

SCHEDLER HONORS COLLEGE ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Alex Williams Oral History Interview Transcription

Narrator Name: Williams, Alex

Interviewer Name: Trujillo, Dianne

Date of Interview: 03/11/2022

Location of Interview: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (Remote Interview - Zoom Recording)

Acronyms:

DT= Dianne Trujillo (Interviewer)

AW= Alex Williams (Narrator)

AP= Advanced Placement

UCA= University of Central Arkansas

GPA= Grade Point Average

HB= House Bill

Interview Summary

The following oral history is the result of a recorded interview with Alex Williams conducted by Dianne Trujillo on March 11th, 2022. This interview is part of the Schedler Honors College Oral History Project.

Readers are asked to bear in mind that they are reading a transcript of the spoken word, rather than written prose. The following transcript has been reviewed, edited, and approved by the narrator.

DT [Dianne Trujillo] [00:00:04] All right. This is Dianne Trujillo with the Schedler Honors College Oral History Project. Today is March 11th, 2022 and I am interviewing Alex Williams, who is— Where are you right now?

AW [Alex Williams] [00:00:19] In Philadelphia?

DT [00:00:20] OK, and then are you at home?

AW [00:00:22] Yes, I'm at home.

DT [00:00:23] OK we will be talking about Alex's experience leading up to during and after their time of the Schedler Honors College. Please state your name and age for the recording.

AW [00:00:33] Alex Williams 24 years.

DT [00:00:36] And then what year did you enter the Honors College

AW [00:00:40] In 2016?

DT [00:00:42] And when did you graduate?

AW [00:00:44] 2020.

DT [00:00:48] OK. Alright so Alex, where are you originally from?

AW [00:00:52] I'm from West Memphis, Arkansas.

DT [00:00:55] OK, and then would you say that was a good place to grow up in or what was it like?

AW [00:01:00] I think it was pretty chill. So it's in Northeast Arkansas, right in the tri state area. So the town itself didn't have a lot to do, but it was a 15 minute drive to Memphis, Tennessee, where you could do anything you wanted. So, yeah, I really enjoyed being there and having a lot of different things to do, yeah.

DT [00:01:26] OK. And then who did you live with, like in high school?

AW [00:01:34] Yes, I stayed with my mom.

DT [00:01:35] Stayed with your mom. OK, and then what high school did you attend?

AW [00:01:39] I went to West Memphis High School.

DT [00:01:42] Is that a big or a small school?

AW [00:01:45] Oh, well, my graduating class is 360, but it was also the only high school, public high school in the town.

DT [00:01:52] Oh, OK.

AW [00:01:54] Yeah.

DT [00:01:56] So would you say that you kind of knew everybody then because everybody kind of went to the same school? Or— [Crosstalk]

AW [00:02:04] [Crosstalk] No— [Crosstalk]

DT [00:02: 05] [Crosstalk] Was no big enough—

AW [00:02:05] It was so big enough, definitely for sure, and we have three junior high schools, so. Three different junior high schools, and then we all came together for the high school, so it really depended on the classes you took. I primarily only new students who were in band or in honors classes because those were the only classes that I took. And there was an overlap. You would tend to take all honors classes and we didn't. It wasn't big enough to offer multiple sessions, so it's if you're in AP [Advanced Placement] stat [statistics] or AP lit [literature], it's only offered at one time.

So you would pretty much have the same schedule with people if they were in those honors classes cause they would take all of them. Band kids, I would meet some of them when I was in junior high, I was going into Dixie Band Camp, which was held at UCA [University of Central Arkansas]. Do different things like All Region auditions, All State. So you could know people in band before you went to school with them. We got to the high school together and you're in the same class throughout all the years, so once you know them you know 'em.

DT [00:03:34] Gotcha. Were there any other extracurriculars that you participated in?

AW [00:03:41] So we had things, but it wasn't really extracurricular. It was more like resume patterns. We had Beta Club, Mu Alpha Theta, and we would meet like once a month but it wasn't like we were— It would be before school or something, and we didn't really do much. So it didn't really count. I don't know.

DT [00:04:08] OK. And then I know that in our pre-interview you mentioned coming to the band camp at UCA, right?

AW [00:04:14] Mhm— [Crosstalk]

DT [00:04:15] [Crosstalk] What was that like—

AW [00:04:16] It was really cool. For me and a lot of kids, it's the first time being away from home. It's a week long camp. You audition, you learn your music, you audition, and then the week has social events. So you got a couple of dances. We go to Wild River Park, whatever the water park. Have karaoke night and movie night, so cool social things but them throughout the day you have rehearsals and sectionals.

And I've been to several other band camps before, and I think UCA does a good job of giving you downtime. Instead of such a strict schedule where it's rehearsal, this that lunch, OK, night time activity, you have time to walk around campus to meet other people to hang out in your dorm. So that was really cool. And one of the main reasons I ended up coming to UCA because a lot of the friends that I had met throughout the years were going to UCA as well. And so it's like, well, I'll go to that college because my friends are there. I had grown to know

the music faculty of the campus, and it had just started to feel like home because I had spent the last X amount of years every summer there, and so it's just really engaging. Because my school had a pretty good music program, but I was always like at the top, so it was cool to have like a week of intense rehearsals. And if we make the top three bands for the high school, then you have two concerts in one week, so it was very intense with having to learn a lot of music. And it was fun because you meet people at band camp and then [Laughs] the music world is funny. You have band camp in the summer, and then All Region auditions and concerts in the winter, and then All State in February. So it's little reunions here and there. So it's, Oh, I met you and you're from Fayetteville or Conway, but I say over here. It's— I would have chances to see them throughout the year. It's really cool.

DT [00:06:45] Mm hmm. Yeah. Was like the distance from Conway to West Memphis. Was that ever something that you considered? It's about two and a half or three hours— [Crosstalk]

AW [00:06:56] [Crosstalk] Yeah— It's two and a half hours. It's not a problem at all cause— My mom would take me to camp or if I would honor band at UCA, and then when I got old enough to drive mainly during my senior year I could go up during the year a couple of times to visit my Conway friends. So that was really cool.

But honestly, I think it's— I think it was a perfect distance because I had season tickets to the Broadway, to the Orpheum back home in Memphis. And so every six to eight weeks I would do a day trip home, and it was the main reason I would go home. So my family would get to see me and then I would get to see a show. So that was cool.

But I remember there being times where I was overwhelmed in school, and I would have friends who were from Maumelle or Little Rock. They could go home whenever they wanted to. And I feel that would have been detrimental to me because if I had a bad day, I'd probably just go home and sulk and let my mom come for me and end up not doing any work or anything. So it was cool to be like, Oh man, I had a bad day. Okay, well I still have things that need to be done. I can't run home and ignore my problems. So, yeah, I think it was a good distance, close enough to get there in a day, but far enough to where you can just— [Makes hand motion] [Crosstalk]

DT [00:08:21] Yes— [Crosstalk]

AW [00:08:23] [Crosstalk] Up and whenever you want—

DT [00:08:24] It's a good experience for some growth and some independence— [Crosstalk]

AW [00:08:28] [Crosstalk] Yeah— Definitely.

DT [00:08:30] Right. So would you say with Bandcamp and knowing people that we're coming to UCA, was UCA your top school or were there other schools that you considered? Going— [Crosstalk]

AW [00:08:41] [Crosstalk] Yeah— I never consider any other school because part of it was I was being lazy and I think I had just become a junior in high school. And my mom was kind of really on top of me. And she's like, “You need to start thinking about colleges.” And I'm like, What can I have a break? [Multiple Laughs] And so I was like, I'll just go to UCA cause

why not? I know people going there. I know the faculty, I know the campus. And so really no thought at all came about— No thought, no research or anything like that. I'll go to that school. And so I did apply to other schools like Fayetteville [University of Arkansas] and Tech [Arkansas Tech University] just cause I was going to audition there as well in case I needed some leveraging with if UCA wanted to give me like one dollar in scholarship or anything like what they're giving me two dollars, but [Laughs] I was too lazy to even audition there, so it was never a question whether or not I was going to UCA.

DT [00:09:44] And then how did you come across the Honors College?

AW [00:09:48] Yeah, my mom wanted me to apply. I was so opposed to applying, I did not plan to apply at all because in high school I had always been the smart kid to do the extra work kid. I'm like, I want to go to college and I want to be normal. I want to be smart, [Multiple Laughs] and I just want to relax. And my mom was hounding me, free tuition X Y Z. I was like, Whatever, I don't care. And I think it was the week the application was due. That's when I actually looked at it, and I remember thinking my English teachers classroom until like six pm the day before the app [application] was due, the essay was due. Oh gosh, what was it? The— [Laughs] the believing game, the doubting game [The Doubting Game and the Believing Game— An Analysis of the Intellectual Enterprise (Excerpts)] talking about that, and then my like personal essay. So it was very last minute.

DT [00:10:46] Do you remember what you wrote for the Peter Elobow essay? Your response to it?

AW [00:10:51] Probably a lot of nonsense.

DT [00:10:52] [Laughs]

AW [00:10:53] Honestly, that was the first time I had ever encountered writing like that, that was stretching your brain. I was like, I don't even know what I'm reading. Doubting and believing, what is this saying? And it just felt all philosophical. I'm like, OK, I'll get philosophical right back and just write words, even though I don't know what they meant. So I have no idea what I wrote.

DT [00:11:19] So what did you think when you had received an invitation to come in for an interview?

AW [00:11:25] It was pretty exciting honestly cause the way that I grew up— My school did not have a lot of extracurricular activities or options. So it's kind of like there's an honors program, there's a ceremony or whatever, I'm going to be there just because of my academic achievements. And so everything was always a guarantee. So with honors, I'm like, Well. The first time I was like, Ah will make it? Will I not? I was kind of the top of my class where I come from so sure, but at the same time that uncertainty is extremely competitive. There are several candidates with perfect GPA's [Grade Point Average], lots of extracurriculars who weren't offered a spot because there are limited spots of kind of I don't really know. I think I'll make it, but you don't know until you get the acceptance. It was very exciting. And cool to be offered.

DT [00:12:34] You were talking about how reading the Peter Elbow essay was something different than what you had read before, you'd never read anything like that. Did you happen to have Donna give you the lecture that day for I-Squared Day?

AW [00:12:47] Yes, that was— We had to write the essay about it too, and I was like, What? An on the spot essay? And I was always a good writer, but I would labor over my work and I would try to get everything right. So like, “Write an essay in fifteen minutes.” It was not it for me. I think I was able to get a few paragraphs down, but I think I was— I don't remember if I was discouraged or not cause it was kind of like, Donna just said a lot at me. And I remember being very distracted by her eyes because they're so intense, and I don't think I've ever seen anybody like that. And part of me is listening to all of these new concepts, part of me gazing at her eyes, and then what? Now I have to synthesize this information with an essay? Ah. So that was probably overwhelming. But I do remember that the group interview, I like that a lot.

DT [00:13:50] Really, did you happen to have Donna for that? Because you had Donna for Core I, right?

AW [00:13:53] I did have Donna for that as well?

DT [00:13:55] Yeah, that was after her lecture. So what was it like to be in a room with her because you were already listening to everything and it was like, Oh no probably— [Crosstalk]

AW [00:14:05] [Crosstalk] Yeah— I think, yeah, it was really cool. Donna was really sweet. Very nice, very encouraging and affirming. So. I mean, I'm sure everybody has the same mindset. Everybody's cream of the crop, the smart kids, so either you're used to participating

in clubs or you're the silent smart kind. So. Everybody was trying to be on their A-game and take opportunities to speak so that was the level of uncomfort. I got to perform. Oh, let me let me jump in and say this thought. And so it was cool to see that we were all trying and that whenever we would offer something— Cause sometimes you just say something to participate, but it won't be— It won't contribute anything. [Laughs] So it was very sweet when Donna would be like, “Wow, thank you for that.” Or, it would make us feel seen.

DT [00:15:03] Offered a little bit of affirmation like, Yes— [Crosstalk]

AW [00:15:07] [Crosstalk] Yeah— Yeah.

DT [00:15:09] Definitely sounds like Donna.

AW [00:15:10] [Laughs]

DT [00:15:12] So after r you left the day of the interview, do you remember having— What did you think of honors? Is it what you expected? I guess cause that kind of gives you a little bit of an introduction.

AW [00:15:29] Yeah I know they said that that's how class will be ran with the small groups, but I don't think I really pieced it together. And so I think I was still very—

DT [00:15:41] What's going on here— [Crosstalk]

AW [00:15:42] [Crosstalk] Honors— Yeah, yeah. Um. I mean, I think I remember being excited by the conversation cause like I love to talk and think, and so that was cool. But it was very overwhelming because I was way more introverted in high school. I know the people that I know. And those are the people that I'm going to talk to. So now a lot of new people and people were coming up to me and trying to talk. My mom was there with me that weekend, and we ate lunch together instead of me talking to other people. I just wanted to stick around her. So I remember the social aspect of it being a lot, yeah.

DT [00:16:24] What was it like when you got in, and what was your mom's reaction to since she was kind of the one to push you?

AW [00:16:33] Yeah, it was really exciting. It was really cool. She was proud of me and she was like, "I told you." So— [Crosstalk]

DT [00:16:45] [Crosstalk] What were you feeling—

AW [00:16:45] Hmm?

DT [00:16:46] What were you feeling?

AW [00:16:48] I think I remember being excited. Part of me was like, Oh, here we go, more work. [Multiple Laughs] This was not what the plan was, but it'll be good.

DT [00:17:03] OK. Did you have— You had a freshman retreat?

AW [00:17:10] Yeah, I did have a freshmen retreat.

DT [00:17:13] What was that like? Where did y'all go?

AW [00:17:15] We went somewhere in Little Rock. I don't really remember. It was in cabins and stuff. I remember not really enjoying my freshman retreat. I had to get there late because I had a marching band rehearsal, and a few other honors members did as well. So we got there late, and it was like in the first two weeks of school. So it's like, I don't even know these people. I don't want to be going on a retreat with them so soon because like I said, I was introverted. So it wasn't really like me to go up to people. "Hi, how are you?" [Unclear] Whatever. So I really kept to myself a lot.

I'm always the type of person where I need structure. Icebreakers and things like that to feel comfortable talking to people. And it wasn't as far as I remember, it wasn't too much of that. It was some free time. There were structured activities and stuff, but I remember there being free time to hang around the lounge. But on top of that, I was just having some homesickness from some of my high school friends and just trouble adjusting. And I remember I was probably stressed out with music work and, Ah I'm away a whole weekend, but I have stuff to do.

I don't have too many fond memories about the retreat, but I do remember we had to read that book *The Reivers* by William Faulkner. I had no idea what that book was about. I'm not good at reading and comprehending. So I struggle to read it. And then they were like, read the book because we're going to talk about it at the retreat. We did not talk about it. I struggled to read this book, and we didn't talk about it. So that was the thing.

And then I remember there was this paper plate activity where we like wrote a sentence on a paper plate or something. And I remember Donna really liked my sentence and she told other honors professors about it. I don't remember what the prompt was, but my sentence was something along the lines of, I'm used to being from Northeast Arkansas where I can go between states to stay very easily, and always going into other places, but like Conway was really a self-sufficient city like you could shop, you could go out to eat, you could watch movies and it's in central Arkansas, so you didn't really leave. And I think my sentence was somewhere along the lines of, If I look to the east I look to the West, Arkansas. as far as you can see. So kind of trying to evoke a sense of feeling stranded in the middle of Arkansas. Like ah. [Laughs]

DT [00:20:15] And by that time, did you already have the group that you would be living with?

AW [00:20:22] Yeah. I already had my roommates. I don't really talk to my roommates much because the music schedule was so demanding. I'm not sure if I had eight a.m.'s that first semester, but I definitely had marching band practice. The music department was my life. I didn't really have time to be invested in honors socially. I didn't go to any mentor events, any of the Farris events because either I have rehearsal or I needed to be practicing. So I never really hung out in my room much. But I do remember here was a kid, his name was Zack, he was also a music major and also in honors, and he stay right next door to me. So if I was in the dorm, I was in his room cause we were doing music work together and honors work.

DT [00:21:24] Must have been nice to have somebody who was kind of going through the same thing because I've heard that like music majors, a lot of their time is taken up, you know, in snow. Most of the— [Crosstalk]

AW [00:21:37] [Crosstalk] Mhm—

DT [00:21:39] Time. So— [Crosstalk]

AW [00:21:40] [Crosstalk] Yeah—

DT [00:21:40] It is hard— Come and do things with the honors community.

AW [00:21:43] Yeah, yeah.

DT [00:21:45] So what were your experiences like during Core I and Core II? What did you think about the curriculum, the professors, and just the style of the conversations and stuff?

AW [00:22:00] Yeah, I definitely loved it. I'd never really been exposed to stuff like that. I remember I would call my best friend who lived in a different town after lectures, and I shared with him what we learned. And I remember always feeling so woke after class. Oh, I got big brain energy so much. Yeah, I love the curriculum. Some of my favorite— And I loved it so much like I've even talked to friends who are into philosophy, and I'll share with them some of our reading from like I remember— I don't remember what it's about, but I remember feeling like this it is. So like a baby in the family? I think that to do with a monkey or something. I like that one. I think our first reading was like, *Where Is The Self?* Is it in the

brain, in the body? That one was cool. *The Land Ethic* that was about like ethical treatment of farm animals.

I remember being an [Unclear] beings and stuff, and so I remember being taken aback by that one like woah. So definitely a lot of pieces throughout that time where I was like, Man this is some really cool thought and I really, really enjoy how diverse it is because you have your main theme. The search for yourself, but you look at it through different lenses like through religion. You get to explore Eastern religions, you look at it through nature, through finance, through the physical body. So it's a great example to bring in other styles of writing and thought processes, which is really cool. So I really love that a lot. I had Donna. I love Donna. I think she's a great Core I person to have cause she's very sweet and gentle, so it's these newly college kids and this big honors college [Unclear] trying to be smart or whatever. [Laughs] And so she was very nice and welcoming, and affirming.

Also remember, that was the year that Donald Trump got elected. And so that was a crazy time because I remember being on campus that day, it was very solemn, very— I would say eerie, but almost like a cloud over the campus. I was walking from Farris to the music department, nobody was out. It was literally so quiet. Like what's going on? And I forgot because I had found some bubbles. And I was going to blow these bubbles. [Laughs] And I was excited to blow my bubbles in music class and in honors. And then I get to class, to honors, and Donna's crying. I'm like, Whoa. [Laughs] And we just stopped. We just stopped what was planned or whatever, and we just took a moment to sit and to cry and process and to share. So that was really cool, that she showed up with her humanity and her emotions. I don't think I'll ever forget that because sometimes you can look at your professors on a

pedestal. It's they're being ridiculous, they're giving me all these things, they don't know what I go through. But it was very cool to see Donna in a very humane moment.

DT [00:25:41] Did these experiences start to change your perspective honors? Did you start to enjoy the environment learning about philosophy and like you said, seeing that Donna and other professors, they're more open to sharing a little bit about themselves with us.

AW [00:26:01] Yeah, I think at that point– Honors was always tricky, though, because it was a hard balance. I was enjoying the work. I genuinely enjoyed reading. Well, I didn't enjoy reading because I don't like reading. I enjoy the thoughts that I was being exposed to. But it was always hard because I'm not good at reading, and I have these dense, philosophical things. I had no idea what they were saying, and then I would have to write like a 500 word journal.

So on top of the music load, honors was a lot because of the workload. But when we would have large group lectures, we get to talk about it the next day. I always enjoyed that. And it was cool cause I would have Zack bounce ideas around and help me write my journals. But then you would get to class. And if you're reading these things and you had a revelation, you would be super excited to share. And then you can hear what other people thought that mm [Snaps fingers] that was good.

So and then the professors– That was another thing I loved about Donna. I feel I would be egotistical. I'm a teacher, I got stuff to say about this. Listen to me talk for a bit. She was very much a facilitator. She would pose a question, and then turn the floor over to us. And that was just so cool. Just free genuine sharing and bouncing around like somebody would offer

something and then she would sit and wait and somebody was like, Oh yeah, that's a really great point. It makes me think of as though she would do that, and my discussion was genuine and authentic. And I remember that, it was really cool. Yeah, and then she would pose other questions or would guide us. And I'm just– I really like that a lot, and it was very different when I got to the Core II and I realized like, Oh dang. This is Donna doing this. And different professors do things differently. So, yeah.

DT [00:28:12] Mm hmm. And in Core II, did you have a community service project? Is that something– [Crosstalk]

AW [00:28:17] [Crosstalk] We did.

DT [00:28:19] Do you remember what that was?

AW [00:28:21] Yes, I will speak about this respectfully. [Multiple Laughs] I had Adam, and Adam was starkly different from Donna. Donna was structured. I love structure and organization. She was like, “Here's our agenda for the day our little grammar rule of the day.” Some announcements for things that are coming up in the week. Our plan of action, and Adam was kind like, “Well, what do you want to talk about today?” More loose, more free. And so I think I was under the impression that Donna's method was the way that all professors operated. And so I realized like, no, that's just how she ran her class. And so it was starkly different.

I had to adjust to Adam's style. I felt Adam talked to more his voices in the space more so, I just talked about how Donna might gave us the floor. And so these were like internal

conflicts, like, “Wait, what's going on? This is how it was last semester. Why wasn't it like this anymore? How do I fit in?” So dealing with that. But yeah, our community projects we dealt with— I think it was HB1259 [House Bill]. The bill about open carry on campuses. So we held a town hall for that and we brought a person out. I don't really remember much about it, because a lot of it— I will say was not organized, that well. I don't think there was that much direction from Adam. One class we wouldn't know what was going on. We would be trying to decide what we want to do the next class. Here's an idea. People have been reached out to. So I remember being confused like, “Whoa, when did this happen? What's going on?” I mean, it's like the town hall really just snuck up. I'm like, “Oh, I didn't even know the date for this thing.” [Laughs]

So I wouldn't necessarily say there was too much class collaboration on that. Obviously we came up with it ourselves and stuff, but I don't remember there being a lot of input within class time about how to execute it, and how to proceed. But something else, Adam is really big into puppets and stuff. So we carried large puppets around campus just to bring attention to the town hall. And it was over with— So it came quickly. It was over with quickly. And like I said, I didn't feel there was much collaboration. I definitely was active in the process, so it felt very anticlimactic when it came and went.

DT [00:31:30] OK. I wonder if that has to do with adding in the actual service project because you still have to read all these readings and have the discussions in class, but also incorporate. But I definitely understand what you mean.

AW [00:31:46] Yeah.

DT [00:31:48] Throughout Core I and Core II, your first year, did you experience any imposter syndrome?

AW [00:31:59] Honestly, I just [Unclear] I know Tricia would post about it every year on Facebook. I'm like, Oh, What's that? I don't know what that is. I didn't. I probably did, but I probably didn't recognize it. I feel I'm going through imposter syndrome right now. And so I'm not sure if I recognized– If I remember these emotions from back then, if that makes sense.

DT [00:32:31] Yeah, OK. So during our pre-interview, you mentioned Core III, Core IV, and I believe it was your core III that was life changing for you. Is that right?

AW [00:32:46] Core IV was life changing.

DT [00:32:49] OK, got you. Do you want to talk about that class and [Unclear] it was with Chad, right?

AW [00:32:55] Yeah.

DT [00:32:56] Anything, what was it like to have a professor that was outside of “the honors professors?” You know what I mean? Because he's not really just for honors. He teaches other classes.

AW [00:33:08] It was the same with Leah, I had her for Core III as well.

DT [00:33:11] OK.

AW [00:33:13] I mean, he was a new person because I know we talked about that you wanted to have all of the professors. That was kind of a goal in the back of my mind. But as I progressed through the curriculum and saw my schedule also with being a music major, we just have an insane amount of classes. So with me having so many classes automatically, I'm unable to even consider all of the options of honors classes cause it won't fit in my schedule. So as I progressed, my hope of being able to take all of the honors professors kind of washed away. And so it's like, I've never had Ellen or Doug or any of these other people. So it's like, Well, here's Chad, a person I haven't had before so it's not that big of a deal.

DT [00:34:09] OK. And what class did he teach?

AW [00:34:14] It was "The History of Rock and Roll."

DT [00:34:17] OK, and what did y'all- I'm interested like, what did you do- [Crosstalk]

AW [00:34:18] [Crosstalk] It was so cool- [Crosstalk] [Unclear]

AW [00:34:21] So we listened to so much music. Oh my gosh, it was crazy. So I told you last time about my Core IV adventure of being signed up for three other classes. This was a spring class. It was the spring of my sophomore year. They did not meet for the first class because it's a Monday night class from six to nine. They didn't meet the first time because of Martin Luther King Day, and we're out of school that day, and then I had to miss the second

class because I haven't decided to change before then. And then by the third class, I was like, Hey, I'm Alex. Can I get in this class? And then he sent me so much stuff.

Chad makes these really thick PowerPoints. Let me see how I can tell this. So on our own. We have to listen to a weekly playlist, and then we have some reading. That's what we have to do. And then Chad comes in, and he basically lectures for like two and a half hours.

[Laughs] And I had two weeks of that to catch up on. And I remember going home for the weekend and just being so overwhelmed like, dang, I play myself. [Laughs] This is way too much having to read all these slides, and in the slides there are a lot of article clippings and stuff. And just taking notes, I'm like, This is just so much information, I don't know what's going to go on. And so I was just very overwhelmed. And then I had to write a paragraph or something because you listen to the weekly playlist. [Unclear] You listen to the weekly playlist and then there's a Spotify quiz not on the exact songs, but of the artist cause he wants you to be listening. He wants you to be listening, so basically, let's say Dua Lipa was on our— *Levitating* was on our thing and then— Why did I pick her? I don't even know another song by her, but let's say another song by her would be on the test. And so you should be able to recognize her style of music, her voice.

And so that was the deal. And so I had missed that. So I had to do like a makeup assignment for that. I wrote a paragraph or whatever. And then I go into the actual classes in the presentation room. This is Monday, so I have a marching band. Marching band went right up until 6:00 and it often ran over, so I had to leave band early every Monday, 10 minutes early. And throughout the day, I would have to go grab lunch. I mean, go grab dinner and leave it in the Farris fridge, or pack dinner so that I could walk all the way from either the football field or the practice field. Come over, grab my food out of the fridge, and then come to class. So it

was always tight and I would sit by myself in that class cause I felt bad cause I smelled [Laughs] cause I had just been outside for two hours marching. And then I had to eat. [Laughs] So it's a lot. But yeah, so we get to class. We're doing the little, the listening quiz. And then he will have some open response things for the readings that we will have to read, and then he would have start talking to us about music and just zipping through his slides honestly.

So the pace was much more chill in the actual class. Just lots of music, lots of articles, lots of video clips. And it was insane just like learning about these great American traditions of the olden days, like the Dick Van Dike show, the American Bandstand, all of these TV shows that were important in introducing artists to the world, just these different platforms that I had no clue about. These different rock journalists who were big deals, these different magazines, just these different platforms. He would expose us to those all the time. And then just the content. He talked a lot. But I loved listening to him talk. I was like, "This class can go on forever because I just want to sit here and listen to Chad talk."

It was just great cause I remember just learning about stuff like the invention of the teenager. Apparently the teenager wasn't around all the time, but it came about after the Second World War because before then you were either a child, or you were earning money and you had a job. When the war happened, there was like an abundance of money and leisure time, and then this demographic emerged of kids who didn't have to get jobs because there is a lot more money, and they had leisure time, and then they liked what they liked. They were separate from their parents. Just how that was a big deal in life music, and you get all these girl groups, these "doo wop" groups singing these "teenybopper" love songs. It was just like, cool

things like that. We talked a lot about the social and cultural importance of music and the role that it played. And then I was able to just learn about a bunch of different types of music.

Because before then— When I was in high school, I was listening to a lot of— High school and earlier, I listened to Gospel and R&B because that's what— No so middle school and earlier Gospel and R&B cause that's what parents listen to. Then high school I became a top 40 person. Then my senior year I found this like alternative music station like, “Whoa, I really like how this sounds.”

The structure of the class was to look at the origins of rock and roll from its roots in Delta Gospel, blues and country. And then we went through the decades in the genres. So then we had basically just a lot of stuff. It would be three to four things per class, and so we're just live listening to a bunch of different artists. At home on our Spotify list that we have to listen to, so I'm just hearing different sounds, different artists that I had never heard of before. It's like “Oh, I really like how that sounds. That's super cool.” So that was just dope being exposed to new music.

And then that's when I fell in love with the Beatles because I knew who they were, but I hadn't listened to their music before. And we did a week on Sgt. [sergeant] Pepper's and I literally became obsessed with them. It was an obsession. I had a Beatles shrine on my wall. [Laughs] I feel just the exposure to different music, it really shaped my taste. Because at first music would just be on in the background, and then now, I'm listening to lyrics. I'm thinking about the effect it had on things. I learned how to listen to music critically. And so that was super cool. I was a music major. But like whatever. I didn't really have a relationship with playing my instrument, I didn't really like it because it was a job. Because of that class, I was

able to create a stronger relationship with listening to music cause I had felt like my niche, my jam. That's what music was for me. Listening to it. Always had music playing. It wouldn't be like that if I didn't take that class, just learning. Hearing different things and then learning the history behind them. It was really cool.

DT [00:43:15] It's interesting how you got there too, cause you said you had a bounce around between two Core IV classes, and that was– [Crosstalk]

AW [00:43:20] Yeah– [Crosstalk]

DT [00:43:21] The one that up with– [Crosstalk] Were the other two related to music?

AW [00:43:26] Donna's class was a film class.

DT [00:43:29] Okay so film.

AW [00:43:30] That's the one I was signed up for first. Then I took Whit's political– I never got into Donna's class because I changed before school actually started. I got into Whit's Political Art Class because I was considering it in and two of my other friends were also taking it, so I got in it. But it was too much work. And then I got into Chad's class cause I actually wanted to take their class from the beginning. But I did it because I'm like, "Let me branch out. That's what honors is all about." I ended up getting his class.

Another reason why I say it changed my life is because I develop strong feelings about listening to music. This is paired with other things in my personal, music teaching

experience. Basically, I wanted to teach people how to use music as a tool to make them feel better. And so it kind of shifted. It was a big player in me, shifting my career from being a traditional band director to wanting to be a general music teacher where you can talk about music that kids are listening to. “Why is it important? What does it mean to you?” That class had a large role in me wanting to do that.

DT [00:44:57] OK. I didn't know that it had kind of shifted your interest into what what you wanted to do as a career. So that that's a good thing.

AW [00:45:04] Yeah.

DT [00:45:07] I hope Chad hears this.

AW [00:45:08] Yeah. [Laughs]

DT [00:45:09] What did you end up doing for your Capstone [project] in honors?

AW [00:45:15] Yeah, I love my Capstone. I did a retelling of the lives of the 27 Club. The 27 Club is a group of musicians that all died at the age of 27. The big ones are Janis Joplin, Jim Morrison of The Doors, Brian Jones of The Rolling Stones, Kurt Cobain from Nirvana and Amy Winehouse. Also, Jimi Hendrix. There's just this myth that musicians are more likely to die at the age of 27.

The first half of the presentation with me arguing against that and debunking that myth. Then the second half was me explaining why just the life of being a professional musician, and

how all of these people have their unstable home lives and just issues set them up to burn out quicker in die at this age. I did a creative project where I was in McAllister in the forum, and I created like a mini museum. My speech started with me like debunking this argument, so I wanted to give guests time to familiarize themselves with the artist cause I didn't want to go through their bio. So I had like a little poster board for each one of them. I didn't think it was that much work. [Unclear] It was two paragraphs talking about their bios. Some pictures of that, and then Chad just brought in a bunch of artifacts. Albums that he had, magazines, and then all of these people were on the cover of the Rolling Stone. So I made a timeline of their Rolling Stone covers, just to help guests see like, "Yo, these people were existing at the same time. They were overlapping, they probably would have been collaborating and making music together." It was kind of my bibliography in person. All of the books that I could get from the library. I just had them there in person for people to look at and flip through. In one office, I had interviews going on. Just on a loop because I remember when I was watching interviews, I was like, "Oh wow, I had never heard this person speak before." I had only heard them sing. And so I was like, "Oh, I don't know, your voice sounded like that." I just had a short interview clips going on, and if people wanted to pop in and hear that, I had a slide show of pictures and then a playlist of music so they could hear their actual work. And so that portion lasted 40 minutes of walking around. I was able to chat with people who came.

Then I had this wall, this big poster that I made, for people to interact with the impact that the 27 club had on their lives. "What do these musicians mean to you?" They could leave a sticky note? Then I had some iPads set up throughout the room cause I created a website, a Google site, which was basically my bibliography as well. You could click through it, and it had a little guide sheet. "While you're here, check out these things." Some videos or some links or

whatever. Then it's like, while you're home, explore everything else because like everything was hyperlink to the original Rolling Stone article, or this article, or that to all these documentaries that I have found. It was all on the website, so that was there for people to scroll through and look and explore. It was quite a lot. Mini museum, and then I got up and I did my speech for 40 minutes, and that was that.

DT [00:49:23] Sounds like you were really invested in this project. I had a question, but I just— The beginning of honors is like a lot of philosophy, but towards the middle and end it was you got to focus on things that you really cared about. So did you really really like that? How did that change your perception of honors? I guess being able to dive deeper into things that you cared about, and having the opportunity to teach people about these different artists in your capstone?

AW [00:50:01] Yeah, it was literally so cool. I would talk to a lot of people about honors. Oftentimes, I would get very reflective around the end of the semester cause, you're going through it with the journals and the work and x y z and you're overwhelmed during the year. But then when you get time to breathe, you're like, “Dang honors is actually pretty cool. I actually really love it.” There's literally no other place where you can— You're given a space to, explore any topic that you want to. It's a passion project. That's how you can get so invested into it cause you pick it, you research it., I was kind of stressed out cause I got a late start [Laughs] Cause I did not— My mentor situation was not good. I had a different mentor during Oxford. Do you have mentors during then?

DT [00:50:58] Yeah I think— [Crosstalk]

AW [00:50:59] [Crosstalk] Yeah I had a mentor— Oxford was the fall of my junior year. I had a mentor that was not that helpful towards me. In spring, no capstone class, I didn't do crap. In the fall that's when my presentation was— I had nothing. [Laughs] It was very stressful. That's when Chad came on as my supervisor during the semester. Very helpful. It was just really cool because it didn't feel— Aside from me to starting late, it was overwhelming. But like when I was doing it, it didn't feel like work cause I'm like, "What? What this documentary? Watch this music video? This is me working on my project work? What?" That was just really cool that you get to choose how you want to engage, and how you want to present it. Literally, it was just the coolest thing in the world. I had to do a creative cause I'm like, "There's no way I've spent all this time and energy on this project to talk about it for 20 minutes on a capstone day. Like, No, I need everybody in their mom to be able to come and I need to be able to talk for as long as I want it." [Laughs] Cause I worked really hard."

I'm honestly forever grateful to honors for giving us that space. Like I said previously, I wish I had taken more advantage of it. With doing more soapboxes, issues in the public square. I thought about it when I was a senior or something. I'm like, "What? I literally wrote papers in my gen ed [general education] that I could have done for issues in the public square or so books. I have already done work that I've just kind of talked about. And so that would be something I would tell it's younger people. Get to know your classmates. really try to take advantage of honors. I couldn't just by my busy schedule. I could have taken more advantage of it. Cause there's really no other place like that. It's very student oriented, student centered, like, "What do you want to do? What do you want to talk about?" As opposed to, "Here's our prompt. Do this." We have the traditional curriculum that we do in class, but then they give us so many more opportunities to be our own scholars. Really cool.

DT [00:53:44] Do you want to talk about any of the soapboxes, or did you have any soapbox of your own?

AW [00:53:52] Yeah. So again, marching band. I couldn't do a lot of soap boxes, so soap box happened on Fridays, I think a three p.m. and I had a marching band at four p.m. A lot of times I was tired. I would just take a nap or something. Of because I didn't really go to that many soapboxes. I remember our mentors kind of being desperate like, "Anybody, please sign up for a soapbox." It was my junior year. I signed up for a soapbox, and I did it over a paper I wrote in Cha's class over an album. Cause we had to present it in the class, it was our end of the year presentation. The slide show was already done. I just literally had to condense it. It was really cool. Donna was there. I told him I needed to go first cause I had to dip, so I can get the marching band. My best friend Zac was there. It was really cool, and I had a lot of fun. I'm like, "Dang, I could have been doing this stuff all along."

DT [00:55:08] You did mention that there were some things that you did the honors right? Studying abroad?

AW [00:55:13] Yes, yes— [Crosstalk]

DT [00:55:13] Where did you go— [Crosstalk] and when? [Unclear] [Crosstalk]

AW [00:55:20] That was also very life changing as well seeing that the world bigger than Arkansas. Oh gosh, my junior year 2019, that summer, I went to England. Well to Great Britain for three weeks. It was a history trip. I didn't have a big honors community. I literally had four friends [Laughs] in honors. It was me, Zack, Lauren, Hunter, and we would go see

shows together. At Renolds my Fine Arts friends. Zack and Lauren were going on this trip, and we would try to get dinner together in the caf [cafeteria] once a week. I remember them talking about mermaids. I'm like, "OK, I don't know what they're talking about, whatever." They were going out of the country, and then I realized— Cause they had been talking about it since the last semester, and now it was like springtime and we were having lunch. Well, it was January, and I realized that it was like a history class, and I'm like, "I've literally just signed up for an online history class for the summer. What the heck?" [Laughs] I missed out a bunch of scholarships cause I found out about it late. I could still get the honors scholarship, but not like the study abroad one. Which I signed up for the class the very last minute, and I got it. I was going overseas like two of my honors best friends. It was just super dope, it was crazy. I don't think about it is so good.

The professor, Dr. Scribner. I adore Scribner. I'm excited right now. He's just so cool. There would have been no reason for me to know of his existence before this trip. He's just so cool. I really enjoyed him, and I'm very big about personal relationships. If I vibe with you. I want to keep in touch. When you go on trips like this, the relationships you create with your teachers are different than it would have been with you been in their classroom. It's a smaller group. You're literally traveling with them. It's different. He was super cool. I'm like, "What?" I'm not going to have spent the past three weeks with him and be like, "OK, see you never." So I would go to his office in Irby [Hall] once a month for office hours just to catch up and chat cause he was super dope. We became friends, actually. He's just super down to earth has given me a lot of great advice, just about career, personal things. He's just really cool. I invited him to my capstone. He was there, I just consider him a friend and a great resource to have. If I didn't study abroad, I wouldn't have known him. So that's super cool. He was like

one of the people I saw right before I moved to Philly. I made sure to go get lunch with him it's so cool.

I went to Great Britain with him. It was a history trip. He wrote this book about mermaids [Laughs] about how all these smart people believe in them. Let's say Einstein, he's really smart people. [Unclear] believing in fictional characters? That was his— what his book was about. They just keep popping up throughout history. People having accounts of them, people drawing them. That was his book. When we were in Britain, we were just looking for mermaids [Laughs] and just looking at old castles and stuff.

I'm kind of more of an experience person. I'm going to go do stuff rather than look at it. Honestly, after the third day I'm like, "Okay, cool. Another old castle, I get it." [Laughs] Once I got back, I'm like, "I want to go back. Oh, this is—" It just kind of opened me up to the travel bug. That had a big thing in my career shift. I did this fine arts camp every summer in college in Michigan, where I got to go and meet all these different people and be exposed to different ways of thinking. It was like two months long. I really enjoyed that. Then on top of leaving the country, it just helped me realize the world is so much bigger than we think. If you want to do something, you can literally do it. That's kind of— On top of having Chad's class it just gave me the courage to be like, "Yo, I want to be a music teacher, but I don't want to do it in this conventional sense." I wanna do something different. I may have to create my own path. Many people may not be doing it, but I can do it. It's just a bunch of different things that I can pinpoint. A lot of them focusing around honors and the opportunities that I received from being in it that really kind of shaped my career goals and aspirations. So I did that.

Then 2020 [Sticks tongue out] January, before everything went crazy, I was in Jamaica for 10 days with a program. We were teaching music to rural Jamaican school children. Through these experience's, I've been able to meet people. I'm still in touch with people that I met there. We just went to New Orleans together last summer. It's crazy– [laughs] the relationships you make through honors. And yes, with that being the case, I was feeling more confident to explore. I wanted to be abroad for more– I wanted to be abroad longer, so I didn't feel like a tourist.

I have found this type of music education called Modern Band, where you basically play music that kids want to play on popular instruments like guitar, drum set, ukulele. Very much not the norm in Arkansas. I won't get into the band politics, but that's what I'm saying. I can do this. I may have to go different paths. I may not know anybody else in my sphere that are doing this. Modern band is really big in the UK. I was going to go abroad for all of 2020. I was gona to extend my degree by a year, go to the Czech Republic, take a bunch of electives, knock out like a stray science course that I needed to get. I needed both of my sciences cause I waited [Laughs] I was going to knock those out and take some electives. Something I did not have time to do as music major. I only had time to take music classes for a bunch of fun things that I want to do that I couldn't. So I was going to do that.

And then in the spring, I was going to student teach at a school in the UK, so I could get trained in my own band, and I was talking to my college professor, “Is this an option? Can I do this?” And we had pulled the trigger on talking to the College of Ed [Education] about setting it up. Me finding schools and all of that, but then covid [COVID-19] happened, yay. So I didn't get to do that trip, but I felt encouraged and empowered because of honors. To even take that leap into this comfort. Going to two different countries, being completely by

myself and now there are opportunities for you to teach music abroad. I think something that was started through honors like. These dreams and goals, I can still do them now as an adult, and I can still pursue that even if I didn't get to take advantage of it because of COVID. When I look back at cool things that I've done or the direction that I want to go in with my career, honors can be pinpoint through everything. Just the opportunity and the experience, just having resources with somebody and saying you want to do something. Here's a platform. If you want to go somewhere, here's some money to help. That was really probably one of the most transformative things, because like I said, my high school, I didn't have a lot of extracurricular things. Honors just gave me so many opportunities to take advantage of.

DT [01:04:40] So talking about how the pandemic, the COVID 19 pandemic, kind of interrupted that semester, and you graduated in December of 2020, which things were still a little bit unstable. Not as much with jobs, but what was your experience like graduating and then trying to go out into the—

AW [01:05:05] Yeah. So the program that I'm currently doing right now, I knew about it about two years. Before— A plot for it, because a friend told me about it, so my plan was to go abroad and come back and do this program. That was affected. I had to move up my graduation date by semester so I could student teach in the fall. I just went ahead and applied for that program last year. I was like “Student teaching would—” I'm thankful for we weren't virtual, I have friends in different states where COVID hit harder, in cities like L.A. and Chicago's, they were locked down for real. We were able to be in-person and virtual at the same time. So I was actually able to build student relationships, able to have good working relationships with my colleagues and my job.

Right now, I'm kind of struggling to connect with the students and the teachers that I'm working with. So it's encouraging to know that like, “Yo, I've done this before. This isn't. That wasn't a one off thing, I can move beyond this year and have good experiences in the future, even though this is challenging.” So I'm very thankful for that and to have those relationships cause when I go back visit in a few months back, I'm going to go see those teachers because it was such a formative experience. I knew that I had this job in December and with things being crazy in the field– With me graduating halfway through the year, I never wanted to accept a teaching position halfway through the year cause that's a lot. To graduate and then find out a week or so later that you got a job at some other town in Arkansas to uproot your life, move away and start teaching on top of that.

Unnecessary stress when I knew I was moving away cause getting acclimated to the school community, coming in in the middle when things are already set up, the students don't know you. I don't want to do that, and I didn't want to do a long term sub position either cause I'm like, “The field is always going to be there.” I'm moving away. I want to have enough time with my friends cause when I graduated, I went into a new community into Chi Alpha and so I had just met a lot of those people. Literally had just met them. And so I wanted more time with them to continue to build and have proper closure and all that. So I'm like, “I don't wanna be stressed out from teaching.”

So I worked at a Chick-Fil-A for six weeks from March to the middle of April. I took a good two months off from school because I'm like, I'm not going to have a summer to be graduated in. I've been hitting it hard for four and a half years. I need a break. So yeah, I did that. Things were different for me cause I know people would normally have to apply and interview. But I didn't have to worry about any of that because I knew I had this thing coming

and I could afford to not be a teacher and still pay for rent and all of that. It wasn't really a struggle. I just got to enjoy being graduated from school and enjoy life in a way that I hadn't before. Like, "What? This is what y'all do? Y'all chill all day with your classes a day. What?" That was cool having freedom to be on campus, and sit in the amphitheater and look at whatever event is going on cause I did not have that time before. It was a nice little change of pace, a nice little break. Yeah.

DT [01:09:05] Okay. So at your current job, you said you work with ages K through eight right grades.

AW [01:09:12] Mm hmm.

DT [01:09:13] What do you do exactly?

AW [01:09:16] I work in a music classroom with a school district employee. I was placed there. It's kind of like student teaching again, except it's more flexible. I write lessons, I teach them a few days a week, I observe. Other days I do work with the art teacher, so I kind of just hop around different classrooms. Yeah.

DT [01:09:49] Is— Having been an honor student and kind of having the experience of a different learning environment, has that impacted the way that you run your classroom today?

AW [01:10:08] That's a good question, and it makes me feel kind of guilty. I'll just flat out say no cause I'm kind of in survival mode cause I've never worked with inner city students before, and so it's just a struggle to get them to listen to me. [Laughs] It's kind of like with

Maslow's hierarchy of needs, you got to handle that base level before you can go to self esteem and self actualization and all of that. And so it's just so much trauma in the city. Yeah, that I feel like some of the work, the deep thinking work that I would want them to be able to do. We can't get to it cause they're not being fed, their parents are arguing, so we can't really do much of that. But and it's also different cause it's not really my classroom. I just teach a few days a week, so that's a tricky dynamic as well.

But I would hope to, when I get my own classroom, incorporate opportunities for them to take in information and synthesize it and respond and think deeply. And so that's another reason why Chad's class was very pivotal in my career because it's like we're listening to music and we're talking about it. That's what I want to do with my students. So when I get my own classroom I want to have the freedom to talk with them cause middle school band is— They say keep your students playing so that behavior isn't an issue cause you can't talk instruments in your mouth. And it's like, “What? I wanted to talk to my kids. I wanted to be collaborative, but that's just not how it goes. That's why I was looking at general music. where you can, “What are you all listening to? How do you connect to that?” Ask deeper questions. A lot of what I saw Chad model. I feel I will be able to incorporate those honors principles when I get my own classroom in a— [Unclear] Inspired just by the general honors curriculum, but mostly by Chad's class.

DT [01:12:23] OK. Again, I really hope that Chad happens to listen to this interview. All right. So what would— If one of your students or just anybody that you knew asked you about the Honors College here at UCA. and they were like, “So what is it like?” How would you describe it?

AW [01:12:46] Yeah. I don't even remember, I used to have to answer this for people all the time. I would say it's a really great opportunity to expand your mind and be exposed to a bunch of different things. That's really what it's about, being exposed to things I would say it's full of professors that care about you, genuinely care about you and how you're doing, and they want to see you succeed, and they want to give you the tools for that. And I would say it truly is whatever you make it to be. If you are taking advantage of the opportunities and getting to know your classmates through mentor events. Cause that's what college is about, like what you learn and who you know. You're building those relationships with others, being the close knit community that they marketed to be. How cool is it that you live across the hall from somebody in your Core I. So if you're taking advantage of all of that, then you can be making relationships with the professors, with the classmates. Lots of academic opportunities. I would just say it's a place full of opportunities to grow intellectually and as a person. That's it.

DT [01:14:09] You talked about the relationships that you had with Vaughn and Chad. Do you still happen to talk to either of them, or any of your friends that were in honors?

AW [01:14:21] Any of my classmates?

DT [01:14:22] Yeah. Do you still have those close relationships?

AW [01:14:27] Yeah so I only have like three friends. [Laughs] I don't really get to talk to Zack as much cause he's a full time teacher. We know that we love each other and stuff, so I'll just probably see him when I go home. And then my other friend, Hunter, I'm going to see him when I go home as well. But it is hard when you— It's hard to do life with somebody that

you're not there physically with. So that was a struggle I encountered with Zack cause he graduated a semester earlier than I did. So he— When I was still on campus, he was student teaching, and then when I was teaching, he was a whole real teacher. So just different stages of life can get in the way. It's easy to leave marching band and be like, “Hey, do you want to go to “Los Tres [Los Tres Portillos]?” Do you want to go to the caf [cafeteria]?” As opposed to like, “Hey, we need to schedule a time,” and our schedules don't line up anymore. So we definitely are not in contact as much as we were in college, but I think the strength of the relationship is still there.

DT [01:15:36] OK, that's good to hear. Is there anything else that you would like to share that you didn't get a chance to? Or even just any advice that you would give— [Crosstalk]

AW [01:15:48] [Crosstalk] Advice—

DT [01:15:49] Current honors students?

AW [01:15:51] Oh man, one thing that I hate is that I didn't take notes for my journals, cause it's like. I read the words, try to understand it and then write the journal and then. When I would try and tell people like nowadays, like yo, I studied these philosophers and try to give examples of my brains I'm like, “You would not believe the type of stuff I was writing.” It's in some archived Google classroom somewhere. or I didn't take notes because it's like, well, if I just write the journal and then we talk about it in class the next day, then we move on from this. It's not like an ongoing thing. So I wish I like taking notes so I could go back and remember what we talked about. What my revelations were, what we talked about in class. I wish I had taking notes while I was reading and while I was in class so I could, “Oh dang

that's what we learned." Oh, I think that's probably it. Just take advantage of UCA and make time to be involved in other things cause that's how you meet other people. That's one of the most important parts about college, not just your coursework, but creating those relationships that will be beneficial to you later.

DT [01:17:26] OK. All right. So thank you for your time, Alex, and this concludes our interview.

AW [01:17:35] OK yay, this is so fun.

DT [01:17:37] I'm glad I got to have this experience.

AW [01:17:41] Yeah, you did. Great. [Laughs]

DT [01:17:43] Thank you.