This year’s 7th annual Explore UAlbany event was a huge success. Explore UAlbany is a unique lecture series organized by the Office of Student Engagement in partnership with the Office of Orientation and Transition Programs that is presented to freshmen during their opening weekend. Over 1500 new students had the opportunity to choose one of ten curated lectures from some of the highest profile professors on campus. The lectures covered a range of departments, discussing everything from the rapidly growing fields of technology and computer science with Dr. George Berg and Dr. Jonathan Muckell to the complexities of race with Dr. Richard Fogarty. This year, we had the great pleasure of hosting our new president Dr. Havidan Rodriguez and his wife, giving him a chance to see some of our best professors in action before they begin the new school year.

Students attending the program had the added benefit of being entered into a raffle at the end of each lecture. Thanks to a generous donation from SEFCU, ten new freshmen were lucky enough to win a $100 gift card to the campus bookstore! Our winners were Yentel Bain and Tatyana Sealy from Brooklyn, NY, Brigid Joyce from Penfield, NY, Julian Alexandre, Sydnie Koskinun, and Natalyn Walts from Syracuse, NY, Francesco Saizone from Staten Island, NY, Michaela Monahan from Millbrook, NY, Robert Hojnacki from Rome, NY, and D’Ahvion Ross from Jamaica, NY. They’ll be using their gift cards to help pay for textbooks!

Explore UAlbany is an amazing way for freshmen to get an idea of what the classroom experience will be like here at UAlbany. Some freshmen seek out lectures pertaining to their academic interests, while others use the opportunity to experience a new discipline with professors they wouldn’t meet otherwise.

Brigid Joyce, one of the winners of our $100 gift card raffle, chose a lecture based on her Human Development major and had the opportunity to hear from the Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education and Professor of Psychology, Jeanette Altarriba. Brigid said, “My professor was very engaging and did a great job at giving us an overview of what to expect from psychology courses as well as other courses at UAlbany!”
Another raffle winner, Natalyn Walts, had a similar idea when picking her Explore UAlbany lecture. Wanting to take a course related to her Biology major, she chose to attend Dr. Melinda Larsen’s lecture. Natalyn said, “My lecture was about the different forms of regenerative medicine as well as the professor’s personal research. I chose it because I knew it would be incredibly interesting and I wanted to know more.”

Sydnie Koskinun, a Communication major, took advantage of this program to explore something outside of her major and chose Professor Danny Goodwin’s lecture on photography and reality. Sydnie said, “My professor was amazing! He made the topic incredibly interesting, and his personality was a great addition. I picked it because photography has always been a hobby of mine. It made me more excited for classes to start.”

Student Engagement is thrilled to have introduced a new class of Great Danes to the collegiate classroom experience and are busy gearing up for a number of other programs that help students connect with faculty and bolster their academic experience. Keep your eyes out for programs like Munch with the Majors, Food for Thought, and events with our Living-Learning Communities!