



Idaho State  
University

University  
Honors Program

# Weekly Update

August 24, 2021

## Savoring the Experience

A letter from UHP Acting Director Alex Bolinger

Welcome back, Honors students, faculty, staff, alumni, and friends! For those who don't already know me, my name is Alex Bolinger and I am serving as the acting director of the Idaho State University Honors Program this year while Shannon Kobs Nawotniak pursues some really cool research adventures on sabbatical leave. I am delighted to get the opportunity to meet and work with you this year.

One of my favorite parts of this year is that I have gotten the opportunity to meet several of you in-person. Two years ago, who would have imagined that we would be so grateful for the chance to just be able to talk in the same location? For all of the terrible and hard things that the pandemic has introduced into our lives over the last 18 months, it has also given us a unique opportunity – a chance to reset our expectations and consider what it means to savor the college experience.

What do we mean by “savor”? According to the Oxford Languages Dictionary, to savor means “to enjoy or appreciate something pleasant completely, especially by dwelling on it.” Savoring is usually thought of in the context of really being in the moment of enjoying a particularly good meal. Savoring involves appreciating the food with all of your senses – how it tastes, of course, but also dwelling on its appetizing smell, feeling its unique textures, seeing and hearing the conversation of the people with whom you are enjoying the meal, etc.

What, then, does it mean to savor your college experience? Importantly, it does not mean that you should pretend to be happy at moments when you are not. Nor does it mean that your college experience should be exactly the same as the experiences of those around you. (Spoiler alert: It won't be.)

Instead, my challenge to you in savoring your college experience is to be thoughtful about noticing all of it. Take time to celebrate all of the victories and joys, no matter how small: a good grade on a quiz; meeting a new friend; enjoying one of Pocatello's beautiful sunsets (maybe even from the top of Red Hill); basking in the energy of attending a live athletic event or performance on campus. Also, take time to reflect on what you are learning from the moments of frustration and adversity, which are often the most essential to enabling you to grow as a student and a person.

This September, the University Honors Program will be leading The Gratitude Challenge, with the goal of students, faculty and staff, alumni, and friends of ISU writing 400 letters of gratitude to people who have made a positive difference in their lives. As part of this effort to savor this return to in-person campus life, I encourage you to participate in writing letters, reporting the letters that you have written to our website ([isu.edu/honors/gratitude](http://isu.edu/honors/gratitude)), and encouraging your friends and family to do the same to help us achieve this audacious goal.

I am grateful to get to work with all of you this year and looking forward to the weeks ahead.

Alex Bolinger

# 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).

## UHP to be Featured Guests for ISU Alumni Association Town Hall

The University Honors Program will be the featured guests for the August 27 ISU Alumni Association Town Hall. If you would like to tune in, the Town hall will be aired at 2:00 p.m. via ISUAA's Facebook page. The link can be found at [isu.edu/alumni](http://isu.edu/alumni).

### Quick Reminder

August 27      Last day to add/drop early 8-week courses.  
September 3    Last day to add/drop full semester courses.

## Unique Opportunity to Represent the University Honors Program

The organizers of the Bannock County 9/11 20th Anniversary Memorial Event have created a space for an Honors student 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](mailto:alexbolinger@isu.edu).

# 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

## 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).

## UHP Advisor Contact

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## This is Your Chance to 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.

To create the videos, we are looking for a few Honors students who are willing 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. If you'd like to volunteer, please email Miriam Dance at [miriamdance@isu.edu](mailto:miriamdance@isu.edu).

## Science Undergraduate Laboratory Internships (SULI)

Are you interested in a paid internship at the Idaho National Laboratory?

The Department of Energy is now accepting applications for the Science Undergraduate Laboratory Internship (SULI) program, a paid internship program hosted by the Idaho National Laboratory and other DOE labs. Application deadline for the Spring 2022 semester is October 6, 2021. Students who are fully enrolled (or recently graduated), pursuing STEM careers, and US citizens are eligible to apply. See [science.osti.gov/wdts/suli](https://science.osti.gov/wdts/suli) for full details about the SULI program.

Boise State University and the Center for Advanced Energy Studies will host an Informational Webinar about SULI opportunities at INL and PNNL on Thursday, August 26, from 2-4 pm. See the attached brochure for details and Registration Link for the webinar. Direct any questions to [caes@boisestate.edu](mailto:caes@boisestate.edu)

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## KISU Radio Show Internship

This unique opportunity for seniors interested in science communication will help you gain experience working as a radio show host. Details in the flyer attached to the Weekly Update email.

## Honors Contract Reminder

For those of you planning to contract one (or more) courses this semester, remember that those contracts are due by **Friday, September 3rd at 5:00 p.m.** Here are some helpful tips:

- Before you chat with your instructor to ask about contracting the course, be sure to check out the Honors Course Contract Checklist at this link.
- Your instructor may already have ideas about what they want you to do, but it is also helpful to have some ideas coming into the conversation. Past contracted projects (in a variety of majors) have included ideas such as:
  - Complete the same deliverables as a graduate student in a 4000/5000-level course.
  - Work in a faculty member's research lab for an agreed-upon amount of time during the semester.
  - Write a research paper that explores and critically analyzes a current event.
  - Conduct a financial analysis of a local business using that company's financial statements.
  - Create a hands-on module to teach middle school students about a course topic.
  - Write a report summarizing interviews with practitioners about potential careers that you can pursue in that field.
- Please be sure to check out our Honors Course Contracts page at this link. This page has information on contracting courses, ideas for contracts, and we are in the process of updating a list (at the very bottom of the page) of faculty who have completed past contracts.
- Once you and your instructor have agreed to contract the course, please don't forget to fill out the Honors Contract Course Form, which can be found at [isu.edu/honors/contract](https://isu.edu/honors/contract). The deadline is Friday, September 3rd at 5:00 p.m.
- If faculty have any questions, feel free to refer them to the Honors Faculty Resources page at [isu.edu/honors/honors-faculty/honors-faculty-resources](https://isu.edu/honors/honors-faculty/honors-faculty-resources), or have them email me at [alexbolinger@isu.edu](mailto:alexbolinger@isu.edu) with any questions.