**University Honors Program**

**Honors Committee Minutes**

4/4/2025 @ 1:30p – 3:30p

Remote

411th Meeting

**Voting Members Present:** Alyssa Fulton (student), Bill Martin (LAS), Ches Thurber (CLAS), DeeAnna Phares (ULIB), Furkan Gur (BUS), Melanie Lytell (student), Melissa Clucas Walter (CHHS), Natalie Joy (CLAS), Nicholas Pohlman (EET), Tuba Azhar (student), J.C. LaBarbera (student – filling in for Sadey Havel)

**Voting Members Absent:** Melanie Koss (EDU), Jui-Ching Wang (CVPA), Kunal Patel (CHHS), Liz Atkinson (student), Sadey Havel (student)

**Ex-Officio Present:** Andrea Radasanu (Honors)

**Others Present:** April Buckley (Honors), Ashlyn Straka (Honors), Connie Storey (Honors),

Edye Cowan (Honors), Ryan Downum (Honors)

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The meeting was called to order at 1:30 pm.

1. Approval of Agenda
   1. J.C. La Barbera moved, Melissa Clucas Walter second, motion passed
2. Approval of Minutes – March 7, 2025, meeting

a. J.C. La Barbera moved, DeeAnna Phares second, motion passed

1. Staff Reports

a. Director – Andrea

I. Projects/News:

a. Honors Day prep

b. New curriculum prep (first-year seminar)

c. HCIR leadership & planning

d. Culminating Honors experience in Suitable (career readiness, Adobe, etc.)

e. Justice Challenge – recruitment, course build out

f. Admissions

g. Knowledge Creation collab with OSEEL

h. EDGE presentation on teaching in Honors

i. AI work group leadership/Conclusion of Carnegie application

b. Assistant Director of Programming and Communication/Scholarships &

Fellowships – Connie

1. Fellowships

a. Udall-find out in May

b. Gilman-8 submitted

c. Goldwater-Hannah Havel awarded Scholar

II. Lincoln Laureate [Nominations](https://niu.infoready4.com/#freeformCompetitionDetail/1961300)

1. CEET Mechanical Engineering: J.C. La Barbera
2. HHS Health Studies: Zoe Zwolen

c.  LAS History: Becca Katz

d. LAS Psychology: Natalie Cassady

e. LAS Biological Sciences: Vana Dakarian

f. LAS Political Science: Gina Fiorenza

g. HHS FCNS: Marinelle Ortega

h. LAS ENVS: Shea Walter

  III. [EYE Grants](https://niuits.sharepoint.com/:f:/r/sites/HonorsCommittee/Shared%20Documents/General/FY25%20Honors%20Committee%20Meetings/4%20-%20December%206th%20Meeting/EYE%20Grants?csf=1&web=1&e=Dzp3lv)   
 a. [Research](https://niu.infoready4.com/#freeformCompetitionDetail/1951488) 1(1)

b. [Study Abroad](https://niu.infoready4.com/#freeformCompetitionDetail/1951489) – 4(1)

You will receive an email next week from Info Ready to review and rank

each candidate in each category. You will have 2 weeks to enter rankings for

the 5 applicants (1 is still missing a reference letter, so it may only be 4 that

you need to review.) After I receive the rankings, if there is consensus on

who should and should not be awarded, we may be able to skip the May

meeting and have an email vote, if not, we will need to meet and discuss.

c. Associate Director of Academic Strategic Planning – Edye

1. Advising

a. Honors Priority Registration – 4/7/25

b. Admitted Student Days – 4/5/25 & 4/26/25

c. Transfer Orientation – 4/11/25 on-campus, 4/15/25 & 4/30/25 virtual

d. Waubonsee Honors Fair 4/17/25

1. Capstones & In-Course Contracts

a. Capstones - 49

i. Nominations for Outstanding Capstones due – 3/26/25

ii. Nominations for the Faculty Mentor of the Year due – 3/26/25

b. Virtual Capstone Panel Discussion 4/9/25, 3:00 p.m.

c. In-Course Contracts – Requests for completion will go out week 14

1. Honors Fellows

a. Chatbot Takeover 4/1/25

b. 2025/2026 – 7 new Fellows selected, 7 returning

c. Sergio Dondiego – Lead Fellow

d. Training for all 2025/2026 Fellows – Reading Day, 5/2/25

d. Assistant Director of Programming and Communication - Ashlyn

I. Events

* Huskies United, April 2-3
* [Honors Program](https://dog.niu.edu/giving-day/97544/department/97550)
* [Undergraduate Research](https://dog.niu.edu/giving-day/97544/department/97611)
* [Career Services](https://dog.niu.edu/giving-day/97544/department/103165)
* Spring Honors Day, April 13: 5pm, Duke Ellington Ballroom

II. Honors House

* Honors House Community Night: Caffeine & Canvas at Cast Iron: Paint and Sip Night, April 1: 7-9pm
* Honors House Faculty Dinner, April 7: 6:15-7:15pm
* Honors House Community Night: Trivia Night, April 8: 7-9pm
* Honors House Community Night: Bowling Night, April 15: 7-9pm
* Honors House Community Night: Honors Eggstravaganza, April 22: 7-9pm
* Honors House Finals Care Kits: April 28
* Honors House Community Night: End of the Year Ice Cream Celebration, April 29: 7-9pm
* Housing Sign Up for next academic year. Patterson West will remain freshman Honors students, Patterson East will be returning Honors students

III. Honors Engaged/Suitable

* CURE Engagement Activity
* Career Readiness Week
* Honors Admitted Student Day Game
* Badge Stacking for Associate and Full University Honors

IV. Social Media

* Follow us on [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/niuhonors/)
* Like us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/NIUUniversityHonors)
* Join the Northern Illinois University Honors Program page on LinkedIn

IV. Old Business

1. None

V. New Business

a. Lincoln Laureate discussion & choice

***Melissa Clucas Walter made a motion to nominate J.C. La Barbera as the Lincoln Laureate, Furkan Gur second, unanimous***

***Furkan Gur made a motion to nominate Gina Fiorenza as the alternate for the Lincoln***

***Laureate, Bill Martin second, unanimous***

VI. Comments from Floor

* 1. None

VII. Adjournment

1. Adjourned (next mtg on May 2 tbd at a later date)