



Idaho State  
University

University  
Honors Program

# Weekly Update

August 30, 2021

## Taking the Step

A letter from UHP Acting Director Alex Bolinger

I need to let you in on a secret: I never would have been associated with ISU's Honors Program if one of my students had not bravely taken the step of approaching me to ask about setting up an Honors contract in one of my courses.

I clearly remember that it was after one of our first class meetings of the fall semester. The student hung around after class, clearly with something on his mind. The conversation began slowly.

"I don't know if you've heard of an Honors contract before," the student said. "No pressure at all, but I was wondering about the possibility of contracting this course?"

I had never heard of an Honors contract, but I wanted to learn more. This student shared some ideas of what he would be interested in doing for his Honors contract, but also wanted to hear my ideas. We worked together and came up with a project in which he interviewed three working managers in different fields of business (e.g., finance, human resource management, and marketing) and summarized what he found in a report about which field he was leaning toward for his major.

At the end of the semester, I thanked this student for allowing me to work with him on his Honors contract. He seemed genuinely surprised. "I almost didn't ask you," he admitted,

"because I knew that you are really busy. Now I'm glad that I did."

As I look back, I have been thinking about what a tragedy it would have been if that student had not taken the step to reach out and ask me to contract my course. He felt awkward about asking, but I felt flattered to have been asked. And whereas he would have missed out on what turned out to be a very useful project, I would have missed out on the opportunity to be involved with the Honors Program and to work with some really amazing students.

When it comes to taking (or failing to take) steps in life, it seems like expressing gratitude to others is another frequently-missed opportunity. I was recently reading a study by researchers at the University of Chicago who discovered that most people systematically underestimate how much it actually means to others to receive a letter of gratitude from them. There are many reasons for this – for instance, we tend to assume that others already know how much we appreciate them. We worry that writing a letter might seem formal or forced. We fret that we won't seem very eloquent or able to come up with the right words.

What these researchers found is that most of us don't realize how surprised and delighted other people feel about receiving a letter of gratitude from us. Whereas we feel awkward or worry

that our words will be inadequate, others focus on the excitement in discovering how much we value them. It turns out that this surprise and delight applies just as much to letters of gratitude to the people we know best, including parents and other family and friends. The tragedy is that we sometimes fail to tell them how much we appreciate them – and we sometimes wait until it is too late.

As we begin this semester, I hope that you will continue to take these kinds of steps, even when they feel a little risky or awkward. For those of you who have taken the step of interacting with your professors and are working right now to finalize your Honors contracts in advance of the deadline (Friday, September 3rd by 5:00 p.m.), I encourage you to check out our Honors contracts page (<https://www.isu.edu/honors/current-students/honors-curriculum-and-courses/contract/>) for more information, for ideas from past contracts (and faculty who have contracted courses in the past), and for access to the Online Honors Contract Submission Form.

And for those of you who are interested in taking the step to express gratitude, I want to encourage you to participate in one of the University Honors Club's upcoming gratitude letter-writing get-togethers. These events are casual, social, and for a great cause (with envelopes provided!). Please join us at 7:00 p.m. behind the C-store on the first floor of the Rendezvous building on one (or more) of the following dates:

- **Wednesday, September 1st at 7:00 p.m.**
- **Monday, September 20th at 7:00 p.m.**

As always, I invite you to check out [isu.edu/honors/gratitude](https://www.isu.edu/honors/gratitude) for more details about the Gratitude Challenge and to report on the letter(s) of gratitude that you have written as we seek to meet our audacious goal of 400 letters of gratitude from ISU students, alumni, faculty/staff, and friends during the month of September.

Finally, let me take the step of thanking you for coming to ISU, for being a part of our Honors family, and for the opportunity to work with you this year!

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## You Can Still Be Famous!

To celebrate and spread the word about The Gratitude Challenge, UHP has partnered with ISU Athletics to create a series of videos that will be shared on UHP, Athletics, Alumni and ISU social media. The videos will also be shown at halftime during football games.

We are still looking for a few Honors students to share their thoughts about gratitude. All videos are filmed with two students having a conversation, so you won't be on your own. And rest assured, the professional and amazing videographer will do a fantastic job of ensuring you look and sound your best.

**Tuesday, September 7 at 11:00 a.m.**

**Tuesday, September 14 at 11:00 a.m.**

Contact: Miriam Dance at [miriamdance@isu.edu](mailto:miriamdance@isu.edu).

## Calling Honors Students! Service Activity with Fourth-Graders

We are looking for Honors students who are interested in working together to help facilitate a one-hour gratitude letter-writing session with fourth-graders at a local elementary school in Pocatello during the month of September.

Date and time are flexible, depending on what works best with the schedules of participants.

For more information or to volunteer, please email Dr. Bolinger at [alexbolinger@isu.edu](mailto:alexbolinger@isu.edu).

# THE GRATITUDE CHALLENGE

LED BY THE UNIVERSITY HONORS PROGRAM

***The Background: In the aftermath of this past year, facilitating campus and community connections (and overall well-being) are top priorities.***

The Premise: "I can live for two months on a good compliment." – Mark Twain Letters of gratitude to people who have made a positive difference in your life are remarkably effective at increasing perceptions of well-being, social support, and motivation for both the sender and the recipient (e.g., Grant & Shandell, 2021; Kumar & Epley, 2018)

***The Audacious Goal: 400 letters of gratitude by students, faculty/staff/administrators, alumni, and friends of ISU in September.***

How You Can Contribute:

- Write letter(s) of gratitude toward our campus-wide goal of 400 letters. We especially invite you to join us for one of the UHP Club's Letter-Writing Get Togethers in the Rendezvous building, behind the C-store, on Wednesday, September 1st and/or Monday, September 20th (both times 7-9 p.m.).
- Consider contributing a story or memory to be included in our campus-wide book, Orange, Black, & Thankful: Stories from The Gratitude Challenge.

For more details about these activities, please visit The Gratitude Challenge web page at [isu.edu/honors/gratitude](http://isu.edu/honors/gratitude).

## Information for Your Future in Easy-to-Access Webinars

Take a look at the webinar flyers attached to the Weekly Update email and learn more about:

**Careers in International Affairs**

**Applying to Graduate School**

### Quick Reminder

September 1	Resume round-up @11am-1pm Lobby of the Business Administration Bldg.
September 3	Last day to add/drop full-semester courses
September 8	Etiquette & Networking Dinner @6-8pm in the Performing Arts Center. Contact John Ney, assistant professor of marketing at <a href="mailto:johnney@isu.edu">johnney@isu.edu</a> .

## Walk-in Peer Advising for Honors Students

To supplement the advising you receive from your Honors advisor, the Honors Program is happy to offer walk-in peer advising for all Honors students. Third-year Honors student, Exko Ramey, is available to meet with you in REND 306A during the following times:

Tuesdays	11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Wednesdays	1:00-3:00 p.m.
Thursdays	11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Fridays	8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

## Unique Opportunity to Represent the University Honors Program

The organizers of the Bannock County 9/11 20th Anniversary Remembrance Event have created a space for **TWO** Honors students to speak in the program on September 11. The speech would focus on patriotism and gratitude, to go along with the Gratitude Challenge. If you are interested in writing and presenting a speech for this event, contact Dr. Bolinger at alexbolinger@isu.edu.

All Honors students are invited to attend this event, which will be held on **September 11 at 9:00 in front of the Bannock County Courthouse on 624 E. Center St.**

Following the remembrance program, there will be a short parade to Old Town Pocatello where lunch will be served. Students are invited to join in.

### Service Opportunity

Event organizers would love to have a few volunteers help raise flags in the morning before the event (8:00 a.m.). If you are interested, please contact Kaden Lee, UHP president at kadenlee@isu.edu.

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## AmeriCorps Job Opportunity

Bengal Service Corps is hiring an AmeriCorps member to serve as a Program Development Associate. The intern will be paid \$9/hr in addition to benefiting from AmeriCorps training, service, and an Education Award to go toward educational expenses.

This position will help build capacity in a wide variety of program objectives, including planning and facilitating service events, developing social media presence, and coordinating service learning information across campus.

Application link:

<https://isu.joinhandshake.com/jobs/5155887>

## Service Spotlight:

### 21st Annual Portneuf Partners Pocatello Marathon

The Annual Portneuf Partners Pocatello Marathon is looking for volunteers to help with the following:

#### Friday, September 3, Packet Pick Up:

Volunteers needed to help hand out the race bags at the Clarion Inn. The packet pick-up time is from Noon to 8:00 PM. Looking for help between 11:45 am to 3:45 pm or between 3:45 to 8:15 pm. If not available the full time, please indicate hours of availability.

#### Saturday, September 4, Bus

##### Loading/Unloading:

Volunteers needed to help with loading and unloading runners at respective race start. Volunteer per your respective event (or for one of the longer distance events) Marathon, Half Marathon, and 10K.

#### Saturday, September 4, Start Line Help and Traffic Control:

Volunteers needed to help direct participants at the start areas, and then traffic control needed at various locations on the course.

If interested, please email [pocatellorun@gmail.com](mailto:pocatellorun@gmail.com) and include the task you would like to volunteer for, available time, and contact number.

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## UHP Advisor Contact

Dr. Alex Bolinger	<a href="mailto:alexbolinger@isu.edu">alexbolinger@isu.edu</a>
Dawn Brooks	<a href="mailto:dawnbrooks@isu.edu">dawnbrooks@isu.edu</a>
Miriam Dance	<a href="mailto:miriamdance@isu.edu">miriamdance@isu.edu</a>
Lori Tapanila	<a href="mailto:loritapanila@isu.edu">loritapanila@isu.edu</a>

## UHP Club Events

All Honors students are invited to join the University Honors Student Club. The UHP Club strengthens connections among Honors students, positively impacts the community through service and enhances campus life by hosting fun activities. Here's a look at upcoming club events!

### September

- 1**      *Gratitude Challenge Kickoff and Letter Writing Event*  
7:00-9:00 p.m.  
Meet in REND behind C-store 7-9 pm  
The club will supply paper, markers, and envelopes, and refreshments
- 4**      *Home Football Game*  
1:00 p.m.  
Holt Arena
- 11**      *9/11 20th Anniversary Memorial Event and First Responder Lunch*  
11:00 a.m.  
Meet at Pocatello City Hall for a brief memorial program that will include a student speaker from UHP. Following the program there will be a short walk to the breakfast location.
- 20**      *Gratitude Challenge Letter Writing Event*  
7:00-9:00 p.m.  
Meet in REND behind C-store 7-9 pm  
The club will supply paper, markers, and envelopes, and refreshments

## First-Year House Competition Rules

For the next eight weeks, the Honors Houses are competing against each other to win the honor of having their House listed as the Fall 2021 Champions on the Recognition Plaque and to participate in the House Competition celebration.

Here are a few ways to earn house points:

1. Meet with your Honors advisor either in person or over Zoom. Let your UHP mentor know when you meet. These meetings with your advisors are worth 10 points.
2. Meet with your mentor. These meetings can be in person or over Zoom and can range from questions about classes or life at ISU, study sessions for homework, or just plain hanging out and having fun. These meetings are worth 10 points.
3. Text or email your mentor. These conversations with your mentor are worth 5 points.
4. Attend Honors events with your mentor. This will earn your House 10 points for each Honors event attended. There will be a sign-in sheet at each Honors event so that the club can keep track of how many students. Be sure to sign in.

**Don't miss the House Competition results on the next page!**

## First-Year House Competition Results

First-Year Honors students found out what house they belonged to at the Induction Ceremony and the competition began with the scavenger hunt at the Meet and Greet. The chart below displays the current competition results.

<b>Stripes</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>Benny</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Panthera</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>Night</b>	<b>60</b>