

The Culture of Competition

HONORS PROGRAM GUIDE January 1, 2012 – December 31, 2013



HONORS IN ACTION

The Phi Theta Kappa Experience:
Honoring Scholars, Building Servant Leaders



PHI THETA KAPPA
HONOR SOCIETY



PUBLISHER:

Phi Theta Kappa, Inc.

EDITORIAL STAFF:

Executive Director

Dr. Rod A. Risley

Associate Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer

Ellen Carmody Roster

Dean of Academic Affairs and Honors Programs

Susan Edwards

Dean of Leadership Development

Monika Byrd

Dean of Service Learning

Jennifer Stanford

Creative Director

John McGee

Senior Designer

Renée Culpepper

Project Manager

Tracy Kleven

Web Editor

Tracee Walker

Additional Resources are Available Online

Resources include a detailed *Honors Study Topic* annotated bibliography, film list, and list of links to further web resources, Phi Theta Kappa's Leadership Briefs and other external websites.

ptk.org

ptk.org/honors

leadership.ptk.org

PHI THETA KAPPA HONOR SOCIETY

Center for Excellence

1625 Eastover Drive, Jackson, MS 39211

ptk.org 601.984.3504



CONTENTS



	PAGE
THE PHI THETA KAPPA EXPERIENCE: Honoring Scholars and Building Servant Leaders	
General Introduction	
Phi Theta Kappa Purpose	2
The Phi Theta Kappa Honors Program	2
USING THE HONORS PROGRAM GUIDE	
General Introduction	
Develop Your Honors In Action Project	2
Other Honors in Action Resources	3
Honors in Action Step by Step	4
Honors in Action Journal	5
HONORS STUDY TOPIC: The Culture of Competition	
ESSAY	6
THEME 1 It's All in Your Mind: Foundations of Competition/Competition and Psychology	8
THEME 2 The Games People Play: Competition and Sports, Recreation and Games	10
THEME 3 Too Big to Fail: Competition and Economics	12
THEME 4 Everybody Wants to Rule the World: Competition and Politics	14
THEME 5 It's a Small World: Competition and Geography	16
THEME 6 Food Fight!: Competition and Food	18
THEME 7 One Small Step, One Giant Leap: Competition and Science, Math and Technology	20
THEME 8 Making the Grade: Competition and Education	22
THEME 9 I Know What I Like: Competition and The Arts	24
THEME 10 Wait Until Next Year: History/Future of Competition	26
PHI THETA KAPPA HONORS PROGRAM COMMITTEE	28
PHI THETA KAPPA HONORS INSTITUTE TOPICS AND SITES	29

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Phi Theta Kappa's Purpose

Phi Theta Kappa opens doors of opportunity that lead to an enriching and well-rounded academic experience that enhances student success. Our Society serves students in over 1,275 community colleges around the world, honoring their academic achievements and encouraging continued academic excellence. We provide members collaborative learning opportunities as part of The Phi Theta Kappa Experience in an atmosphere that encourages the exchange of intellectual ideas and ideals as well as programs to develop their leadership abilities. These skills contribute to personal and career development and afford students the opportunity to have an impact on their campuses and communities in service to others.

The Phi Theta Kappa Honors Program

The Honors Program fulfills multiple dimensions of Phi Theta Kappa's purpose. It is designed to:

- foster a stimulating environment for intellectual growth and challenge.
- create opportunities for leadership and learning as leaders through service and advocacy.

For the first purpose – fostering a stimulating intellectual environment – the Honors Program foundation and focus is the *Honors Study Topic*. The biennial topic is an interdisciplinary, contemporary topic of interest related to global challenges. Members explore the topic with the multitude of perspectives that their personal experiences and academic studies provide. For the second purpose – creating opportunities for leadership and action – the Honors Program provides guidance through a process called *Honors in Action* for taking action based upon new knowledge related to the themes of the *Honors Study Topic*.

Honors Study Topic

The *Honors Study Topic* changes every two years so that it will always be a timely and relevant subject of importance to the human experience in a global context. This *Honors Program Guide* details the 2012/2013 *Honors Study Topic*, **The Culture of Competition**. Consideration of complex, real-world issues and further research into them builds the analytic and collaborative problem-solving skills necessary and valued in advanced academic pursuits, workplaces, and communities.

Honors in Action

Honors in Action is the process that provides opportunities to apply learning and practice real-world problem-solving by developing an in-depth, action-oriented project related to *Honors Study Topic* research. Academic research into the themes related to the *Honors Study Topic* is what makes the difference between *Honors in Action* and simply action. *Honors in Action* is informed action designed to make a lasting impact and contribute to the betterment of society. Through engaging in *Honors in Action*, students develop and demonstrate:

- awareness of the importance of seeking out multiple perspectives to augment understanding and improve decision-making.
- abilities to draw research conclusions and develop ideas to make a difference.
- effective planning and capabilities to initiate action.
- intentional and purposeful efforts to grow leadership skills.
- understanding of the need to involve others and work together effectively to enhance impact.

- capacities to lead and manage self and others to motivate, overcome obstacles, perform in complicated environments, and accomplish goals.
- aptitudes for assessing progress, adjusting to circumstances, and measuring results quantitatively and qualitatively.

Use This Guide to Develop Your Honors in Action Project!

Each component of this guide reveals *The Culture of Competition* topic in both familiar and unexpected ways through 10 themes. Explore the guide as a team so that you may choose the theme that best fits your interests and resources. Take advantage of the groundwork represented in the components below to build your exceptional *Honors in Action* Project:

Exploration Questions **A**

Each theme offers intriguing questions to help you better understand the theme's connections to *The Culture of Competition* topic. After selecting the theme for your research focus, the Exploration Questions can help you further refine the research you pursue. Be sure to use multiple academic sources offering differing viewpoints.

Tip: Make your exploration of *The Culture of Competition* themes FUN by including a movie that relates to one or more themes. (A list of suggested films is available online.)

Read All About It! **B**

The resources listed in each theme are a good starting place for your research. Keep in mind some themes will overlap so consider resources from other themes to provide different perspectives of your topic. Additional books, articles, films, web sites, and television programs highlighting *The Culture of Competition* topic are available online.

Tip: Select a book related to your selected theme and organize a book club discussion about it.

Honors in Action Project Examples **C**

Each theme features an *Honors in Action* Project example broken down into the critical components of a successful *Honors in Action* Project: Overview, Preparation, Implementation, Leadership Development, Action and Reflection.

You may use one of the examples OR you may develop your own *Honors in Action* Project based on careful investigation of your chosen theme. Remember, even one of the sample projects will still require extensive research to make a successful *Honors in Action* Project. Check out the additional sample projects online at ptk.org/honors.

Tip: Help others invest in your project by explaining the marketable skills they will gain.

THEME 1

It's All in Your Mind: Foundations of Competition/ Competition and Psychology

Is competition an inherent part of life?

A

Questions for Exploration

1. How is competition viewed by different societies?
2. When does a culture of competition emerge and what are the factors that influence its emergence?
3. To what extent is competitiveness a part of human nature?
4. What are the similarities about and differences between competitiveness and ambition?
5. In what ways do factors such as age and gender influence competitiveness?
6. What is the value of "keeping score"?
7. What does psychological research tell us about the effects of winning and of losing?
8. How does the level of competition change as the stakes and consequences change?
9. What are the reasons why some people refuse to compete? What are the consequences?
10. To what extent must we compete to succeed?
11. Is it possible to have a truly win-win situation where there is no loser? Why, or why not?
12. To what extent does the culture of competition encourage cheating? What other positive and negative consequences may result from a culture of competition?
13. In what ways do we compete with no intention to compete or compete when we may not be knowledgeable about who or what the competition is?
14. Do we learn to be competitive through nature or nurture?



B

Read all about it!

Brown, J. and Fenske, M. *The Winner's Brain: 8 Strategies Great Minds Use to Achieve Success*. 2010.
Brown and Fenske use cutting-edge neuroscience to identify the secrets of those who succeed no matter what — and demonstrate how little it has to do with IQ or upbringing. Through simple everyday practices, the authors explain how to unlock the brain's hidden potential.

Colvin, G. *Talent is Overrated: What Really Separates World-Class Performers from Everyone Else*. 2008.
Based on scientific research, Colvin shares the secrets of extraordinary performance and shows how to apply these principles. This book features the stories of people who achieved world-class greatness through deliberate practice.

Dweck, C. *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*. 2007.
Dweck proposes that everyone has either a fixed mindset or a growth mindset. A fixed mindset is one in which you view your talents and abilities as unchangeable. A growth mindset, on the other hand, is one in which you see yourself as a work in progress.

Summers, N. "Why Winners Win: The New Science of Triumph in Sports, Business and Life" in *Newsweek* (July 18, 2011): 44-49.
www.newsweek.com/2011/07/10/the-new-science-of-triumph.html
Neuroscientists, psychologists and other researchers are beginning to find surprising links between brain chemistry, social theory and even economics to explain why some people come out on top again and again.

For more sources go to ptk.org/honors.

8 "Competition is a process or variety of habitual behavior that grows out of a habit of mind." Willard Beecher

HONORS IN ACTION The Parent Trap

C

Overview

We have all heard stories about how parents try to provide an unfair advantage for their children in a variety of areas (education, athletics, the arts, etc.). This project brings the problem of "cheating parents" to the forefront by investigating the foundations of competition and calls for increased awareness and implementation of remedies to this problem.

Preparation

- **Selection of Theme:** It's All in Your Mind: Foundations of Competition/Competition and Psychology
- **Choose/Develop Research Questions:**
 - a. To what extent do parents inappropriately contribute to a culture of competition?
 - b. Why do parents participate with their children to foster a culture of competition?
 - c. What drives parents who cross the line in helping their children with competitions? Can these efforts be changed for the purposes of good?
- **Academic Research:** Research the extent that parents illicitly influence the success of their children in a variety of areas (academia, youth sports, arts, etc.). What causes parents to behave inappropriately to give their children a competitive advantage? Explore the impact that these efforts have on both the parent and child. Explore strategies by which parents can become more ethical in their parenting strategies while still giving their children a competitive edge. Determine the areas in which parents are more likely to engage in unethically gaining advantages for their children within your own community.
- **Analysis and Conclusions:** Your analysis and conclusions might include the answers to the following questions. List and describe the reasons parents get involved in both appropriate and inappropriate ways to give their children a competitive advantage. From your research, what are the most prevalent reasons? What are the psychological characteristics of parents whose own drive to succeed drives their actions on behalf of their children? To what extent is helping your children "cheating"? Where is the line between appropriate and inappropriate help? Determine how extensive parents' cheating on behalf of their children is in your community. How does that relate to the national numbers? Identify reasons why this cheating happens there and who are the most likely participants. Does this help with competition vary in different places, among different groups of people? What are the variables that seem to make a significant difference?
- **Determination of Action:** Based on your research about the foundations and psychology of the culture of competition, create a reader's theatre piece to present to education organizations on campus and parent/teacher organizations in your community about the dangers of parents unethically intervening in the success of their children's endeavors. The script could include secondary research as well as primary sources, including personal narratives from students who have experienced their own parents' overbearing behavior as well as parents who have worked to help their children enhance their competitive skills and those who have encouraged their children to do their own work.

- **Leadership Development:**
 - Workshop by Social Sciences faculty on survey/interview techniques
 - Seminar on public presentation/discussion moderation techniques by Speech/Communications professor
 - Reader's theatre training by Theatre professor
 - Project Management videos in Competitive Edge

Implementation

- **Leadership Roles:**
 - Developing a chapter research team
 - Serving as reader's theatre director and moderator
 - Recruiting and coordinating the presenters/performers
 - Publicity and public relations for the event
 - Event planning
- **Collaboration:**
 - Education, Social Sciences, Speech/Communications and Theatre professors and other educators in your community
 - Theatre professors and professionals in your community
 - Education/academic clubs/organizations on campus
 - Parent/teacher organizations in the community
 - Phi Theta Kappa members during regional workshop about organizing a reader's theatre production on campus
- **Action:** Develop a reader's theatre script dramatizing how parents engage in unethical activities to ensure the success of their children, the impacts these activities have on their children, and potential alternative parenting strategies. The script should utilize your research as well as personal narratives — in this way, anonymity can be preserved. Conduct a series of student-led panel presentations where the reader's theatre is performed followed by a student-led discussion of the issues presented in the theatre. Offer the presentation to interested college organizations as well as community organizations such as parent/teacher associations.

Reflection

- **Evaluation:** Your evaluation might include the answers to these questions: Were students genuinely affected by their parents' overly competitive behavior? Were parents receptive to both the information presented and strategies suggested? Did the experiences relayed during the discussions match the extent of the problem as illustrated by your research and the script? How many people participated in your reader's theatre production? How many audience members did you reach? What feedback did you receive from chapter/team members? From professors with whom you worked? From community members? From your college administration about your work? Do you have quotations you can include? How did you grow as scholars and leaders? What part of the project was most valuable to your learning experience? What obstacles did you overcome to complete your project? What might you improve if you were to repeat this project?
- **Future Implications:** To what extent will such panels have significant impact on parents' participation in creating a culture of competition for their children? What might your chapter do with this project if team members choose to repeat it? What might an organization do to replicate your project?

"The ability to learn faster than your competitors may be your only sustainable competitive advantage." Arië de Geus

9

Other Honors in Action Resources:

Honors in Action Planning Model

The *Honors in Action* Planning Model is an online worksheet that will guide you through the planning process for a successful project. Download the worksheet at ptk.org/honors. This can also be the foundation for your *Honors in Action* Journal as you record important details to be used later in the *Honors in Action* Project Award Entry.

Tip: When writing about your project's impact, don't forget to include measurable and immeasurable results. Immeasurable results can include quotes from participants discussing what they learned or gained from the experience, publicity received for the project/event, or the individual growth of the project's leaders.

Leadership Development Studies

Phi Theta Kappa's Leadership Development Studies offers lessons on key leadership skills used in *Honors in Action* - building teams, setting goals, delegating, guiding through conflict, making decisions, just to name a few. Log in to access these resources at leadership.ptk.org.

Five Star Chapter Development Plan

Chapters, follow the Five Star Plan to build your membership base, gain administrative support, and engage in *Honors in Action*. The plan is designed to help chapters organize their participation and receive local, regional and international recognition for their efforts. Visit ptk.org/fivestar for details.



Five Star Competitive Edge

Members, get credit for the skill-building activities you're doing through *Honors in Action* with this online professional development plan. Watch instructional videos (Overcoming Math Anxiety, Professional Etiquette, Making Great Presentations and Identifying Suspicious Sources on the Internet are a few examples) and build an online portfolio at the Phi Theta Kappa password-protected site my.ptk.org.



Hallmark Awards

What better way to reflect on a project well done than to submit it for the *Honors in Action* Project Award in the Society's most prestigious awards competition? Other categories offer recognition for chapters' College Projects (see Level Three of the Five Star Plan), and individual awards recognize members, officers, advisors and even college administrators. For more information visit ptk.org/benefits/awards/hallmark.

Honors in Action Step by Step

1. Read the *Honors Program Guide* and **choose** one of its 10 Themes. Keep reflective journals, minutes, or notes at each step, describing the process used to select your Theme. **Develop objectives** related to your investigation of the *Honors Study Topic*.

7. **Write the results** — using your journal and judging rubrics — for the Hallmark Awards (reflection).

2. Each Theme has a series of Questions for Exploration. **Consider choosing** one or more of these questions as a focus for research or create your own based on the Theme.

6. **Carry out the plan.** **Evaluate regularly** as you go along and make adjustments as necessary, and **assess** the results and **consider** future possibilities.

3. **Research the Theme.** Use at least 8-10 good-quality academic resources (academic or professional journal articles, books by academic/professional experts) and interviews with experts that highlight various ideas, perspectives and ways to approach the Theme.

5. **Develop a project plan and objectives** that include the chapter's

- (a) process that will be used for meeting your objectives,
- (b) leadership roles of individual chapter members and of the chapter as a group in meeting these objectives,
- (c) groups with which the chapter will collaborate
- (d) leadership development actions and/or events used for training the chapter and its *Honors in Action* Project leaders specifically to successfully develop the action component, and
- (f) the action component that addresses a need or needs at the college or in the community.

4. After researching, develop conclusions regarding the Theme. **Develop objectives** or goals resulting from these research conclusions — what can the chapter do to address a need at the college or in the community?



Keeping an Honors in Action Journal

The following lists pose questions inspired by Phi Theta Kappa's four Hallmarks of Scholarship, Leadership, Service and Fellowship and can guide your record-keeping and reflection as you use the guide to plan and implement your *Honors in Action* project.

Academic Investigation

- ✓ How and why did you choose a particular theme related to the culture of competition?
- ✓ Who engaged in the research?
- ✓ What study questions were the researchers investigating?
- ✓ What are the different disciplines involved in the theme and study questions?
- ✓ What are the varied perspectives and points of view to explore?
- ✓ What are the details of your research plan (number and type of sources, deadlines for reporting, etc.)?
- ✓ What sources did each researcher consult?
- ✓ In what ways was the research challenging and how did you overcome the challenges?
- ✓ How do you better understand what's happening in the world related to the culture of competition?
- ✓ How did the discussions on the topic, theme, and study questions proceed?
- ✓ What did you learn from analyzing and synthesizing the research; what are your research conclusions?
- ✓ How were the studies, research, analysis, and conclusions shared?
- ✓ What are the questions remaining for further research?

Leadership Roles & Leadership Development

- ✓ Who is already working on this theme and what can you learn from their leadership and strategies to address the issues?
- ✓ What processes did you use for setting goals, assigning roles, building a team, making decisions, staying motivated, empowering group members, and recruiting people for the project?
- ✓ What leadership lessons did you learn? How do you know that your leadership for the project was effective?
- ✓ What is the evidence for great teamwork, for example?
- ✓ Who are potential model leaders, mentors, and coaches for you on your campus and in your community?
- ✓ With whom did you make connections and what did you learn from them?
- ✓ Describe the details of resources you used and events you organized and designed to develop leadership skills necessary for the project to ensure greater impact.
- ✓ How did you and others overcome obstacles or threats to your project?
- ✓ What feedback did you receive from participants about the leadership of the project and how will you use the feedback?

Action

- ✓ What are the different ways you can overcome challenges related to the theme you chose?
- ✓ What specifically do you propose to do and describe how it is related to the culture of competition?
- ✓ Whom will you serve? (demographics, numbers, location, etc.)
- ✓ What organizations exist in the world that are engaged in actions similar to what you aim to do? How does their work inform yours?
- ✓ What organizations exist locally that are engaged in actions (service, advocacy) similar to what you aim to do? How can you augment or complement their work?
- ✓ What is the specific impact you intend to make?
- ✓ What are the details of your strategies and plan?
- ✓ How are you going to measure the impact (quantitative measures and qualitative measures)?
- ✓ What are the specific results and impact of your action?
- ✓ What are the reactions and feedback from the people and organizations whom you serve?
- ✓ What is necessary for the project to be sustained and grow?
- ✓ How could other chapters/organizations adapt your work for their use?

Collaboration

- ✓ Who are the different people and audiences with whom you can collaborate?
- ✓ How can you maximize the diversity and inclusivity for your project?
- ✓ What perspectives and points of view are represented in your group? What challenges and benefits does diversity create?
- ✓ What is your public relations strategy? How will you measure its success?
- ✓ What are the communication strategies you are using to keep people informed and engaged?
- ✓ What are the details of meetings and events for planning, information gathering, presentations, and debriefing and reflecting?
- ✓ What feedback do you receive from meeting and event participants about the connections they make with others? How will you use the feedback?

ESSAY The Culture of Competition

By: Susan Edwards, Dean of Academic Affairs and Honors Programs, Phi Theta Kappa

Nobody ever set their sights on second place. Who aspires to be almost remembered? There's a reason there are no giant foam figures saying, "We're number 3." No one wants to tell an average joke, make an underwhelming entrance, go out with a whimper. No one ever stood in the mirror with a hairbrush pretending to be the tambourine player. And there are definitely more kids dressed as Batman than Robin. We all aspire.

These words come from the narration for a 2011 Samsung® commercial for its Galaxy S™II phone. It speaks to the American market, though the model is sold internationally as well. What makes this commercial effective? We aspire to be number one whether we are talking about individual achievement or national supremacy. Part of the reason the American dream resonates with people is the enduring belief that it is possible for everyone to achieve it. While the playing field is not always equal, the ability for each and every one of us to achieve our dreams is within our grasp. Samsung has used its commercial to position the Galaxy S™II as a symbol of aspiration and success in a competitive world. We live in a culture of competition. Samsung's message is purchase this phone, and you can escape being average. Which, of course, begs the question, if everyone purchases this phone, aren't we all average? Can we all be number one? Gary Larson drew a cartoon more than 20 years ago of a flock of penguins in the middle of which one was singing, "I gotta be me! Oh, I gotta be me!" In *Discovery Magazine*, Ed Young uses the cartoon to illustrate the work of University of California, Los Angeles scientists Kimberly Pollard and Daniel Bloomstein that supports the idea that social animals compete to be unique, especially within a large group. Youngme Moon writes in *Different: Escaping the Competitive Herd* (2010), that rather than go head-to-head with



PhotoStock10 / Shutterstock.com

competitors, it is important to break away from the "competitive treadmill" and find a way to offer something meaningful and different to society. Samsung aspires to tap into that desire to stand out. Its tagline for the Galaxy S™II is "everything but ordinary."

We live in a world where marketing such as Samsung's ad is ubiquitous. Does that mean, though, we live in a culture of competition? Marketing and advertising are characteristics, rather than the full measure of our competitive culture. According to author and Harvard Business School professor, Michael F. Porter in *On Competition* (2008), "Competition is one of society's most powerful forces for making things better in many fields of human endeavor. That is truer today than ever before, as competition has intensified dramatically over the last several decades in almost all domains." We live in a culture of competition that transcends geography. Nations must compete with one another in global markets and for natural resources. Businesses must compete and so must arts organizations, educational institutions, health care providers and non-profits as collective needs grow and collective resources seemingly grow scarcer.

We also live in a culture that ranks just about everything. With the click of a mouse, we can learn the top grossing films, richest people in the world, top colleges and universities, top ranked sports teams, Tony® award winners, best companies to work for, nations with highest percentage of college completion and best places to retire. We have global competitions for nearly everything,



from the sublime — International Chopin Competition, Nobel Prizes and international wine competitions — to the seemingly trivial, even ridiculous — annual Cheese Rolling competition in Gloucestershire, United Kingdom, Alaska Bush Pilots Short Take Off competition and the Miss Longest Hair competition, all of which can be viewed on YouTube. Sociologists suggest competitions such as the Miss America Pageant, Super Bowl and Academy Awards unlock clues to the culture of competition in the United States. Author Franklin Foer wrote *How Soccer Explains the World* (2005) to help us understand the role competition plays as an international, social, economic, political and cultural force. While admitting soccer and the competition among fans can reinforce hatred and cultural stereotypes, Foer maintains it has also been a force for progress as evidenced by thousands of Iranian women who collectively forced police to allow them to enter a men-only stadium to celebrate the victory of their national team in an international competition. "Today," James Case argues in *Competition: The Birth of a New Science* (2007), "there are instructional DVDs, schools, summer camps, and year-round training facilities to improve performance in golf, tennis, rodeo riding, ballet dancing, fiction writing, portfolio management, and almost every other known form of competitive activity." While *The Art of War* (circa 500 B.C.E.) may be the first book written about competition, the market is teeming with titles that help us identify, test and refine traditional competitive practices.



“A competitor will find a way to win. Competitors take bad breaks and use them to drive themselves just that much harder. Quitters take bad breaks and use them as reasons to give up. It's all a matter of pride.” Nancy Lopez



Competition can be a force for innovation and transformation. In *The Winner's Brain* (2010), cognitive-behavioral scientist Jeff Brown and neuroscientist Mark Fenske argue it takes more than innate intelligence to compete and win. It takes self-awareness, motivation, focus, emotional balance, memory, resilience, adaptability and brain care. They point to French sculptor Auguste Rodin as an example of someone who overcame poverty and multiple rejections from art schools among other failures and disappointments to fuel his talent and become one of the world's most renowned artists. World-record-holding swimmer Dara Torres defied conventional wisdom as well. In 2008 at age 41 she won her twelfth Olympic medal at the Beijing games. In her memoir, *Age is Just a Number* (2009), Torres writes about overcoming bulimia and her initial reluctance to get in the pool at 5:30 each morning to swim and resume training while she was pregnant with her daughter. In the years since she participated in her first Olympic games, she had learned that as much as she loved competition, swimming was not life. As she waited for the finals in the 50-meter race in Beijing with other competitors, she recounts, "We were the eight fastest female swimmers in the world. We'd already won. I wanted to enjoy the experience. I wanted them to enjoy the experience. I knew we were all going out there to try to beat each other, and believe me, I wanted to win. But I felt the occasion called for a joke. 'Anybody else hot? Or is it just me?'" she called out to the other swimmers. "I feel like I'm in menopause." Torres used humor to calm people's nerves, but she had used self-awareness, focus and adaptability to get to the finals. She knew what Geoff Colvin espouses in

Talent is Overrated (2008): hard work, even when it is not fun, understanding what types of work need to be done to achieve a certain result and willingness to practice alone for hours are keys to success.

If competition is everywhere, are we inherently competitive? Is the culture of competition universal? In *No Contest: The Case Against Competition* (1992), Alfie Kohn contends that competition is not inevitable. It is, according to Kohn, uniquely American. He cited many examples, from the Zuni and Iroquois Indians to Israeli kibbutzes and rural Mexican towns where cooperation was more common than competition. Desmond Tutu, in an address before the 2011 World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, argued it is more universal, "We worship at the temple of cutthroat competition. We have become quite obsessional about competition. In our culture we set high store by success. The most horrible thing is to fail. The pressure is so great." For Archbishop Tutu, something is off when stomach ulcers become status symbols related to how hard we work. We often ask, "Is it profitable?" he suggested, when we should be asking "Is it right?"



Perhaps we don't have to choose between competition and cooperation. Ray Noorda, Novell founder, coined the phrase "coopetition" which utilizes mathematical game theory to explain how competing and cooperating at the same time can help businesses succeed. Could coopetition be the solution to the problem to which Tutu referred in his message to the World Economic Forum, or is it just another form of competition in which corporations with common interests work together to maximize market share? Does it go beyond profit motives to a system where success is not a zero sum game? To what extent do businesses as diverse as American Airlines®, Intel®, Nintendo®,

Microsoft®, Netscape® and Apple® bank on it to help them survive in lean and competitive economic times?

Phi Theta Kappa has its own culture of competition. Everything we do is designed to help students successfully complete their education and then go out into the world to make a positive difference. Our Competitive Edge curriculum offers members tools and opportunities for personal and professional growth. Our Hites, Guistwhite, Leaders of Promise and other scholarships reward our best and brightest members with funds to continue their studies. The Hallmark Awards program recognizes top chapters and distinguished work done by individuals each year at our Annual Convention. In what ways do the competitive aspects of our Society's programs enhance our mission? In what ways can we improve? Over the next two years, consider these questions as you examine the themes related to *The Culture of Competition*. We hope you will aspire to grow as scholars and leaders who understand how we should compete and cooperate in ways that address the world's most pressing challenges with intention, persistence, reflection and meaning.

On your mark, get set, go!



THEME 1

It's All in Your Mind: Foundations of Competition/ Competition and Psychology

Is competition an inherent part of life?



Questions for Exploration

1. How is competition viewed by different societies?
2. When does a culture of competition emerge and what are the factors that influence its emergence?
3. To what extent is competitiveness a part of human nature?
4. What are the similarities about and differences between competitiveness and ambition?
5. In what ways do factors such as age and gender influence competitiveness?
6. What is the value of “keeping score”?
7. What does psychological research tell us about the effects of winning and of losing?
8. How does the level of competition change as the stakes and consequences change?
9. What are the reasons why some people refuse to compete? What are the consequences?
10. To what extent must we compete to succeed?
11. Is it possible to have a truly win-win situation where there is no loser? Why, or why not?
12. To what extent does the culture of competition encourage cheating? What other positive and negative consequences may result from a culture of competition?
13. In what ways do we compete with no intention to compete or compete when we may not be knowledgeable about who or what the competition is?
14. Do we learn to be competitive through nature or nurture?

Read all about it!

Brown, J. and Fenske, M. *The Winner's Brain: 8 Strategies Great Minds Use to Achieve Success*. 2010.

Brown and Fenske use cutting-edge neuroscience to identify the secrets of those who succeed no matter what — and demonstrate how little it has to do with IQ or upbringing. Through simple everyday practices, the authors explain how to unlock the brain's hidden potential.

Colvin, G. *Talent Is Overrated: What Really Separates World-Class Performers from Everyone Else*. 2008.

Based on scientific research, Colvin shares the secrets of extraordinary performance and shows how to apply these principles. This book features the stories of people who achieved world-class greatness through deliberate practice.

Dweck, C. *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*. 2007.

Dweck proposes that everyone has either a fixed mindset or a growth mindset. A fixed mindset is one in which you view your talents and abilities as unchangeable. A growth mindset, on the other hand, is one in which you see yourself as a work in progress.

Summers, N. “Why Winners Win: The New Science of Triumph in Sports, Business and Life” in *Newsweek* (July 18, 2011): 44-49.

www.newsweek.com/2011/07/10/the-new-science-of-triumph.html
Neuroscientists, psychologists and other researchers are beginning to find surprising links between brain chemistry, social theory and even economics to explain why some people come out on top again and again.

For more sources go to ptk.org/honors.

HONORS IN ACTION The Parent Trap

Overview

We have all heard stories about how parents try to provide an unfair advantage for their children in a variety of areas (education, athletics, the arts, etc.). This project brings the problem of “cheating parents” to the forefront by investigating the foundations of competition and calls for increased awareness and implementation of remedies to this problem.

Preparation

- **Selection of Theme:** It's All in Your Mind: Foundations of Competition/Competition and Psychology
- **Choose/Develop Research Questions:**
 - a. To what extent do parents inappropriately contribute to a culture of competition?
 - b. Why do parents participate with their children to foster a culture of competition?
 - c. What drives parents who cross the line in helping their children with competitions? Can these efforts be changed for the purposes of good?
- **Academic Research:** Research the extent that parents illicitly influence the success of their children in a variety of areas (academia, youth sports, arts, etc.). What causes parents to behave inappropriately to give their children a competitive advantage? Explore the impact that these efforts have on both the parent and child. Explore strategies by which parents can become more ethical in their parenting strategies while still giving their children a competitive edge. Determine the areas in which parents are more likely to engage in unethically gaining advantages for their children within your own community.
- **Analysis and Conclusions:** Your analysis and conclusions might include the answers to the following questions. List and describe the reasons parents get involved in both appropriate and inappropriate ways to give their children a competitive advantage. From your research, what are the most prevalent reasons? What are the psychological characteristics of parents whose own drive to succeed drives their actions on behalf of their children? To what extent is helping your children “cheating”? Where is the line between appropriate and inappropriate help? Determine how extensive parents' cheating on behalf of their children is in your community. How does that relate to the national numbers? Identify reasons why this cheating happens there and who are the most likely participants. Does this help with competition vary in different places, among different groups of people? What are the variables that seem to make a significant difference?
- **Determination of Action:** Based on your research about the foundations and psychology of the culture of competition, create a reader's theatre piece to present to education organizations on campus and parent/teacher organizations in your community about the dangers of parents unethically intervening in the success of their children's endeavors. The script could include secondary research as well as primary sources, including personal narratives from students who have experienced their own parents' overbearing behavior as well as parents who have worked to help their children enhance their competitive skills and those who have encouraged their children to do their own work.

Leadership Development:

- Workshop by Social Sciences faculty on survey/interview techniques
- Seminar on public presentation/discussion moderation techniques by Speech/Communications professor
- Reader's theatre training by Theatre professor
- Project Management videos in Competitive Edge

Implementation

Leadership Roles:

- Developing a chapter research team
- Serving as reader's theatre director and moderator
- Recruiting and coordinating the presenters/performers
- Publicity and public relations for the event
- Event planning

Collaboration:

- Education, Social Sciences, Speech/Communications and Theatre professors and other educators in your community
- Theatre professors and professionals in your community
- Education/academic clubs/organizations on campus
- Parent/teacher organizations in the community
- Phi Theta Kappa members during regional workshop about organizing a reader's theatre production on campus

- **Action:** Develop a reader's theatre script dramatizing how parents engage in unethical activities to ensure the success of their children, the impacts these activities have on their children, and potential alternative parenting strategies. The script should utilize your research as well as personal narratives — in this way, anonymity can be preserved. Conduct a series of student-led panel presentations where the reader's theatre is performed followed by a student-led discussion of the issues presented in the theatre. Offer the presentation to interested college organizations as well as community organizations such as parent/teacher associations.

Reflection

- **Evaluation:** Your evaluation might include the answers to these questions. Were students genuinely affected by their parents' overly competitive behavior? Were parents receptive to both the information presented and strategies suggested? Did the experiences relayed during the discussions match the extent of the problem as illustrated by your research and the script? How many people participated in your reader's theatre production? How many audience members did you reach? What feedback did you receive from chapter/team members? From professors with whom you worked? From community members? From your college administration about your work? Do you have quotations you can include? How did you grow as scholars and leaders? What part of the project was most valuable to your learning experience? What obstacles did you overcome to complete your project? What might you improve if you were to repeat this project?
- **Future Implications:** To what extent will such panels have significant impact on parents' participation in creating a culture of competition for their children? What might your chapter do with this project if team members choose to repeat it? What might an organization do to replicate your project?

THEME 2

The Games People Play: Competition and Sports, Recreation and Games

How do we compete when we play?



BrunoRosa / Shutterstock.com

Questions for Exploration

1. In what ways do competitive sports programs affect the culture of educational institutions?
2. To what extent do competitive and/or online video games enhance or detract from “real life”?
3. How do collaboration and competition interact in popular sports?
4. In societies in which every participant gets a trophy, how do you introduce healthy competition and the idea that there are winners and losers?
5. Should municipalities be responsible for providing recreational facilities for their citizens?
6. In what ways does the presence of spectators change/influence competitive events?
7. When does competition in individuals or teams become unhealthy and how does that competition manifest itself?
8. How is technology changing/affecting the ways we approach and compete in games, sports and recreation?
9. What impact do competitive sports, games and recreation have on economies and quality of life?
10. What ethical and/or unethical strategies are used in competitive activities to match or best current records? To what extent do we support the use of these strategies?
11. What role do economic conditions play in the relative importance we place on competitive or collaborative leisure activities?
12. How does socioeconomic status predict the types of competitive or collaborative leisure activities in which people participate?
13. To what extent can men and women participate equally in competitive sports, games and leisure activities?
14. Why is football (soccer) the most popular competitive sport in the world?

Read all about it!

DeMaria, Rusel. *Reset: Changing the Way We Look at Video Games*. 2007.

In this insider’s analysis of the increasingly violent and uncreative video gaming industry, DeMaria offers a roadmap for parents, educators, gamers, and industry insiders to leverage the inherent potential of games to promote positive personal and social change.

Rosen, Joel Nathan. *The Erosion of the American Sporting Ethos*. 2007.

Rosen takes a historical look at the nature of competition in American sports. Issues such as self-esteem, gender, and racial issues are addressed.

Sage, George. *Globalizing Sport: How Organizations, Corporations, Media, and Politics are Changing Sport*. 2011.

Sage examines the evolution of sport into a worldwide industry. The roles of countries, organizations, teams, agents, schools, and the media are explored.

St. Amant, Mark. *Committed*. 2005.

St. Amant discusses fantasy football, a competitive activity for some 20 million people. *Committed* tracks the progression of the hobby, from its beginnings in the early 1960s to what is now a multibillion dollar business.

For more sources go to ptk.org/honors.

HONORS IN ACTION The Perfect Athlete?

Overview

The motto of the Olympic Games translates from Latin to “Stronger, Faster, Higher.” Aspiration has long been a hallmark of athletic competition. New technology and advances in medicine have had an impact on the ways athletes gain the competitive advantage to go stronger, faster, and higher in sports.

Preparation

- **Selection of Theme:** The Games People Play: Competition and Sports, Recreation and Games
- **Choose/Develop Research Questions:**
 - a. What biological and technological advantages do athletes use to win?
 - b. How do we determine what is and isn't ethical?
 - c. To what extent do these enhancements give athletes a competitive advantage over people who do not use them?
 - d. In what ways do economics and the quest for celebrity factor into decisions to use biological and technical advantages?
 - e. Can an athlete succeed without them?
- **Academic Research:** Research what has driven the need/desire to use enhancements to compete in athletics. Determine the advantages of the newest technology and innovative design in sports equipment. Investigate the prevalence of steroid use and other biological treatments (blood doping, HGH, etc.). Determine the effects of steroid use. Examine the policies related to competition and technological advantages. Trace the history of performance-enhancing efforts. Consider how athletic competition has evolved over time and how our attitudes about it have changed. Determine what sanctions various governing boards use to monitor the use of enhancements and why they use these sanctions. Examine the legality within and outside of the athletic context.
- **Analysis and Conclusions:** Your analysis and conclusions might include the answers to the following questions. Create a timeline of the history of biological and technological advancements that have enhanced athletic performance. Include sports milestones that may or may not have been achieved via these enhancements. Determine how widespread the use of biological and technological enhancements is in competitive sports. To what extent does your research relate to your community?
- **Determination of Action:** Based on your research about sports and competition, review the ways the use of biological and technological enhancements are used in your community. Your analysis and conclusions might include the answers to the following questions. To what extent is that different from regional, national, and global levels? Prepare a presentation geared to middle and high school students and Little League teams in your community about the pros and cons of using the latest biological and technological enhancements to boost athletes' competitive advantage. Facilitate discussions about what it takes to compete as an athlete.
- **Leadership Development:**
 - Library training on academic research in sports technology
 - Workshop with legal expert on what is currently legal and illegal in sports

- Training in ethics and conflict management to address heated disagreements about determining what is and isn't ethical
- Training in creating and leading effective PowerPoint presentations and discussions

Implementation

• Leadership Roles:

- Developing and serving on a chapter research team
- Interviewing local athletes and members of athletic organizations
- Analyzing data collected during the research phase of the project
- Developing and presenting the presentation
- Contacting and coordinating with schools and community athletic organizations

• Collaboration:

- College and community athletes and coaches
- Library professionals
- Middle school and high school administrators and faculty members
- Middle school and high school students
- College faculty
- Phi Theta Kappa members with *Honors in Action* presentation during a regional convention

- **Action:** Based on your research about the history and current use of biological and technological enhancements for competitive athletes, develop presentations for middle schools, high schools and community sports programs (Little League) on benefits and dangers of performance-enhancing techniques in sports.

Reflection

- **Evaluation:** Your evaluation might include the answers to these questions. How have sports programs in your communities been impacted by performance-enhancing technologies and related sanctions? How are inconsistencies between programs resolved? What is ethical and what isn't? What did you learn about the ethics involved? What did you learn about the number of entities involved with upholding and/or challenging these rules? How many people from your chapter participated in the project? With how many students and athletes did you work? What feedback did you receive from the college and community members with whom you worked? Do you have quotations you can include from these groups? How did you grow as scholars and leaders? What part of the project was most valuable to your learning experience? What obstacles did you overcome to complete your project? What might you improve if you were to repeat this project?
- **Future Implications:** To what extent will such presentations likely have significant impact on student and community athletes? How might a group work with legislators and governing bodies to create reasonable, equitable decisions about biological and technological enhancements for competitive athletes? What might your chapter do with this project if team members choose to repeat it? What might an organization do to replicate your project?

THEME 3

Too Big to Fail: Competition and Economics

How does competition shape economics?



Questions for Exploration

1. How does the American worker compete in a global labor pool?
2. What is the role of labor unions in a competitive business environment?
3. How do locally-owned businesses compete with national chains?
4. What are the economic implications of businesses outsourcing work to remain/become competitive?
5. To what extent are global immigration policies tied to competition for labor?
6. Does the economic impact generated by professional sports teams justify the length to which cities will go to attract and retain them?
7. What should be the government's role in ensuring fair economic competition?
8. How are non-profit organizations affected by a competitive marketplace and competition for limited resources?
9. To what extent is Adam Smith's "invisible hand" concept applicable in the twenty-first century global business environment?
10. How does the concept of "the tragedy of the commons" affect the competition for unregulated resources?
11. What are the effects of taxation and regulation in the competitive marketplace?
12. How have some industries, like high tech and fashion, generated competition through planned or perceived obsolescence?
13. Why do governments lower the value of their currency to affect economic competitiveness?
14. Does computerized stock trading provide an unfair advantage for the institutional investor over the individual investor?

Read all about it!

Ehrenreich, Barbara. *Nickel and Dime: On (Not) Getting by in America*. 2008.

In 1998, Ehrenreich left her home, took the cheapest lodgings she could find, and accepted whatever jobs she was offered. Very quickly, she discovered that no job is truly "unskilled," that even the lowliest occupations require exhausting mental and muscular effort.

Kling, Arnold, and Nick Schulz. *From Poverty to Prosperity: Intangible Assets, Hidden Liabilities, and the Lasting Triumph over Scarcity*. 2009.

Kling and Schulz tell the story about the huge differences in the standard of living across time and across borders. It is a story that draws on research from the world's most important economists and eschews the conventional wisdom for a new, more inclusive, vision of the world and how it works.

Levitt, S. D., and Dubner, S. J. *Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything*. 2005.

Levitt and Dubner break the mold of the typical academic and government approach to viewing and understanding economics and the world of unintended consequences. Their approach is to view data as sets of information, and allow readers to strip away political and/or ideological biases as they form their assessments.

Roubini, N., and Mihm, S. *Crisis Economics: A Crash Course in the Future of Finance*. 2010.

Economist Roubini and economic historian Mihm view market crises not as mysterious black swan events, but as predictable events. They provide brief analyses of past events as a tool for introducing ways of viewing current market trends and forces as predictors for potential economic changes and future trends.

For more sources go to ptk.org/honors.

HONORS IN ACTION Documenting Economic Competition

Overview

There are growing concerns and discussion about illegal immigrants working in the United States and their impact on the nation's economy and job market. This project examines the positive and negative impact of the presence of millions of undocumented workers who participate in the American economy.

Preparation

- **Selection of Theme:** Too Big to Fail: Competition and Economics
- **Choose/Develop Research Questions:**
 - a. To what extent are undocumented workers participating in the American economy? What is the impact for citizens and documented workers of having undocumented workers participating?
 - b. How does the American worker compete in a global labor pool? In one that includes millions of undocumented workers?
 - c. To what extent are global immigration policies tied to competition for labor?
 - d. What should the government's role be in ensuring fair economic competition?
- **Academic Research:** Research how prevalent undocumented workers are in the entire United States, your geographic region of the nation, your state and your local community. How have the numbers changed over the last 10 years? How have they changed over the past five years? Ascertain the types of jobs done by undocumented workers. In what industries do undocumented workers flourish, even dominate the workforce? Examine whether this current wave of immigration is significantly different from those that have come in the past. If so, how is this wave of immigration different? If not, why not?
- **Analysis and Conclusions:** Your analysis and conclusions might include the answers to the following questions. In your analysis, be sure to examine both the pros and cons to the American economy of having a significant number of undocumented workers. To what extent is your local community similar to or different from the national numbers? How does that affect your community? Does the presence of undocumented workers represent a free market that could not or should not be stopped? If so, why? If not, why not? What are the underlying reasons so many undocumented workers have come to the United States to work? What role has economic competition played in these factors? How much would it cost some industries to remain competitive in the American and global markets without the presence of undocumented workers? To what extent would American consumers be willing to pay for products produced in the United States only by native and documented immigrant workers? To what extent would they prefer to import goods from another nation to control the use of undocumented labor? To what extent is it necessary to make changes to American immigration policy? What role does competition play in such decisions? To what extent do other nations face similar immigration issues?
- **Determination of Action:** Based on your research about undocumented workers and the role economic competition plays in attracting and utilizing these workers, host a panel discussion about undocumented workers and the use of undocumented labor in your state. Be sure to include panelists who can address all viewpoints regarding the issues related to undocumented workers.

Leadership Development:

- Workshop by Business and Economics faculty members on reading and analyzing data
- Training on facilitation techniques and effective question writing for the panel discussion
- Seminar on public speaking techniques to prepare for hosting the panel discussion
- Workshop by Phi Theta Kappa chapter advisor about establishing S.M.A.R.T.E.R. goals

Implementation

Leadership Roles:

- Organizing a research team
- Serving as moderators and facilitators for the panel discussion
- Inviting panelists and prepping them on *The Culture of Competition* and your goals for the discussion
- Organizing publicity and logistics for the event

Collaboration:

- Faculty from a variety of disciplines on campus to help with leadership development activities
- College administrators and staff to secure permissions and resources for the panel discussion
- Community members and college officials serving as panelists

- **Action:** Organize a panel discussion about immigration policy and undocumented workers and their impact on the local and state economy. Invite expert panelists and work with them to prepare for the event. Train chapter members to serve as moderators and facilitators. Work to ensure an intellectual approach to the topic for your panel discussion and, at the same time, to attract a diverse audience and group of panelists who will explore all elements and sides to the issue of undocumented workers and their effect on competition within the American economy. Include tables where people of all beliefs about the issue can find information about the issue and about ways to serve as advocates for their beliefs.

Reflection

- **Evaluation:** Your evaluation might include the answers to these questions. Film the panel discussion for inclusion in your campus library's collection and for reflection by your chapter. What went as planned? What problems arose, and how did you deal with them? What did you learn from the panelists? What feedback did you receive from the college and community members with whom you worked? Do you have quotations you can include from these groups? How did you grow as scholars and leaders? What part of the project was most valuable to your learning experience? What obstacles did you overcome to complete your project? What might you improve if you were to repeat this project?
- **Future Implications:** Was the panel discussion newsworthy? If not, what could you do in the future to make it so? How can you sustain your college's role in informing college constituencies about significant issues? How could another organization or chapter replicate your work?

THEME 4

Everybody Wants to Rule the World: Competition and Politics

What is the role of competition
in politics?



krutenyukoxana / Shutterstock.com

Questions for Exploration

1. To what degree is competition healthy or harmful in politics?
2. In what ways does the United Nations foster competition and/or collaboration?
3. To what extent does the competition of majority rule work in global and local contexts?
4. How does the monetary cost of competition affect political actions?
5. To what degree does the competition for viewers by the news media have an impact on politics?
6. Political issues are often labeled as liberal, conservative, labor, socialist, fundamentalist or left versus right. To what extent can more nuanced thinking work in a competitive political environment?
7. What role does the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States play in political competition?
8. Lobbyists are often criticized for increasing the competitive advantages of special interest groups. To what extent is this influence fair? Are we all members of some special interest group(s) that influence political competition?
9. In what ways does the nature of political competition encourage or discourage participation?
10. To what extent does political competition within nations affect global relations?
11. If people choose not to participate in the political process, to what extent do they forfeit the right to protest the outcome?
12. To what degree is freedom necessary to foster political competition?
13. What role can/should the minority and/or oppositional voice play in political competition?
14. Why have nations resisted the idea of multinational unified/global political systems?

Read all about it!

Acemoglu, Daron and James A. Robinson. *Economic Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*. 2009.

Acemoglu and Robinson explore the creation and consolidation of democracy and dictatorship around the world. They use game theory and mathematics to provide a model to help predict emerging democracies and dictatorships.

Axelrod, Robert. *The Evolution of Cooperation: Revised Edition*. 2006.

How can cooperation emerge in a world of egoists without central authority? Axelrod shows how computer tournaments and mathematical analysis demonstrate that cooperation based upon reciprocity can emerge and prove stable given a long future.

Roemer, John E. *Political Competition: Theory and Applications*. 2006.

time.dufe.edu.cn/wencong/johnroemer/PoliticalCompetition.pdf

Roemer presents a theory of political competition between parties. He discusses many factors of political competition including whether political parties are policy oriented or oriented toward winning. He discusses the role of voter preferences, and the concept of policy space.

Schelling, Thomas C. *The Strategy of Conflict*. 1981.

Schelling uses game theory to analyze the Cold War's nuclear arms race and the ways nations compete. He argues people are better able to cooperate when they rely on focal points, which he defines as mutual expectations, shared appreciations, preoccupations, obsessions and sensitivities to suggestions, all of which can be perceived intuitively.

For more sources go to ptk.org/honors.

HONORS IN ACTION Meet the Candidates

Overview

During presidential elections, candidates for national office have frequent and multiple opportunities to participate in debates and issues forums. However, candidates for local office often have no forum to discuss their positions on the issues facing the town, city, county, or region. This project addresses the issue of competition and local politics.

Preparation

- **Selection of Theme:** Everybody Wants to Rule the World: Competition and Politics
- **Choose Research Questions:**
 - How does competition for political office differ at the national, state and local levels?
 - What are the qualifications for local office in your community? How competitive are these political races?
 - What factors contribute to the ability of local candidates to get elected to office?
- **Academic Research:** There are two distinct areas of research involved in a project like this. First, what are the various formats the debate or political form can take? Second, what issues are most relevant to the type of elected office the candidates are competing for? What does it take to compete for local office in your community? Historically, what qualities/backgrounds have successful candidates for competitive office possessed? What forums exist that allow candidates for local office to talk about the issues with constituents? Why do local elections matter? What percentage of registered voters in your community actually vote in local elections? How do these voters access information about the candidates for office and their stances on the issues?
- **Analysis and Conclusion:** Your analysis and conclusions might include the answers to the following questions. Once research has been completed and the chapter has a good understanding of the issues of importance to the area served and the offices being contested, what are the issues and offices most likely to affect your college and community? How can you best highlight your research in a way that affects the ways people at your college and in your community make decisions regarding political competitions?
- **Determination of Action:** If there is no current forum for local political candidates to explain their positions on the important issues facing the community, determine how you can provide a valuable community service to help candidates competing for office inform voters of the issues and the candidates' position on those issues. If such a forum already exists, work to become involved and get the event moved onto campus with community college students taking on significant leadership roles.
- **Leadership Development:**
 - Workshop on public speaking/communication
 - Seminar on professional communication and public relations strategies
 - Training on how to contact, negotiate, and coordinate with the various candidates for local office
 - Work with Social Sciences faculty to develop questions for candidates during the forum

Implementation

- **Leadership Roles:**
 - Developing a research team
 - Researching the best format for and relevant issues to discuss during the candidates forum
 - Contacting candidates and coordinating with them to get their commitment to be part of the event
 - Organizing the logistical team planning the event
 - Securing permissions for use of college facilities
 - Contacting and working with local media outlets
- **Collaboration:**
 - Local media
 - Community political organizations
 - League of Women Voters
 - Student organizations on campus (i.e. Student Government Association, political clubs)
 - Campus personnel to arrange for venues, security, parking, and custodial services
 - Faculty for leadership development seminars and workshops
 - Phi Theta Kappa chapters at Annual Convention Poster Session
- **Action:** The chapter, working in collaboration with college and community partners, will present a political forum for local candidates focusing on the issues relevant to the powers of the office and the concerns of the area the office will serve. At the forum, the chapter will distribute campaign literature and issue papers to participants from the college and community.

Reflection

- **Evaluation:** Your evaluation might include the answers to these questions. How did local media cover your event? Did that coverage make a difference in your local election? When you followed up with candidates thanking them for participating, what feedback did you receive? What information did you glean from a follow-up meeting with any collaborative partners that helped you understand what influence your work had on the community and the election? How many people participated on your research team and on the team that organized your forum? How many people participated in the forum? What feedback did you receive from the college and community members with whom you worked? Do you have quotations you can include from these groups? How did you grow as scholars and leaders? What part of the project was most valuable to your learning experience? What obstacles did you overcome to complete your project? What might you improve if you were to repeat this project?
- **Future Implications:** To what extent has the chapter been able to create a community institution for candidates to get their message to voters? What else can you do to foster a strong connection between your college, community, and local political candidates? What is still left to do? What might your chapter do with this project if team members choose to repeat it? What might an organization do to replicate your project?

THEME 5

It's a Small World: Competition and Geography

How do regions and cultures compete?



Vadim Petrakov / Shutterstock.com

Questions for Exploration

1. What are the geographic factors that lead nations to compete or align?
2. What are the sources of competition in places experiencing conflict, such as the Middle East, Sudan, Northern Ireland, and Wisconsin?
3. In what ways do international institutions, such as the United Nations and the World Court, have a role in settling international competitions?
4. What role does geographic location play in the success or failure of a nation?
5. How has the emergence of the global marketplace affected the significance of geographic location?
6. How do geographically based trade agreements, like NAFTA, enhance and diminish local and global trade opportunities?
7. How has competition for resources complicated international relationships?
8. How does geographic location impact a nation's use of military power versus diplomatic skill?
9. What role does egocentrism play in our world view?
10. How has colonialism affected nations' ability to compete in the world?
11. How has access to resources, such as oil, gas and water, affected competition among nations and regions of the world?
12. How do the geographic features of a nation or region affect the health issues of its residents?
13. Did the space race of the 1950s and 60s represent a geographic competition? What are the future possibilities?
14. To what extent should governments respond to and help out after natural disasters?

Read all about it!

de Blij, Harm. *The Power of Place: Geography, Destiny, and Globalization's Rough Landscape*. 2010.

de Blij counters the idea that the world is flat. Instead, de Blij argues many people of the world face steep obstacles that prevent them from succeeding in a competitive environment. He looks at the impact of geography on people he calls globals, locals, and mobals (migrants).

Friedman, Thomas. *The World is Flat 3.0: A Brief History of the Twenty-First Century*. 2007.

Friedman argues that the lowering of trade and political barriers has made the world "flat." Globalization is fueled by individuals around the world who can successfully compete for lucrative jobs and resources.

Vietor, Richard. *How Countries Compete: Strategy, Structure, and Government in the Global Economy*. 2007.

Vietor shows how governments set direction and create the climate for a nation's economic development and profitable private enterprise. Drawing on history, economic analysis, and interviews with executives and officials worldwide, Vietor provides examinations of different government approaches to growth and development.

Joseph, Brian D., Editor. *When Languages Collide: Perspectives on Language Conflict, Language Competition, and Language Coexistence*. 2003.

This collection of essays demonstrates how the evolution of language has been shaped by conflict and competition within cultures. Specific emphasis is given to languages that have or are in a state of decay and the efforts to preserve them.

For more sources to to ptk.org/honors.

HONORS IN ACTION Modeling the World

Overview

The United Nations works to help nations collaborate and settle differences created by competition for resources, power and status. This project helps students better understand the United Nations and its mission and the ways nations interact with one another within the organization.

Preparation

- **Selection of Theme:** It's a Small World: Competition and Geography
- **Choose/Develop Research Questions:**
 - In what ways and over what do nations compete?
 - To what extent does the United Nations temper the competition among nations?
 - How does geographic location and access to resources affect the way a nation uses diplomatic versus military solutions to problems?
 - To what degree does the United Nations play a significant role in an increasingly global economic environment?
- **Academic Research:** Research the United Nations (UN), its purpose, history, member nations and committees, and its rules of operation. How effective is the UN in brokering solutions among nations competing for resources, power and status? What alternatives to the UN exist? Are they more or less effective than the UN? Explore the connections between nations that share borders, regional affiliations and/or interests. What types of competition and/or cooperation exist between the nations? What factors determine whether nations tend to cooperate or compete?
- **Analysis and Conclusions:** Your analysis and conclusions might include the answers to the following questions. Why do nations compete? What are the major factors? What has worked historically to stem conflict between nations? When and where has competition between nations been healthy and productive? When and where has it been destructive? Trace the evolution of the United Nations and the ways it has dealt with competition between nations. How effective has the UN been in fostering cooperation among nations? Why has it been effective or ineffective? How much do people on your campus know about the UN and its inner workings?
- **Determination of Action:** Based on your research about why regions and cultures compete and the role the United Nations plays in fostering cooperation among nations, establish a Model United Nations Club on campus.
- **Leadership Development:**
 - Workshop by Speech/Communications professor on parliamentary procedure
 - Training in articulating a vision to help communicate the benefits of establishing a Model United Nations Club on campus
 - Seminar on small group facilitation

Implementation

- **Leadership Roles:**
 - Organizing a chapter research team
 - Establishing a Model United Nations Club on campus
 - Writing the application to participate in the National Model United Nations Conference
 - Organizing a "Learn More about the United Nations Day" on campus and sharing information with local middle school students
- **Collaboration:**
 - Speech/Communications faculty on campus
 - Administrators and Student Development personnel to establish a Model United Nations Club on campus
 - Community members who participate in the "Learn More about the United Nations Day"
 - Students from around the world at the National Model United Nations Conference
- **Action:** Establish a Model United Nations Club on campus. Invite faculty and fellow students to nominate and encourage people to participate. Secure materials from the National Model United Nations to develop your club and the teams of students who will represent member nations. Work with faculty to use the materials to create curriculum and team projects that encourage students to participate in the Model UN. As a chapter team, apply to participate in the National Model United Nations Conference in New York City. Organize a "Learn More about the United Nations Day" on campus for local middle school students who are studying Civics.

Reflection

- **Evaluation:** Your evaluation might include the answers to these questions. How many people participated on your research team and on the team that organized your Model United Nations Club? How many people participated in the "Learn More about the United Nations Day" activities? What feedback did you receive from the college and community members with whom you worked? Do you have quotations you can include from these groups? How did you grow as scholars and leaders? What part of the project was most valuable to your learning experience? What obstacles did you overcome to complete your project? What might you improve if you were to repeat this project?
- **Future Implications:** To what extent was the chapter able to successfully create a strong, potentially lasting organization to study the connection between geography and competition? What else can you do to foster a strong connection between your college, the Model United Nations Club and the National Model United Nations organization? What is still left to do? What might your chapter do with this project if team members choose to repeat it? What might an organization do to replicate your project?

THEME 6

Food Fight!: Competition and Food

What are the relationships between competition and food?



Questions for Exploration

1. Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin once quipped “tell me what you eat, and I will tell you who you are.” How does competition for food affect who we are as individuals and cultures?
2. “What impact has the “green revolution” had on agriculture and nutrition worldwide? To what degree has the “green revolution” affected competition over food?
3. What do we mean by the term “comfort foods”? How did these comfort foods become prevalent in your region or group?
4. How do factors such as ethnicity, economics, and location affect what foods are available? How do these factors affect what foods are preferred?
5. To what extent does food reflect competition and/or collaboration? Why do some popular foods from particular cultures engender disgust or fear in other cultures? Why are other foods popular throughout the world?
6. How and why has corn emerged as a competitive crop that affects the world’s population? What are the pros and cons regarding our current uses of this crop?
7. Why have shows such as *Cake Boss*, celebrities like Anthony Bourdain and Cat Cora, food competitions, and networks such as The Food Network become so popular in recent years?
8. Chain restaurants, convenience stores, specialty shops, and easy access to so-called convenience or fast foods have engendered a great deal of competition. What are some of the concerns and claims about these foods, and how truthful are they?
9. How do guidelines, such as the USDA’s Food Pyramid and school lunch programs compete with or match parental and/or community food standards and/or realities?
10. How do competing ideas about beauty affect food choices? How does this differ throughout the world?
11. How does your diet differ from that of your grandparents or great grandparents? How have the changes in a competitive food market affected those changes? What are the effects of those differences?
12. Why is the diet/fitness business highly lucrative in the western world?

Read all about it!

Brownell, K., and Horgen, K. B. *Food Fight: The Inside Story of The Food Industry, America’s Obesity Crisis, and What We Can Do About It*. 2004.

Brownell and Horgen tackle the issues of food consumption, advertising, and America’s obesity epidemic. They argue there is no one root cause, or one single industry to blame for the problems of obesity. Rather, the combination of our desires for certain types of nutrition, consumer demand, agricultural processes, food technology, advertising, and mixed messages come together to create an environment in which obesity is endemic.

Nestle, M. *Food Politics: How the Food Industry Influences Nutrition, and Health, Revised and Expanded Edition (California Studies in Food and Culture)*. 2007.

Nestle tackles the paradox of affluence in American food culture: we are surrounded by a vast number of choices, and yet our nutritional inputs are declining. She helps make sense of the complexity of the choices and challenges consumers face in making nutritional decisions and understanding the impacts these choices have on the individual and on society.

Participant Media and Karl Weber, eds. *Food Inc.: A Participant Guide: How Industrial Food is Making Us Sicker, Fatter, and Poorer- And What You Can Do About It*. 2009.

A companion piece to the film, *Food Inc.* (2009), the text is a collection of essays speaking to the issues raised in the film. Of concern are issues of agribusiness, genetically modified foods, consumer demand, pesticides, biofuels, sustainable agriculture, food distribution, and other aspects of the world-wide food process.

Pollan, M. *Food Rules: An Eater’s Manual*, 2009; Pollan, M. *In Defense of Food: An Eater’s Manifesto*, 2008; Pollan, M. *The Omnivore’s Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals*. 2006.

In this trio of books, Pollan tackles issues of food production — ancient and new, traditional and agri-business — and covers the history of shifts in agriculture, food supplies, consumer demand, and product manipulation.

For more sources go to ptk.org/honors.

HONORS IN ACTION Lend Me Your Ears

Overview

Corn is an ever-present part of our world. In grocery stores, there are several hundred items with corn products in them. Corn is grown for human consumption, animal feed, fuel production, and a host of non-food uses. Each year, more and more land is turned over to corn production, and there are a growing number of companies working to create newer and more productive varieties of corn. Corn production is a growth industry and has provided the foundation for many new businesses, provides income for many areas, and promises to have more impact in the future. At the same time, there are concerns about corn as a product: concerns about the use of high fructose corn syrup and potential links to obesity and diabetes, concerns about shifts away from multi-crop to mono-crop agriculture, concerns over the use of federal dollars to support corn production, and so on.

Preparation

- **Selection of Theme:** Food Fight!: Competition and Food
- **Choose/Develop Research Questions:**
 - How has corn affected the world's population?
 - What are the pros and cons regarding our current uses of this crop?
- **Academic Research:** As a chapter, investigate the history and development of corn. When and where was corn first domesticated, and what are the cultural norms associated with corn by a number of groups? Beyond the more obvious foods, what other foods contain corn and corn products? In areas where corn production is high, what are the typical farming practices, and what other crops are grown along with corn? Investigate the use of corn as animal feed and what effects that has on animal production and consumer prices. Does research into new strains of corn have an effect on other agricultural studies, and how is that research funded? Set up teams to do the various levels of research, and a team to collate and synthesize the research done.
- **Analysis and Conclusions:** Your analysis and conclusions might include the answers to the following questions. Corn, once considered a staple crop for farm animals in the United States, is now a staple of the American diet. What forms does corn take? What competitors are there to challenge the supremacy of corn and its by-products? What role does the government play in the importance of corn as a cash crop? How do agribusinesses that specialize in corn production stave off competitors? How is the story of corn production and marketing a model of competition in the food world? In what ways is it unusual?
- **Determination of Action:** Based on your research about corn and the competition engendered by cultivation of the crop, organize a forum to discuss the connections between competition and food. Include the widest possible perspectives on the subject, including those of agribusiness executives, Farm Bureau representatives, local food advocates and nutritionists. Share your work with fellow Phi Theta Kappa members at a regional meeting.
- **Leadership Development:**
 - Workshop to develop communication skills necessary to conduct a marketing campaign
 - Training in the Phi Theta Kappa Leadership Development Program, particularly the unit on managing conflict which could be necessary as people's schedules grow hectic midway through the project
 - Organizing a book club reading of Alfie Kohn's *The Case Against Competition* to discuss arguments for cooperation and cooperation
 - Training in facilitation techniques to prepare for the forum

"We cannot ensure success, but we can deserve it." John Adams

Implementation

- **Leadership Roles:**
 - Reaching out to local Farm Bureau representatives and other community organizations for help with research and implementation of the action part of the project
 - Organizing the forum for college and community audiences
 - Providing the opportunity for local FFA and 4-H members to participate in and work with the project
 - Host a presentation of the topic at your region's *Honors in Action* Conference
- **Collaboration:**
 - Social Sciences and Agriculture faculty to help with academic research
 - College administrators, faculty and staff to help with logistics for forum
 - Other student organizations on campus to work together on forum
 - Community members who work with agriculture in general and corn in particular
 - Fellow Phi Theta Kappa members via an *Honors Study Topic* presentation at the regional *Honors in Action* Conference
 - Local FFA and 4-H groups and high school agriculture programs
- **Action:** From your research, put together a series of informational pieces to discuss the role of corn in our society. Host an open forum on your campus to explore the role of corn in current society and in your community. As part of the presentation, invite people who are involved in research or production, nutrition, farming, ranching, and so on to get a variety of viewpoints. Working with your media technology group, record the forum and post it for public access. Ask the participants to take part in filming a series of short pieces to discuss specific aspects of the corn industry they are familiar with. As a group, prepare informational literature on corn — nutritional information, uses of corn, the impact of corn on your local economy, controversies over corn production and consumption, and so on. If possible, work together on a single issue of corn to prepare a piece for publication in a revered journal or to prepare a presentation for an academic or trade association meeting.

Relection

- **Evaluation:** Your evaluation might include the answers to these questions. Looking back over the research and the project you developed, what are the key things you, as a chapter, learned? What methods of research worked best, and which were the least effective? How were projects received and which ones worked best? Which groups on your campus and local community did you successfully collaborate with? How many people participated on your research team and on the team that organized your forum? How many people participated in the forum? What feedback did you receive from the college and community members with whom you worked? Do you have quotations you can include from these groups? How did you grow as scholars and leaders? What part of the project was most valuable to your learning experience? What obstacles did you overcome to complete your project? What might you improve if you were to repeat this project?
- **Future Implications:** Are there aspects of your research and your projects which would be appropriate for further development? Are there aspects of your research or your projects which will invite future expansion?

THEME 7

One Small Step, One Giant Leap: Competition and Science, Math and Technology

What are the connections between competition and science, math and technology?



Questions for Exploration

1. What attempts have been made to reconcile competing scientific theories (e.g., physics – quantum theory versus Newtonian physics)?
2. How does competition across nations for math and science educators/scholars improve or diminish current educational programs?
3. How can mathematical game theory be used to study and predict: (1) terrorist activity, (2) military strategies, (3) business decision-making, (4) human interactions and behavior, etc.?
4. How can competition between and within species be modeled mathematically and scientifically?
5. In what ways do online/video games shape the culture of competition and in what ways do they reflect it?
6. What aspects of competition or alternatives to competition do designers need to consider when developing algorithms and design features of electronic games?
7. How does policy concerning scientific research inhibit or advance scientific development?
8. How does competition for resources drive innovation in science and technology?
9. How does competition for resources between species affect their relative health and well-being? What is the role of competition in the processes of evolutionary theory?
10. In what ways can competition be a positive force in advancing scientific programs? In what ways can it retard progress?
11. How do competing conceptions of infinity and other intangible concepts play out in real-life contexts?
12. What factors in certain civilizations pushed them to develop more sophisticated math and science theories and applications? What is the relationship between scientific advancement and a civilization's longevity?
13. To what extent does adapting new technologies ensure success in competition-driven jobs?
14. How do intuition and empirical evidence compete in scientific research?

Read all about it!

Atwood, Margaret. *The Year of the Flood*. 2009.

In this fictional account of post-apocalyptic earth (most of the human race is obliterated by a super-virus), the survivors are competing for resources with other humans and with genetically engineered species created by a technologically advanced pre-apocalyptic society. Atwood describes an imagined pre-apocalyptic society, the competing societal, religious and technological groups, and the consequences of such competition.

Gallian, Joseph. *Mathematics and Sports*. 2011.

This collection of essays illustrates the use of college level mathematics in common sports activities. Gallian discusses football, track and field, baseball, and golf, featuring an article modeling Tiger Woods' career.

Greene, Brian. *The Elegant Universe*. 2003.

Greene explores the "Quest for the Ultimate Theory" of the universe in this book written for non-mathematicians and non-physicists. Two competing theories, quantum mechanics and general relativity, cannot both be right at the same time. Greene discusses the quest for reconciliation of these two theories and ultimately, a cohesive explanation of our universe.

Straffin, Philip D. *Game Theory and Strategy*. 1996.

In this introductory and interdisciplinary guide to Game Theory, Straffin explores the mathematical bases for simple games, decision-making and strategic maneuvers. Applications include business, finance, psychology, philosophy, evolutionary biology and more.

For more sources go to ptk.org/honors.

HONORS IN ACTION Flexing Your Mussels

Overview:

Invasive species such as zebra mussels, Asian longhorn beetles, and numerous forms of plant life are having a significant impact on our environment and economy. This project explores both advocacy and service in helping to restore the natural competitive balance in your local area.

Preparation:

- **Selection of Theme:** One Small Step, One Giant Leap: Competition and Science, Math and Technology
- **Choosing/Developing Research Questions:**
 - a. To what extent are invasive species inhibiting the natural competitive order in our local ecosystems?
 - b. What can be done to restore the balance?
- **Academic Research:** Explore research as presented in biological literature as well as mainstream information outlets to discover the overall extent to which invasive species have impacted our ecosystems. How do they enter the ecosystem? When does a species become invasive? Utilize local research opportunities such as interviews with local park rangers and other local officials to discover the environmental impacts of invasive species within your own community. How have communities used the challenge of invasive species to their advantage? What factors contributed to their being able to do so?
- **Analysis and Conclusions:** Your analysis and conclusions might include the answers to the following questions. Determine the most significant threats posed by invasive species in your own areas. Identify strategies by which those threats can be managed. What has worked successfully? What has failed? Why were some strategies successful while others failed? What strategies have your local community experts and activists tried? What do experts say will work best in your community?
- **Determination of Action:** Based on your research about the prevalence and impact of invasive species, conduct awareness campaigns and projects that will curb the impact of invasive species in your community. Utilize traditional and social media to convey your message to the widest possible audience. Work with community organizations and enlist other students on campus as well as fellow Phi Theta Kappa members to curb the impact of invasive species in your community and beyond.
- **Leadership Development:**
 - Work with Communication professors and Public Relations staff at your college to determine the best avenues for message dissemination and in a workshop on writing skills that will help you write effective materials
 - Utilize Competitive Edge videos such as Project Management, Teambuilding, and Making a Great Presentation to prepare and implement project
 - Seminar on applied research
 - Training by Biology faculty on appropriate protocols and communication strategies to work with local community organizations

Implementation:

- **Leadership Roles:**
 - Organizing a research team to deal with both academic and applied exploration
 - Developing and implementing a public relations plan
 - Recruiting volunteers to help with action and advocacy aspects of project
 - Coordinating with local environmental agencies
 - Organizing teams to work with college and community organizations
 - Hosting monthly reflection meetings to analyze research, check progress and make necessary alterations to program
- **Collaboration:**
 - Chapter members and the Biology and Environmental student organizations on campus
 - Biology, Environmental Science and Chemistry faculty members as academic research sources
 - Administrators and staff to handle logistical elements of the project
 - Local government, local parks and recreation departments to identify local invasive species as well as strategies with which to deal with the species
- **Action:** Identify local invasive species and, based on your academic research, develop a plan to address the challenges of and opportunities for dealing with those species. Implement a public relations campaign calling attention to the local threat of invasive species and what community members can do. Use traditional and social media to disseminate information. Organize an invasive species cleanup in your community and work with community activists.

Reflection:

- **Evaluation:** Your evaluation might include the answers to the following questions. Attempt to measure the effectiveness of your public relations campaign — was the message effectively spread? Based on observations during the action project, did the impacts match what was suggested by your research? What might have happened if no intervention was staged? How many people participated on your research team and on the team that organized your forum? How many people participated in the forum? What feedback did you receive from the college and community members with whom you worked? Do you have quotations you can include from these groups? How did you grow as scholars and leaders? What part of the project was most valuable to your learning experience? What obstacles did you overcome to complete your project? What might you improve if you were to repeat this project?
- **Future Implications:** What other species will thrive as a result of eradicating the invasive species? Will this be a benefit? Were there any previously unforeseen benefits to introducing the invasive species into the ecosystems? As other invasive species introduce themselves, what are the most effective techniques for managing them?

THEME 8

Making the Grade: Competition and Education

What is the relationship between competition and education?



Questions for Exploration

1. How does competition for funding affect education?
2. Does the assignment of grades help or hinder the learning process?
3. To what extent does a competitive admissions process lead to ethical or unethical behavior?
4. How and why does competition for students affect the costs of education?
5. To what extent are a baccalaureate and/or a graduate degree considered a requirement for success in a competitive global job market? How do more students completing degrees affect the job market?
6. What are the advantages and disadvantages of going to a competitive school?
7. How does the educational system of the United States compete with those of other nations? What factors are taken into consideration when determining these rankings?
8. How do grade school students engage in competitive activities? Are students ever too young to compete?
9. Do students who attend private, preparatory schools gain an unfair educational advantage when competing with their peers? To what extent does going to a competitive college matter in terms of a person's success?
10. What criteria should be used when awarding academic scholarships? Should non-academic qualities — such as athletic ability — be considered when scholarship money is awarded?
11. When education budgets are being cut, how should school systems make funding decisions in light of competing disciplines? What stays, and what gets cut?
12. How do students compete for social status at school? Does being labeled a member of a certain social group (such as a jock or a geek) affect educational performance?
13. Has the concept of the student athlete become outmoded? Should colleges and universities pay athletes to play intercollegiate sports? Why, or why not?
14. To what extent do edupunks change the equation for success as it relates to formal education and making it in a competitive job market?

Read all about it!

Brewer, Dominic, Susan Gates and Charles Goldman. *In Pursuit of Prestige: Strategy and Competition in U.S. Higher Education*. 2001.

Brewer, Gates and Goldman base their work on case studies at 26 colleges and universities around the United States. They argue that while higher education is a vital part of the economy, the educational system is failing to make students competitive in an ever-changing world of technological advances and a demographically shifting populace.

***Comparative Indicators of Education in the United States and Other G-8 Countries: 2009*. National Center for Education Statistics. nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2009039**

This report describes how the education system in the United States compares with education systems in the other G-8 countries — Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Russian Federation, and the United Kingdom.

Peterson, Paul E. *Choice and Competition in American Education*. 2005.

Peterson examines competition within public education and looks at issues such as charter schools and merit pay for teachers and administrators. Instead of advocating for one position, he looks at multiple sides of this contentious issue.

Rust, Val, Laura Portnoi and Sylvia Bagley, editors. *Higher Education, Policy, and the Global Competition Phenomenon*. 2010.

Focusing on global competition, Rust, Portnoi and Bagley investigate how colleges and universities compete with each other. Specifically, they explore the way in which universities are ranked into supposedly “strong” and “weak” institutions and how these tensions affect competition in today’s global society. Among the questions discussed are issues of how and why certain foods gained (or lost) popularity, how certain foods have become nutritionally empty while others have become more dense, sustainable agriculture, and issues of mono-crop farming and genetically modified foods, to name a few.

For more sources go to ptk.org/honors.

“You should be having more fun in high school, exploring things because you want to explore them and learning because you love learning – not worrying about competition.” Maya Lin

HONORS IN ACTION The Brain Drain

Overview

Much has been said and written about the nine-month education cycle. The term “brain drain” refers to the knowledge forgotten after a three month vacation from school. While some schools/districts have made a switch to year-round schooling, most have not. In addition to pressures from teachers, students, and parents, many businesses and industries (most notably the hospitality industry) rely on summer break students to supplement their workforce during the summer months. Do students in year-round schools perform better than those in a nine-month system?

Preparation

- **Selection of Theme:** Making the Grade: Competition and Education
- **Choose/Develop Research Questions:**
 - a. Are students who participate in year-round schooling better prepared to compete for jobs and/or acceptance into college programs?
 - b. What global models of education schedules might inform the way American schools develop the academic year?
 - c. What academic schedule leads to significant success in completion?
- **Academic Research:** Seek out scholarly publications on the brain drain to help determine the validity of such claims. Determine countries that rely predominantly on year-round schooling and compare the academic rankings of students in those countries with those that do not meet year-round. Survey students and faculty at your college, to determine perceptions and attitudes toward year-round schooling. Research advantages and disadvantages of year-round college in terms of student success, completion rate, and completion time frame.
- **Analysis and Conclusions:** Based on your research, draw conclusions on the costs/benefits of year-round schooling. What academic schedules have the highest success rates? How do those school systems define success? Are there other factors besides the length of the academic year that contribute to the success or failure of educational institutions in your community? How do these compare to state, regional and national data?
- **Determination of Action:** Develop a program to help students at your school minimize the impact of the summer brain drain. Involve faculty, administrators, staff members, and student leaders in ways that ensure your program helps students learn to eliminate brain drain to make them more competitive when they graduate and transfer or enter the job market. Invite community members with vested interests in attracting top students to their businesses or organizations to contribute to the program. Share your results during the Poster Session at Phi Theta Kappa's Annual Convention.
- **Leadership Development:**
 - Facilitated S.W.O.C. (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, challenges) analysis workshop to help *Honors in Action* team better understand how to work together to complete the project
 - Training in program development and public speaking by Business and Speech/Communications professors
 - Training in effective tutoring techniques
 - Creativity workshop to better develop fun and interesting approaches to countering the summer brain drain

Implementation

- **Leadership Roles**
 - Determine your leadership team for the project
 - Identify and train small group leaders and tutors
 - Identify and secure faculty who will help develop summer self-study materials
 - Contacting and coordinating with community groups who may assist with tutoring, scheduling tutoring sessions
 - Coordinating with the college administration for meeting space
 - Promoting the tutoring opportunities to faculty, students, and student organizations
- **Collaboration**
 - Work with instructors at your school to collaboratively develop materials for a summer self-study guide for their subject areas
 - Collaborate with other student organizations (particularly program-specific groups) to organize summer tutors
 - If your college has an academic success center (or something similar), work with the staff to offer and/or enhance summer tutoring opportunities
 - Work with senior citizens (or other populations) to offer their skills as tutors and/or small group facilitators
- **Action:** Develop a summer program to help minimize summer brain drain. Components of the program might include
 - A self-study guide to help students stay engaged on a particular subject area (e.g., composition, algebra, etc.)
 - Organize small groups (cohorts) to meet on a regular basis over the break to stay intellectually engaged on topics of relevance to the group
 - Offer a tutoring service that runs over the break to help students retain and/or develop skills in preparation for the upcoming semester

Reflection

- **Evaluation:** Your evaluation might include results from the following exercise and answers to the following questions. Survey students who participate in the summer program. Conduct a pre-survey to determine goals going in and a post-survey to identify perceived success in achieving those goals. Write a proposal to college administration to continue some form of summer programming, to help keep students intellectually engaged and minimize information loss. Do you have quotations you can include from these groups? How did you grow as scholars and leaders? What part of the project was most valuable to your learning experience? What obstacles did you overcome to complete your project? What might you improve if you were to repeat this project?
- **Future Implications:** To what extent was the chapter able to successfully create a strong, potentially lasting organization to study ways to alleviate brain drain to help students compete successfully in the academic world and beyond? What else can you do to foster a strong connection between your college and students that facilitates continuous and effective learning and encourages completion? What is still left to do? What might your chapter do with this project if team members choose to repeat it? What might an organization do to replicate your project?

THEME 9

I Know What I Like: Competition and The Arts

What roles does competition play in the arts?



Stanislaw Tokarski / Shutterstock.com

Questions for Exploration

1. To what extent does competition enter into a valid definition of art?
2. What distinguishes fine arts from popular arts and to what extent does competition play a role in their definition?
3. To what extent should artists compete for critical acclaim? What qualities distinguish one artist or artist's work from another?
4. How does/should one competitively evaluate the arts?
5. How does competition for funds affect the arts?
6. How does competition for audiences affect the arts and arts organizations?
7. Identify a situation where competing for popular attention affected the quality of the art produced? What elements of the competitive experience made it better or worse?
8. How can competition increase attention paid to the fine arts?
9. To what extent can winners and losers of artistic competitions parlay their experiences into artistic and commercial success?
10. How does competition affect artistic integrity?
11. Do artists in competition with each other make for a more interesting or richer experience for the artists? Does competition between artists make for a more interesting or richer experience for audiences?
12. To what extent do higher prices paid for works of art or tickets to arts events affect their legitimacy?
13. Why is the competition to succeed on a national and international level in the arts so difficult?
14. What role does marketing play in competition to lure audiences to live performances, recordings and films? Does marketing affect the integrity of the arts?

Read all about it!

Brandfonbrener, Alice G. "Competition in The Arts: Risks and Benefits?" in *Medical Problems of Performing Artists* (December 2004): 151 (3).

Brandfonbrener compares the competitive atmosphere within sports and the arts and draws insightful conclusions about the psychological stress they both foster. She also identifies several suggested directions for study that would improve the educational experience of competitive arts.

Goffen, Rona. *Renaissance Rivals: Michelangelo, Leonardo, Raphael, Titian*. 2002.

Goffen views the lives and greatest works of 16th century artists through the prism of their ardent rivalry. They knew each other's work, knew each other's patrons, and knew each other — sometimes as friends and colleagues, sometimes as enemies, but always as rivals.

McManis, Juliet. *Glamour Addiction: Inside the American Ballroom Dance Industry*. 2006.

In the wake of the blockbuster television success of "Dancing with the Stars," competitive ballroom dance (also known by its practitioners as DanceSport) has become a subject of new fascination — and renewed scrutiny. McManis explores how competitive ballroom is a significant dance form and a fascinating cultural phenomenon.

Thornton, Sarah. *Seven Days in the Art World*. 2008.

Thornton describes the ways in which contemporary art has become a mass entertainment. She looks behind the scenes at a Christie's auction, the offices of *Artforum* magazine, an art competition, an art school seminar and Venice's Biennale. These behind-the-scenes looks help Thornton reveal the connection between competition in the art world and the dynamics of creativity, taste, status, money and acquisitiveness.

For more sources go to ptk.org/honors.

HONORS IN ACTION Do Not Exit Stage Left!

Overview

"You're an actor? What restaurant?" So the joke goes. Competing against other talented individuals is an important element in the process of becoming a professional in the performing arts, but are the performing arts the only thing in which an aspiring professional should be prepared to compete? What are these additional competitive factors that affect career prospects? With whom or against what is an individual competing?

Preparation

- **Selection of Theme:** I Know What I Like: Competition and The Arts
- **Choose/Develop Research Questions:**
 - a. What are the specific competitive factors that influence the development of a successful career in the performing arts?
 - b. What skills does a performer need to be effectively competitive with others in his/her field?
 - c. What are the opportunities and challenges facing students wishing to build careers in the performing arts?
- **Academic Research:** Read autobiographies and biographies of performing artists from a variety of performing arts and a variety of times and places and determine if there are some qualities, environmental characteristics, or actions different successful performing artists have in common. What makes an artist competitive in performing arts fields? Research would also include the psychological challenges for performing artists. Interview people in the community who are performing artists. Investigate educational and professional development opportunities. What differentiates them? Who accredits them? How has successful social media management by individuals or corporations affected career development? Some scholars have called it a "game changer" for performing artists — is that really true? What venues are available in your community for professional and amateur performing artists? How do artists audition to perform in these venues?
- **Analysis and Conclusions:** Your analysis and conclusions might include the answers to the following exercises and questions. Using information your research revealed, compile a list of the varied contexts in which a performing artist must compete in order to become a professional. Draw conclusions about the qualities and training that makes performing artists competitive. Create an annotated list or brochure that would benefit aspiring artists. Why do some artists make it while others who are equally, sometimes more, talented do not? To what degree can performing artists have successful careers without becoming "stars"?
- **Determination of Action:** From your research findings, create a Performing Arts Career Road Map. Use social media to highlight and promote the road map in your community and to others in and beyond your region.
- **Leadership Development:**
 - Workshop on successful interviewing techniques facilitated by a Journalism professor
 - Training in mentoring so that the Road Map uses effective and appropriate language and suggestions to contribute to the mentorship of aspiring performing artists
 - Consultation with performing arts faculty to discuss research findings and facilitate a discussion about the practical applications of that research
 - Training on effective use of social media to promote the Road Map

Implementation

- **Leadership Roles:**
 - Coordinating research team's work
 - Serving on the editorial team and coordinating editing and publishing
 - Project management and recruiting
 - Organizing and arranging for training of interviewers and writers
 - Marketing and distributing the Road Map
- **Collaboration:**
 - Faculty and students involved with the performing arts
 - Community members involved in the arts
 - Fellow Phi Theta Kappa members interested in the performing arts via social media
 - People beyond the community and region via social media and networking
- **Action:** Write, edit and distribute the Road Map. Use social media to share the Road Map and career development information you have learned from your research about competition and the arts. Share the Road Map with local schools and community centers as well as local arts organizations. Submit the Road Map to local, regional and national arts magazines for publication.

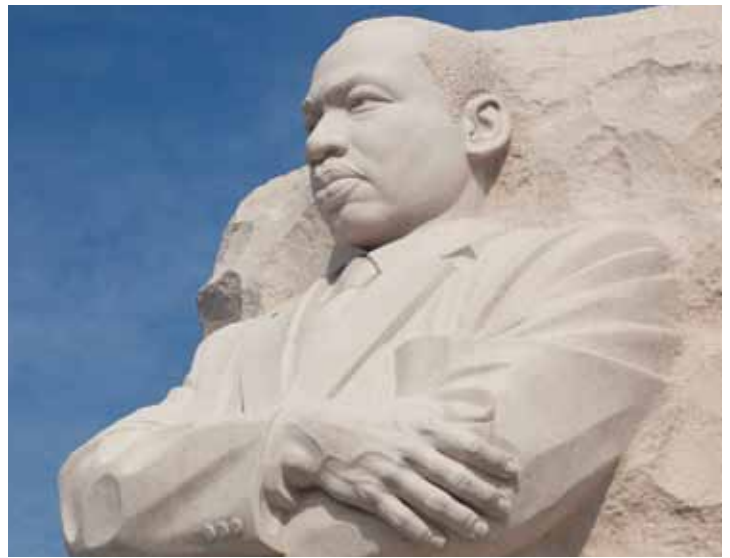
Reflection

- **Evaluation:** Your evaluation might include results from the following exercises and answers to the these questions. You may not know immediately if any performing artists benefit from the Performing Arts Career Road Map, but you may ask faculty and community members in the performing arts to provide feedback and reflect on additional outlets to distribute the Road Map so that it benefits more people. How many people participated on your research team and on the team that wrote and edited the Road Map? To how many people did you distribute the Road Map? What feedback did you receive from the college and community members with whom you worked? Do you have quotations you can include from these groups? How did you grow as scholars and leaders? What part of the project was most valuable to your learning experience? What obstacles did you overcome to complete your project? What might you improve if you were to repeat this project?
- **Future Implications:** In researching educational programs and professional development for aspiring performing artists, which programs accepted transfer students from community colleges? A future edition of the Performing Arts Career Road Map could add information about "transfer friendly" institutions. Another valuable addition to the Road Map would be information about unique funding and scholarship opportunities for the performing arts and guidance on developing a financial plan to understand the full costs of beginning a career in the performing arts. What else can you do to foster a strong connection between your college and performing arts organizations that facilitates continuous and effective learning and encourages completion? What is still left to do? What might your chapter do with this project if team members choose to repeat it? What might an organization do to replicate your project?

THEME 10

Wait Until Next Year: History/Future of Competition

How has competition shaped history and how will competition shape the future?



Steve Heap / Shutterstock.com

Questions for Exploration

1. What impact has competition had on the evolution of cultures and civilizations?
2. What effect do competing narratives have on our understanding and appreciation of history? How have these narratives been affected by historical memory?
3. In what ways have the Olympic Games historically fostered both competition and cooperation?
4. What is the impact of regime change or war on the preservation of history?
5. How has access to information helped fuel competition over historical and futuristic narratives?
6. How have cultures with competing world views effectively engaged in cooperation? How have they competed? Given the present state of world affairs, what changes are likely in the future?
7. In what ways might the future become more competitive? How can people effectively prepare for those changes?
8. To what extent can competition lead to a sustainable future?
9. How has the notion of competition developed? To what extent and how is competition likely to evolve in the future?
10. What impact will increased globalization have on competition for resources between nations?
11. How accurately and effectively can we predict catalysts of future competition?
12. If it is true that “to the victors go the spoils,” to what degree can we be assured that the spoils will be preserved for future generations?
13. In what ways can nations work together to foster innovations that solve the world’s problems? What role will competition play in fostering future innovations?
14. As more people compete in the future for the world’s resources, to what extent can a global market ensure equitable distribution of those resources?

Read all about it!

Carr, Nicholas. *The Big Switch: Rewiring the World, From Edison to Google*. 2008.

Carr explores the impending shift that computer utilities will replace personal in-house computers much in the way that electrical utilities replaced onsite power generators in the past. He explains how our lives will center around one planetary World Wide Computer and examines the benefits and disadvantages of this inevitable future.

Hamel, Gary and C.K. Prahalad. *Competing for the Future*. 1996.

Hamel and Prahalad focus on the ways leaders need to think and analyze new technologies and ideas to succeed in the future. This book offers an opportunity to see what the authors thought was important for twentieth-century leaders to know in order to compete in the twenty-first century.

Hont, Istvan. *Jealousy of Trade: International Competition and the Nation-State in Historical Perspective*. 2010.

In a series of essays, Hont discusses the history of political economy and political theory in the content of the Enlightenment and the rise of modern liberalism. He argues the history of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is one of global commercial empires and that the rise of nation-states is a story of transnationalism.

Ranadive, Vivek and Kevin Maney. *The Two-Second Advantage: How We Succeed by Anticipating the Future – Just Enough*. 2011.

Ranadive and Maney explore the art of anticipation. They argue the difference between success and failure is just a bit of information in the right context at the right time.

Surowiecki, James. *The Wisdom of Crowds*. 2005.

Surowiecki explores the idea that large groups of people are smarter than an elite few, no matter how brilliant — better at solving problems, fostering innovation, coming to wise decisions, even predicting the future.

For more sources go to ptk.org/honors.

HONORS IN ACTION The Coopetition

Overview

Historically, competition has been viewed in a win/lose context, with one winner clearly emerging as the “best” among a field of contestants or competitors. This is especially clear in the beauty contest, where women vie for recognition and prizes based on external attributes. Many find these kinds of competitions to be senseless and vapid. In this project, you will turn the historical win/lose framework on its head by re-visioning competition as “coopetition” and recognizing those who work with instead of against others.

Preparation

- **Selection of Theme:** Wait Until Next Year: History/Future of Competition
- **Choose/Develop Research Questions:**
 - a. What is coopetition?
 - b. How will the notion of coopetition evolve in the future?
 - c. What are some historical examples of “win/win” situations?
- **Academic Research:** Research the history of competition, concentrating on specific forms of competition such as the beauty pageant, a talent competition, or a sporting event. Pay special attention to the notions of “winners” and “losers.” Also research examples of alternative modes of competition such as cooperative events or freeware systems. Assemble a panel of experts and hold a debate on the merits of competition versus the merits of cooperation. Interview individuals who have become highly successful in competitive fields. Ask these individuals how a sense of competition helped them to achieve their goals and whether a cooperative spirit with others aided them in their journeys to success.
- **Analysis and Conclusions:** Your analysis and conclusions might include the answers to the following questions. Competition is a more nuanced and vexing concept than you thought it was. While elements of competition often spur success, most successful individuals, teams, corporations, etc., have achieved their success through a blending of competition and cooperation, or “coopetition.” Coopetition is a concept that deserves attention and exploration in our seemingly hyper-competitive society. What factors lead to successful coopetition? In what ways and where has coopetition been successfully utilized?
- **Determination of Action:** Plan a community wide Coopetition that will recognize more intrinsic values such as serving others instead of external qualities such as physical attractiveness. This “pageant” will stress the importance of coopetition as a measurement of success.
- **Leadership Development:**
 - Workshop by Communications faculty on how to develop strong communication and organizational skills
 - Training on how to approach and work with college administrators and community leaders
 - Training with Media faculty to develop marketing/public relations skills to solicit participants for the event and to advertise the Coopetition itself and to develop a video for YouTube
 - Workshop with Hospitality Management faculty to develop skills in banquet planning

Implementation

- **Leadership Roles:**
 - Organizing research, public relations, and media teams

- Planning and implementing elements of the project such as organizing the banquet
- Soliciting entries for the Coopetition event
- Working with college administrators, faculty, and staff to secure facilities and support
- Organizing a community liaison team
- Writing, editing, directing and filming the YouTube video
- **Collaboration:**
 - Fellow Phi Theta Kappa chapters within your region and beyond it via social media
 - YouTube viewers
 - College administration, faculty and staff
 - Community organizations from around the area
 - Local media outlets
- **Action:** Sponsor the first annual Phi Theta Kappa Community Wide Coopetition. To enter, organizations such as Phi Theta Kappa chapters, local individuals, or local charities will write up a project highlighting a positive contribution that they have made to the community. There are no swimsuits or fire-twirling majorettes for this pageant. Judging will be based upon the good things that have come about from the projects entered. The most important rule for the pageant is that each entry must highlight coopetition. That is, winning entries will not represent “stand-alone” projects where individuals or groups did not seek out collaboration with others. The more collaborative the project, the better chance it has of being crowned the winner! Hold a banquet or pageant night in which you highlight all of the entries and “crown” the winner that best represents the project’s vision of coopetition. So, to compete for this project, winners must cooperate! (The winner could even be selected by a vote of the other participants, furthering a sense of coopetition). Or, a chapter could consider not having a winner at all, with the “prize” being the good work already done through the entries.

Reflection

- **Evaluation:** Your evaluation might include results from the following exercises and answers to the these questions. Publish a summary of all of the coopetition’s projects and release it to the local media. Conduct interviews with local members of the media to explain how coopetition brought about good for your community. Write an op-ed piece for your local newspaper explaining the benefits of coopetition. Create a highlights reel from pageant night and post it to YouTube. Create a “how to” checklist that shows others how they can sponsor similar coopetitions. Meet with your college administration and discuss the feasibility of making this coopetition an annual event. How many people participated on your research team and in the Coopetition? What feedback did you receive from the college and community members with whom you worked? Do you have quotations you can include from these groups? How did you grow as scholars and leaders? What part of the project was most valuable to your learning experience? What obstacles did you overcome to complete your project? What might you improve if you were to repeat this project?
- **Future Implications:** What else can you do to foster a strong connection between your college and community to encourage coopetition? What is still left to do? What might your chapter do with this project if team members choose to repeat it? What might an organization do to replicate your project?

PHI THETA KAPPA Honors Program Committee

The Phi Theta Kappa Honors Program Committee is responsible for making recommendations to Headquarters staff about the new *Honors Study Topic* every two years and for assisting with the compilation of the Honors Program Guide. Made up of Phi Theta Kappa advisors, Headquarters staff, and consultants, the Honors Program Committee is selected for its broad knowledge of the culture of competition and Phi Theta Kappa's integrated approach to the Hallmarks as well as its balance in academic disciplines.



Dr. Randal Allison
History and Social Sciences Representative
Blinn College
Bryan, Texas



Dr. Ken Kerr
Fine Arts Representative
Frederick Community College
Frederick, Maryland



Monika Byrd
Dean of Leadership Development
Phi Theta Kappa
Jackson, Mississippi



Dan Rooney
Service Learning Representative
Western Technical College
La Crosse, Wisconsin



Susan Edwards, Chair
Dean of Academic Affairs and Honors Programs
Phi Theta Kappa
Jackson, Mississippi



Stephen Schroeder
Communications/Technology Representative
College of DuPage
Glen Ellyn, Illinois



Dr. Joan Fedor
Honors Consultant
Regional Coordinator Emeritus
Sun City West, Arizona



Jennifer Stanford
Dean of Service Learning
Phi Theta Kappa
Jackson, Mississippi



Dr. Liesl Ward Harris
Humanities Representative
Jefferson State Community College
Shelby Campus
Birmingham, Alabama



Dr. Patricia Scott West
Leadership Development Representative
Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College
Jefferson Davis Campus
Gulfport, Mississippi



Dr. Erica Hastert
Science/Mathematics Representative
Arapahoe Community College
Littleton, Colorado

PHI THETA KAPPA Honors Institute Topics and Sites

Established in 1968, Phi Theta Kappa's Honors Institute is an intensive exploration of the topic, featuring internationally recognized speakers, small group seminars, educational field trips and experiential activities. The following is a list of past *Honors Study Topics* and Honors Institute dates and locations.

1968	Our Cultural Heritage: 1800-1860 Endicott College, Beverly, Massachusetts	1991	The Paradox of Freedom: A Global Dilemma University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota
1969	The Changing Nature of American Society: A Challenge to Government Marymount College of Virginia, Arlington, Virginia	1992	1492-1992: The Dynamics of Discovery College of the Holy Cross, Worcester, Massachusetts
1970	A Study of Twentieth-Century Drama Bennett College, Millbrook, New York	1993	Our Complex World: Balancing Unity and Diversity Elizabethtown College, Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania
1971	Man, A Part of Nature/Man, Apart from Nature Fort Lewis College, Durango, Colorado	1994	Science, Humanity and Technology: Shaping a New Creation Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, Michigan
1972	The State of Our Nation: Toward Responsible Contributory Citizenship American University, Washington, D.C.	1995	Rights, Privileges and Responsibilities: An Indelicate Balance Chapman University, Orange, California
1973	Voices of Human Experience, I Endicott College, Beverly, Massachusetts	1996	The Arts: Landscape of Our Time Bryant College, Smithfield, Rhode Island
1974	Voices of Human Experience, II Ferrum College, Ferrum, Virginia	1997	Family: Myth, Metaphor and Reality Western Washington University, Bellingham, Washington
1975	Franklin and Jefferson: Apostles in '76 University of Richmond, Richmond, Virginia	1998	The Pursuit of Happiness: Conflicting Visions and Values The College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Virginia
1976	William Faulkner: The Man, His Land, His Legend University of Mississippi, Oxford, Mississippi	1999	The New Millennium: The Past As Prologue The Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C.
1977	Music: The Listener's Art Cumberland College, Lebanon, Tennessee	2000	In the Midst of Water: Origin and Destiny of Life The University of San Diego, San Diego, California
1978	Man Alive: Can He Survive? Fort Lewis College, Durango, Colorado	2001	Customs, Traditions, and Celebrations: The Human Drive for Community Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, Georgia
1979	The Brilliant Future of Man: Problem Solving Time Lees-McRae College, Banner Elk, North Carolina	2002	Dimensions and Directions of Health: Choices in the Maze Furman University, Greenville, South Carolina
1980	A Time for Truth: America's Need for Governmental Renaissance Endicott College, Beverly, Massachusetts	2003	Dimensions and Directions of Health: Choices in the Maze The Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C.
1981	Man in Crisis: A Quest for Values State University of New York, Purchase, New York	2004	Popular Culture: Shaping and Reflecting Who We Are University of California, Los Angeles, California
1982	The Short Story: Mirror of Humanity University of Southern Mississippi, Long Beach, Mississippi	2005	Popular Culture: Shaping and Reflecting Who We Are University of Nevada Las Vegas, Las Vegas, Nevada
1983	Signed by the Masters C.W. Post College on Long Island, Greenvale, New York	2006	Gold, Gods, and Glory: The Global Dynamics of Power University of Delaware, Newark, Delaware
1984	America, A World-Class Citizen: Image and Reality University of Southern Mississippi, Long Beach, Mississippi	2007	Gold, Gods, and Glory: The Global Dynamics of Power Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois
1985	Ethics and Today's Media: An Endangered Alliance? Fort Lewis College, Durango, Colorado	2008	The Paradox of Affluence: Choices, Challenges, and Consequences San Francisco State University, San Francisco, California
1986	The American Dream: Past, Present, and Future Trinity University, San Antonio, Texas	2009	The Paradox of Affluence: Choices, Challenges, and Consequences University of Richmond, Richmond, Virginia
1987	The U.S. Constitution: Assuring Continuity Through Controversy University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia	2010	The Democratization of Information: Power, Peril, and Promise Chapman University, Orange, California
1988	The Character and Climate of Leadership: Old Frontiers and New Frontiers Western Washington University, Bellingham, Washington	2011	The Democratization of Information: Power, Peril, and Promise Boston University, Boston, Massachusetts
1989	The Americas: Distant Neighbors Building Bridges University of Ottawa, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada	2012	The Culture of Competition University of Denver, Denver, Colorado
1990	Civilization at Risk: Challenge of the '90s Adelphi University, Long Island, New York		

About Phi Theta Kappa

Phi Theta Kappa is the honor society for community college students. Since its founding in 1918, Phi Theta Kappa has recognized the academic achievements of students in associate-degree programs. The Society has grown from eight charter chapters in Missouri to approximately 1,275 chapters located in all 50 of the United States, Canada, Germany, the Republic of Palau, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the British Virgin Islands, the United Arab Emirates, Peru, and U.S. territories. Approximately 130,000 of the most outstanding two-year college students are inducted into membership in Phi Theta Kappa each year. Phi Theta Kappa offers students opportunities for engaging in scholarly activities, earning academic scholarships, providing service to the community, developing and practicing leadership skills, and enjoying fellowship with other scholars.

Phi Theta Kappa Mission Statement

The purpose of Phi Theta Kappa shall be to recognize and encourage scholarship among two-year college students. To achieve this purpose, Phi Theta Kappa shall provide opportunity for the development of leadership and service, for an intellectual climate for the exchange of ideas and ideals, for lively fellowship of scholars, and for stimulation of interest in continuing academic excellence.



PHI THETA KAPPA
HONOR SOCIETY