Self-Designed Experience Proposal

**Guidelines**

* **Timeline**: Submit proposals and revisions to the UHP database by the 5th of each month. Proposals should be submitted one month prior to the expected start date of the experience. International travel experiences require at least two months’ notice.
* **Format**: Maintain the proposal format (e.g. headers, layout). Do not delete boxes.
* **Submission process**: Access the UHP Database (<https://webapps.uc.edu/uchonorsstudent>). Add a new record in the “Tracking Project” tab and upload your proposal document as an attachment (Word documents only – no PDFs).

***Note regarding Financial Aid and Honors Grants****: All proposals with a grant request are reviewed in collaboration with the Office of Student Financial Aid. There is no guarantee of grant funding nor of a specific grant amount. Honors grant awards are typically 20% or less of the approved budget. The quality of your proposal can also impact a grant award. Honors grants are posted to students' accounts as scholarships and can affect an individual student’s financial aid. Some students may not be eligible to receive a grant due to their financial aid status. If awarded an honors grant, students acknowledge full awareness of possible financial aid implications.*

**Independent International Travel**

If you are proposing travel independent of UC faculty, staff or a UC student group, you must submit your self-designed proposal by the following deadlines:

* October 5 – winter break experiences
* January 5 – spring break experiences
* March 5 – May/June experiences
* April 5 – July/August experiences
* June 5 – fall experiences

All independent, international honors experiences require a completed Worldwide Honors Experience application through UC International. UC International will verify successful completion of the application before an experience can be approved. Additionally, the [Student Travel Policy](https://www.uc.edu/content/dam/uc/af/financialpolicies/Docs/Student%20Travel%20Policy.pdf) restricts UC-sponsored travel to countries under a [U.S. Department of State Travel Advisory](http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/alertswarnings.html). Those who wish to visit a country or area within a country with a **Level 3 or higher Travel Advisory Level** must seek an [exemption](https://www.uc.edu/campus-life/study-abroad/apply/restrictions.html) through UC International. Students traveling without a faculty or staff leader must individually request an exemption. ***We cannot allow you to count this travel as an honors experience nor can we give you a grant without an approved exemption.*** See more information on the UHP [international travel](https://www.uc.edu/campus-life/honors/students/experiences/international-travel.html) page.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK**

*Assumption of Risks: The honors experience and related experiential learning as described below may contain certain inherent risks that cannot not be eliminated. Aware of the risks, dangers, and hazards known and unknown to me, I agree individually, and on behalf of my heirs, successors, assigns and personal representatives, to* ***ASSUME AND ACCEPT ALL THE RISKS, DANGERS, HAZARDS, AND RESPONSIBILITIES*** *resulting in or arising from my participation in the experience.*

*Your e-signature, which will be completed in the UHP database prior to proposal submission, confirms that you acknowledge that you have read the entire proposal, that you understand its terms, that you have had the time and opportunity to read and ask questions regarding the proposal, you are fully aware of possible financial aid and tuition implications, and that you have signed it knowingly and voluntarily.*

**Basic Information**

Full Name: Samuel Mark Graler

Title of Experience: Vocaholics Involvement Experience

[Competency/Competencies](https://www.uc.edu/campus-life/honors/about/competencies.html): Creativity

Expected Start Date: 10/20/2021

Expected End Date: 3/9/2021

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| **Personal Connection****Section must include:*** Explanation of why this experience matters to you
* Explanation of how this experience will help you progress toward becoming a [global citizen scholar](https://www.uc.edu/campus-life/honors/about.html)

I’ve always loved singing. It doesn’t really matter where I am or what I’m doing, I’m usually at least humming and nodding my head to one tune or another. My friends and family would absolutely support the assertion that I am always making noise or music (sometimes to the point of annoyance). Since the 6th grade I’ve been involved in various traditional choirs and it has been a fantastic experience, but I think I’m ready for something new.I’ve always wanted to be a part of an acapella group. Some of my most played artists on Spotify are acapella groups, (Home Free to name my favorite) and I love listening to people do amazing things with just their voices. In high school, I was a competitive swimmer, and factoring in my rigorous academic schedule, I could never carve out enough time to join the acapella group at my school. However, now that I have a bit more control over my schedule, I auditioned for Vocaholics, and I’m thrilled to say I was accepted.This experience is something that I’ve wanted to get involved in since I discovered it. Singing and making music with others is one of the things I missed the most during the Covid era, and I can’t wait to get back to it. But this time around, I want to try and learn some new techniques and theory behind it all, since it has been an interest of mine for so long.Growing as a person and developing different interests is a critical part of what it means to be a global citizen scholar. When so much of our lives was scheduled without our control in high school, what distinguishes a run of the mill college student from a global citizen scholar (in my opinion) is what they choose to do with their newfound freedom. Choosing to develop a long-held interest that will help me become a more well-rounded individual is a great way to start my journey to becoming a global citizen scholar.Advisor Revisions/Feedback |

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| **Abstract****Section must include:*** Brief description of the experience and explanation of how you will reach the 75+ hours requirement
* Description of risks (if any) inherent in this experience and safety precautions you will take
* Itinerary, including locations and dates, for any travel experience

This experience will entail 3 main types of activities. The first is rehearsals. Vocaholics rehearses 6 hours during a typical week, and since this experience takes place over about 14 school weeks, rehearsals will amount to 84 hours alone. Of course, this is assuming that no rehearsals get canceled, and I am present at each one, but regardless I do not anticipate the time requirement being an issue. The second type of activity that the experience will involve is performances. Although Covid has complicated things, Vocaholics has multiple invitationals planned so far, and competition season begins in the spring (most of my experience will be complete before then). Additionally, smaller more informal performances will more than likely happen throughout the fall season. These performances will add up quickly, and I estimate that performances could contribute between 10 and 20 hours by the end of my experience timeline. The final type of activity that this experience will entail is my individual research and learning projects. Two specific skills I would like to learn from this experience are how to arrange music for acapella ensembles, and vocal percussion (beatboxing). I have some composition experience from high school, as well as very basic beatboxing knowledge. These skills will likely take time outside of rehearsal to develop, and I will aim to spend at least 1 hour per week learning and practicing these skills. Totaling up the estimated hours for each type of engagement gives a grand total of 114 hours over 20 weeks.This experience doesn’t have any inherent risks except for vocal injury through overuse. This will be easy to prevent by taking the necessary precautions (staying hydrated, not working though pain, using vocal rest as needed)The itinerary for any traveling Vocaholics will do for performances will vary depending on the trip, and depending on the circumstances traveling might not be possible.Advisor Revisions/Feedback: |

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| **Advisor****Section must include:*** Experience advisor name and contact information
* Description of why advisor was selected
* Specific plans to engage with advisor

*Note: Advisor(s) should have knowledge or expertise in an area related to the experience and be able to help you craft your experience goals. Honors advisors, undergraduate students, and family members cannot be experience advisors.*My experience advisor will be my high school choir director Mr. Jason McKee (mckeej@masonohioschools.com). He is the choir director at Mason High School, and in addition to directing the five traditional choirs, he also oversees Notorious, the acapella group that I always wanted to get involved with, as well as the vocal parts for the theatre productions. Mr. McKee was a fantastic teacher and director, and over my four years in high school he taught me not just how to be a better singer, but how to be a better person. He always took time in class to expose us to different kinds of music, whether it was relevant to a piece we were learning, or just for fun, and he truly cares about his students and their wellbeing. He is obviously a skilled singer and gifted musician, and I have no doubt that he can help me with any questions I might have, whether it be about singing technique or music theory.My plan for engagement is as follows:I will give an update on my experience and goals through an email on a bi-weekly basis. If I have any specific questions or things of note I want to share I will include those in the email or send another if it can’t wait. If I have anything that I would rather speak than write about, I will correspond with Mr. McKee and schedule a virtual meeting. These will be scheduled on a case-by-case basis. In each email I will also attach my ongoing reflection materials for the preceding two weeks, and any recordings that I want to share from the weeks of rehearsals or performances.Advisor Revisions/Feedback: |

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| **Goals Related to Competency/Competencies:****Section must include:*** Two specific and measurable **experience** goals related to chosen [competency/competencies](https://www.uc.edu/campus-life/honors/about/competencies.html) outlining the intended results/outcomes/achievements
* Two specific **personal** goals related to chosen [competency/competencies](https://www.uc.edu/campus-life/honors/about/competencies.html) outlining how you hope to grow as a result of this experience
* Examples of activities and explanation of how each will assist in the progress toward the goals

Experience Goals:* Engage with the acapella community and learn what it means to other people, as well as share my own thoughts, emotions, and experiences on the subject
* Attend at least 80% of rehearsals and performances so I can truly learn and make the most of this new creative experience

Personal Goals:* Learn the process by which pieces are arranged for acapella ensembles, and have one finished arrangement that I completed myself by the end of my experience
* Learn 3-4 new vocal percussion sounds that I can incorporate into my experimentation and arrangements

Experience Goal 1 can be achieved by interacting with those that I meet at our invitationals and performances and creating conversation about how they connect to music, what music means to them, or how music allows them to feel a sense of belonging in a community.Experience Goal 2 can be accomplished by taking time to plan my weeks and make sure I create time for all the activities and assignments and such that I need attend or complete.Personal Goal 1 can be accomplished by engaging with the academic resources I’ve found, as well as learning from the members of Vocaholics that arrange our music. Above all else, this goal will require practice.Personal Goal 2 will be achieved in a similar way as my first personal goal. By working with the academic resources I gathered, and learning from our current vocal percussionist, I can improve my ability. Again, this goal will require practice more than anything else.My experience goals relate to my chosen competency in that they will allow me to make new connections and ask questions within this creative community that is new to me, while my personal goals are more focused on learning new creative techniques and finding new ways to engage in a creative medium that I am familiar with.Advisor Revisions/Feedback: |

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| **Academic Resources Connected to the Goals** **Section must include:*** Two to three academic resources connected to your goals
* Title and author of each resource
* Description of how resources will help make progress toward the goals

*Note: Academic resources are professional/academic works that can be used to assist your understanding of the topic. Some examples are books, research journals, documentaries, or videos.*I imagine I will engage with various academic resources as I conduct more research on my personal goals, but these are the 3 sources I intend to start with.Arranging Music for A Capella by Ryan Moulton (online article).This resource is a short online article that resembles others that I’m sure I will stumble across on my creative endeavors. This article will help give me general knowledge of the arranging process, and some helpful tips to get me started and working towards my personal arranging goal.A Cappella Pop: A Complete Guide to Contemporary A Cappella Singing by Brody McDonald (kindle book)This resource will provide me with knowledge on a range of acapella vocal techniques (including vocal percussion which was my 2nd personal goal), music choice, sound reinforcement, and rehearsal techniques.Advisor Revisions/Feedback: |

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| **On-going Reflection****Section must include:** * Method for ongoing reflection
* List questions you plan to ask yourself to gauge your growth related to your goals as well as understanding of the selected competency/competencies

*The on-going reflection should help you process the experience and progress toward the goals you have identified.* *Note: A variety of methods can be used for reflection. Some examples are videos, drawings, blogs, songs, and journals.*The method I have selected for my ongoing reflection will be keeping a journal. I have used this in the past and found it very therapeutic, so I believe it will be equally effective as a reflective medium. Since this experience takes place over multiple months, I plan to have at least 1 entry per week, and more if I have anything I really want to document before the next entry. I might also include recordings or notes from research in the journal as another way to document what I’ve learned.Theses are the questions I plan to ask myself each entry:1. What new beatboxing / arranging technique have you practiced this week?
2. Were you able to make all the rehearsals / performances for this week? If not, why?
3. Have you had any interesting conversations about the music or the acapella community? With whom? What about?
4. Are you enjoying the experience so far? What can you do to engage more if needed?
5. How do you feel about the music you’re working on?
6. Have you started / made any progress on a personal arrangement?

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| **Sharing Your Learning****Section must include:** * At least one method to actively share what you learned focused on growth connected to competency/competencies
* A specific audience and why the audience was selected

*While social media can be an effective platform for sharing, only posting on your learning portfolio or social media account(s) does not reach a targeted audience.* I plan to share my learning about arranging acapella music with the rest of the Vocaholics. Currently, there is only one member (the creative coordinator) who primarily arranges all the pieces, which is a bit of a burden. Additionally, I believe our creative coordinator is graduating after this year. My plan is to share my notes and what I’ve learned to keep the knowledge of our current creative supervisor circulating around the group. This would be beneficial because input from other people could improve the functionality of the arrangements, and although all members of the Vocaholics are musically talented, learning to arrange is a different but valuable skill that could really help each member contribute to improving the group for the future.Advisor Revisions/Feedback: |

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| **Budget (if applicable)****Section must include:** * Itemized budget of expenditures with sources to justify estimates (review information on [Honors Grants](https://www.uc.edu/campus-life/honors/students/grants.html))

*The UHP no longer provides honors grants for unpaid research or internships. You can still complete these as honors experiences, but cannot receive a grant.*$50 joining feeApart from this, there are no other expenses to be included in a budget.Advisor Revisions/Feedback: |