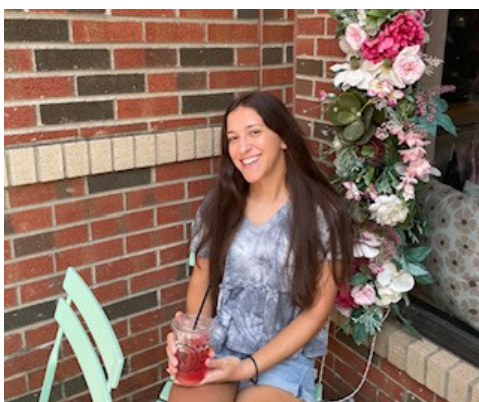
*“I was able to challenge myself and my fears, and doing that with a new group of people was interesting. While gaining new friendships, we were able to support each other to finish the courses. I began to feel [more] comfortable around the other [students] in UHP. “*



# UHP Venture Program

## WELCOMING THE NEW UHP COHORT WITH OPEN ARMS

This year, the UHP Venture Program also took place in Levine Hall. The goal for this experience was to help students build community among the incoming UHP cohort. Members participated in ice breakers, communication and team building activities, as well as a scavenger hunt throughout the Charlotte campus.



### Julia Scrbacic

*"The indoor part of Venture further connected me with other honors students and helped establish a sense of community among everyone. The activities [we participated in] did a great job of allowing students to work together and demonstrate how everyone has different perspectives. [This experience] really made me excited for the upcoming semester and prepared me for some of the critical thinking that I am expected to contribute as an honors student here at UNC Charlotte."*



# HONORS COLLEGE "BY THE NUMBERS"

30

Honors Programs



828

Honors & Merit Scholars

\*incl. Levine Scholars (LSP)

193

New Honors &  
Merit Scholars [incl. BHP,  
AAHP, UHP, and LSP]

## Merit Scholarships Awarded

12

Albert Engineering  
Leadership Scholarships

16

Martin Scholarships

7

Freeman Scholarships

4

Crown Scholarships

13

Johnson Scholarships

11

Alumni Scholarships for Merit

272

Honors College Scholarships

35

Fall 2020 Graduates



127

Spring 2021 Graduates



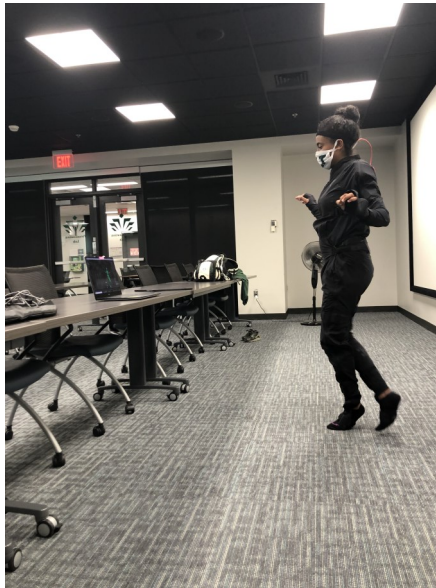
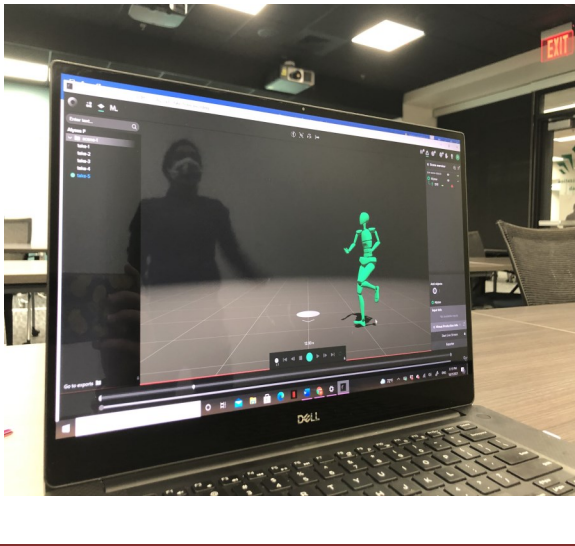


# Arts + Architecture Honors Program [AAHP]

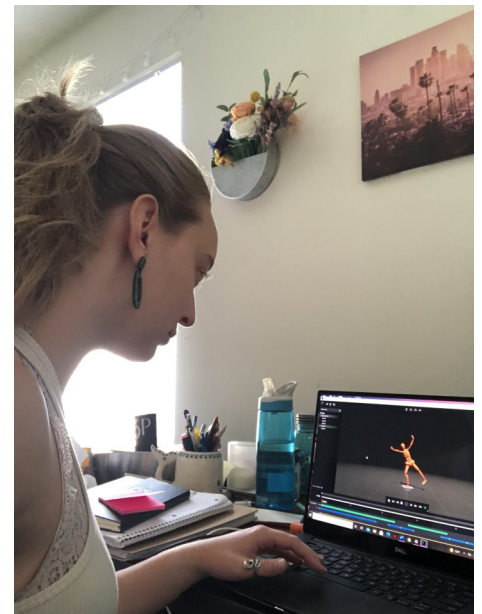
## McKenzie Waldron

Class of Spring 2022 — Architecture — Greensboro, NC

I am currently a fourth-year architecture undergraduate student working on an Architecture History & Criticism Minor, as I am interested in exploring historical preservation as a career.



*Dancer, Alyssa, [above] in a motion capture suit connected to a program [left] called Rokoko Studio that detects and shows all of her movements onto the screen. An example of one step of Mackenzie's honors thesis, intercepting dance and architecture.*



I have been in AAHP and UHP since Fall 2018 (freshman year). I am also involved in the American Institute of Architecture Students (AIAS), and Running Club. During my time at AAHP I have been able to learn a little about the other majors in the COAA, which is one of the reasons I chose UNC Charlotte. It is easy to get lost in architecture work, and forget about other majors, so AAHP helped to connect me back to that. As a COAA student, I can procure free tickets to dance/music concerts, which really helps bolster a sense of community by firstly supporting my fellow students, and secondly gives me an opportunity to learn more about what students in different majors are working on. Right now, I am working on my honors thesis, which involves the intersections between dance and architecture, and focuses on how the movement created by dance can inspire forms by looking through an architectural lens.

Fourth year is an exciting time, as students have the option of going to Rome for the semester. We have been learning about Italian culture in one of my classes, and it makes me thankful that we are going to be there for 3 months -- so we will be able to appreciate the culture a little better than we would perhaps if we only stayed for a week. I am elated to be able to see ancient buildings I have learned about in Architectural History come to life, as well as eat pasta!



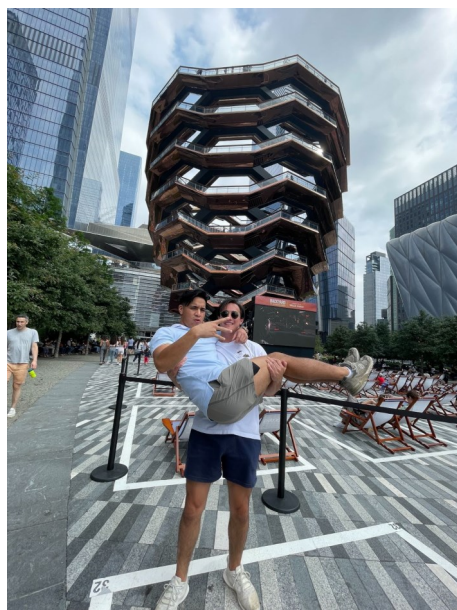


# Business Honors Program [BHP]

## Kevin Briones-Tristan

Class of Spring 2023 — Finance — Greensboro, NC

I have been in the Business Honors Program [BHP] since my first semester at UNC Charlotte. I came to Charlotte because it's a great banking city, but the extent of my knowledge of banking was bank tellers and definitely not Wall Street trading floors and lower Manhattan skyscrapers. The greatest lesson I have learned in my time in BHP is the fact that connections and the people you meet will carry you just as far, if not farther, than the knowledge you will obtain in the classroom. The biggest benefit is the other students you meet in those smaller honors classes, who are among the brightest on campus. One of the students that I made a connection with in BHP interned at RBC Capital Markets as a Pathways Scholar. The Pathways program is a paid internship in the New York office and a scholarship. I was introduced to someone in their Human Resources office and from there I interviewed with several different people in the bank. I ended up getting the internship and scholarship. It was a great experience and one I will cherish forever.



Because I am a first generation college student and first generation Mexican American, the internship at RBC Capital Markets meant a lot to me and my family. When he was my age, my father was picking oranges in the Florida heat, whereas I was interning with the ninth largest investment bank in the world in their New York headquarters. Next summer, I will be interning with Morgan Stanley as a Richard B. Fisher Scholar in their Investment Banking Division in Los Angeles, California. I have the Business Honors Program to thank for that.





# University Honors Program [UHP]

## Faustina Edwin

Class of Spring 2022 — Health Systems Management — Waxhaw, NC

From the moment I stepped onto Charlotte's campus,, the University Honors Program (UHP) provided me with many opportunities to develop as a global citizen through service, scholarship, and enrichment. I lived in Levine Hall my freshman year, where I was placed with other Honors students from my cohort. This made starting out at UNC Charlotte much less intimidating, as I had other people to explore campus with and get started on my college career. I also had the pleasure of participating in an honors section of Arts and Society, as well as City as Text™ in UHP colloquium. These different experiences shaped the way I saw the environment around me, and also shaped my mindset on how I viewed the remaining four years of my college career, as I was thinking with the lens of a multidisciplinary viewpoint through my coursework. I approached all of my endeavors with a very open mind and I credit UHP for successfully making me an academically curious student throughout my internships, jobs, and academic involvement.



*Faustina is the recipient of the 2020-2021 Student Employee of the Year Award!*



In addition to helping improve my mindset, I was also able to become more involved in research from the start of my academic career through the Arts and Society honors section. I recall deep-diving into many journal articles and peer-reviewed work and was very satisfied with an essay I had written discussing the intersections of a ballet performance, identity, and gender. I was even able to present this piece to the University Research Conference alongside two of my classmates.

After many positive experiences with the Honors College and its staff, I decided to come back as an intern while simultaneously completing my honors thesis and a capstone course. This internship has been very helpful as I learn skills in social media marketing as well as communications, all skills that I was looking to develop before my graduation. I find my work to be meaningful, and I enjoy meeting more students within the Honors College. The staff is also very knowledgeable and supportive of me and cater to my role as a student first.



# Alumni Spotlight: Honors 49er at Harvard

## Samantha Tracy

Graduated May 2017 — UHP + Crown Scholars Program — B.S. in Biology, B.S. in Psychology, Minor in Mathematics

I always knew I wanted to attend graduate school, but was not 100% sure which type of degree and area of focus I wanted to pursue. After my graduation from UNC Charlotte, I took two years off to work in a variety of environmental science positions before starting my master's program at Harvard in September of 2019. I am currently pursuing my Master of Science in Environmental Exposure Assessment at Harvard's T.H. Chan School of Public Health. Opportunities for research and access to a large network of researchers and professionals in the Boston area were my primary motivation for attending Harvard. There are also many on-campus interdisciplinary organizations that allow me to broaden my perspectives and expand my knowledge base beyond my individual degree. I plan to graduate in December 2021.



*National Parks in Anchorage, AK. Samantha was able to travel the state and see many national parks while working on research investigating toxic chemical pollution in the arctic and adverse health outcomes.*

I've been able to be a part of some interesting research projects, work on my own thesis, and be involved in the Harvard community. The faculty and access to resources provide an exceptional educational experience that has allowed me to dive deeper into my research interests and encouraged me to pursue a PhD. Despite complications from the pandemic, I've still been able to pursue my own research interests and learn from my coursework. The Honors College not only gave me an amazing set of friends and experiences, but also allowed me the chance to explore my own academic interests in an interdisciplinary setting. Taking honors courses opened up my various research interests and gave me a chance to work on my own honors thesis project. The resources at the Honors College gave me the confidence and skills to apply to graduate programs and feel that I can successfully accomplish my goals.



### Educational Background

I've always been comfortable with numbers and deciphering the stories they can tell, so I was initially drawn to accounting. That led me to the College of Business, where I found my home. A professor of mine suggested I try the insurance industry. He explained that insurance companies are some of the largest investors in the US because they receive steady insurance premiums that they invest in stocks, bonds, real estate and private equity to boost their income. That sounded intriguing, so I ended up interning for three summers while in college with three different insurance companies.

I changed my major to finance and was leaning towards entering the insurance world upon graduation. However, once I learned more about investment banking, that was the world I wanted to try. My senior year, I was recruited by consulting companies and investment banks and ultimately accepted JP Morgan's offer.



### Career Background — Investment Banking

I interned with Citibank in their investment banking division during the summer while in business school and loved it. Once I graduated, I accepted Citibank's full-time offer for an investment banking role in NYC. However, shortly after that, they asked me if I wanted to relocate with the team I was working with to London to cover European companies. I traveled a lot to Italy, Germany, and France. Typical work days entailed arriving in the office about 6:30am, and if not traveling, working on models and presentations and following what's happening in the market and how that may impact your deal. You ate breakfast, lunch and dinner at work and typically left the office around 1am.

I returned to the States, later left the industry and was recruited by TIAA-CREF, the largest private pension company in the U.S.. Now, instead of overseeing clients, I became one of the clients of the investment banks, who tried to convince me to invest in their transactions. I stayed at TIAA-CREF for almost 20 years and served the bulk of that time as a fixed income research analyst, recommending investments in industries like automotive, aerospace/defense, healthcare and industrials. By the time I left, I was responsible for overseeing almost \$25 billion in private assets like real estate and other investments.

### Campus Involvement and Teaching Honors

I decided it was important to spend more time with my family, so I left the investment management industry and joined UNC Charlotte as a member of the Finance faculty. In addition to teaching, I serve as the faculty advisor and co-advisor to two student organizations and volunteer on committees where I can be an active contributor to maintaining and enhancing the reputation of the honors students at UNC Charlotte and the Belk College of Business.

When we were thrown online due to the pandemic, that was a suboptimal experience for students who didn't have the desire to be online and/or didn't have the right equipment. However, I tried to ease the transition by opting to teach synchronously while online and using teams, so students could interact with one another and foster a classroom community. The silver lining from that period is that UNC Charlotte now has the tools and resources needed to seamlessly offer both online and in person classes. This gives students a range of options, depending on their learning styles and schedules.





# WELCOME SCHOLARS ADVISOR!

**Dr. Andrew Keener**

## Scholars Advisor Position

Dr. Andrew Keener is the new Scholars Advisor for the Honors College team! In this position, he provides honors advising to the continuing students in the University Honors Program. He also works with merit scholars and any undergraduates seeking nationally competitive awards and fellowships. Additionally, Dr. Keener teaches lower-division honors courses in the Honors College.



*Dr. Keener enjoying his vacation in Asheville, NC*

## Background — Career and Education

Before coming to UNC Charlotte, Dr. Keener taught in the English Department and Honors Program at Santa Clara University. Before Santa Clara, he completed his PhD at Northwestern University and prior to that, he completed his M.A. degree at North Carolina State University. Dr. Keener is originally from Charlotte and he is happy to be back in his hometown.

## What Dr. Keener is Most Looking Forward to at the Honors College

I am most looking forward to working with students and connecting them with opportunities that can open doors to exciting new possibilities on campus and beyond. I bring a writing instructor background to the Honors College, both in terms of my teaching and in the way I help students apply for competitive scholarships and fellowships. No matter what the outcome of an application, students learn so much about themselves and gain professional confidence through this process, and seeing that happen is the best thing in the world.



**Andrew Keener, Ph.D.**

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**Email: [andrewkeener@uncc.edu](mailto:andrewkeener@uncc.edu)**



# HONORS COUNCIL

The Honors Council is an elected committee of Honors Faculty that serves as an advisory body to the Executive Director of the Honors College. The Council is responsible for reviewing and evaluating the honors curriculum, program proposals and revisions, and providing shared governance of honors at the University.

The Honors Council consists of:

- 2 elected Honors Faculty representatives from the College of Liberal Arts + Sciences (CLAS)
- 1 elected Honors Faculty representative from each of UNC Charlotte's colleges, except CLAS
- 2 elected At-Large Honors Faculty representatives, one to represent UHP
- 1 appointed undergraduate honors student representative

College of Arts + Architecture	→	<b>Robert Campbell</b> , Alternate: Mark Pizzato
College of Business	→	<b>Karen Ford-Eickhoff</b> , Alternate: Carol Stivender
College of Computing + Informatics	→	<b>Jessica Schlueter</b> , Alternate: Mohamed Shehab
College of Education	→	<b>Cindy Gilson</b> , Alternate: Amy Good
College of Engineering	→	<b>Andrew Willis</b> , Alternate: Cathey Blat
College of Health + Human Services	→	<b>Joseph Marino</b> , Alternate: Juliana Marino
College of Liberal Arts + Sciences	→	<b>Ritika Prasad</b> , Alternate: Jose Batista
College of Liberal Arts + Sciences	→	<b>Didier Dreau</b> , Alternate: Sara Levens
At-Large	→	<b>Amanda Pipkin</b> , Alternate: Gregory Mixon
At-Large, University Honors Program	→	<b>Abigail Moore</b> , Alternate: Jeanette Bennett
Ex-officio non-voting member	→	<b>Malin Pereira</b> , Executive Director of the Honors College



# New Honors Faculty

College	Name	Title	Department
COB	Cynthia Bush	Lecturer	Finance
COB	Scott Tonidandel	Professor / Associate Director	Management
COB	Zack Lord	Assistant Director of Professional Development & Honors Programs	Business
CHHS	Charlene Brown	Clinical Associate Professor	School of Nursing
CHHS	Colette Chambers	Clinical Assistant Professor / Director of CHHS Learning Resource Center	School of Nursing
CHHS	Frances Fusilli	Clinical Assistant Professor / Field Placement Coordinator	School of Social Work
CHHS	Pilar Zuber	Sr. Lecturer / Director	Public Health Sciences
CHHS	Roger Suclupe	Clinical Assistant Professor / BSW Director	School of Social Work
CHHS	Teresa Cating	Clinical Assistant Professor	School of Nursing
CHHS	Yuqi Guo	Assistant Professor	School of Social Work
CLAS	Carol Higham	Sr. Lecturer	History
CLAS	Cheryl Brown	Associate Professor / Chair	Political Science and Business Administration
CLAS	Christine Haynes	Professor	History
CLAS	Christopher Bejger	Associate Professor	Chemistry
CLAS	David Goldfield	Professor	History
CLAS	Dan Du	Assistant Professor	History
CLAS	Eric Heberlig	Professor	Political Science and Public Administration
CLAS	Jason Giersch	Assistant Professor	Political Science and Public Administration
CLAS	Jason Windett	Associate Director	Political Science and Public Administration
CLAS	Jerry Troutman	Professor / M.S. Grad Program Director	Chemistry
CLAS	Jill Massino	Associate Professor	History
CLAS	Joanna Krueger	Associate Professor	Chemistry
CLAS	Joseph Dippong	Associate Professor	Sociology
CLAS	Joshua Miller	Lecturer	Political Science and Public Administration
CLAS	Kendra Jason	Assistant Professor	Sociology



# New Honors Faculty

College	Name	Title	Department
CLAS	Mark Wilson	Professor	History
CLAS	Mary Jo McGowan	Sr. Lecturer / Undergraduate Coordinator	Political Science and Public Administration
CLAS	Michael Walter	Associate Professor	Chemistry
CLAS	Monica Castro	Associate Professor / Graduate Program Director	Languages and Culture Studies
CLAS	Paola Duarte	Assistant Professor	Biological Sciences
CLAS	Ritika Prasad	Associate Professor / Graduate Program Director	History
CLAS	Sonya Ramsey	Associate Professor	History
CLAS	Tom Schmedake	Professor	Chemistry
CLAS	Zinobia Bennefield	Assistant Professor	Sociology
COE	HaiTao Zhang	Associate Professor	Mechanical Engineering + Engineering Science
COE	Scott Kelly	Professor	Mechanical Engineering + Engineering Science
COED	Colleen Whittingham	Assistant Professor	Reading and Elementary Education
COED	Erin FitzPatrick	Assistant Professor	Special Education and Child Development
COED	Leslie Bross	Assistant Professor	Special Education and Child Development
COED	Mitch Eisner	Clinical Assistant Professor	Reading and Elementary Education

# Re-Appointed Honors Faculty

College	Name	Title	Department
CLAS	Diane Zablotzky	Associate Professor / Faculty Director Levine Scholars	Levine Scholars/Sociology
CLAS	Meaghan Rand	Sr. Lecturer	University Writing Programs
CLAS	Susan Trammell	Associate Professor	Physics and Optical Science
COAA	Thomas Forget	Associate Professor / Director of Undergraduate Programs	Architecture
COB	Carol Stivender	Clinical Professor	Economics
COB	Matthew Metzgar	Clinical Assistant Professor	Economics
COED	Amy Good	Associate Professor	Reading and Elementary Education



# Faculty Fellows



Dr. Howden has been a faculty member since 2008 and is the Faculty Fellow for the Albert & Crown Scholars Programs. Dr. Howden is a Professor of Kinesiology and a member of the Laboratory of Systems Physiology.

**Reuben Howden | Ph.D.**



Dr. Padilla-Falto has been a faculty member since 2016 and is the Acting Faculty Fellow for the Martin Scholars. Dr. Padilla-Falto is a Professor in the Languages and Culture Studies department. She is also the coordinator for Elementary Spanish.

**Olga Padilla-Falto | Ph.D.**



Dr. Thorsheim has been a faculty member since 2000 and is the Faculty Fellow for Curriculum and Pedagogy. Dr. Thorsheim is a Professor of History and focuses his research on the history of modern Britain. In his free time, he enjoys off-road biking and foreign movies.

**Peter Thorsheim | Ph.D.**

# Student Interns

## Faustina Edwin

Membership and Social Media Intern

Class of 2022

Major: Health Systems Management Minor: Economics

Hometown: Waxhaw, NC



## Darius Simms

Social Media Intern

Class of 2022

Major: Biology Minor: Religious Studies

Hometown: Baltimore, MD

## Maria Vinson

Marketing and Outreach Intern (*Communiqué* Editor)

Class of 2023

Major: Marketing

Hometown: Clarke County, VA



## Bryson White

Information Technology Intern

Class of 2022

Major: Computer Science

Hometown: Kannapolis, NC



# Staff Directory

**Mindy Adnot | Ph.D.**  
Associate Director of Curriculum

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**Elizabeth Hanie | D.V.M., M.S.**  
Pre-Health Professions Advisor

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Crown + Albert Scholars Faculty Fellow

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Scholars Advisor

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Coordinator of Programming

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