

Chesick Scholars Program
Summer Institute Director's Report
August 9, 2017
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The Chesick Scholars Program is in its sixth year. Originally funded by pilot grant from the San Francisco Foundation, the program is now supported in addition by funding from anonymous donors and Friends of the College. 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 the Chesick Scholars Program 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 (e.g. Center for Career and Professional Advising, Fellowships and Internships, Mellon-Mays Undergraduate Fellowship, Center for Peace and Global Citizenship, Hurford Humanities Center).

This report concerns the initial part of the Program, the 5-week Summer Institute. The long-term faculty mentoring is the second, and most important part of the Program, and will be reported on separately.

Recruiting the Chesick Scholars

This year we admitted a cohort of 15 students. Selection 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 37 students, who were identified by Admissions as very high-achieving students who met the Chesick Scholars demographic. A total of 5 students from this first round chose to attend Haverford and become Chesick Scholars.

2) After May 1, we sent out a second round of 29 offers to apply for the remaining 10 spaces in the cohort. These went out to matriculating students on financial aid whose academic ratings were among the highest of those in the Chesick demographic.

For both groups of students, we asked for students' summer course choice, some indication of academic areas of interest, and for short answers to the following prompts:

- While all Haverford students are here to learn, Chesick Scholars are students we expect to be academic and campus leaders. 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.
- Academic excellence rarely depends solely on natural talent. At Haverford, students find that achieving such excellence requires an active approach to their education, and being open to using all of the available resources. 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.
- In addition to your work with a faculty mentor, you'll be expected to form supportive academic relationships with your fellow Chesick Scholars. Please describe in a paragraph or two what you envision to be the advantages and challenges in working closely with your peers.

We received 17 applications in the second phase, and a committee consisting of the Summer Program Director, the OAR Director, the Dean of Admission, and the Dean of Academic Affairs selected 10 students from this group, with an eye to balancing course choice and gender. The resulting final cohort had 9 women and 6 men, from a variety backgrounds, of which 10 had neither parent with a bachelor's degree. The students hailed from all over the US, including the states CA, MD, NC, NJ, NY, NV and PA, and one international student. About half were intending to major in the natural sciences.

Summer Institute

The summer program was 5 weeks in duration (June 25-July 29), and students were housed in single dormitory rooms in Leeds 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 approximates the summer earnings expectation for students on financial aid.

A graduate student lived in the dorm with the students and served as Residential Director. He supervised two Chesick Scholar 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 Friday and 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 Friday afternoons and Saturdays, to learn about resources in the surrounding area, or just to have fun. In addition to trips using 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, there were scheduled guest appearances from students, staff and administrators, to talk about issues such as summer research opportunities, campus life, and to introduce the Office of Academic Resources, Deans' Office, Office of Multicultural Affairs, etc. Students also attended one academic-style talk from a faculty member in Gender and Sexuality studies.

Summer Courses

There were four courses offered, and each student signed up for two one-credit courses, each meeting 8 hours per week.. The two credit-bearing 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. All 15 students in the program successfully earned both credits.

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

Each student signed up for one writing-intensive course (either Social Reproduction and Mobility or Origin Stories) and one other course (Food Chemistry or Visualizing and Exploring Data). Course descriptions are included at the end of this document.

The two writing-intensive Humanities courses culminated in an oral presentation by each student in a symposium held at the end of the summer. The weekly written essays and revisions were supported by a Writing Center staff member, who in addition to meeting with the entire cohort in class to discuss general writing issues, also met individually with each student for 30-45 minutes each week. Students also had mandatory meetings with peer writing tutors on Sundays to help refine their submissions.

The two science/quantitative courses culminated in poster sessions and presentation of research.

Summer faculty held office hours, graded problem sets, exams and papers, just as during the term, and met regularly with the Summer Program Director. Stipends for faculty were: Course Instructors \$10,000; Writing Center staff instructor \$7000; Summer Program Director \$8,000.

Faculty Mentors

The summer program leads into the long-term mentoring aspect of the program. The list of mentors for this cohort, with the number of their mentees is:

Fran Blase (1), Ted Brzinski (1); Rob Fairman (2); Barbara Hall (2), Matthew Incantalupo (2), Maud McInerney (2), Stephen Podowitz-Thomas (1), Jeff Tecosky-Feldman (2), Theresa Tensuan (2)

Faculty Mentors are expected to meet with their mentees individually for a minimum of 15 minutes each week during the term, to attend a 2-hour training session, and to meet periodically as a group to discuss progress. Mentors are compensated \$750 per mentee per year for the first two years; in addition, mentors have at their disposal \$250 per mentee for expenses related to meetings with mentees.

Evaluation

This year we are introducing, with the help of Haverford's Office of Institutional Research, a comprehensive evaluation framework for both the Summer Institute and the following mentoring program. Both Scholars and Mentors will be completing survey instruments and building portfolios for assessment over the students' four years of study. New this year is a requirement for engagement with a small, but significant number of academic activities (e.g. scholarly talks, concerts, gallery presentations), including follow up reflections, and more focused mentoring activities. Students will also convene in monthly group workshops during the academic year, some of which will be devoted to assessment of the program. The assessment is being coordinated by a faculty member in the BiCollege Education Program.

In the summer, Chesick Scholars completed a short midterm evaluation at 2.5 weeks, and a more comprehensive evaluation at the end. From the students' perspective, the summer was a great success: they were challenged academically, gained important time-management skills, learned how to use College resources such as office hours and the writing center, formed partnerships with their fellow Scholars that will last during their four years, 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 as part of the ongoing evaluation process. Faculty participants uniformly enjoyed the opportunity to teach the Chesick Scholars over the summer, with several stating that some of their students progressed faster and dove more deeply into the material than most first-year students.

Summary

Every student in this sixth cohort of Chesick Scholars showed amazing growth over the summer! All of them rose to the formidable academic challenges, as they faced full versions of freshman 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 symposium and poster presentations, where the 15 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. They uniformly look forward to building a strong working relationship with their faculty mentor. Many of the scholars affirmed 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 peers.

From both the Scholars and their instructors, then, an overwhelmingly positive appraisal of the sixth iteration of the Summer Institute. 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 2017 Course Descriptions

Reproduction or Mobility: Analyzing Social Class Theory through Reading and Writing about Ethnography, Heather Curl, Lecturer in Bi-Co Education Department

Investigating the role that social class plays in society is a concern dominating studies in the fields of sociology, anthropology and education. Political scientists and economists have been concerned with this question as well. Despite the persistent narrative of the American Dream and our commitment to education's role in mitigating inequality, qualitative research done in school settings has offered tremendous insight on how social class might be reproduced and the role that schools play in this process. This course actively investigates theories of social class and reproduction through the lens of ethnographies of school sites.

Looking through critical lenses throughout the summer, we discuss theoretical conceptions of education and social reproduction. Issues of culture and identity (race, gender, social class, sexual orientation, ability, family and community) are also considered through the ethnographies discussed and analyzed.

This course is reading and writing intensive. Assignments include in-class writings; two reflective/ analytical pieces; and a final research presentation and research paper.

Origin Stories: Initiations, Identities, and Indigenous Imaginations, Theresa Tensuan, Dean for Diversity, Access and Community Engagement

In this course we will read a range of origin stories -- creation narratives, memoirs, alternative accounts of settler colonialism, and trickster tales -- that delineate constructions of identity and

constitutions of community with a focus on the ways in which writers and artists represent ongoing “encounters” between indigenous and imperial cultures.

Our discussions will be organized around a set of interrelated questions: what values, concerns, and cultural points of orientation are established in and through origin stories? What role do cultural productions play in framing cultural ideologies and creating sites for reflection, contestation, and/or change? What is at stake in acts of reading, interpretation, analysis, and critical confrontation? How do we understand our own critical and material situation in these histories; what roles or responsibilities do we have as critical and creative agents?

Students will be experimenting with a variety of writing assignments ranging from close analyses and reviews of literary texts, to autobiographical reflections, to experiments with speculative fictions. You will learn how to write detailed and compelling narratives, how to identify conventions and genres, how to use evidence in constructing logical arguments, how to write persuasive essays, and how to contextualize and cite sources.

Visualizing and Exploring Data, Matthew Incantalupo, Visiting Instructor of Economics

In this course, we will learn to make arguments, tell stories, and answer questions using data. Equal parts art, programming, and statistical reasoning, data analysis skills have become essential for those pursuing careers in policy advocacy and evaluation, business consulting and management, or research in the fields of education, health, medicine, natural science, social science, and more. *Visualizing and Exploring Data* introduces students to the powerful **R** programming language and the basics of conducting data analysis and producing compelling graphics in **R**. We will use real datasets to explore topics ranging from public opinion to network data (like social interactions on Facebook or trade between counties) to geographical data (like county-level election returns in the United States or the spatial distribution of insurgent attacks in Afghanistan).

The course will culminate with a data analysis project in which students will be assigned to groups and analyze a data set of their choice. Each group will produce a report summarizing a compelling relationship or story it identifies in the data, accompanied by tables, figures, and an oral presentation. **No prior background in math, statistics or programming is required or expected.**

The Chemistry of Food, Stephen Podowitz-Thomas, Visiting Assistant Professor of Chemistry

From the mix of fats, water, and starches that make a silky smooth gravy to the mix of temperature and time required to produce chocolate with the just the right shine, chemical processes play a central role in the preparation of the foods we love to eat. This course focuses on the application of fundamental concepts in chemistry and standard scientific laboratory procedure to the study of food. Analytical chemistry techniques will be used to study browning of meats and vegetables during searing, the relationship between the crystal structure of chocolates and their appearance, and the difference in the ice crystal size of ice creams made using liquid nitrogen as compared to conventional churning. Students will investigate how

parameters such as time, temperature, acidity, and alkalinity affect food preparation and apply these concepts in the kitchen by cooking, preparing, or baking their own food products. Through a combination of chemistry bench laboratory, kitchen laboratory, and lecture sessions, students will use college-level chemical study to understand what makes great food. The course will have daily homework assignments, a midterm and a final exam.

Summer Field Trips/Destinations

Reading Terminal Market/Chinatown
Magic Garden on South Street
Rafting on the Lehigh River
University of Pennsylvania Campus
Haverford House in West Philadelphia
Philadelphia Art Museum
Old City in Philadelphia
Bryn Mawr College
Penn's Landing
69th St Terminal