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The University of Northern Iowa Honors Program and You

Eric Jacobs
University of Northern Iowa

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THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA
HONORS PROGRAM AND YOU

A Project
Submitted
In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Designation
University Honors

Eric Jacobs
University of Northern Iowa
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This Study by: Eric Jacobs

Entitled: The University of Northern Iowa Honors Program and You (Promotional Video)

has been approved as meeting the thesis or project requirement for the Designation University Honors.

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Date

Ronnie Bankston, Honors Thesis/Project Co-Advisor

5/3/06
Date

Joyce Chen, Honors Thesis/Project Co-Advisor

5/8/06
Date

Jessica Moon, Director, University Honors Program

My project entitled, *The University Northern Iowa Honors Program and You*, was meant to be a promotional video for the honors program here at UNI. The purpose behind my project was twofold.

The first reason why I choose to make this my final thesis project was that I wanted to learn how to use the Avid Express editing system. The Avid is a widely used program throughout the video production industry and I thought that this presented me the perfect opportunity to get some real hands on experience using a system that is so widely used by professionals in the video editing industry. By learning how to use the Avid editing program I would be able to gain valuable experience that will help me out later on in my professional career.

The second reason that I choose this for my thesis project is that I wanted to use my video production experience that I have gained during my time here at UNI to produce a promotional video for the university's honors program. I wanted to make a video that could be shown to incoming students as a way to help persuade qualified students to join the honors program. I really believe in the benefits that the honors program gives students throughout their college career. I also wanted to do a little something and give back to the program that has done so much for me throughout my college experience. Throughout my college years, my honors courses have been some of the most engaging, challenging, and rewarding classes that I have taken here at the University of Northern Iowa. I just wanted to spread the word of the benefits of the honors program in hopes that more students would see the video want to join and participate in all that the honors program has to offer.

There were many steps involved in the entire video production process, but from idea conception all the way to completion I have found this experience to be both challenging and rewarding at the same time. The entire process started with the creation of an idea and a message that I wanted to convey through this video. That idea was that I wanted to inform new and prospective honor students with some of the benefits and privileges associated with the honors program. Once I had decided on that I then had to develop what is known as a shot list. A shot list is a list of video footage that I really wanted to include in the video. These shots ranged from footage taken outside and inside of the honors cottage, footage gathered during honors classes, and other footage captured from around the university.

Once I decided what footage I needed to gather the next step was going out and actually collecting the footage with a video camera myself. I decided to wait until after spring break so that the outside footage that I did capture was as beautiful as possible. I also had to go through a process of scheduling times with various professors who taught honors sections of classes and ask them when I could come to each of their classes and gather footage for the video. This process was a bit challenging as I had a number of schedules that I needed to work around which really forced me to be well organized and open to more flexibility.

While I was in the middle of gathering my various shots to use throughout the video I realized that the video could be more persuasive if I included some personal accounts of how the honors program has helped other students besides myself during their time here at UNI as well. In order to do this I asked a number of students if they would like to help me out by sitting down in a studio and allowing me to interview them

about their experience with the honors program. This also presented some scheduling challenges that I had to learn how to overcome as well.

After I finished gathering all of my raw footage the next step in completing my project was to become familiar with and learn how to use the Avid editing system. Since this is a relatively new system here at UNI there is no real class that I could take where I could learn how to use the program so I was forced to teach it to myself. I did this by going through and completing the interactive tutorials that come along with the program. These tutorials allowed me to get some experience using the program before I actually sat down and tried to put together the video. Once I finished going through the tutorial programs I was ready to start importing my footage onto the computer and begin editing my video. During this part of the editing process I go through and examine all of the footage that I had collected over the semester and begin to refine my shot selection along with selecting the best shots to be used at certain times throughout the video.

Another step that I had to complete during this process was developing a voice over script for the video. I wanted my voice over to convey the positives associated with participation in the honors program. I decided to focus on the small class sizes which offer a better chance for student interaction with professors and the fact that honors classes are very discussion based. I also decided to mention the fact that the honors program gives out 50 scholarships a year to qualified incoming students. Another thing that I wanted to highlight in the video with my voice over script was the benefits of being able to have access to the Honors cottage and the benefits that are associated with that. Another benefit of developing a voice over script is the fact that it helps me decide what order I need to put my video clips in and what video footage I still need to go collect.

Once I am finished recording my voice over I was then able to go back to editing my video and putting video footage along with the audio that I just finished. Once I was done editing the video I then had to export the entire project onto a DVD so that I could present it and it could be used by the honors program after I was finished.

After all was said and done my final project consisted of a short informational video which covered all of the benefits of the honors program, a taste of what classes are like in the honors program, as well as personal accounts of how the honors program has helped other students.

It was important for me to do this creative project because it gave me valuable experience using the Avid editing program since it is so widely used throughout the industry that I wish to pursue. I also think that it was important for me to do this creative project because I think that it was the best way that I could use what I have learned here at UNI and give back to the honors program at the same time.

This experience was extremely educational for me. The fact that this was more of an independent study type project really allowed me to learn a lot about myself. I learned that it really takes a lot of self motivation to complete a project like this and that I can really pull something like this off if I put my mind to it. I also learned a lot about overcoming obstacles and being flexible which is very important during the video production process because not everything that you do is going to turn out exactly like you wanted it to. I definitely believe that I will be able to take the lessons that I learned from doing this project and apply them and use them later on down in my life. Overall, I believe that this was definitely a positive experience.