National Collegiate Honors Council
Assessment and Evaluation Committee
Electronic Document

A PRACTICAL HANDBOOK
FOR HONORS PROGRAM
AND HONORS COLLEGE
EVALUATION AND
ASSESSMENT

Rosalie Otero, University of New Mexico
Robert Spurrier, Oklahoma State University
Gregory Lanier, University of West Florida

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to supplement and expand

Assessing and Evaluating Honors Programs and Honors Colleges:
A Practical Handbook
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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Rosalie Otero

Dr. Rosalie C. Otero is the Director of the Honors Program at the University of New Mexico and Associate Dean of University College. She is past president of the National Collegiate Honors Council and the Western Regional Honors Council and has been elected twice to the NCHC Board of Directors. Rosalie was elected as a member of the first class of Fellows of the National Collegiate Honors Council. She has served as a Chair or Co-Chair of several NCHC committees including Assessment & Evaluation, Finance, and Diversity. She has also been a member of several NCHC committees including Honors Semesters, Long-Range Planning, and many Conference Planning Committees. Rosalie is an NCHC Recommended Site Visitor who has taken part in external reviews and consulting visits for Honors Programs and Honors Colleges in a wide variety of two- and four-year institutions ranging from small private colleges to large public universities. She has co-chaired the NCHC’S Faculty Institute on Honors Assessment and Evaluation in 2004, 2006, 2008 and served as a facilitator in 2010. Rosalie is the author of several articles in NCHC publications and co-author of the 2005 NCHC monograph on Assessment & Evaluation. Rosalie is also the author of books, short fiction, and professional journal articles on literature.

Robert Spurrier

Dr. Robert (Bob) Spurrier is Director of The Honors College and Professor of Political Science at Oklahoma State University. He has won numerous awards for outstanding teaching and academic advising, and he enjoys teaching honors courses and seminars dealing with the American legal system and as well as serving as honors advisor for approximately 100 Honors College students each year. He is a past president of the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC), was elected twice to the NCHC Board of Directors, and currently serves as NCHC Secretary. Bob was elected as a member of the first class of Fellows of the National Collegiate Honors Council and is an NCHC Recommended Site Visitor (conducting external reviews of other institutions' honors
programs and honors colleges several times a year). He co-chaired the NCHC’S Faculty Institute on Honors Assessment and Evaluation in 2004 and 2006 and served as a facilitator in 2008 and 2010. He is the author or co-author of numerous articles on honors education as well as books and articles on the American legal system. He originated NCHC’s “Developing in Honors” workshop for experienced honors professionals and, with Rosalie Otero, inaugurated the NCHC “Best Honors Administrative Practices” conference sessions.

**Dr. Gregory (Greg) Lanier** is an Associate Dean in the College of Arts and Sciences, Director of the University Honors Program, Director of the School of Fine and Performing Arts and holds joint tenure and appointments in the Departments of English and Theatre at the University of West Florida. An expert on the relationship between dramatic texts and theatrical performance, Dr. Lanier has published articles on the plays of Shakespeare and Sam Shepard in journals such as *Modern Drama* and *Essays in Literature*. Recently, Dr. Lanier has emerged as a leading expert in the area of honors assessment, having presented at numerous honors conferences and been appointed to the position of Co-Chair of the Assessment and Evaluation Committee for the National Collegiate Honors Council. Dr. Lanier’s work on assessment appears in the *Journal of the National Collegiate Honors Council*, and he is a co-author with Dr. Jane Halonen on the chapter, “Benchmarking Quality in Challenging Contexts: The Arts, Humanities, and Interdisciplinary Programs” which appears in the Jossey-Bass publication, *Using Quality Benchmarks for Assessing and Developing Undergraduate Programs*. Dr. Lanier has received numerous teaching awards, including the Undergraduate Teaching Award, an Outstanding Undergraduate Teaching/Advising Award, two Teaching Incentive Performance Awards, and has been listed multiple times in *Who's Who Among America's Teachers*. He has been a member of the NCHC Board of Directors and currently serves as National Collegiate Honors Council President-Elect.
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In addition, we would like to thank the honors director whose external review report is contained, anonymously and in abbreviated form, in Appendix K. We also thank Jane Halonen, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of West Florida and Claudia Stanny, Director of the Center for University Training and Assessment at the University of West Florida for their invaluable assistance with assessment designs and models.
INTRODUCTION

This electronic Assessment and Evaluation Committee document (version 1.0.1) is designed as a searchable .pdf file that can be downloaded to your computer for easy reference. The electronic format will permit frequent future modifications (in new versions) as developed by the authors for the Assessment and Evaluation Committee. We hope that you find this format to be very “user friendly,” but of course if you prefer hard copy text you may print from the .pdf file or contact the NCHC Headquarters Office about the cost of a print-on-demand copy.

Assessment and evaluation have always been important components of higher education in one form or another. There are many books and journals dedicated to established practices and processes, particularly the contribution that these make to student learning and to course, staff and institutional development. The National Collegiate Honors Council (hereafter NCHC) recognized the importance of assessment and evaluation from its inception in the 1960s. However, NCHC recognized that honors programs were unlike disciplinary departments. By 1970 the organization established a list of consultants mostly made up of directors of honors programs who were willing to assist other faculty and administrators in establishing an honors program as well as assisting programs develop evaluation tools specific to honors. Prior to that, honors programs followed the established procedures of their respective institutions.

NCHC was established in 1966. It is an organization of colleges and universities, faculty members, students, administrators, and others interested in supporting honors education. Its mission is to cultivate excellence in American undergraduate education. In February 1989, the Executive Committee of NCHC led by Anne Ponder and Faith Gabelnick, Co-Chairs of the Strategic Planning Committee began to construct more comprehensive, thorough, and systematic plans for the organization. Specifically, the Executive Committee identified the goals of NCHC as the following: to stimulate development of new honors programs in colleges and universities; to support and nurture the growth of existing honors programs; to promote an awareness of honors learning within higher education; to create enriched educational opportunities for honors students; and to advance the professional status and expertise of honors education. In the succeeding years, the NCHC continued to define and refine its purpose, function, and responsibility.

In March 2008 NCHC approved vision, mission, and core values statements. Vision: Excellence in and respect for honors education. Mission: The National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC) is the professional association of undergraduate honors programs and colleges; honors directors and deans; and honors faculty, staff, and students. NCHC provides support for institutions and individuals developing, implementing, and expanding honors education through curriculum development, program assessment, teaching innovation, national and international study opportunities, internships, service and leadership development, and mentored research. More generally, NCHC carries out this mission by serving honors
professionals and by advocating support for and excellence in higher education for all students. **Core Value Statement:** NCHC values an atmosphere that promotes academic opportunity and challenge for honors students and faculty. Within this intellectual environment, members of honors communities demonstrate integrity, respect, and excellence. Through the honors experience, participants realize enhanced personal, social, and intellectual development. The NCHC recognizes the importance of life-long learning and social responsibility in preparing individuals for an increasingly complex world. These beliefs and values are reinforced among member institutions through the collegiality and shared purpose of the NCHC.

As a result of this work, NCHC realizes that evaluation and assessment are important tools for achieving its goals. The organization understands the importance of having site visitors and NCHC consultants who can assist fledging programs as well as inexperienced administrators. In the spring 1989, for example, C. Grey Austin (Ohio State, Emeritus) wrote an article published in the NCHC Honors Report (Vol. X. No. 1) on “How a Consultant Can Help Your Program.” NCHC also acknowledges that even long-standing honors programs need external evaluators to point out the strengths and weaknesses of an individual honors program through unbiased and third-party observations.

Similar to other units in colleges and universities, honors programs and colleges must develop high quality and appropriate tools in order to undergo rigorous review processes that will measure their effectiveness and demonstrate accountability, but also to inform continued development or improvement of programs. Unlike other units on campus, however, honors programs and colleges are distinctive and often difficult to compare to traditional departments. Although honors administrators may find useful guidance and helpful ideas in the numerous publications available, based on their experience as NCHC Recommended Site Visitors the authors believe that a practical handbook of the nature of this electronic Assessment and Evaluation Committee document is more appropriate and specific to the needs of honors programs and colleges. Through workshops, conference sessions, and institutes, NCHC has developed tools that will assist honors programs assess highly cognitive and affective student learning—“value-added assessment.”

Colleges and universities are interested in finding ways of identifying a department, program, or institution’s strengths and weaknesses. With the expanding use of computer capabilities, it is becoming easier to collect and interpret data. NCHC realizes that this approach is going to remain with us, and, in fact, assessment has quickly become imbedded in the educational process at all institutions of higher learning. Therefore, NCHC has begun the task of finding tools that would assist honors programs assess highly cognitive and affective student learning—“value-added assessment.”

Both terms, evaluation and assessment, refer to measurement of performance; the difference lies in how the results of the measurement are to be applied. “Evaluation” implies accountability by the person or entity whose performance is being measured.
“Assessment” refers to the measurement of students’ performance for the purpose of evaluating something other than the individual students; a school system, a general education curriculum, or, of course, an honors program. The purpose of education is to foster learning. It is, therefore, appropriate that we should evaluate our success by measuring how well our students have learned.

Although honors programs may vary as a result of their unique institutional contexts, some standards for honors education may apply to all programs. Consequently, in 1994, the organization approved a set of basic characteristics for honors programs and later approved a set of characteristics for honors colleges in 2005. The characteristics share foundational premises and may assist honors administrators in determining whether or not they have a bona fide honors program or honors college and how well their own program corresponds to the prevailing norms. Just as traditional departments may vary due to the climate, setting, and character of particular institutions, honors programs and honors colleges also differ from one another. However, the characteristics share foundational premises and assist honors administrators in determining whether or not they have a bona fide honors program or honors college and how well their own program corresponds to the prevailing norms.

The first edition of Assessment and Evaluation: A Practical Handbook was created principally to serve as a text for the NCHC Assessment and Evaluation Institutes. It evolved from conversations by the NCHC Assessment and Evaluation Committee following three Site Visitor and Evaluations Institutes. The first one held in Brooklyn, New York (2000), and the second one held in Chicago, Illinois (2002), were organized and directed by Dr. Bernice Braid. These were followed by one held in Albuquerque, New Mexico (2004). The monograph was published in 2005. Training for site visitors continued with one in Lincoln, Nebraska (2006) organized and directed by Dr. Rosalie Otero and Dr. Robert Spurrier, one held in Portland, Oregon (2008) organized by Dr. Rosalie Otero and Dr. Greg Lanier, and one held in Atlanta, Georgia (2010) organized by Dr. Hallie Savage and Dr. Greg Lanier. Because of an increasing appeal by NCHC members for assistance with assessment, an assessment component was added to the Institutes in Portland and Atlanta. The first edition of the monograph was valuable to Institute participants for completion of their assignments and to help them prepare for Institute discussion sessions. In addition, the participants took a copy of the monograph at the close of the Institute to serve as a reference once they returned to their home campuses. This electronic Assessment and Evaluation Committee document includes additional material and changes to the basic characteristics as well as a substantial section on assessment. It includes models, illustrations, and examples of best practices from an array of honors programs and colleges across the nation.

The systematic use of evaluation and assessment tools has thus become one of the core principles guiding honors education. The NCHC currently has approximately forty Recommended Site Visitors. These are current institutional or professional members of NCHC who have attended three of the last five NCHC conferences and
have participated in Site Visitor Training. Many honors programs and honors colleges have instituted a cycle of external review and developed assessment tools.

The reader will find rationales and objectives for evaluation and assessment practices as well as specific methods for using honors consultants and honors external reviewers. This electronic Assessment and Evaluation Committee document also presents practical approaches to undertaking an honors self-study.

It addresses the differences between honors consultants and honors external reviewers as well as the benefits derived from both sets of specialists. Very important to honors directors and deans is the section concerning the external review process. This section provides honors administrators with explicit information on the various aspects of an external review. It details the preparation that must be done prior to a site visit, the goals and schedule of a successful site visit, and expectations subsequent to the site visit. Section Six offers directions for those who are interested in becoming an NCHC Recommended Site Visitor and is followed by Section Eight on assessment. This section gives honors administrators practical methods, scoring rubrics, and assessment matrixes that can be adapted to individual honors programs and honors colleges.

As with any pedagogy and program, a variety of tools and methods can be used to evaluate and assess in an approved manner. Honors programs’ ability to engage in high-quality assessment and evaluation has become a sine qua non for honors administrators. The methodology employed in assessment and evaluation in higher education is diverse and must be appropriate to the purposes for which they are being used. The focus of this electronic Assessment and Evaluation Committee document is very specific given the incalculable investment of time, energy, and effort of countless honors administrators across the county. It serves as a culmination of the ideas generated and best practices for assessing and evaluating honors programs and honors colleges. It is not the intent of the authors that this document will answer all of the questions regarding assessment and evaluation, nor are they attempting a broad range of options. Indeed, honors administrators are encouraged to consult with other scholarly literature in order to advance and strengthen their own assessment and evaluation methods. It is the authors’ intent that this document serve as a foundation for honors assessment and evaluation. Rather than being prescriptive, this document offers prototypes, models, and examples of how NCHC has addressed assessment and evaluation among its members.
PART ONE. THE VALUE OF EVALUATIONS

A. Rationale and Objectives

In recent years, institutions of higher education have experienced strong pressures to demonstrate the effectiveness of their academic programs. Much of this movement has been externally driven by national organizations and agencies, and in some cases state legislatures, all of which are demanding visible and concrete accountability and verification that fiscal and human resources invested in educational institutions are being used in ways that result in high-quality education and positively impact students. Furthermore, most accrediting agencies or other governing bodies are requesting that institutions develop evaluation methods and instruments as a means of improving academic programs.

For honors programs and colleges, a thorough evaluation process begins with two interrelated phases. First, an honors program or honors college must conduct a self-study to clarify its mission and objectives, to assess its success in attaining those objectives and fulfilling its mission, and to identify ways in which the effectiveness of honors can be increased. It is highly recommended that in addition to the many particulars and data included in a self-study, there be a section appraising how the honors program corresponds to the NCHC Basic Characteristics. Second, a team of experienced NCHC Recommended Site Visitors comes to the institution for an on-site evaluation. There may be legitimate reasons why an institution would choose professionals either outside of NCHC or honors administrators who have not undergone the NCHC site-visitor training. In any case, an on-site review is very important to the process. Finally, based on the program/college self-study report, information and insights gained during the visit, and a comparison to the National Collegiate Honors Council Basic Characteristics, a final report evaluating the honors program or honors college is produced.

Peer review of academic programs is a widely accepted method for evaluating curricular sequence, course development and delivery, and the effectiveness of faculty. Using external reviews is a useful way of analyzing whether student achievements correlate appropriately with program or college goals and objectives. In numerous instances, recommendations initiated by skilled external reviewers have been instrumental in identifying program strengths and weaknesses, leading to substantial curricular and structural changes and improvements.

Success of honors evaluation relies heavily on the collection of reliable and valid data on student achievements and the variables to explain them. Evaluation uses assessment information to support decisions on maintaining, changing, or discarding instructional or programmatic practices. These strategies can inform the nature and extent of learning in an honors program or honors college, and facilitate curricular decision-making.
Evaluation results or reports of external reviewers should be used in a timely manner to facilitate continuous programmatic improvements. Designing a feedback process is essential in all assessment and evaluation plans because it gives honors administrators and faculty the opportunity to use recent findings to improve the honors program or honors college. Since honors programs and honors colleges vary, consulting and evaluating honors programs and colleges is a unique and at times complex process.

B. Defining Kinds of Evaluations

Evaluation is the systematic measurement of the overall worth or merit of an honors program or honors college. The goal of evaluation is to provide feedback to various constituents interested and involved with honors education. Evaluation provides an opportunity for honors programs and honors colleges to demonstrate their strengths, address their weaknesses, generate institutional support, and gain outside validation of their accomplishments and goals. For the purposes of honors programs and honors colleges, formative and summative evaluations are most beneficial. Formative evaluation is a review of the structure of the honors program and honors college and the means by which it accomplishes its mission. Formative evaluation is a review of the structure of the honors program and honors college and the means by which it accomplishes its mission. Formative evaluation explores the input factors such as organizational context, personnel, procedures, and curriculum, and services that support learning. Summative evaluation examines the effects or outcomes of honors education, that is, students’ progress toward and achievement of institution and program-level learning.

When planning an honors program or honors college evaluation, one needs to consider the purpose. What do you want to be able to decide as a result of the evaluation? For whom is the evaluation intended? What kind of information is needed to ensure a successful evaluation? Most evaluations performed by NCHC Recommended Site Visitors are both formative and summative. They include goal-based evaluations which help determine whether the program or college is meeting its goals or objectives as well as process-based evaluations that examine the modus operandi of the program or college.
PART TWO. ANNOTATED BASIC CHARACTERISTICS OF A FULLY DEVELOPED HONORS PROGRAM

(Approved by the NCHC Executive Committee on March 4, 1994; amended by the NCHC Board of Directors on November 23, 2007; further amended by the NCHC Board of Directors on February 29, 2010)

Although no single or definitive honors program model can or should be superimposed on all types of institutions, the National Collegiate Honors Council has identified a number of best practices that are common to successful and fully developed honors programs.

The introductory paragraph in the “Basic Characteristics” document reflects the careful deliberations within the National Collegiate Honors Council about how to provide an instrument to assist with evaluation of honors programs without in any way attempting to develop a “one size fits all” model that might discourage a variety of honors program models. For an overview of the discussions leading up to adoption of the original Basic Characteristics list in 1994, see Richard J. Cummings, “Basic Characteristics of a Fully-Developed Honors Program and How They Grew: A Brief History of Honors Evaluation in NCHC,” The National Honors Report, vol. XV, no. 2, pages 27-31 (summer, 1994).

NCHC Recommended Site Visitors make extensive use of the Basic Characteristics because as stated earlier, these characteristics were a result of years of serious discussion and debate often with members at variance on what constitutes an honors program. The results of the intense dialogue were the Basic Characteristics. Although they are not mandates, they are the agreed-upon features that distinguish honors programs from other units on campus.

It should be noted that the numbering of the Basic Characteristics is for reference purposes only. Numbering in no way implies a rank order of importance among the characteristics.

1. The honors program offers carefully designed educational experiences that meet the needs and abilities of the undergraduate students it serves. A clearly articulated set of admission criteria (e.g., GPA, SAT score, a written essay, satisfactory progress, etc.) identifies the targeted student population served by the honors program. The program clearly specifies the requirements needed for retention and satisfactory completion.

The criteria for admission to an honors program by a first-year student, a continuing student, or a transfer student establish the gateway through which new students enter the program. These criteria should be the result of thoughtful deliberation because they will play a major role in determination of the nature of the honors student body at the institution. Among the factors that may well be considered are:
• Should standardized test scores (ACT, SAT) be utilized and, if so, how much weight should be accorded to them?

• Should high school academic performance (in the case of entering freshmen) or academic performance at the college or university level be considered? In the case of high school performance, what should be taken into account—grade point average, class rank, nature of curriculum, reference letters, or other measures? In the case of continuing or transfer students, what factors should be considered—grade point average, faculty references, or other measures?

• Should an essay be required from the prospective student? If so, how will it be evaluated and what role will it play in the honors admission decision? If more than one reader will be involved, what rubric or other measure will be employed to provide equity in the review of the essays?

• If multiple factors are involved in the honors admission decision, must a student score above a specified level on all of the factors, or would it be better for a particular institution to have, for example, a “three out of four” standard?

• Should there be a “provisional admission” procedure by which a student can demonstrate that he or she has true potential for the honors program even if not meeting the normal admission criteria? If so, who will make the determination? Will the number of provisional admission students be limited in any given year, or will the number remain flexible?

If a college or university elects to have an “open admissions” system for its honors program rather than employing criteria such as those mentioned above, it should be communicated clearly to prospective honors students. Whatever criteria are determined to be appropriate for a particular institution, the requirements should be clearly articulated, easily understood, and made readily available to all prospective honors students.

All honors programs should have clearly enunciated standards for retention “in good standing.” Many make provision for a probationary semester for students who fail to meet the criteria. Almost all honors programs have a minimum college grade point requirement, and many also review the progress being made by students toward completion of the program.

2. The program has a clear mandate from the institution’s administration in the form of a mission statement or charter document that includes the objectives and responsibilities of honors and defines the place of honors in the administrative and academic structure of the institution. The statement ensures the permanence and stability of honors by Guaranteeing that adequate infrastructure resources,
including an appropriate budget as well as appropriate faculty, staff, and administrative support when necessary, are allocated to honors so that the program avoids dependence on the good will and energy of particular faculty members or administrators for survival. In other words, the program is fully institutionalized (like comparable units on campus) so that it can build a lasting tradition of excellence.

Rather than having a nonspecific “excellence” directive, the honors program can better assess and evaluate its mission if it has a specific mandate in the form of a mission statement incorporated in a comprehensive set of policies and procedures approved by the chief academic officer of the institution.

Similarly, if the institution engages in strategic planning, it is important that the honors program has its own strategic plan approved by the chief academic officer—preferably with clearly defined performance objectives and benchmarks for success.

Essential to the health and longevity of the honors program is a realistic budget that provides salary support for the honors administrator (director or coordinator), adequate support staff, faculty lines or released time for faculty from academic departments, and operational expenses. The honors program should not be expected to “support itself” by external fundraising efforts that are expected of other academic units on campus, nor should the honors director be placed in the position of a mendicant always seeking support of departmental administrators when it comes time to schedule and staff honors courses.

The amount of released time for the director or coordinator may vary among institutions, but in the experience of the authors of this electronic Assessment and Evaluation Committee document very few honors programs rise to the level of national prominence without having full-time honors administrators with twelve-month appointments.

As the number of students actively participating in an honors program grows over time, it is essential that budgetary support keep pace with the increasing number of students. When site visitors discover that the budgetary commitment has not kept pace, the funding shortfall almost automatically becomes a point of concern to be addressed as part of the site visit.

3. The honors director reports to the chief academic officer of the institution.

Assuming that the honors program is an institution-wide academic program, the appropriate reporting line is to the chief academic officer. While the actual supervisory authority often resides with an associate provost (or some similar administrator), it is quite important that the honors reporting line be to the central administration rather than to a subsidiary unit on campus for both budgetary and campus perception reasons.
In many, and perhaps most, institutions the chief academic officer is better positioned to fund, support, and protect honors education than the head of any subsidiary unit—thus contributing to the budgetary support noted above. In addition, if the honors administrator reports to an academic dean (for example, the dean of Liberal Arts and Sciences), the perception on campus tends to be that the honors program is a wholly-owned subsidiary of LA&S and that the other deans and colleges need not have a stake its success.

Another important benefit derived from reporting to the chief academic officer is that the honors administrator has a seat at the proverbial table when it comes to resource allocation. While some directors participate in meetings of deans, others do not do so. In part this may be a matter of campus history, but it may also reflect the considered decision of the honors administrator that the program is better served by his or her being “below the radar screen” rather than being overtly present at the meetings of the deans on an ongoing basis.

4. The honors curriculum, established in harmony with the mission statement, meets the needs of the students in the program and features special courses, seminars, colloquia, experiential-learning opportunities, undergraduate research opportunities, or other independent-study options.

A wide variety of honors courses are offered by NCHC colleges and universities, and not all honors programs offer all of the following—but the list is reasonably comprehensive in the experience of the authors:

“First-year orientation” honors seminars or colloquia, sometimes built on a summer reading assignment, to bring new students into the honors community.

Honors sections of a wide variety of general education courses (English composition and/or literature, American government, biological sciences, calculus, foreign languages, etc.) that are open only to honors program students—although some institutions allow other students to fill vacant seats in an honors section on the basis of specified criteria.

Special honors courses, frequently interdisciplinary and sometimes team-taught, that fulfill general education requirements.

Honors seminars/colloquia that are topical in nature and may well vary in content from academic term to term.

Honors independent study or honors research under the tutelage of a faculty mentor.

Honors thesis or other creative component appropriate as an honors “capstone” experience.
Credit earned through NCHC’s Honors Semesters and international and national programs.

In addition to actual honors course offerings such as those listed above, many honors programs provide students an opportunity to earn honors credit in a “regular” course by the mechanism of an honors contract (sometimes called an honors option) that allows a faculty member to work with the student to add some academic dimension to the course that otherwise would not be included. Many honors programs limit the number of credit hours that may be earned by honors contracts, and some limit honors contacts to upper-division work in the student’s academic major field. Almost all honors programs require some sort of approval for the proposed contract, but the degree of detailed supervision varies significantly across institutions.

5. The program requirements constitute a substantial portion of the participants’ undergraduate work, typically 20% to 25% of the total course work and certainly no less than 15%.

If an honors program does not require this amount of honors course work, including the honors thesis, it is immediately suspect. The 15% minimum is truly that—a barely acceptable minimum (18 credit hours in a 120-hour degree). Many honors programs require a substantially greater number of honors credit hours (as high as 40 in some cases). In more typical cases, many honors programs require 25 or more credit hours, bringing them close to the minimal threshold of 30 credit hours required for a baccalaureate degree program (and there are some programs and colleges that offer baccalaureate degrees in the “discipline” of honors). Thus honors coursework often comes close to constituting a “super-minor”—a focused sequence of course that leads to the breadth of knowledge and focused skills that are the goals of honors education.

6. The curriculum of the program is designed so that honors requirements can, when appropriate, also satisfy general education requirements, major or disciplinary requirements, and pre-professional or professional training requirements.

This characteristic addresses the need for continuation of honors educational opportunities from the first year to graduation. Assuring that honors courses early in students’ academic careers satisfy general education requirements (in part or in whole) is an important factor in an honors program’s success, as is carefully integrating “honors in the major” into overall honors program requirements. At nearly all institutions the need to avoid the burden of excessive credit hour requirements deem it necessary to accept honors credits to fulfill graduation requirements in lieu of regular, non-honors courses. It is important that these equivalencies be spelled out clearly in the institution’s policies.
At many colleges and universities, separate honors awards are available for completion of general honors as well as for honors in the major requirements, with both sometimes being required for graduation with honors. Terminology for these honors awards varies significantly among institutions, but it can be important to have a “midway” award that may be earned at or near the end of the sophomore year to reward honors performance and encourage continued participation in the honors program.

7. **The program provides a locus of visible and highly reputed standards and models of excellence for students and faculty across the campus.**

At many institutions, honors programs are housed in centrally located buildings. In addition, they are quite often highlighted in the colleges and universities’ recruitment materials and on the main website. Faculty who teach honors courses are considered some of the best teachers and can use their honors work in tenure and promotion considerations. Honors programs are places for innovation and experimentation. They establish courses and programs that are models. Instructors often develop new methods for teaching and incorporate approaches that are groundbreaking and inventive. These may include challenging assignments, field-based projects, service-learning endeavors, and interdisciplinary research.

8. **The criteria for selection of honors faculty include exceptional teaching skills, the ability to provide intellectual leadership and mentoring for able students, and support for the mission of honors education.**

It should go without saying that faculty teaching in the honors program must be fully committed to the program and the students that it serves. The honors administrator must have influence and authority in determining who teaches honors courses. The ideal situation would be that the honors program include in its budget “bargaining power” in order to negotiate with department administrators for the best faculty.

Some institutions employ honors faculty committees to review faculty honors course proposals. Care must be taken, however, to avoid constructing an overly complicated obstacle course that can discourage talented and innovative faculty from applying in the first place.

The honors director should have access to student evaluations for honors courses as well as to syllabi used in those courses.

In the long run, to retain the type of faculty needed for a successful honors program, success in teaching and mentoring honors students must be built into the institutional formula for promotion, tenure, and salary increases.
9. The program is located in suitable, preferably prominent, quarters on campus that provide both access for the students and a focal point for honors activity. Those accommodations include space for honors administrative, faculty, and support staff functions as appropriate. They may include space for an honors lounge, library, reading rooms, and computer facilities. If the honors program has a significant residential component, the honors housing and residential life functions are designed to meet the academic and social needs of honors students.

Giving honors students a “place to call their own” is important in any institution. Informal space in which to gather, conduct study groups, and just relax is an important to developing the honors community. Some institutions have their honors student space open on a 24-hour basis. Some also include cooking facilities and vending machines in their honors lounges.

Precisely what is necessary in this honors space will vary from campus to campus. For example, if a campus has extensive wireless Internet service, it may be less important to have computers in the honors student area. The same can be true if there are many readily accessible computer facilities on campus. But the décor of the honors lounge is important not only to the students who relax and study there, but also for the college or university’s recruiting efforts for prospective honors students. It is quite likely that the institution’s enrollment officers see the honors program as a major recruiting tool, but if the facilities are cramped, dingy, and noticeably out of date, they are unlikely to make a good first impression on the students who are visiting campus as part of their college or university selection process.

The honors library, although included in this “Basic Characteristics” list, may be becoming a less important feature in light of the fact that the current generation of students is far more adept at using (and even prefers) electronic access to materials.

10. The program has a standing committee or council of faculty members that works with the director or other administrative officer and is involved in the honors curriculum, governance, policy, development, and evaluation deliberations. The composition of that group represents the colleges and/or departments served by the program and also elicits support for the program from across the campus.

Having a faculty honors council or committee is important for a wide variety of reasons, not the least of which is obtaining “buy in” from the institution as a whole. Giving “ownership” of this group to key campus units can be extremely useful, and some institutions allow those units to select some or all of the members of the council or committee. While it may at first seem convenient for the honors director to be able to appoint the members of the council or committee, in the long run this can be a self-defeating strategy because of the perception that no one else has a real stake in its operations.
Some institutions include key professional staff on their councils or committees, such as members representing the library, admissions office, and scholarships office.

The honors council or committee should meet regularly, and it is advisable to have multi-year terms with staggered expiration dates to provide some continuity over time.

Having at least two students as members of the faculty honors council or committee is also good practice since it provides a student voices at the table and helps students appreciate the intricacies of honors program administration and development. (See the next Basic Characteristic, below.) Although some institutions make the students non-voting members, we recommend that they have the same voting privileges as the faculty. This insures equal participation by all members. The reason that we say “at least two” student members is that it avoids isolating the lone student member who can feel marginalized. At least one institution has an equal number of faculty and students on its governing council.

Faculty honors councils and committees can play many roles including serving as liaisons to their respective campus units; participating in the honors admission process (or, in a more limited role, assisting with decisions in borderline cases); reviewing honors program requirements and curriculum (including, at some institutions, approving proposals for new honors courses); making or advising in academic eligibility appeals from honors students whose performance falls below specified levels; participating in the review of honors theses; assisting in recruiting events and activities; and assessing the effectiveness of the honors curriculum. This list is not meant to be exhaustive, but rather to serve as a starting point for discussions on your campus about how best to utilize this council or committee.

11. Honors students are assured a voice in the governance and direction of the honors program. This can be achieved through a student committee that conducts its business with as much autonomy as possible but works in collaboration with the administration and faculty to maintain excellence in the program. Honors students are included in governance, serving on the advisory/policy committee as well as constituting the group that governs the student association.

The role that the students will play should be the first consideration in establishing a student committee. If it is to be essentially a part of the governing process for the honors program, the committee may be kept relatively small while also being broadly representative of the undergraduate colleges and majors from which honors students are drawn. If, on the other hand, the student committee is conceived as having an inclusive social community-building role, it may well be a larger committee so that various events can be planned, meetings arranged, and active student involvement encouraged.
Some honors programs provide for student elections to fill their student committees, while others allow constituent units on campus to select representatives from among their own honors students. Whatever method is adopted, however, the governance policies should be clear and made known to all students who may wish to participate.

Some honors programs have honors student organizations in which every honors student is automatically a member. Typically an organization of this type has its own constitution and bylaws approved by the honors director, and frequently students elect their peers to leadership positions in the organization. At some colleges and universities, honors student organizations of this type qualify for student activity funding from sources other than the honors program budget.

It is important that the honors director or coordinator be in close communication with the student committee throughout the year, both to provide encouragement as well as to receive comments and suggestions brought forward by the students. There are programs where the student committee, accompanied by the honors director, meets once a week.

12. Honors students receive honors-related academic advising from qualified faculty and/or staff.

The provision of quality honors advising is essential to the success of an honors program, and as with other facets of the honors experience there should be a systematic method for student evaluation of honors advising. In terms of the need for mentoring and guidance, honors students are just like the rest of the student population.

An important point to keep in mind as regards honors advising is that honors students can be expected to have at least as many, and as complicated, problems as other students. It is sometimes tempting to envision all honors students as especially well-rounded, balanced, thoughtful, mature, and self-possessed. This vision does not seem particularly accurate or helpful despite its attractiveness and allure. Honors students, just like their non-honors peers, are sometimes plagued with doubts about their academic careers and their futures; they are going to have problems with their love lives, fights with roommates, scheduling conflicts, health problems, or intrusive parents. In fact, because their academic expectations and goals are oftentimes higher than those of their non-honors peers, honors students will sometimes have more academic and personal counseling needs than other students” (Sam Schuman, Beginning in Honors, NCHC 2006, 62-64).
In very small honors programs, it may be possible for the honors director to provide honors advising for all of the students in the program—but this is not a realistic expectation in even mid-sized honors programs.

The National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) reports that the average load for a full-time advisor at a four-year institution is just over 280 students (and remember, all those individuals are required to do is to advise students), so it is not realistic at all to expect that the honors director will shoulder a major share of the advising burden in the majority of honors programs. In some honors programs, honors advising is handled by carefully selected faculty advisors in academic departments. In others, the honors program professional staff provides honors advising—and a few institutions require that honors advisors themselves have earned honors degrees. Another model is for key advisors in centralized advising centers to provide honors advising, especially before students declare their academic majors. A few institutions make use of peer advising in which selected honors students provide honors advising. Some institutions mix and match two or more of the elements discussed here.

Regardless of the approach adopted, those providing honors advising should be committed to the goals of the honors program and fully conversant with its policies and procedures. Just as it is crucial that the honors director have a significant voice in the selection of faculty who teach honors courses, it is important that the he or she be able to influence the selection of honors advisors and have full access to the results of evaluations of honors advisors.

13. The program serves as a laboratory within which faculty feel welcome to experiment with new subjects, approaches, and pedagogies. When proven successful, such efforts in curriculum and pedagogical development can serve as prototypes for initiatives that can become institutionalized across the campus.

Because honors programs tend to be open to experimentation by top faculty, they frequently are “incubators” for new courses and approaches. It is not uncommon for an honors course to develop into a course available to the wider student body. The same may be true with innovative course formats (intensive condensed courses, for example) and pedagogical approaches. The honors program necessarily must take the lead in making these curricular success stories known on campus and be willing to work with campus units that may wish to build on the foundation developed in the honors program.

14. The program engages in continuous assessment and evaluation and is open to the need for change in order to maintain its distinctive position of offering exceptional and enhanced educational opportunities to honors students.
Honors programs must engage in continuous assessment in order to provide faculty members, administrators, and others with evidence, numerical or otherwise, from which they can develop useful information about their students, programs, and courses. This information can help them make effectual decisions about student learning and development, professional effectiveness, and program quality. Assessment includes the measuring and appraising of such components as the function of orientation, curriculum, instruction, advising, and extracurricular elements that are necessary for maximal improvement of the program. It should also include input assessment that helps programs understand their students: their various abilities as judged by testing or grade point averages, the approaches they take to learning, and their capacity for abstract reasoning and critical thinking. This information gives honors administrators’ crucial information for designing appropriate components that will strengthen their programs.

The gathering and compilation of assessment data can then be archived in detailed annual reports. These reports serve not only as historical record, but they can also be helpful in making the achievements of the honors program known more widely if they are liberally distributed on campus (and even make available on the honors program’s website).

Evaluation or formal review can take many forms. Including the honors program in the regular institutional program review cycle is one way to assure that formal reviews will take place on a periodic basis, and at many institutions, inclusion in the regular cycle provides a source of revenue to bring external reviewers to campus as part of the process. Another approach is to invite reviewers, in particular NCHC Recommended Site Visitors who have been trained and are experienced in this process, or other experts to campus to provide an external perspective from time to time, either as consultants on specific aspects of the program or as an external review team. Some honors programs involve alumni in their review process. A number of honors programs have strategic plans and assessment rubrics with performance benchmarks that are part of larger strategic planning assessment frameworks at the institution.

The faculty honors council or committee and the honors student committee or organization should be engaged in continuous review of the honors program and invited to bring forth suggestions for its improvement at any time.

15. The program emphasizes active learning and participatory education by offering opportunities for students to participate in regional and national conferences, Honors Semesters, international programs, community service, internships, undergraduate research, and other types of experiential education.

Just as faculty and professional staff benefit tremendously from experiences away from the home campus, so do honors students. Such opportunities can serve to
showcase honors students’ successes and to enable them to learn from other honors students.

State, regional, and national honors conferences provide excellent venues in which to share information about all aspects of the honors experience. Attendance at the annual National Collegiate Honors Council conference typically includes 40-45% undergraduate honors students along with honors administrators, faculty, and professional staff—making it unique among national professional conferences.

NCHC’s Honors Semesters are offered both in the United States and abroad. These highly selective experiences bring approximately 30 honors students together for an entire semester of honors coursework and experiential learning.

Study abroad is another important aspect of the honors experience for many students. It gives students practical, experiential understanding of other places and cultures. This is particularly important since we live in a diverse, interconnected world. It is important, however, that an honors program take into account the value of the study abroad experience in terms of fulfilling (or substituting for) some of the requirements of the program.

Community service is required by a number of honors programs and is encouraged by many programs. In some cases, demonstrated community service may be used to meet a portion of the honors program’s curricular requirements. Service learning or community service is important in order to connect students to their communities and to deepen their commitment toward becoming more caring and involved citizens. Service experiences expand student understanding especially when linked to the student’s academic learning.

The National Student Exchange (NSE) program is another avenue to broaden the experience of honors students. If an institution participates in NSE, it can make its honors program available to honors students from other colleges and universities and also arrange to accept honors credit from other NSE institutions at which its own honors students have studied.

16. When appropriate, two-year and four-year programs have articulation agreements by which honors graduates from two-year programs who meet previously agreed-upon requirements are accepted into four-year honors programs.

Transfer students constitute an important cohort for many honors programs, and a formal articulation agreement is useful in making the transition from a two-year honors program to that of a four-year institution smooth and predictable in terms of criteria for transfer and utilization of honors credit. Honors advisors at the two-year institution can work with their honors students from the outset to tailor their honors work so that it is most useful to the student after he or she transfers to a four-year institution.
An honors articulation agreement also can codify how credit from a four-year institution’s honors program will be counted when an honors student transfers to a two-year institution.

17. The program provides priority enrollment for active honors students in recognition of scheduling difficulties caused by the need to satisfy both honors and major program(s) requirements.

The unique scheduling needs of honors students are recognized even at institutions with large numbers of honors courses because even under the best of circumstances honors students must juggle their honors courses around requirements in their academic majors. Honors students frequently pursue double (or triple) majors, multiple minors, study abroad options, and internships—all of which make it important that they be able to implement sometimes extremely complex plans of study to be able to graduate on time.

PART THREE. ANNOTATED BASIC CHARACTERISTICS OF A FULLY DEVELOPED HONORS COLLEGE
(Approved by the NCHC Executive Committee on June 25, 2005, and amended by the NCHC Board of Directors on February 19, 2010)

Just as the “Basic Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors Program” may have many uses, the “Basic Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors College” may be useful for planning the transition from an honors program to an honors college as well as for determining the level at which an honors college is functioning at any given time. Again, it should be noted that the numbering of the “Basic Characteristics” list is for convenience of reference only. The numbering in no way implies a rank order of importance among the characteristics.

The National Collegiate Honors Council has identified these best practices that are common to successful and fully developed honors colleges.

1. An honors college incorporates the relevant characteristics of a fully developed honors program.

Most, if not all, honors colleges grew out of honors programs and the characteristics that define a fully developed honors program will continue to inspire the vision, mission, and program of the honors college. In addition, the program characteristics delineate some of the most essential features of an honors experience, features that will be enhanced and transformed to support the four-year goals of the honors college.
2. **The honors college exists as an equal collegiate unit within a multi-collegiate university structure.**

The dean of the honors college should participate as an equal voice in the Deans’ Council meetings. Budget allocations and other benefits to the honors college should be on par with other colleges on campus including, for example, a full or part-time development officer, equal access to the recruitment office, and scholarship funds.

3. **The head of the honors college is a dean reporting directly to the chief academic officer of the institution and serving as a full member of the Council of Deans if one exists. The dean has a full-time, 12-month appointment.**

This crucial characteristic guarantees a fully developed honors college. The honors college dean must enjoy access to the chief academic officer and participate in university decisions that include deans and other administrative officers. Honors college deans must participate in programmatic and academic decisions that will affect all the schools/college in a university structure in order to strengthen the honors college and to network the college’s assets to the university community.

4. **The operational and staff budgets of honors colleges provide resources at least comparable to those of other collegiate units of equivalent size.**

Operational budgets should be created that enable an honors college to provide both curricular and extracurricular activities for its students. Staff/student ratios should parallel similar departments in size and in function. As honors college budgets expand, university officials and deans will struggle with the appropriate balance of “hard” and “soft” money to support the college, and deans may be called on to support relevant university officers in fundraising activities. Deans need to push for permanent funding of their college, while also working to raise soft funds.

5. **The honors college exercises increased coordination and control of departmental honors where the college has emerged out of a decentralized system.**

The transition to an honors college from an honors program requires the honors dean to explain the academic gains to all departments despite what may appear at first to be a loss of departmental prerogatives. A stronger, more diverse, and multidisciplinary program enables the honors college to offer a variety of curricula alternatives that transcend departments and schools/colleges. The creation of a faculty honors council or committee to facilitate communication across the schools/colleges and departments is essential to this transition.
6. The honors college exercises considerable control over honors recruitment and admissions, including the appropriate size of the incoming class. Admission to the honors college may be by separate application.

Deans and honors staff should participate in the admissions process in order to create and promote the unique identity of the honors college. A separate application process ensures an appropriate and high quality student and also provides the personal touch to a typically impersonal process.

7. The honors college exercises considerable control over its policies, curriculum, and selection of faculty.

The dean should exercise significant control over policies and curriculum and the selection of faculty. Deans can use this opportunity of decision-making to enhance the “buy-in” of department chairs and deans. Honors faculty can also facilitate connections with the University community by working not only with an honors council but also with key institutional committees, such as a faculty senate, to deliberate and advance honors policies and goals.

8. The curriculum of the honors college offers significant course opportunities across all four years of study.

Although many honors courses can easily be derived from the core requirements of schools or colleges, deans should work to create significant academic opportunities for students who move beyond the core requirements of their respective school. Faculty should be encouraged to create courses that facilitate continued seminar-based discussion and appropriate disciplinary capstone projects for students who have moved almost exclusively into their major and minor fields.

9. The curriculum of the honors college constitutes at least 20% of a student’s degree program. The honors college requires an honors thesis or honors capstone project.

Since the purpose of an honors college is to enhance and broaden and, in some instances, deepen the education of honors students, the honors college should constitute at least 20% (24 credit hours) of a student’s degree program. A capstone option is important as a culminating experience for graduating seniors. Because many honors students will go on to graduate or professional schools, a research thesis or project not only deepens a student’s understanding of a disciplinary or interdisciplinary topic, but also prepares the student for advanced inquiry and research. Other capstone options may include service-learning projects, international study, and internships, with each typically requiring a detailed report. Further,
capstone activities provide a very rich and telling assessment node, which can be important in the program evaluation feedback loop.

10. Where the home university has a significant residential component, the honors college offers substantial honors residential opportunities.

The benefits derived from living-learning opportunities are many and well documented, and like other student cohorts, Honors students benefit significantly from living together in an honors residence hall. Provisions should also be made for additional honors community-building and academic activities, all of which combine to enhance retention not only for the honors college, but for the institution at large as well.

11. The distinction achieved by the completion of the honors college requirements is publically announced and recorded, and methods may include announcement at commencement ceremonies, notations on the diploma and/or the student's final transcript, or other similar actions.

Honors colleges need to praise the extraordinary achievement of their scholars who have completed the four-year requirements, and special recognition at commencement or an additional commencement for the honors students is one important way to highlight their achievement. Separate diplomas and commendation on University transcripts reinforce the institutional appreciation for the students’ dedication and success.

12. Like other colleges within the university, the honors college may be involved in alumni affairs and development and may have an external advisory board.

Most honors colleges today find themselves having to balance the special needs of honors alumni with the demands of a highly specialized development office or alumni affairs office, units often charged with facilitating all ongoing contact with an institution’s graduates. Honors alumni often find themselves indebted to both the honors college and the school or college of their degree program, which creates conflicting giving loyalties. Honors colleges thus need to work even more closely with the Development Office and alumni affairs to support the overarching goals of the university as well as the specific needs for honors. Given the difficult nature of fundraising in general, the honors dean needs to work to facilitate yearly contact with alumni and to increase endowments and gifts.

Establishing an external advisory board for the honors college can be highly beneficial. A group of professionals, often composed of both honors alumni and friends of honors, can provide guidance and support on critical issues and build relationships with the community so that individuals external to honors understand
the unique mission of the honors college as well as its various courses, programs, and activities. An external board can serve as a conduit to the influence and power that the honors college often needs.

PART FOUR. HONORS CONSULTANTS AND REVIEWERS: WHAT’S THE DIFFERENCE?

Outside consultants can be useful agents in assisting honors administrators in a variety of ways, but particularly by offering advice and guidance for specific issues. External reviewers, by contrast, typically provide the program or college a more general evaluation that may be useful when undergoing a program review. External reviewers do not target specific issues or questions in isolation since a program review is intended to evaluate the whole program or college within the context of the institution and national norms. Like external reviewers, consultants may elect to use the Basic Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors Program or Basic Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors College as a framework for their appraisal. (The Basic Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors Program were developed by the NCHC Honors Evaluation Committee and approved by the NCHC Executive Committee in 1994 And subsequently amended by the NCHC Board of Directors in 2007 and in 2010. The Basic Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors College were developed by the ad hoc Honors Colleges Committee and approved by the Executive Committee in 2005.)

Consultants can help situate individual honors practices within the national honors context, can provide outside perspective to analyze the needs of the honors program or honors college, and can target just one or a few particular issues that concern that program or college. It may be necessary to arrange for a consultant to visit the campus since there is only so much information that can be learned about an honors program or college and its unique culture that can be learned at a distance. Because each honors program or honors college is unique, with a distinctive mission, history, leadership style, capabilities, resource availability, culture, and set of challenges, the primary goal of a consultant is to make recommendations that fit the specific need of the individual honors program or honors college. The advice may range from facilitating custom-designed on-campus workshops or serving as “technical advisors” to a review team.

Consultations and workshops can be especially beneficial if there is sufficient need for training on a particular topic. Consultants can help with such issues as the following:

- planning honors curriculum
- devising honors teaching strategies for faculty
- designing or redesigning honors course evaluations
- deterring, detecting, and dealing with plagiarism
- developing assessment tools like student learning outcomes
designing distance learning for an honors context
fostering honors leadership skills for both faculty and students
designing mentoring schemes

Campuses should contact a consultant directly to discuss their interests and consultation needs. Arrangements regarding the length and structure of a consultation contract, as well as fees, are negotiated individually between the institution and consultant. Normally campuses cover travel costs plus an honorarium.

Honors administrators may select their own consultant or take advantage of the Consultants’ Center held during the annual NCHC conference. Experienced honors deans and directors volunteer to be available in the center for at least one hour during the conference, and the NCHC conference program lists these volunteers, their institutions, and their expertise. Conference attendees may stop by the Consultants’ Center to speak with one of the experienced volunteers and receive expert advice. In recent NCHC conferences, for example, over twenty-five honors administrators have participated in the Consultants’ Center and given advice on such topics as academic advising, extracurricular programming, alumni relations, study abroad, curriculum development, scholarships, fundraising, and undergraduate research.

The use of the NCHC listserv is another valuable tool for receiving advice and sharing ideas. In recent years, the listserv has generated suggestions on topics ranging from the use of medallions, cords, or certificates of achievement in graduation ceremonies to strategies for becoming an honors college.

PART FIVE. UNDERTAKING AN HONORS SELF STUDY

As one of the Basic Characteristics states, honors assessment should be ongoing and constant: “The program engages in continuous assessment and evaluation and is open to the need for change in order to maintain its distinctive position of offering exceptional and enhanced educational opportunities to honors students.” At the very least, Honors administrators should prepare an annual report that includes the successes as well as the inadequacies of the program or college for that year. Recommended content of the annual report can be found in Appendix D. The extensive documentation gathered annually can be used for a variety of purposes including preparation for an external review of the program or college or even an accreditation review of the institution. Generally, the annual report should include student statistics and graduate profiles as well as information on courses, faculty, and activities associated with the honors program or honors college in the academic year, presented in both narrative and quantitative formats. The report should be as detailed as possible including, for example, the names of students who graduated that year.

When such a report is generated annually, the generation of a self-study document becomes relatively simple. The annual report should be disseminated to all appropriate audiences in a timely fashion (alongside the annual reports for the other
academic units on campus) and with recommendations designed to encourage follow-through. Placing a read-only file containing the annual report on the web page is another way to make the information available to alumni and others.

A self-study report is the major source of information about an honors program or honors college for both internal and external reviewers. It defines the context in which the honors program or honors college will be examined and provides the focus for site reviewers’ discussion during the visit. A self-study is a thoroughly comprehensive report. It includes an in-depth analysis of the program or college’s purposes, programs, services, resources, structures, and functions by the sitting honors administrator. The self-study should include, of course, the successes of the program or college, but it should also highlight areas that are in need of improvement. An honest assessment has the dual benefit of presenting both a credible report and, perhaps more importantly, of eliciting support from the institution to change or strengthen areas listed as weaknesses. Recommendations for improvement can have the added benefit of showing external stakeholders the success of the honors program or honors college in doing its job. Transparent assessment results can go a long way toward receiving support for honors education.

In planning the self-study, honors administrators should consider the following questions:

1. What are the mission, goals, and objectives of the honors program or honors college?
2. Are mission, goals, and objectives appropriate in the present time and place and for the present constituency of honors students and faculty?
3. Are all the honors activities consistent with the program’s mission, goals, and objectives?
4. Are the honors courses, curricula, and activities designed to achieve the program’s goals and objectives?
5. What is the evidence (data) that the mission, goals, and objectives are being achieved?
6. Are the human, physical, and fiscal resources needed to achieve the overall goals of the honors program or college available? Are they likely to be available for the foreseeable future?
7. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the honors program or college?
8. Who are the people to be interviewed during the site visit?
9. What else does the reviewer need to know about the honors program or college?
10. What additional documents should be examined?

A self-study report must include a history of the program. At many institutions, the director serves a limited term. Institutional memory, therefore, depends on well-kept records, and a self-study report provides one locus for keeping the history of the program or college. Any important or interesting information concerning the start of a program should be included since the moment of genesis reveals many of the
choices that determine the lasting shape of the honors program. Founding documents may also be included in the self-study appendices. Policy documents should include the mission and goals of the program, all statements that govern the operation of the honors unit (admission criteria, curricular programs and/or maps, course descriptions, etc.), as well as discussion about whether the honors policies are consistent with the educational mission of the institution.

The self-study report must include extensive information about the organization of the program or college. What is the organizational structure? To whom does the administrator report? Is there provision for continuity of leadership? What is the level of staff support? Are the staffing roles clearly defined and do they have written position descriptions? Is the staff responsible only for administrative tasks or does it also have recruitment, advising, or development duties? It is also important for reviewers to understand how the program is governed. Is there a faculty-level honors council or committee? Does it set policy, merely advise, or do both? Who at the institution is involved in honors governance, and how are they selected? Is there a student-level Honors Committee or Council? What are the functions and responsibilities of this student body? Finally, it is important to provide evidence of administrative support for honors. Areas that can be used as evidence may include the budget, a description of the physical facility, and participation by administrators in various honors events.

Information about the honors student population is, of course, vital to a self-study report. For example, what are the criteria for admission to and retention in the honors program or college? Statistics about the number of students participating in the program (including demographic breakdowns if possible), profiles of honors graduates and their successes, and other similar information can be helpful. A list of theses/projects and other commendable achievements of the students should be included. In addition, the self-study should include information about recruitment, admission, and retention.

A description of the honors curriculum is important. What is the overall shape of the honors curriculum, and what is its purpose and focus? What honors courses have been offered and what were the enrollment figures for each course? Who teaches the honors courses, how are they selected, and how are they trained in honors pedagogy? The inclusion of a summative report of honors course evaluations also provides valuable information about the quality and shape of the honors curriculum.

Lastly, the self-study should include all of the activities and events that were sponsored by the program/college and any additional relevant information, such as activity involving participation at the national, regional, or statewide honors councils. Many honors programs and colleges have extensive international or cultural opportunities for their students, and information about those programs needs to be included. If alumni, housing, or advising surveys are used, findings from them should be added as well.
One way to organize the self-study is to use the NCHC’s “Basic Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors Program” and the “Basic Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors College.” In addition to forming a useful framework, the “characteristics” can help situate the program or college in the context of national guidelines.

**PART SIX. THE VALUE OF A SITE VISIT**

Part six of this Assessment and Evaluation Committee document is a compilation of comments from a variety of honors administrators whose institutions made use of NCHC Recommended Site Visitors for external reviews or consulting. We believe that these comments generally are representative of the experiences of numerous honors deans and directors who have invited site visitors to their respective institutions in recent years.

**Abilene Christian University**

As I write, the Honors Program at Abilene Christian University is in metamorphosis into an honors college. We have begun a 4-year phase-in, anticipating a total investment of $400,000 for additional teachers and staff, research grants, travel courses, a speakers’ series and so on. But this comes after standing hat-in-hand for 7 years. The program was founded in 1984, and trustees voted in 2001 to ramp up to an honors college. But not a nickel came forth to do it until 2008. Creating an honors college had to await some global changes including dramatic reallocations to make the school more innovative and competitive in its second century. The honors college proposal competed with 150 other proposals in a two-year winnowing process. Our use of outcomes assessment and of NCHC site visitors was enormously important in our making the cut. In 2001, three NCHC site visitors came as external reviewers. I believe it was their evidence and eloquence that persuaded the president and board that we needed an honors college. If their testimony and our data had not been in place when reallocation started, we would not have prevailed.

— Chris Willerton, Dean

**Grand Valley State University**

The consultant visit was very valuable to our honors college because it quickly brought out core issues, challenged some long-standing assumptions, helped us advocate with administration, and caused us to think long and hard about direction and strategic planning. If it had not been for the consultant visit, we might have taken years to address all of these issues. At its conclusion, though, the process was very affirming because, in addition to suggesting areas for development, the consultant report highlighted the positive elements we have in place now and emphasized the contribution the Honors College is already making to the university. Because we
have external validation, we can say with confidence to prospective students that our Honors College is an exceptional educational value, and that it continues to advance and offer ever-greater opportunities and rewards.

— Jeffrey Chamberlain, Director

Elizabethtown College

Our program was very young (five years since inception and on the brink of graduating our first cohort of students) at the time of the visit, undergoing our first growing pains. The site visitors were thorough, insightful, very politic, and complimentary whenever possible, yet they had much to recommend that we consider. The final report yielded 23 primary recommendations, some with multiple parts.

In the first year following the review, the honors director and honors committee were able to use the report to leverage institutional support for a temporary part-time administrative staff member, our most critical need. Unfortunately, the person hired left the position after nine months, necessitating an unplanned search for a replacement during a time of great upheaval both within the program and across campus. However, in moving forward with a replacement, due to the report we were able to make the position permanent, though still part time. This person remains a critical part of the honors program staff.

In the four years since the site visit, the program survived enormous change: a planned turnover in directorship after the founding director completed two three-year terms; a campus-wide curriculum revision that temporarily reduced honors offerings for several semesters while departments sorted out their major requirements; and an unforeseen program name change when our endowing company changed its name. Furthermore, the supervisory line of reporting for the honors director remained blurry for several years between the provost and dean of faculty because the provost position turned over four times in five years and the dean of faculty and the dean of admissions (now enrollment management) each turned over once. All of these positions are now stable.

Through all this turmoil, the NCHC site visit report was a guiding constant that allowed us to smoothly transition between directors and keep the honors program afloat and high on the priority list of senior administrators. Despite growing attrition rates, we did not suffer funding cuts or institutional roadblocks to new initiatives designed to stabilize the program as it was being buffeted by these external pressures. While we have met some isolated resistance to a few recommendations of the report, generally the program has enjoyed positive support across campus for both the recommendations and new initiatives. To date, we have categorized recommendations in the original report into six groups: curriculum, assessment, facilities, operations, personnel, and recruiting, prioritizing within each category.
Some recommendations fall under two categories, e.g., a four-part quality control of senior thesis recommendation falls under both curriculum and assessment.

Ten recommendations have been adopted completely.

Seven have been examined, revised to reflect the current realities of the campus, and adopted in some form. Three of these remain in process toward possible full adoption.

Three have been tried and rejected. All three will be tried again after revision.

Three have not been addressed at all yet due to their low priority in relation to the others or scope beyond the control of the honors director and committee, e.g., Add successful direction of the honors program to promotion criteria in the faculty guidelines.

The site visit came at a crucial time. Without it our honors program might not have survived. The report has been both lifeline and roadmap to our success.

— Dana Gulling Mead, Director

**Johnson County Community College**

Being hired as a new director of an honors program that had been in existence for 20 years presented challenges. The original program structure was still in place and while the program seemed to operate smoothly, procedures and processes were entrenched and many practices appeared dated. Moreover, recent turnover in personnel had presented inconsistencies. The timing for a site visit was ideal. It would serve two purposes: affirm (or negate) the program director’s perceptions of the program and lend validity to and provide support for proposed program changes.

Preparation for the site visit was an important process. It served as an opportunity to learn about the program, view it holistically, and talk with constituents about Honors. Writing the self-report was time-consuming, mostly due to a lack of familiarity with the program and difficulty accessing some of the requested information. Planning the agenda for the two-day site visit was a strategic process aimed at making the most productive use of site visitors’ time on campus. Their ability to formulate probing questions and very quickly identify areas of conflict and opportunities for improvement was impressive.

A final report from site visitors was received within one month. The report has been quite helpful and is being used as a working document. It is important not to put the report on a shelf and forget about it, but rather refer to it on a regular basis and keep the recommendations in mind. There is campus support for the recommendations, but persistent follow-up is necessary. The report helps to keep me focused on the big picture rather than getting bogged down in details of daily operation. It is used as a
blueprint to improve the program. Overall the site visit was a most positive experience and a very valuable one for our Honors Program and ultimately our students.

— Pat Decker, Director

Kent State University

When we invited the NCHC site visitors to come to Kent State in the fall of 2001, we sought from their outside experience and perspective both validation and recommendations for improvement. Our honors college was not in jeopardy and had enjoyed respect and adequate support for decades. The president and provost were both impressed by the team’s validation of our quality learning experiences, model advising, staff strength and longevity, and university citizenship. We took issue with some of the team’s recommendations about faculty and curriculum, we took to heart some others and made improvements, and we agreed strongly with the team’s advocacy for (a) increasing our fund to compensate departments, (b) reducing non-honors duties, and (c) increasing our endowments for scholarships. As a result of my budget request in the following year, we received a modest increase in our curriculum support fund. Within four years we had surrendered, with the blessing of the provost, four non-honors duties and proposed to the new provost shifting of our oversight for general education, diversity, and writing-intensive requirements to a more appropriate office.

After a two-year hiatus, we secured a new shared development officer, partly to serve a new capital campaign, and scholarship endowments have increased. The opening of a newly-constructed honors center with dedicated residence halls and classrooms revitalized the community and resolved some other issues. Thus positive improvements followed the site visit, though its explicit influence on these is not always clear. With a new president, provost, and honors dean, a strong case for expanding the curricular support fund, based on the site visit report and comparisons with similar programs, has been revived. The site visit was a very positive experience, and we would recommend undertaking one every ten years or so.

— Larry Andrews, Dean Emeritus

Mesa Community College

Although we have had significant resources for a scholarship program as part of the Maricopa County Community College District (MCCCD) Honors Program, we lacked a core honors curriculum on our campus. As we worked with a new campus administration to expand the program offerings, it was the NCHC "best practices" criteria that provided a rationale for that decision. Simultaneously all of the MCCCD Honors Programs are in the process of establishing an assessment component to be
used throughout the district. Again the NCHC "best practices" list and site visitor suggestions have been guideposts for the creation of assessment rationale and practices. The presence of national research and expertise available through the NCHC has enabled a positive and energetic discussion of dedicated honors classes and the need to demonstrate their impact on students. Neither the honors-only classes nor the assessment process would have been possible without the foundation provided by an established national organization and its shared expertise

— Betsy Hertzler, Mesa Community College Honors Coordinator

**Northeastern University**

In the spring semester of ’05, the Northeastern University Honors Program invited a team of NCHC consultants to visit our campus. My goal for this visit was grounded by two concerns: my inexperience with honors education program goals and the need to institute change on my campus with how honors education was implemented. This experience was transformative – it allowed me to escape the box of “well-wishers” who wanted to help me learn how we “did things in honors at NU,” and to engage faculty, students, and staff in an investment in the program through the lens of NCHC national “best practices.” Of course, there are always unintended consequences to this type of process, and I have to admit being disconcerted to find that things that I thought were proceeding smoothly, in fact were rickety at best and probably a whole lot worse. And clearly, program directions to which I aspired would need a surer foundation for their launch. So it was back to the drawing board for me and my staff, but there were clear gains: connections to significant expertise at the national level; a campus-wide network of invested educators, staff, and students; an honors staff who basked in the after-glow of national attention and were up to a laundry list of challenges; and, of course, myself – someone who was ready for “social change,” and had a good road map to follow courtesy of my NCHC consultants. The very existence of a nationally drawn up road map has proven to be a critical reference point over the last several years, adding credibility to programmatic decisions at the college-by-college and provost level. Might be time for another visit!

— Maureen Kelleher, Director

**Oklahoma City University**

In April 2009 two NCHC site visitors visited the Oklahoma City University campus for an external review of our Honors Program. From our first communication when the consultants asked what we hoped to accomplish from the visit to their comprehensive final report, this team was thoughtful, thorough, and not afraid to ask the hard questions, either to the Honors community or the deans and president of the university. Why is it higher administration only “gets it” when the voice comes from outside the university? I’m sure I don’t know, but the results of our 2009 visit
confirm this truism. Since the 2009 visit the Honors budget has increased and we have hosted several special events such as a day-long Honors retreat for faculty and our upcoming Celebration of Undergraduate Research. More importantly, Honors is squarely on the radar of decision makers, and we continue to grow as a signature program at Oklahoma City University.

— Virginia McCombs, Director

The University of Mississippi

The NCHC on-campus visit to the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College (SMBHC) at The University of Mississippi enabled us to enjoy unprecedented growth through a focused vision. The NCHC site visitors visited our campus in 2002 while we were suffering a difficult leadership transition in the Honors College. This trio visited almost every known constituency within three days and listened to the hopes and fears of all the stakeholders in the Honors College: students, faculty, staff, and administration. They brought a delightful critique that held us all accountable and pointed us back to the basic characteristics that have worked throughout universities and colleges. They spared no punches and did not draw back from the anger or ill feelings that dominated some of the discussion, and they reminded us all of the greatness of what a program could be. These basic characteristics then became the cornerstone of growth for the new leadership at the SMBHC, and within five years, our numbers doubled and everyone enjoyed the success of our program on campus. From the Chancellor to the faculty member, staff and student alike, we all celebrated our tenth year as an Honors College, and brought the same team back to campus in 2007 to see the difference. That second visit by the NCHC evaluation team confirmed what we already knew in our hearts: we had turned the corner on our past difficulties, and now we faced new challenges. The team made concrete suggestions about how to handle growth and a dependence upon a very generous donor. The NCHC turned up the proverbial heat so that we all could percolate some innovative ways of dealing with our new strengths and weaknesses. I highly recommend the NCHC evaluation team for your campus. It will make a difference.

— Douglass Sullivan-Gonzalez, Dean

University of Northern Colorado

In the spring semester of 2003, the University of Northern Colorado invited external reviewers from within the NCHC family to visit our campus, meet with diverse constituents, and observe our honors program operations. Roughly two years before the visitation, a well-loved and well-respected honors director had resigned his position in the program, and the intervening period between his resignation and the external visitation had been characterized by uneven leadership, decreasing student enrollment, and a general lack of vision and direction for program operations. The
external reviewers provided a candid assessment on the state of the program and made substantive and useful recommendations to campus and program leaders on how we might improve operations. Later that fall, as the university undertook a campus-wide strategic planning process, we in honors program leadership found ourselves in the unique position of being able to make solid recommendations for improving program operations based not only on important self-assessment measures but also on the strength of the report and recommendations provided by the recent NCHC visitors.

In planning for our future, the honors program leadership proposed something unique for campus: a bringing together of university-wide undergraduate programs of academic excellence to share resources and leadership and to advance undergraduate student enrichment experiences. This proposal became reality in August 2005 when the Center for Honors, Scholars, and Leadership officially came into being by bringing together under one umbrella such programs as the University Honors Program, the President’s Leadership Program, and the McNair Scholars Program. As this reflection is being written, some three years after the center formation, we are undertaking yet another strategic planning process—this one planned by center leadership—to fine-tune our operations; expand undergraduate service, internship, and research opportunities; and collaborate more fully with both traditional student services and academic affairs areas on our campus. Already, we have hallmark events coming out of the center which celebrate student achievement campus-wide: the Embracing Community Together Service-Learning Forum held in the fall and Academic Excellence Week held in the spring. The Center—and the honors program within it—has renewed energies and commitment from faculty and students alike, and we have seen an increase in student thesis production as well as student engagement in applied learning through study abroad, National Student Exchange, and internship placements.

The visit by NCHC external reviewers was invaluable in helping those of us in the honors program take a critical look at ourselves and undertake useful assessment to plan for our future. We found that our vision to improve honors education included taking the time to learn from and partner with others on campus who shared a passion for expanding undergraduate enrichment experiences. Our university is stronger for having created the Center for Honors, Scholars, and Leadership, and our students have deeper, richer experiences in their learning because we took the time to ask for help, had the courage to assess, expressed a willingness to partner, and embraced the opportunity for change!

— Kaye Holman, Associate Director

**University of Wisconsin Oshkosh**

During the 2004-05 academic year, the University Honors Program at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh undertook a program review, the periodic assessment of
academic programs that many department heads and program coordinators dread, as the process requires enormous time and effort and often seems to yield little in terms of real change. Certainly I was dreading the process as a fairly new director of our university-wide honors program; I had been on the job for a matter of months when I was instructed to begin gathering data for program review. And I was especially concerned about the time and effort the process would require of me. For, while I was enjoying my job enormously, the job even without program review was itself enormous. I was the newly installed director of a program serving over 300 students, yet I was also teaching two courses per semester and had a permanent staff of one, who was a .5 FTE advisor/assistant director who had been running the program for six years and through the brief tenures of three different directors. The condition I initially found the program in was, without exaggeration, perilous. I am by nature a fixer—which accounts for why I was enjoying my job—but to add program review to my challenges was, even to me, daunting.

Yet program review has done more for my ability to “fix” things than anything else during my now five-year tenure as director. The site visitors were instrumental in making the program review process an enormous success. They spent a day and a half on my campus in October, during which they met with faculty, students, staff, and administrators. And while they were clearly aware of the changes I had helped bring about that were already improving the quality of the program, they made sure I understood that the conditions under which I was working were, to be frank, unacceptable. Not only was I being run ragged, but of course the honors students were not getting the kind of program they deserved. Using the NCHC’s “Basic Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors Program” and the insights they had gleaned from years of running their own campus’s programs and visiting others, they prepared a report that spelled out how the university administration’s good words were not enough to make up for insufficient resources. And they gave me a crucial piece of advice that I filed in the back of my mind: They told me that sometimes the right thing to do for an under-recognized and underfunded program is to walk away—to submit one’s resignation rather than perpetuate an unacceptable situation.

I prepared my response to the site visitors’ report, using their comments to reiterate the request I made in the self-study for additional release-time from teaching for the director and for funding sufficient to cover two new positions: a full-time assistant director and half-time advisor. The materials were sent to the next levels for review. The report at each successive level commended the work accomplished during my first year, made some recommendations for improvement, and called for additional resources. Finally, in March 2005, the report made it to the provost’s office. The provost concurred with many comments made at other levels, including recommendations for future improvements, but made no mention of additional resources. And of course, for a university-wide program funded by the provost’s office, the decision to dedicate more resources could only be made by the provost. Using the site visitors’ report, my response to it, and my original self-study, members of my governing council and I sat with the provost and explained why his response was insufficient. At that point he declined to commit to additional resources.
Recalling the advice [the site visitors] had shared with me, I resigned, effective at the end of the spring 2005 semester. Two days later, I received a memo from the provost, in which he agreed to provide funding for the two staff positions I requested and to reduce my teaching load by an additional course. I, in turn, agreed not to resign.

Today, my program is healthier than I might have imagined during what I thought were the dark days of program review. The .5 FTE staffer I inherited when I became director has moved on, and I now have a full-time assistant director and half-time advisor. We still have between 300 and 350 students participating in the program, but now we can actually serve them. We have been able to track and advise them better, provide more innovative courses for them, expand our co-curricular opportunities, and generally raise the profile of our students and the program on the campus. And just last month, the chancellor and provost asked me to submit to them a proposal for an honors center—a facility that will combine residential, meeting, and office facilities. It was that initially dreaded program review that paved the way for this. Now I (almost) can’t wait for the next one.

– Roberta S. Maguire, Director

**Wayne State University**

If I were to give one piece of advice to honors directors, or deans, or (as I was several years ago) a director who is charged with turning a program into a honors college, it would be this: take advantage of an NCHC site visit, whether by a single consultant or by a formal review team, or what is best, both. What you get is the benefit of years of experience, without having to wait years to accumulate it on your own. What you get is the chance to talk honestly with dedicated experts in honors education who, first and last, are on your side. What you get is an objective appraisal of your program or college from folks who have spent a lot of time thinking about best practices models, and solutions to the precise challenges you might be encountering. And if you are in the position of needing to explain to your local community the value of what you are doing, you will also get a handy "report card" to demonstrate how and where you are succeeding.

— Jerry Herron, Dean
PART SEVEN. EXTERNAL REVIEWS

This section provides a practical “nuts and bolts” discussion of the external review process rather than a theoretical approach to the matter; thus a veritable checklist provides the organizational theme.

A. Before the Site Visit

1. Developing the budget

As will all things in the academy, a program review will consume funds and therefore needs an adequate budget. In planning for a consultation or program review, remember to provide adequate resources for the preparation of the materials that will be needed: honoraria and travel expenses for the site visitors, meals or other events on campus involving the site visitors and members of the campus community, and other miscellaneous expenses.

Although there is no officially prescribed remuneration scale for NCHC Recommended Site Visitors, an honorarium in the range of $1,000.00-$1,500.00 for each day or portion thereof on campus (plus travel expenses) is not unreasonable.

If the review is part of a mandated institution-wide process, funding is probably available from the Assessment Office or similar unit on campus. In such a case, the honors program will be just one of many academic units undergoing an external review since most institutions have a process whereby each degree program is externally evaluated on a regular cycle (often every 5 to 10 years), and the institution as a whole normally underwrites the entire cost of the review. That alone might be sufficient incentive to make certain that the honors program is included in the review cycle. At other institutions, the provost or president’s office can provide all or part of the funding for an external review, but the honors director or dean may have to take the initiative to request these funds. Significant side benefits of obtaining funding from the central administration include greater access to key administrators during the site visit (many institutions mandate a formal exit interview in which the reviewers present their preliminary findings to the upper administrators) and greater credibility attached to the final report from the site visitors precisely because the review was funded and/or initiated by the central administration.

2. Selecting the Site Visitors and Scheduling the Visit

The selection of site visitors is important to a successful external review. Although as mentioned earlier, honors administrators may select reviewers who are not recommended by NCHC or non-honors because they may have expertise in aspects that honors administrators deem important to their institution, this section is to help honors administrators with the process of having their programs or colleges evaluated by NCHC Recommended Site Visitors. The list of NCHC recommended site visitors
is available on the NCHC web page at <www.nchchonors.org/site-visitors.shtml>, or it may be obtained from the NCHC Headquarters Office.

Although there obviously is no requirement that an honors colleague from this list be used for a site visit, these recommended site visitors have extensive honors experience and have completed at least one NCHC Faculty Institute for site visitor training. They not only can bring a great depth of expertise to the visited campus, they also bring considerable skill and understanding of how the unique mission of honor needs to be communicated to upper administrators (not all of whom are versed in or supportive of Honors). The requirements and process for becoming an NCHC recommended site visitor are detailed in Part Eight of this document.

**How many site visitors?** Although a consultation visit for an honors program or honors college is frequently undertaken by a single individual, an external review should have at least two and preferably three members, especially if the review of the program or college is considered to be a formal review taking place alongside other formal or accreditation reviews within the institution (like AACSB, ABET, NCATE, etc.). More than one reviewer is advisable for several reasons. First, the experiences and perspectives of two experienced honors colleagues are brought to bear on the honors program or honors college under review. Second, two readers will be more likely to identify all of the salient information when reading the materials provided in advance of the site visit: that which is explicit in the documents and that which is implicit or conspicuously absent. Third, it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, for one site visitor to note and process every comment or nuance during a site visit, so it is important for the site visitors to check the perceptions of other team members while on campus as well as during the writing of the program review report. Fourth, the selection of site visitors from institutions both similar and dissimilar to the home institution can broaden the perspectives that can benefit an honors program or honors college. A number of NCHC recommended site visitors, including the authors of this Assessment and Evaluation Committee document, have concluded that it is neither feasible nor appropriate for a single individual to conduct a formal external review.

**Who chooses the site visitors?** The answer to this question varies. If the honors director or dean does not make the selection, then providing a list of names to the person who will make the choice of site visitors can be a good idea. The list of NCHC recommended site Visitors, posted on the NCHC web page, allows the chooser to review the credentials and gauge the suitability of potential site visitors; the site includes as well contact information that permits the chooser to contact institutions that have been visited by the site visitor in the past.

If more than two site visitors are coming to the campus, designating one of the site visitors to chair the review team in order to streamline the workload and provide a single point of contact is recommended. If not, experienced site visitors will usually sort out their responsibilities among themselves.
If there is sufficient time before the site visit, the NCHC annual fall conference may be a good place to meet informally with potential site visitors before making a selection. Quite often, a quick visit with potential site visitors can help determine which visitor is likely to match the needs of the institution.

**Who contacts the site visitors?** The institution requesting the external review contacts the potential site visitors directly to determine availability, honoraria, and the like.

**What to say to the site visitors?** Throughout the review, the selected site visitors will do their best to provide an objective evaluation of the strengths of the honors program or honors college as well as any challenges that it faces, but they will also be advocates for honors education. It is perfectly appropriate, indeed somewhat expected, that an honors director or dean will enlist the support provided by an external review in the development of an honors program or honors college. In addition to the specific written information that will be requested (see below), the host institution needs to provide as much background information as possible—and as early as possible—in telephone conversations or e-mail exchanges with the reviewers. To best help the host institution, the site visitor(s) will need to know the answers to many or most of the following questions: Why is the site visit being scheduled? What is the general campus culture regarding to honors education? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the honors program or honors college? What are the opportunities and threats facing the honors program or honors college? Are there specific needs that the site visitors can address? Are there particular points of pride to call to their attention? Are there sensitive matters on the host campus that need to be raised but which may be difficult, or imprudent, to include in the written materials? Are there “political land mines” on campus about which the site visitors need to be wary? Who are the allies of honors education on the campus? Are there those who oppose honors education, either overtly or covertly? What other things can help the site visitors begin to appreciate the institutional environment for the honors program or honors college?

**How far in advance?** Since an external review is a labor intensive activity, composed of extensive preparation for the campus visit, the campus visit itself, and finally the writing of the report, most Site Visitors by necessity limit themselves to one or two external reviews in any given semester. For this reason, contacting potential site visitors six to nine months in advance of the preferred date of the visit is highly recommended.

3. **Utilizing NCHC Basic Characteristics as a Tool**

NCHC’s “Basic Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors Program” (discussed above and also listed in Appendix A) and, if applicable, the “Basic Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors College” (also discussed above and found in Appendix B) provide an excellent starting point for the external review process. A thorough and honest self-assessment of the program or college, based on a point-by-point discussion of each characteristic, provides a great deal of information both for the site
visitor(s) and the host institution. The Characteristics also provide a nationally-normed framework for the work of preparing for the site visit and for the final report that will be prepared by the site visitors.

4. Materials to be Prepared

Before conducting external reviews, site visitors typically provide a list of requested materials and request that all of the items be delivered at least one month prior to the campus visit. A typical list of materials requested contains:

A. A brief history of the honors program or honors college, in order to provide context for the program/college.

B. A self-study that uses the National Collegiate Honors Council’s “Basic Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors Program” and the “Basic Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors College” to evaluate the state of honors education at the host institution (as mentioned above). If, due to review polices peculiar to the host institution, a different self-study format must be used, that is acceptable, but in any case, the purpose of the self-study is to assess how the honors program or honors college meets or does not meet the NCHC characteristics so that the visiting team has benchmarks to judge how the program or college measures up to national norms. The self-study may also include ideas about goals the college or program may hope to achieve in the short and long run.

C. An extensive list of supporting documents to provide important “raw” information and data about the program/college, such as:

1. The college or university catalog. Catalogs contain a wealth of background information about the history, mission, and current operations of the institution, and they also give one glimpse into the manner in which the honors program or honors college is presented to the public. How prominently are honors opportunities featured in the catalog? How much detail about the program is provided? Is the honors administrator included in the list of key campus administrators? Does the index direct readers to key information about the honors program or honors college?

2. The mission statement of the honors program or college. What is the formal mission statement? How does the honors mission correspond to the overall mission of the institution? Has the mission statement been approved by the central administration at the institution? How well do the current operations mesh with and fulfill the mission statement?

3. The honors program or honors college strategic plan (if applicable). Although not every academic institution has undertaken strategic planning, more and more colleges and universities are doing so. In order to succeed, the honors unit must be an integral part of the institution’s overall strategic plan, and honors
administrators should utilize the strategic planning process to position themselves in the institution for future growth and development. In addition, documentation of progress made toward strategic goals should be made part of the materials.

4. Position descriptions for the honors director or dean, for other honors administrators (if applicable), and for the honors office staff. The amount of detail in positions descriptions will vary among institutions, but the site visitors need to have a general idea of the responsibilities of all of the honors administrators and staff with whom they will visit.

5. Recruitment materials for the college or university in general and for the honors program or honors college in particular. The site visitors will be wondering: How does the institution recruit new students? How prominently is the honors program or honors college featured in general recruiting materials? How accurate is the information, and how frequently is it updated? What specific materials relate to potential honors students? Who is responsible for their content, and how are the materials utilized?

6. The honors program or honors college budget for the past five years, including salary for the honors director and an average salary figure for assistant or associate deans and directors across campus. One crucial element for the success of any program or college is the budget, and the site visitors should be provided with as much detailed budget information as possible. Budgetary questions that will be addressed in the review include: Is the honors budget sufficient to the many tasks demanded of the program or college? Does the program or college have sufficient support staff? If the number of honors students has grown, has the honors budget increased over the same time period? How is the honors budget developed, and who has final say over the honors allocation? If—as is to often the case—an institution is expecting its honors program or honors college to operate on the proverbial shoestring, then questions about institutional support for the program or college will be raised during the site visit and in the final written report. Many times, these questions result in very positive changes in the honors budget. Honors administrators should not be expected to work for nothing, nor should they be compensated at a rate well below that provided for comparable academic administrators on campus. Having comparative data provides one measure by which site visitors can gauge the support being provided by the institution’s central administration. A telling question during some site visits can be to ask to compare the size of the honors budget with the funds earmarked by the institution for the support and enhancement of under-prepared students since a marked disparity in those numbers most often indicates an under-appreciated and under-funded honors program.

7. Honors policies and procedures documents. Because every honors program or honors college operates under rules and procedures, it is important that these
rules and procedures are codified and made readily available to faculty and students so that all participants may be well informed. (By way of example only, the honors polices and procedures from Oklahoma State University are included in Appendix F.) A review of the honors policies and procedures document gives the site visitors an understanding of the operating structure of the program or college, information that is quite important in preparing for the time that will be spent on campus during the review process. Thoughtful policies and procedures are considered to be a definite plus in the review process as long as the reviewers can verify that actual practice is consistent with the stated policies. However, if the site visitors conclude that the written policies are not followed, this fact almost certainly will be raised as a concern in the final report.

8. Honors annual reports for the past five years. Annual reports are quite important in documenting the history, progress, and successes of an honors program or honors college. Because honors administrators at many institutions serve for relatively short periods, often for just three or four years, the risk of institutional memory loss is great. Even at institutions where the honors director or dean has served for many years, an archive of past annual reports can be extremely helpful when questions arise.

9. A list and description of the honors courses offered in the past five years (if not included in annual reports). Site visitors will want to know about the honors curriculum and courses that are available to honors students. Site visitors will want to know, for example, if there is an overall shape to the honors curriculum. Is there a reasonable offering of courses, or do the offerings appear to be tailored only to a segment of the student body? Are the honors courses appropriately spread across the years of study? Do the honors offerings satisfy or substitute for general education requirements where appropriate? Have there been any recent innovations in the curriculum, or has it remained essentially static? How and where are these courses described so that honors students can be aware of them?

10. Longitudinal data of honors course offerings and student participation in the program or college during the past five years (if not included in annual reports). Longitudinal data provide a solid glimpse into the health and activity of honors education on a campus. For example, if the number of honors students has increased during this time span, has there been a corresponding increase in the number of honors courses? Have the numbers in one area increased or decreased at the expense of numbers in another (for example, has the number of honors students majoring in the liberal arts expanded while the number of students in the professional programs declined?). Unfortunately, some institutions assert pressure to increase honors student numbers without providing the resources necessary to serve the increase in the honors population. If that seems to be the case, the site visitor(s) will probably have questions well before they reach the campus for the on-site visit.
11. A report on the institution’s participation in national and regional honors council activities (if not included in annual reports). Since quality honors programs and honors colleges do not operate in a vacuum, evidence of active participation in national, regional, and state honors organizations (where they exist) provides a perspective simply not available on one’s own campus. While just attending national and regional conferences is a good start, the more important step is making presentations at these conferences and becoming involved with colleagues in committee work and other aspects of the larger national community. How frequently does the institution participate in these conferences? Is the participation passive or active? What is the range of participation from the honors program or honors college? Are honors students encouraged to present at conferences, and are they supported by the institution if a presentation proposal is accepted? Are individuals from the campus active on committees and leadership positions? What other connections have been established with off-campus honors and other colleagues?

12. The evaluation materials used for honors courses. How does the honors program or honors college evaluate honors courses? What instruments are used? Is there a separate instrument that is used to evaluate honors courses (which is a practice common to many programs and colleges)? How is the information gained from evaluation used? Does the honors director or dean have any input into the formal evaluation of a faculty member who teaches honors courses? Is prompt feedback provided to the faculty? If problems are identified, how are they addressed? Are course evaluation results made available to honors students as part of the honors advising process?

13. The evaluation materials used for honors advising. Where applicable, how does the honors program or honors college evaluate honors advising? What instruments are used? How is the information gained from evaluation used? Is prompt feedback provided to the honors advisors? How does the evaluation process contribute to improved honors advising?

14. The honors assessment materials. Does the honors program or honors college have an overall assessment plan? If so, how it is structured? Are the student learning outcomes clear and appropriate? Exactly what learning activities are assessed, and how is this assessment undertaken? What are the results of the assessment activities? How are these results reported on campus? How are those results used to improve the honors curriculum and the teaching of honors courses?

15. Information about any scholarships or scholarship programs dedicated to honors students. What kind and how many scholarships does the honors program or honors college provide? Is honors program or honors college participation taken into account in the awarding of other scholarships?
16. Information on the role of the honors program in the preparation of students for major national and international scholarships (Rhodes, British Marshall, Truman, Goldwater, Fulbright, etc.). What role, if any, does the honors program or honors college play in identifying and preparing students who may wish to compete for those prestigious scholarships? At some institutions, the honors program or honors college has primary responsibility in this area, while at others two or more campus units cooperate. Whatever the arrangement, it is only natural to assume that honors students are likely to be among those who compete for and receive such recognition.

17. Information on honors study abroad and/or international education opportunities. Are honors students encouraged (and supported) to study overseas? If the honors program or honors college is not the primary point of contact for students interested in international study, does it have a close working relationship with the office on campus that is responsible? Are honors courses offered that incorporate international study? How may study abroad be counted toward the academic requirements of the honors program or honors college?

18. Guidelines or manual for thesis or creative projects. What guidelines are provided to honors students before they undertake their honors thesis work? At some institutions an honors thesis is required and at others it is one of the senior options. How are they evaluated? In addition, is there recognition for outstanding work? Are honors thesis mentors rewarded in any way?

19. Information about any privileges that honors students may receive. Do honors students enjoy priority enrollment, as is the case at many NCHC institutions? If so, how does priority enrollment work? Is an honors residence hall option available? If so, what are the criteria for honors housing eligibility? Do honors students have extended library borrowing privileges? Is there an honors library, computer laboratory, or student lounge? Do honors students receive discounts or free admission for campus cultural events? What other benefits accrue to honors students?

20. Tenure, promotion, and evaluation documents. Just as honors administrators should not be expected to work for nothing, faculty who are successful in honors education should receive credit in their annual evaluations as well in their tenure and promotion reviews. As with the honors budget, the importance of honors activity in annual evaluation, promotion, and tenure reviews probably says the most about an institution’s commitment to honors education. If honors education is valued, then honors activities will figure significantly in the evaluation of faculty, but if it isn’t valued by the institution, then any mention of honors activities will be scarce in those documents. Even worse, some institutions have a culture that actively discourages faculty—especially younger faculty—from participating in honors opportunities. In brief, do honors teaching and learning activities matter for promotion and tenure? What is the
role of the honors program or honors college in those processes? If the honors
director or dean has not already attained the rank of professor, how is success in
honors administration and teaching, if applicable, taken into account in the
requirements for advancement in faculty rank?

21. The standards for evaluation, tenure, and promotion if the honors program or
honors college has its own faculty lines. Many honors programs and colleges
follow evaluation, tenure and promotion policies and procedures established by
their institutions. The process that is followed and the results should be
included in the supporting documents for evaluation purposes.

22. Documents pertaining to the honors student organization. How is the student
organization structured, and what role does it play? Does this organization
contribute to the governance of the honors program or honors college? How
many students actively participate in the organization?

23. Information regarding the facilities of the honors program or honors college.
Space is an important feature for any honors program or honors college, and it
should be adequate, attractive, centrally located, and not relegated to what
appears to be a castoff or out-of-the way location. Ideally, honors classrooms
and seminar rooms should integrated into the honors space, as should computer
facilities, informal gathering areas, study and/or meeting rooms, or other space
for activities appropriate to the mission of honors.

B. During the Visit

The site visit itself can be a challenging time for both the visitors and the hosts. The
logistics and scheduling all of the appointments and meetings fall to the on-campus
person responsible for the external review, typically the honors director or dean.
When preparing for the site visit, the following suggestions should be kept in mind.

1. Goals for the Site Visit

Make the goals for the site visit clear. If the visit is for a focused consultation on a
specific area, such as honors pedagogy, for example, the shape and extent of that site
visit will be markedly different than if the goal is to conduct a thorough and extensive
program review. While these goals should have been communicated with the site
visitors well in advance of their arrival on campus, it is a good idea to repeat them
when the site visitors arrive at the institution, especially when meeting with non-
honors administrators or similar individuals. The overall purpose of a consultation is
often to provide expertise to assist with a particular issue whereas the purpose of an
external review is to identify and validate the strengths (and weaknesses) of the
honors program or honors college, point out ways to remedy possible weaknesses,
and assist with meeting improvement goals.
2. Developing an Appropriate Schedule

Two-day visits are by far the most typical kind of external reviews, although there can be a need for three days particularly if the institution is large with many facets to explore or if there are challenges for the honors program that are quite challenging. Informal consultancies can be much shorter, perhaps even half a day, but a formal program review requires a minimum of two full days. The site visitors will most likely arrive the night before the first full on-campus day begins, but if the travel arrangements permit an earlier arrival, an orientation or entry briefing can be scheduled for the first evening, perhaps including a meal.

The site visitors will expect that the on-campus days will be proverbial treadmill experiences with little down time. A typical day starts with a working breakfast, a series of meetings in the morning, a working lunch, more meetings in the afternoon, and frequently a working dinner. Because students often find evenings more agreeable to their schedules, a meeting with students on the first evening after dinner is common.

When possible, honors students can escort the site visitors from meeting to meeting when appropriate. The informal conversations with students in this setting are often very informative and provide additional information and context for the evaluation.

Since the site visitors will need some time each day to confer among themselves and check notes, allowances in the schedule for about an hour of evaluator discussion at a private location should be made. A few such “holes” in the schedule also provide the opportunity, if necessary, for the site visitors to meet with individuals not on the schedule or for the site visitors to take the initiative to visit a campus location that has been called to their attention.

The site visit should conclude with an exit interview, best scheduled on the morning of the site visitors’ departure from campus and following the conclusion of the rest of the scheduled interviews. If that isn’t possible, it can be scheduled as the last item of the final day of the campus visit.

Unless a specific reason not to do so exists, the honors director or dean typically is not present during most of the meetings scheduled for the site visitors.

Once the schedule of meetings has been finalized by the host institution, the agenda should be forwarded to the site visitors. If possible, the schedule should list the time and location of each meeting, the name and title of the persons expected to be at each meeting as well as their relationship to the honors program or honors college. Of course complete information will not be possible for open meetings with honors faculty and/or honors students, but the site visitors will appreciate receiving as much detailed information as possible in advance the site visit.
3. Meetings with the Site Visitors

The list of meetings provided below is a starting point, but almost always the honors director or dean will add to or subtract from this list based on the immediate need of the institution and the difficulties of scheduling. Because many of the individuals listed below have appointment schedules that are arranged weeks or months in advance, contact should be made with them as early as possible to be certain that they will be available to meet with the site visitors.

While personal styles among site visitors will vary, it is fairly common for one or more of the visiting team members to take extensive notes during the site visit meetings. The tone of the sessions, however, attends more toward a conversation among colleagues than a formal interview.

The list of meetings does not include visits to individual honors classes. The authors’ experience has led them to conclude that their presence in a class introduces an artificial element that most likely makes the session non-representative of the regular class experience, but that does not mean that an honors director or dean never should schedule such a meeting. Our point here is that visiting classes is not essential to a valid external review process.

College or university president and the chief academic officer. It is extremely important that the site visitors meet with the top administrators of the college or university to gauge the level of administrative commitment to honors education, explore the goals of the president and chief academic officer, ask questions and raise points of concern, and be advocates for honors education. Separate sessions with the president and the chief academic officer are preferred, but a combined meeting may be the campus norm. As noted above, the honors director or dean should have informed the site visitors about any areas of political sensitivity on campus so that they do not inadvertently cause harm during these conversations. On the other hand, if difficult questions need to be asked, it is extremely helpful if the honors director or dean has provided the site visitors with as much background information as possible.

Vice provost for academic affairs. At a large institution, the vice provost for academic affairs may be the key contact or supervisor for the honors director or dean on a day-to-day basis. If this is true, a separate meeting should be scheduled with the person in this position.

Deans of undergraduate colleges involved with the honors program or Honors College. If the institution has multiple undergraduate colleges, the deans of these colleges can either be key allies in the honors effort, or they can be major stumbling blocks. Discussions with these deans give the site visitors the opportunity to determine
how well honors education fits into the local academic landscape, to provide examples of how similar undergraduate colleges elsewhere cooperate with and profit from the honors program or honors college, and to give those deans, hopefully, an opportunity to share their honors success and foster support for honors education.

**Department heads or chairs involved with honors education.** At many institutions it may be that the deans set the tone, but the actual decisions are made and the real work of the institution is done by the department chairs. For example, in the vast majority of cases, it will be the department chair who has the final say over the availability of faculty to teach honors courses, and thus a supportive department chair can significantly advance honors education just as an antagonistic chair can severely hinder the honors effort. It may also be profitable to meet with the chairs of departments who are not involved with or supportive of honors education to find out why, or, in the best case, to offer convincing reasons for them to support the program or college.

**Honors program or honors college director or dean.** Ample time should be scheduled for the site visitors to meet privately with the honors director or dean. In many instances, the agenda includes an entrance interview, an extended meeting during the site visit, and an exit interview.

**Honors office staff.** The site visitors should meet with all key honors office staff members. If the staff is small, individual meetings can be scheduled. If the staff is large, grouping staff members with similar responsibilities may be necessary.

**Open meeting with faculty who regularly teach honors courses** [limited to these faculty]. The faculty who teach honors classes are obviously absolutely crucial to a successful honors program or honors college. Because they can provide extremely helpful insights for the site visitors, the meeting with them should be located in a comfortable setting and scheduled at a time to facilitate a good turnout. The meeting with honors faculty frequently becomes a discussion forum that covers a wide range of topics and points of view. In addition to discussing their honors experiences at their own institution, faculty often inquire of the visitors about honors practices or initiatives at other institutions.

**Faculty-level honors committee.** Since this body is most commonly charged with formal governance responsibilities for the honors program or college, the site visitors will learn much about the state of honors education at an institution by meeting with these committee members. These faculty members typically have more information
and insight into the complexities of honors operations than do other faculty and students; they often have realistic suggestions for bettering honors education, and they can also be good sources of insight into the ups and downs of the political landscape on the host campus.

**Student-level honors council or committee.** In the authors’ experience, honors students in a well-run honors program or college have a strong sense of ownership over the unit. Even a very short meeting with the honors student leadership group quickly reveals whether or not that is true. If the students feel that they really are important to the honors program or honors college, that fact will quickly be apparent to the site visitors. Conversely, if the students feel that they are essentially “window dressing” or disengaged from the program and its goals, that perception too will become quickly apparent.

**Open meeting with honors students [limited to these students].** At least an hour should be built into the site visitors’ schedule to allow them to meet informally with honors students in an open forum setting. The meeting should be publicized well in advance to honors students; a reminder shortly before the meeting should follow (and the offer of free pizza will often bring them out if nothing else works). The leaders of the honors student organization and/or honors student committee, since they will have the opportunity to meet with the site visitors separately, should take care not to dominate the discussions so that the site visitors will have an opportunity to interact with a wide range of honors students and hear multiple opinions. As already noted above, scheduling this meeting on the evening of the first full day of the site visit often leads to the greatest participation, but of course this may not be the best time for every institution. The purpose is to provide a comfortable, informal setting at a time most convenient for the students.

**Others thought appropriate** by those responsible for the review process, such as representatives from the Offices of Admissions, Enrollment Services, Financial Aid, Development, Alumni Affairs, Housing, etc. If additional people on campus are important to the current success and plans for the future of the honors program or honors college, the site visitors should meet with them.

The meetings included above in this checklist are essential, but the list is by no means exhaustive.
C. After the Site Visit

While the honors director or dean can breathe a sigh of relief once the visit has been concluded, the site visitors now must move into even higher gear in order to prepare the final written report that will conclude their part of the external review process. Depending on the complexity of the situation, the amount of time required to write the formal report may vary from several weeks to six weeks or more, but typically, the final report is completed and submitted within a month after the visit to campus.

1. Preliminary Site Visitors Report

The site visitors will confer extensively with one another about the draft written report, frequently exchanging several drafts by e-mail or FAX before they are satisfied with the report. After the draft report has been completed, many site visitors will provide a confidential preliminary copy of the report to the honors director or dean with the request that he or she indicate any factual errors such as misspelled names, incorrect titles, or misperceptions of verifiable facts. To speed the process along, the preliminary report typically is transmitted as an electronic file attachment to e-mail. It is important, though, to remember at this juncture that the copy is both a draft and highly confidential.

The opportunity to review the draft copy does not constitute an opportunity for the host director or dean to dispute or to attempt to dissuade the site visitors from the positions reflected in the report, especially in the case of a program review, which is by its very nature the articulation of a number of carefully considered professional judgments. However, the honors dean or director should not hesitate to raise any points of concern especially if the draft report contains matters that might be politically sensitive or harmful to the honors effort. In that case, the honors director or dean might suggest different language that might mitigate the difficulties.

A point worth making here is that no site visit to a campus can completely comprehend every facet of an honors program or honors college. In essence, a site visit amounts to a two-day snapshot of honors life at the institution, and that along with the written materials they have received is all that the reviewers may honestly reflect in their written report.

2. Final Report

After reviewing the comments and suggestions of the honors director or dean made in response to a review of the preliminary report, the site visitors will complete their final written report, thus concluding the external review process. The chair of the visiting team will transmit the final written report along with a cover letter to each recipient. Copies of the report usually are sent to the president, the chief academic officer, and the honors director or honors dean. If others should receive a copy, the chair of the site visitors’ team can prepare and transmit additional copies as requested. Frequently the chair will send both electronic copies as e-mail attachments and hard
copies of the report via the U.S. Postal Service.

3. Utility of the Final Report

Receipt of the final external review report on campus should not be the end of the process because it can be of benefit to the honors program or honors college in many ways. A few examples are provided below.

The final report can and should be disseminated widely on campus. Obvious recipients are key campus administrators to whom the report was not transmitted by the chair of the site visit team, members of the faculty and student honors committees, officers of the student honors organization, and key honors alumni. Wide dissemination of the report provides a solid basis for discussions with and among the recipients. One significant benefit of including the honors program in the regular cycle of program review is the practice, common at many institutions, of a mandatory yearly follow-up report that details the institution’s responses to the recommendations included in the final report. Such a practice keeps the institution and its administration accountable for implementing the changes, and brings the recommendations to mind on a yearly basis.

Assuming that the report is a generally positive one, a copy or key excerpts might be sent to the office on campus responsible for the institution’s public relations. If appropriate, direct communication with the commercial media can provide positive publicity for the honors program or honors college, remembering, of course that the report represents the opinions of the site visitors, not those of the National Collegiate Honors Council as an organization.

A copy of the report should be filed for use during the next external review as well as for any other reviews that might occur such as the decennial institutional accreditation review.

If areas of concern are noted in the report, the recommendations of the site visitors can be a springboard for discussions on campus. In many cases, honors directors and deans have used the final report to strengthen honors education in relatively short order. Even if immediate positive changes are not forthcoming, the final report may be of significant value at a later date, either as new high-level campus administrators come into office or when current administrators have additional resources. Using the final report as one measuring rod for progress has been an effective approach at many colleges and universities. A successful honors director or dean always should have a wish list for honors improvements, and the final report can be evidence of the appropriateness of items on that wish list.

If the final report does not fully address the strengths or needs of the honors program or honors college, the director or dean may wish to write a follow-up document that is responsive to the site visitors’ report. This document then could be circulated along with their report to provide additional perspective to the readers.
PART EIGHT. TRAINING PROCESS FOR NCHC RECOMMENDED SITE VISITORS

A. Process for Becoming an NCHC Recommended Site Visitor and Remaining on the Site Visitor List

The National Collegiate Honors Council must have a substantial number of NCHC recommended and trained site visitors, in part because the honors programs and honors colleges that are members of the NCHC differ widely. Without a sufficient number of reviewers, NCHC cannot address the needs of its varied constituents. In addition, scheduling a site visit becomes easier with more choices.

The NCHC headquarters office maintains and makes available to members a list of NCHC recommended site visitors. To facilitate member institutions selecting appropriate reviewers, the list of visitors as well as specific professional information about each site visitor is available on the NCHC website.

People who are interested in becoming an NCHC recommended site visitor must be a current member of NCHC. Persons must also complete an NCHC Institute for Site Visitor Training generally held every two years. Institutes have been held in Brooklyn (2000), Chicago (2002), Albuquerque (2004), Lincoln (2006), Portland, Oregon (2008), and Atlanta (2010). In addition, applicants must submit an application form; abbreviated curriculum vitae limited to honors as well as assessment and evaluation activities; the names and addresses of three relevant professional references, at least two of which are from institutions other than his or her own home institution; a one-page statement of his or her views on the role of a site visitor; and have attended three of the last five NCHC conferences.

The Assessment and Evaluation Committee shall submit the names of persons recommended as new site visitors to the Executive Committee, which shall have the authority to direct the addition of names to the site visitors list. By January 31 of each year, Site visitors will report to the NCHC headquarters office by updating the one-page form for the web page and other NCHC materials including the institution(s) for which they have conducted site visits in the previous calendar year.

In order to remain on the list, a site visitor must have attended three out of the last five national conferences, on a rolling basis. If a person on the list does not conduct a site visit in a six-year period, he or she shall be removed from the list if he or she does not again attend an NCHC Institute for Site Visitor Training.

Neither the chair nor co-chair of the Assessment and Evaluation Committee, nor any officer or employee of NCHC shall recommend specific site visitors but will instead refer those asking for such information to the list of recommended site visitors. The sole exception to this policy will be when the chair or co-chair, or officer or employee of NCHC, has been selected as a site visitor himself or herself and is asked to suggest names for additional members of the site visit team.
The NCHC recommended site visitors are a group of experienced honors administrators and educators. Individually, each NCHC recommended site visitor brings years of experience, knowledge, and skills related to honors education. Collectively, these people offer familiarity with a range of program or college types, cultures, and geographic locations. Representing a wide range of expertise, these people provide individual and group consultation to institutions working on a comprehensive review of their honors program or honors college. They may assist honors programs and honors colleges in aligning their goals with those articulated in “The Basic Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors Program” and “The Basic Characteristics of an Honors College” or with other appropriate guidelines. They can situate individual honors programs and honors colleges within the national honors context and provide outside perspective to analyze the program or college needs. A campus should ideally select site reviewers whose expertise corresponds to its own needs and interests.

A successful site visit team is one that not only respects and follows ethical standards regarding conflict of interest, personal conduct, and communication and confidentiality issues, but also conscientiously prepares itself by studying in advance the self-study document, background materials, and other information received about the honors program or honors college. Team members are expected to contribute to a thoughtful assessment of the honors program or honors college, measuring the validity of the image projected in the self-study document and drawing upon the insights gained by the team from on-site contacts and discussions.

B. “Do and Don’t” Guidelines for NCHC Recommended Site Visitors

1. **DO** serve as an advocate of honors education. Follow the Hippocratic Oath, “First, do no harm!”

2. **DO** be mindful that honors programs and honors colleges differ widely.

3. **DO** be sensitive to the distinctive institutional traditions and customs of any given institution.

4. **DO** remember that although your report does not represent the views of the NCHC (and this should be indicated clearly in your report), you do represent the organization in your capacity as NCHC Recommended Site Visitor.

5. **DO** be professional, honest, and objective.

6. **DO** gather information—*LISTEN* rather than *TALK*, but don’t be afraid to respond to questions or to ask probing questions, as appropriate.
7. **DON'T** just talk to, or listen to, those who are big fans of honors education; there is much to learn from the doubters and critics.

8. **DON'T** use your own honors program or honors college as *the* model for how things should be done (either orally or in writing), but do try to provide a range of models for possible consideration. Self-promotion is not the purpose of the visit.

9. **DO** be timely—submit your written reports within 30 days.

10. **DO** consider that your written report should result in meaningful and positive guidance.

11. **DON'T** permit administrators to use your visit as ammunition in their own personnel battles. In particular, don’t be trapped into answering a question about whether the incumbent director or dean should be retained.

12. **DO** ask for budget data that are as complete and detailed as possible to underscore your fiscal recommendations for growth. However, avoid personal comparisons; use instead that institution’s average budgets and salaries for comparison.

13. **DO** help the host campus develop a sense of the largest role honors education could play, in this setting, if developed well and funded appropriately.

14. **DO** be brief (remember, provosts and presidents are unlikely to wade through an excessively verbose report). While your report may well become a 20-30 page document that can be extremely valuable to the honors director or dean over an extended period, it is very important to provide an executive summary along with the report to draw attention to key findings or recommendations.

15. **DO** be mindful of diplomacy and protocol on campus: the honors director or dean is going to have to live with all the people with whom you interact, long after you are gone.

16. **DON'T** work yourself into a frazzle during your visit: meetings every 45 minutes from 7:30 AM until 6:00 PM, followed by a working dinner is NOT the way to do thoughtful work. **NOTE:** To some degree, the site visitors do not control the schedule, but you can ask that breaks be built into the schedule to allow time for the site visitors to confer among themselves.

17. **DO** realize that site visitors may have different impressions and viewpoints that may need to be harmonized in the written report. Don’t be afraid to express your differences (in private) to the other site visitors during and after the site visit.
18. *DO* keep not just your wits, but also your sense of humor, about you.

**C. Sample Site Visitor Information**

Below are two samples of the kind of information one might find in the NCHC website at [http://www.nchchonors.org/site-visitors.shtml](http://www.nchchonors.org/site-visitors.shtml) about each individual consultant and site visitor.

**Example #1**

**Email:**

**Institution:**

**Address:**

**Phone:**

**Fax:**

**Institution Type:** 4-year, independent, private college

**Program Type:** Institution-wide, General Education Honors program

**Program Enrollment:** 110 per semester

**Total Enrollment:** 2,400

**Present Position:** Director of Honors Program

**Previous Honors Positions:**

**NCHC Member Since:** 1989

**NCHC Activities Related to Honors Program Assessment:**

I have run workshops and/or given presentations at numerous NCHC meetings on topics as diverse as developing honors handbooks, honors student research, employing “City as Text” in the honors curriculum, recruitment and retention, distinctiveness in honors programs, dealing with AP credits, running honors faculty retreats, and best practices in Honors website design. I have sat on numerous NCHC committees, and served as a member of the NCHC Board of Directors. In twenty years in higher education, I have sat on just about every imaginable college committee, including those devoted to strategic planning, course evaluations, faculty review, learning communities, budgeting, and development, which are perhaps particularly relevant to honors assessment.

**Other Activities Related to Honors Assessment:**

I have run two honors programs at very different institutions—one a large, public, state university and the other a small, private college. Because I have engaged in extensive program building at each, I have insight into the needs
of a wide range of programs. I have over a decade of experience teaching honors courses and have team-taught with over two dozen different faculty members from a wide variety of disciplines. I have particular areas of interest and expertise in curriculum development, employing “City as Text” approaches to teaching, using writing in the honors classroom, team-teaching in honors, honors recruiting, student and faculty development and retention, and extra-curricular programming, among others.

Self-Identified Areas of Special Interest and Experience of NCHC Recommended Site Visitors

Honors Administration

- Admission Criteria
- Advising Honors Students
- Assessment of Honors Outcomes
- Budgeting
- Buildings & Honors Space
  - Governance of Honors
- Handbooks for Students & Faculty
- Leadership & Enrichment Programs
  - NCHC Involvement
  - Newsletters
- Publicity & Marketing
  - Recruitment & Retention of Students

Student Matters

- Extracurricular & Co-curricular Activities
- Graduate & Professional School Preparation
- Mentoring by Peers
- Student Honors Organizations
- Student Presentations at Conferences

Curricular Matters

- AP, CLEP, & IB Credit
- Curricular Design in General
- Freshmen Seminars
- General Education Requirements
- Learning Communities
- Summer Readings
- Undergraduate Research

Faculty Issues

- Development of Faculty in General
- Interdisciplinary Team Teaching
- Grading Expectations in Honors
- Recruitment & Retention of Honors Faculty
Example #2

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Institution:  
Address:  
Phone:  
Fax:  

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Self-Identified Areas of Special Interest and Experience of NCHC Recommended Site Visitors

Honors Administration

- Admission Criteria
- Advising Honors Students
- Advisory Boards
- Alumni Relations
- Articulation Among Institutions
- Assessment of Honors Outcomes
- Budgeting
- Buildings & Honors Space
- Diversity
- Fundraising
- Honors Governance
- Graduation Criteria
- Growth Management
- Handbooks for Students & Faculty
- Honors College Issues
- Honor Societies
- Leadership & Enrichment Programs
- National & International Fellowship Advising
- NCHC Involvement
- Newsletters
- Priority Enrollment
On the Role of the Site Visitor as Consultants & Program Reviewers

I have undertaken a number of program reviews in honors programs and colleges around the nation, and it has been my observation that almost universally, Honors directors/deans are:

- Highly idealistic people - more so than the average academic - who have a vision of what the best educational outcomes can be for students;
- Very hard working as they try to make these broad, very time intensive honors efforts as successful as they can possibly make them; and,
- Typically, under-appreciated and under-resourced in the roles they fulfill on their campuses.

This last point is not because of either administrative malevolence or a conspiracy by supervisors to exploit their people, but rather stems from:

- The current higher education “crisis” of assuming that college is a private, not a public good, and therefore public money has become far less available;
The imposition of often inappropriate business models on higher education;
The lack of understanding by administrators of the purpose and potential for honors education; and, finally,
The newness of the honors movement, which has left administrators a little bewildered about how
exactly honors, whether it be a program or a college, fits into the scheme of things on their
campuses

Given the previous premises, it seems to me that a site visitor’s primary responsibility is, frequently, to educate
local officials about the role and scope of honors education, and what it can do to enhance the academic profile of
the visited campus. This needs to be done subtly and sophisticatedly, but this “education and modeling” function
may be one of the more important ones that a visitor has.

As another objective, the visitor needs to make recommendations to the program or college about strengths,
weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Often an outside person can see things that are less readily visible to the
people on campus. Nor should the “encouragement” factor be overlooked. An outside visitor can be a force for
energizing and enthusing students, faculty, and administrators alike for the tremendous role that honors education
can or is playing on their campus - from an outsider’s perspective.

Above all, the site visitor’s time on campus should be viewed as a positive but also an illuminating experience by
the constituencies being visited. The visitor can help local people see more clearly the nature and role of their
program on their campus.
PART NINE. HONORS PROGRAM AND HONORS COLLEGE ASSESSMENT

A. The Value of Assessment

Honors courses typically maintain high academic expectations usually in small, highly interactive classes and contribute to the educational objectives of the honors program or honors college. Those of us engaged in honors education want students to demonstrate superior capabilities in essential lifelong skills including the abilities to read critically, express themselves effectively in speech and writing, reason ethically, engage in quantitative analysis, and think critically and creatively. Upon graduation, honors students should have the ability to reflect critically on and integrate knowledge and issues within the broader societal and human context. They should also recognize their individual and collective responsibilities as citizens and leaders.

The following list was compiled by the NCHC Board of Directors in answer to the question: Why is honors education valuable?

- High caliber students provide intellectual enrichment for the entire campus.
- Because retention and six-year-persistence rates are often much higher for honors students than non-honors students, the overall university graduation rates are higher as a result of the role of the honors program.
- The higher retention rates for honors students have a significant economic impact on the campus.
- Honors students create a community of diverse but compatible individuals in terms of serious academic pursuit.
- Honors students bring service enrichment to the community through service activities.
- Honors students provide an active and effective alumni base.
- Honors students have good personal experiences: the small college within the large university feel.
- Honors students create a community of like-minded individuals.
- Honors residential living enriches the campus.
- Honors alumni create donation and development opportunities.
- Honors programs foster the exploration and development of new courses and pedagogy.
- Honors programs provide faculty and students interactions and mentoring opportunities.
- Honors programs contribute to the institution’s undergraduate research agenda.
- Honors students provide leadership and involvement on campus.
How do honors programs and honors colleges evaluate and assess their students and programs in order to provide evidence that we are indeed accomplishing the goals listed above?

Assessing for learning is a systematic and systemic process of inquiry. It is a core institutional process guided by questions about how well students learn what we expect them to learn—based on pedagogy; the design of curricula, co-curricula, and instruction; as well as other educational opportunities. By examining students’ work, texts, performances, research, responses, and behaviors across the continuum of their learning, we gain knowledge about the efficacy of our work. Assessment is effective when it is congruent with program objectives. It needs to be relevant, comprehensive, and fair.

This section is designed to assist honors administrators in assessing honors students’ knowledge; understanding; abilities; habits of mind; and ways of thinking, knowing, and behaving. Assessment is not an easy task because the ways humans learn is complex. When students are asked how they learn, for example, one gets multiple answers including some of the following: repetition, practice, time, feedback, self-reflection, modeling, observation, and even through mistakes. Thus learning is a multidimensional process that differs from student to student.

The assessment process should explore reasons why students are or are not achieving and finding ways to improve the honors program or honors college accordingly. Educational practices that need to be discussed include pedagogy, instructional design, curricular and co-curricular design, resources and tools, advising, and other educational opportunities such as internships or study abroad.

Assessment is most effective when it reflects an understanding of learning as multidimensional and revealed in performance through time. Because learning involves not only what students know but also what they can do with that knowledge, it is a complex process. Assessment should reflect these understandings through a diverse array of methods, and it should be ongoing, not episodic.

Proper assessment of honors education needs to mirror the assessment of an entire university in its scope. It is useful to draw a distinction between the assessment of the honors academic mission which is student-learning focused, and the honors enrichment mission, which includes the many value-added activities such as international studies, cultural and diversity experiences, speakers, and living-learning experiences that support and enrich academic living. It is important to emphasize the distinction between the measurement of the academic mission and other enrichment activities because both kinds of endeavors add dimension and depth to students’ honors experience. Only by evaluating both, can a program or college understand the strengths of each.
B. Introduction to Honors Assessment

Creating effective and reliable program assessment measures for honors programs and colleges is overarching and important. Assessment practices are inextricably linked to the legitimate call for accountability in higher education, and they are a significant piece of our academic landscape. Assessment plans and student learning outcomes are central components of all reviews at all levels, whether focused on the institution as a whole or on specific programs. These assessment plans and learning outcomes can certainly be used for accreditation reviews as well as for improving, strengthening and advancing academic units.

Accreditation reviews conducted by the regional associations of schools and colleges all include extensive stipulations about assessment and student outcomes. As one example drawn from one of those bodies, the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) indicates:

The institution implements and supports a systematic and broad-based approach to the assessment of student learning focused on educational improvement through understanding what and how students are learning through their academic program and, as appropriate, through experiences outside the classroom. This approach is based on a clear statement or statements of what students are expected to gain, achieve, demonstrate, or know by the time they complete their academic program. The approach provides useful information to help the institution understand what and how students are learning, improve the experiences provided for students, and assure that the level of student achievement is appropriate for the degree awarded. Institutional support is provided for these activities. (NEASC Accreditation Standard 4.44: Assessment of Student Learning)

Assessment practices and student learning outcomes are perhaps even more prominent in “specialty” accreditation reviews like those conducted by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM), the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology, the Association for the Advancement of Colleges and Schools of Business (AACSB), the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Education Training (CAATE), and the National League for Nursing Accreditation Commission (NLNAC). All of these entities—as well as overarching bodies such as the Association of American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) and the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS)—have embraced assessment planning and learning outcomes as central and significant practices. Honors administrators and faculty too must become proactive and collectively develop the best practices for assessing honors programs with specific student learning outcomes.

Honors educators new to the assessment process may wish to begin by reviewing “Our Students’ Best Work: A Framework for Accountability Worthy of Our
Mission,” a publication by the Association of American Colleges & Universities. The student learning outcomes (SLOs) proposed by the AAC&U are the following:

- strong analytical, communication, quantitative, and information skills—achieved and demonstrated through learning in a range of fields, settings, and media, and through advanced studies in one or more areas of concentration;
- deep understanding of and hands-on experience with the inquiry practices of disciplines that explore the natural, social, and cultural realms—achieved and demonstrated through studies that build conceptual knowledge by engaging learning in concepts and modes of inquiry that are basic to the natural sciences, social sciences, humanities, and arts;
- intercultural knowledge and collaborative problem-solving skills—achieved and demonstrated in a variety of collaborative contexts (classroom, community based, international, and online) that prepare students both for democratic citizenship and for work;
- a proactive sense of responsibility for individual, civic, and social choices—achieved and demonstrated through forms of learning that connect knowledge, skills, values, and public action, and through reflection on students’ own roles and responsibilities in social and civic contexts;
- habits of mind that foster integrative thinking and the ability to transfer skills and knowledge from one setting to another—achieved and demonstrated through advanced research and/or creative projects in which students take the primary responsibility for framing questions, carrying out an analysis, and producing work of substantial complexity and quality (pp 5-6).

Those SLOs were not developed for honors programs but for a college-level experience centered on a fairly traditional concept of liberal education, as the statement below reveals:

. . . in today’s knowledge-based economy, a good liberal education embraces science and new technologies, hands-on research, global knowledge, teamwork, cross-cultural learning, active engagement with the world beyond the academy, and a commitment to lifelong learning, as well as the acquisition of knowledge and skills. (p. 4)

On the other hand, those SLOs do correspond well to a list of learning outcomes that John Zubizarreta posted on the NCHC listserv in September of 2004. According to that compilation, an honors student:

- Thinks critically
- Thinks creatively
- Reads critically
- Employs an effective process to produce clear, persuasive writing
- Conducts research effectively
Takes risks with learning
Demonstrates cultural sensitivity
Demonstrates aesthetic sensitivity
Demonstrates gender sensitivity
Participates actively and effectively in large and small groups
Assumes multiple roles in groups
Demonstrates responsibility outside classroom and school
Demonstrates awareness of the “outside world”
Appreciates learning for its own sake
Appreciates diversity
Demonstrates personal integrity

Regardless of whether those concepts fit all honors programs or not, a properly constructed assessment plan will provoke legitimate questions about the honors educational experience and its specific student learning outcomes: (1) Do our honors programs and colleges actually provide educational opportunities and curricular structures that enhance our students’ ability to attain these outcomes and goals? (2) What is the evidence that shows that our honors students have actually achieved these outcomes? Beyond those two fundamental questions are matters of method and practice: How can an honors program consistently measure the outcomes such as “thinks critically” or “achieves strong analytic skills” given the breadth of a typical honors program (which is often quite unlike the sharp focus and coherence of the curriculum in a major)? What exactly do we mean by these outcomes? Where in the honors curriculum do honors students demonstrate these behaviors for faculty to gauge? What follows is a tentative blueprint that attempts to demonstrate how to build an assessment plan that will address many of those questions.

C. Toward the Assessment of Honors Student Learning

Measure what you value, rather than valuing what you can measure.

Kermit Hall, former President, University at Albany – SUNY

At the center of the assessment effort are the students learning outcomes that have provoked some controversy in the honors community. They are not only useful but essential to what honors educators are all about: providing educational enhancements for superior students so that they not merely succeed but excel once they have left our campuses. The first of the student learning goals articulated by the AAC&U and quoted above is: strong analytical, communication, quantitative, and information skills—achieved and demonstrated through learning in a range of fields, settings, and media, and through advanced studies in one or more areas of concentration (“Our Students’ Best Work,” pp. 5-6).

If we begin with this first dictum, a number of us might dismiss it with a comment such as: “Of course our students have these skills. They’re what honors is all about,
and no one who graduates with an honors designation could possibly have less.” But the assessment skeptic will respond, “What’s the proof? Where are the data?” and second, “Is that really true across the board? Do honors students who are engineering majors really have the same level of communication skills that honors English majors have? Do honors theatre majors have the same level of quantitative skills that honors mathematics majors exhibit?” Only if we are lucky will the skeptic not ask the very pointed question: “What significant, quantitative evidence do you have indicating that an honors student outperforms a non-honors student of similar ability?” In other words, what data do we have showing that honors education makes a significant difference in student learning?

The first question in good assessment is “What do we want our students to learn?” The second is “How do we know they learned it?” Because every honors program or college is unique, each assessment plan must also be unique, but even honors programs typically share a common set of characteristics, as described in the NCHC’s “Basic Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors Program,” so the assessment of honors programs might have a common set of assessment practices.

Developing assessment plans and student learning outcomes is fundamentally no different for honors programs than for other disciplinary departments, save for the twist that honors programs in general do not have a central, shared content as do discrete disciplines like chemistry, art, accounting, or physical therapy. The cycle below graphically summarizes the assessment process:

(https://depts.washington.edu/learning/)

Once in place, a good assessment plan becomes a continuous feedback cycle with the four steps indicated in the graphic.
Step 1: Assessment Domains — Assessment domains are, generally speaking, overarching rubrics that encompass a number of closely related student learning outcomes. An incomplete list of possible domains that could be useful in honors assessment might include:

- Content (knowledge specific to a discipline or major as well as knowledge specific to interdisciplinary or cross-disciplinary activities)
- Communication (writing skills, oral communication skills, media and computer)
- Communication skills, numeric skills, etc.
- Critical Thinking
- Analysis
- Project management (both group and individual work)
- Moral Values/Integrity
- Problem solving
- Citizenship
- Leadership
- Diversity
- Creative ability
- Professional behavior/skills
- International experience
- Foreign language proficiency
- Active learning
- Interdisciplinary learning
- Service learning
- Community service
- Cultural awareness

The first step in an honors assessment plan is to consider which of these domains not only engage honors students in specific learning activities but also are central to the mission of an honors program. The point of proper assessment is to reflect not only on what we do but why we do it and how we can do it better.

Assessment should give us insights into our programs that data such as grade point averages, graduation/retention rates, or post-baccalaureate placement statistics cannot provide. For example, let us consider the domain, “project management.” Most honors programs have capstone projects or senior theses requirements, and the extent of that activity in honors education suggests that, as a corpus, honors educators value project management as one of the specific skills that honors students should acquire in an honors program. The task then is to devise specific student learning outcomes related to the domain and figure out ways to gather data about whether students are actually learning and accomplishing the goals indicated in the outcomes. For example, here are three student learning outcomes that may be part of the project management domain: Each student is expected to:

- Exhibit disciplined work habits as an individual;
- Apply discipline-based and/or cross-discipline-based knowledge to design a problem-solving strategy;
• Conceive and plan a high-quality research and/or creative capstone project in the appropriate disciplinary or multi-disciplinary context.

The last SLO listed above speaks to what many faculty members would cite as the first crucial step toward successfully completing an honors thesis. In order actually write a thesis, one has to have sufficient background and training in a disciplinary context to conceive a useful and productive research design or creative project. Evaluating that step in the process obviously is not quite the same as evaluating a finished thesis. The step of conceiving and planning is equivalent to the prewriting exercises and drafts used in composition classes; although in some composition programs some of the “prewriting” phases are graded, in practice most institutions only assess (by assigning a grade) the finished product. The final grade of “Honors” or “Satisfactory” assigned by the instructor, director, or honors thesis committee does not address the process or difficulty or learning gains that students evince in the planning stages. At UWF, the data that we received on this SLO (much more about gathering data later) revealed that some of our honors students handled the planning very well, but others did not, and it further revealed that the disparity was somewhat discipline-specific. Students from the hard sciences at UWF (where there is in general a culture of undergraduate research) did very well in this area; students from other areas, business in particular, did not fare nearly as well. We now know that we need to do something else or something more to help students from outside the hard sciences get started on their theses. We haven’t yet figured out exactly what to do, but we will be trying at least one new mentoring approach for those students during the next academic year.

The first step toward building an assessment plan for honors is to identify the domains that are most central to the mission of an individual honors program or college. International experiences and foreign language proficiency are distinctive and prominent features of some honors programs, but certainly not all. Similarly, leadership development is a central concern in some but not all institutions. The key is to have frank and in-depth frank discussions with the faculty who teach honors courses and the students who take those courses about what is valuable and important in the honors curriculum, looking for common themes and experiences that lead to the educational enrichment of our students. Allowing ideas to emerge from wide-ranging discussions is easily the best case scenario when developing domains and the SLOs that are part of them; if the goal is to measure what is valuable, the first step is to identify those aspects of honors education at an institution that truly are valuable.

As can easily be inferred from the sheer number of the possible domains listed above, the danger of trying to do it all can paralyze an honors effort. Honors programs and colleges often pride themselves on their inclusiveness, and many a program has tried to offer all needed learning experiences to all honors students. But whichever domains are chosen, they should reflect not only what is valued in the program but also what can be delivered through courses and other programming and what can be feasibly measured. In sorting through the possibilities, it helps to keep in mind that the domains should:
• Promote curricular coherence: The very concept of a “program” implies that there is a unity and definable focus in the totality of a student’s educational path. Do the domains you have selected connect with one another meaningfully to advance a coherent educational experience for your students?
• Facilitate collaboration: We all know that we gain strength and quality through interactions among faculty and students from multiple disciplines and backgrounds. Do the domains encourage students and faculty to integrate perspectives across fields, disciplines or cultures?
• Showcase strengths: Each honors program or college has unique areas of achievement that are models of educational quality, and these areas should be highlighted in an assessment plan and represented by the domains selected.
• Build from the bottom up: Honors faculty and students should decide what to assess and why; the buy-in alone will make the implementation of the plan simpler and less painful.
• Satisfy multiple “drivers”: Assessment data and plans are needed both for external entities (such as accrediting bodies) and for internal operations such as program improvement. Try to develop a plan that advances both purposes.

One final caveat: “content” domains are very difficult to incorporate into an effective honors assessment plan. Many, if not the overwhelming majority of honors programs and colleges have a university-wide mission and frequently can boast of having at least one honors student in each and every major offered at the institution.

The task of defining and measuring content for all of those majors is, to say the least, a substantial challenge. If an honors thesis or similar capstone project is required for honors graduation (which should be the case in honors colleges but appears as well in many honors programs), then content-based SLOs can be tied directly to the subject area of the thesis discipline. Without such a capstone product, finding a way to assess content across the breadth of honors program in which student activity is spread across an entire institution will be a tough challenge.

Step 2: Student Learning Outcomes — Once the domains are identified, it is time to develop the SLOs: statements that describe what students will be able to know, do, or value as a result of their honors educational experience. It is curious that SLOs have attracted fairly widespread distaste among honors educators since all they really do is articulate clearly the knowledge, skills, abilities, and values a student gains from a course of study. Perhaps one reason for this skepticism is that honors educators simultaneously do and do not see honors as a discrete discipline. Consider the case, say, of a student attaining a B.F.A. in musical theatre: what knowledge, abilities, and values should a student be able to demonstrate upon receipt of a B.F.A. in this major? We might say that such a graduate should be able to go to an audition and (1) quickly and crisply pick up whatever dance steps are demonstrated by the choreographer, (2) sight-read and perform well whatever musical piece is thrust into his/her hand by the musical director, and 3) deliver two contrasting (one comic, one tragic) one-minute monologues for the director while exhibiting professional poise, grace, and attitude. If we start there, we are most of the way home. The major change in our thinking
prompted by SLOs is a shift in focus away from course grades to student behaviors: we need to concentrate on changes in the student’s knowledge, skills, abilities, and values rather than how much or how well the student can parrot back what the instructor has presented.

In order to develop SLOs for an honors program, we need to remember that we are identifying overarching concepts that span several courses, not individual course objectives. Further, we need to devise statements that describe what students should think, know, and be able to do when they finish the honors program, and these statements need to be expressed in behaviorally measurable terms. In general SLOs should focus on observable student behaviors and work products, and they should describe the products or outcomes of these activities. In other words, we need to describe what understanding or learning has occurred as well as what the students have done or produced as a result of the honors learning.

As many people have stated, writing successful SLOs stems from adapting the language of Bloom’s Learning Taxonomy to the specifics of a curriculum. Bloom’s hierarchy of higher-order learning skills (http://www.apa.org/ed/new_blooms.html) is roughly thus:

**Higher-Order Skills**
1. Create
2. Evaluate
3. Analyze
4. Apply
5. Understand
6. Remember

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**Higher-Order Skills**
1. Create
2. Evaluate
3. Analyze
4. Apply
5. Understand
6. Remember

Since this hierarchy distinguishes the types of learning students can achieve in order of depth or sophistication, we need to remember that honors students should be expected to demonstrate the higher order skills regularly, and we should therefore craft honors SLOs primarily but not exclusively in terms of the top three skills. To craft language appropriate for SLOs, it is useful to start each SLO with one of the action verbs from Bloom’s taxonomy; an abbreviated list appears below.
### Action Words for Bloom’s Taxonomy

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As an example, let us consider crafting SLOs for the domain of critical thinking since it is an area where we would expect honors students to excel. The link between writing and critical thinking has long been established, and so an SLO that points toward the type of critical thinking that appears in a typical writing assignment might be: “Select and organize credible evidence to support converging arguments.”

Most writing teachers would argue that the organization of credible evidence into a well-shaped and pointed argument is a central hallmark of a well-written analytic or research paper; these same teachers, though, would probably not agree that selection and organization of evidence are the only criteria on which a paper is graded. Paper grading is a more holistic process that involves the evaluation of grammar, syntax, content, thesis statement, paragraph structure, tone, voice, and many other factors beyond the organization of the evidence. These multiple criteria point toward one of the reasons that overall grades are not that useful in assessment plans. Overall course or assignment grades are a function of many different factors while SLOs should focus on a single behavior or skill we would like to see our students attain.
A few examples of SLOs are reproduced below:

- Identify and describe major theories in the discipline;
- Evaluate competing hypotheses and select the one that is best supported by existing data;
- Write clearly using the editorial style endorsed by the discipline;
- Comply with professional standards of ethics associated with the discipline;
- Manage time and resources to carry a long-term project in the discipline to completion. (http://uwf.edu/cutla/Assessres.cfm)

In general, well-written SLOs will provide clear goals for honors students to achieve, promote the design of well-organized honors courses and active learning, and provide the basis for precise, reliable, and valid assessment of the honors curriculum so that improvements can be made on the basis of empirical data rather than subjective impression.

In summary, we need to devise honors SLOs that state in objective, measurable terms the skills and behaviors we expect our honors students to achieve. As a tentative example, the Academic Learning Compact for the UWF Honors Program with its sixteen separate SLOs is attached as Appendix N. Whatever SLOs are devised, four general precepts are important:

- Be honest! Is this something you really want to assess?
- Be honest! Is this what really happens in the honors class?
- Be smart! Where and how are you assessing this activity already?
- Be efficient! How can you extract data you might already have?

In the end, each SLO should be the targeted assessment of a specific and discrete facet of the honors student’s learning, and solid assessment plans for an entire program should incorporate twelve to twenty specific SLOs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Direct Measure: Course Number</th>
<th>Direct Measure: Course Name</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Critical Thinking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LIT 1110</td>
<td>Great Books 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDH 403x</td>
<td>Honors Seminar</td>
<td>I, P I, P</td>
<td>I, A I, A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDH 4970</td>
<td>Honors Thesis</td>
<td>M, A M, A</td>
<td>M, A M, A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Step 3: Map the Curriculum — Once the SLOs for an honors program are devised, a curriculum matrix or map can be should be used to indicate how the honors curriculum aligns with the SLOs. Basically, the matrix is a graphic representation of the interface between the curriculum and the SLOs that enables you to identify where the desired outcomes are introduced, reinforced, or practiced, and then mastered by the students. The matrix also shows whether there are curricular or educational weaknesses or gaps as well as where there the best opportunities for assessment exist. A sample curriculum matrix looks like this:

As is common practice, the individual SLOs are listed across the top of the matrix, with the courses in the curriculum listed down the left-hand side. In this matrix, “I” stands for Introduced, “P” for Practiced, “M” for Mastered, and “A” for Assessed. So for each of the SLOs in the domains of content and critical thinking, we can quickly see where the desired outcome is first introduced to the students, where it is practiced and or otherwise reinforced, where the student should be able to demonstrate mastery of the behavior/skill, and where the SLO is assessed.

Although a full curriculum matrix for a typical academic major--chemistry, for example--would list every course taught by the department down the left hand side, it is not necessary to do so to create an effective assessment plan. Most honors programs consist of more than three courses, but it isn’t necessary or desirable to do assessment in every single course offered. Assessment is simplest in academic departments where students have to complete a very specific series of courses with few or no exceptions—engineering or music, for examples. For honors assessment, as with other programs of study that are highly interdisciplinary in nature, effective assessment plans can be built on a limited but discrete core of courses or other learning experiences. In the example above, all honors students must complete an honors core—a Great Books course, two seminars, and a capstone thesis—and in addition to providing a coherent pedagogic foundation, the core provides as well a stable and predictable environment for assessment.

Wherever there is the potential for a wide variation in course options—say all the various honors sections of general studies courses or honors by contracts or the widely dispersed but discipline-specific upper-division honors classes, the harder and more time and energy intensive assessment becomes. After all, what specific learning outcome could be assessed in an honors psychology course here or an honors zoology course there? The worst assessment nightmare is the “Chinese menu” interdisciplinary program that requires a student to choose any nine courses from department A, any six from department B, and any four from department C. As Linda Suskie of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education puts it, “The problem with many of these programs is not assessing them per se but the fact that they're poorly designed: they're simply a collection of courses, and a collection of courses does not make a program.”

In practice, the number of courses in a program makes no difference in assessment, but the presence of a discrete core—no matter what the focus—does; this is a major
assessment challenge facing honors education, particularly those programs that have neither a common entry-level experience nor a capstone experience. Assessing an honors program made up primarily or exclusively of honors contracts can be done, but it inevitably turns difficult and costly, since an effective assessment methodology will most likely require blind readings or holistic scorings and will feed as well in to all of the prejudices against assessment in general precisely because it so quickly becomes onerous and unwieldy.

A second confusion might arise from the appearance of the A for assessment in all of the courses listed under the critical thinking domain. In that particular case, the critical thinking skills are being assessed longitudinally in order to determine if appropriate progress in critical thinking is being made as a student advanced from the freshman to senior year.

**Step 4: Gather the Data** — Once we have identified what is going to be assessed and where, the strategies for collecting the assessment data can be explored. A single caveat should guide all of our work in this area, namely KISS: KEEP IT SIMPLE, STUPID. In devising a good assessment plan, we should strive for practices that are feasible, manageable, transparent, and measurable. Assessment falls apart completely when faculty members do not buy into the practice, and one sure way to alienate faculty is to force on them tasks they consider silly, worthless, confusing, or onerous. Assessment can be done well, however, and in a way that has little impact on a faculty member’s time and energy.

There are two kinds of assessment activity: direct and indirect. Direct assessment is any type of evaluation done by faculty or by recognized educational entities such as the people who put together licensure examinations; it consists of evaluations of classroom activities—course papers and presentations, honors theses, work done in capstone courses, learning portfolios, case notes, laboratory exercises—and activities that occur beyond the classroom such as state or national licensure, certification, professional examinations, or other forms of standardized tests. Indirect assessment consists of data gathered from sources such as self-reports from students (often in-class self-evaluations); reports from clients, employers, or other non-academic experts; surveys of current students and alumni; and exit interviews (one-on-one or in focus-group settings). To gain as full an understanding of the learning environment, solid assessment plans will incorporate both direct and indirect data. When determining which data to collect, it is important to remember that the primary purpose of assessment is diagnostic, rather than evaluative. Our goal is neither to blame nor embarrass any particular faculty member for poor teaching. Instead, assessment seeks to identify pedagogical practices and curricular designs that advance learning so that faculty can improve what they do.

Since one of the challenges of good assessment is finding ways to gain useful data while keeping the workload for faculty to a minimum. One way to achieve this goal is to consider what students are already doing that can be incorporated into the assessment plan. Many excellent assessment practices and the attendant data may
already be embedded in what faculty typically do in the classroom. One example is the critical thinking SLO: "Apply discipline-based and/or cross-discipline-based higher order thinking skills to a range of topics and issues." Many of us would rightly argue that we promote this SLO in nearly every assignment we ask students to complete. For example, here is a sample quiz question on Homer’s *Iliad*: “How does the single combat between Aias and Hektor end, and what does that entire episode tell you about Aias and Hektor? (5 pts).”

An example of an excellent student response that received maximum credit is:
The fight between Aias and Hektor is literally called on account of darkness. Neither soldier seems to get the upper hand in the struggle; they simply throw spears at each other and talk a lot. But it tells me that both Hektor and Aias are honorable men. They agree to do something, do it, and they fight fairly. And when the contest is over, they each speak respectfully about each other and they exchange gifts, much like xenia. This episode is in great contrast to what happened between Paris and Menelaos, which ended so weirdly when Aphrodite stepped in to save Paris.

Less resonant or developed responses, of course, receive fewer points. What this example illustrates is that many faculty are already accumulating numeric data that could be used in an assessment plan. Quizzes are given not to check students' grammar or writing skills nor to see if they are increasing their awareness of history or diversity or Western culture but to make certain that they are thinking critically, that they are identifying patterns, drawing analogies between episodes, incorporating a specific moment into the general context—in other words, thinking actively and critically. Every time we give a quiz, we are directly assessing students’ learning such as their ability to apply discipline-based higher order thinking skills to a new topic, and each time we grade a quiz, we are recording the result, often with a set of numbers such as a 6-point Likert scale (5 for “Great!”; 0 at the other end for “Totally Wrong” or blank). In many courses, faculty already have assessment data; they simply need to derive the data from the spreadsheet they are already using to calculate students’ overall course grades.
A small portion of a spreadsheet used to calculate grades for each student at the end of the term may look like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>IL-1</th>
<th>IL-2</th>
<th>Od-1</th>
<th>Od-2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Average | 3.1  | 3.3  | 3.4  | 3.1  |
| Count   | 133  | 133  | 133  | 133  |

Often we are already collecting hard, specific, and useful data that we can pull out and use in our assessment practices rather than building new and often too complicated or labor-intensive paradigms from scratch.

The process outlined above raises a key question and common misconception related to assessment: How do grades and assessment relate to one another? Although the process of grading may include possible means of assessing student learning; student learning outcomes and grades—especially course grades—are not and cannot be the same thing. In the example above, student's quiz might be an excellent means of assessing students’ critical thinking ability. However in terms of the overall grade for the course, the quiz is just one factor; additional quizzes, midterm and final exams, papers, and participation are factored into the grade as well. Properly crafted SLOs should describe one specific learning behavior or skill, but a course grade represents an overarching judgment about a student’s performance over a range of learning outcomes. Consequently, it is possible a student might exhibit good critical thinking skills but still fail the course. When scoring papers or grading final exams, we are not only estimating how well students have identified patterns, drawn analogies, and performed other critical thinking tasks; we are also assessing a range of other objectives, including grammar and writing skills, awareness of history or diversity or Western culture, and the ability to synthesize or organize large amounts of information—just to name a few. Assessment is one piece of the learning continuum, not the whole, but many of the pieces are useful in an assessment context.

Assessment can focus not only cognitive or content-based outcomes but also one affective ones. For instance, students should have disciplined work habits. Students
who do their work well, turn it in on time, and always give their work a professional
polish not only do well in college but are likely to perform well in graduate or
professional school or the workforce. Disciplined work habits are not the sole basis
for a high grade, but we value them. We do not, however, typically assess them. Yet,
maybe if we did, we might find that “exhibiting disciplined work habits” is a
characteristic that distinguishes honors students from their non-honors counterparts.

**Step 5: Scoring Rubrics and Data Sheets for Direct Assessment**

Even though the assessment methods embedded in everyday pedagogic practices may
yield useful data, most honors administrators will need to gather assessment data
from other modes and viewpoints in order to assemble the best diagnostic evaluation
of our programs. Just as a more complete picture of what actually transpired during a
traffic accident comes from assembling all available perspectives (eyewitness accounts, the police report, forensic analyses of the physical damage, skid marks), so
the best picture of our honors pedagogic practices and design comes from assembling
feedback from multiple sources. The full picture is especially important when we are
assessing the effectiveness of what we do in courses with multiple sections taught by
different faculty or when various classes are used to assess one or more of the same
student learning outcomes.

The challenge is to devise methods that will provide useful assessment data about the
specific skills, knowledge, and abilities that honors students gain from a range of
learning experiences, including different sections of the same course, different
courses, or other learning opportunities within the honors program. To address this
challenge, the SLOs need to be carefully crafted so that they apply to the various
learning contexts, and clear rubrics must be developed thoughtfully to measure the
SLOs accurately. Also important is to select which outcomes will be assessed in
which contexts. For example, if we check the assessment matrix, we can see that,
even though many of the SLOs may be practiced or reinforced in an honors seminar,
due to time constraints, not all of them are assessed.

To determine which outcomes should be assessed in a given program, it may be
helpful to consider your program’s priorities. Here are four SLOs that are commonly
promoted in honors programs:

- Communicate effectively in one-on-one or group contexts;
- Employ writing conventions suitable to the research method and/or creative
  process of the subject of the honors seminar or honors thesis;
- Solve discipline-based and/or cross-discipline-based problems using strategies
  appropriate to the subject of the honors seminar or honors thesis;
- Exhibit disciplined work habits as an individual.

The SLOs listed above are obvious choices because honors courses are usually small
classes grounded in free-flowing interchanges among the students and instructor.
Students are frequently assigned to be the discussion leaders for one or more classes,
with the instructor functioning as a resource or facilitator rather than a fount of all
knowledge. Hence, effective communication is a key component of the class. As well, each student typically completes a seminar paper or project that is the culminating effort for the course, and that effort often is designed to reflect best practices in the discipline. Finally, most honors faculty members expect honors students to work efficiently, hard, and well. Although all of the expectations listed here may be common, how they are defined or evaluated will vary. Because most honors programs have a diverse group of faculty teaching honors seminars, the development of a set of rubrics that guide the faculty in their assessment of student learning and help to ensure that the data are accurate and consistent across the wide range of seminars is a must.

In general, rubrics should provide explicit criteria for assessing student work by describing the characteristics of performance at different levels of skill. As an example, here is the rubric used to evaluate the second SLO listed above:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SLO</th>
<th>Exceeds expectations</th>
<th>Met expectations</th>
<th>Fails to meet expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Presentation of work was exceptional, very well organized, and reflected a highly competent and professional level of writing standards and conventions; the work revealed great familiarity with the disciplinary standards and followed appropriate APA, MLA, etc. guidelines.</td>
<td>Presentation of work was adequate and mostly well organized and/or reflected at least the minimal professional level of writing standards, formats, and conventions as presented in disciplinary guidelines.</td>
<td>Presentation of work was inadequate, sloppy, disorganized, and/or failed to recognize or follow professional writing guideline standards, formats and conventions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No matter which faculty member is teaching the honors seminar, and no matter what subject the student has chosen for his or her assignment, the instructor can use this rubric quickly and consistently to assess the students’ performance on this SLO. Moreover, as this example reveals, the scoring does not have to be done with a 5-point Likert scale to be effective. Assessment plans should gather only data which are truly useful (remember, measure what we value, not the other way around), and the faster and easier it is for faculty members to gather and submit assessment data, the higher will be the chance that they will accept the assessment methodology and incorporate it into their daily practices. Adopting three-point assessment scales for nearly all assessment rubrics is simple and practical: the student failed to meet the instructor’s expectation in the targeted area; the student met the instructor’s expectations; the student exceeded the instructor’s expectations.
Since the goal of assessment is to improve curricula and pedagogy to advance student learning, honors educators only need to gather and array enough data to identify areas for improvement. It’s a little like being a car mechanic: if the car is running smoothly and getting good mileage, we don’t need to do much more than routine maintenance; if it’s running roughly or pulling off the road, we need to do some aggressive tinkering; and if the wheels fall off or it won’t start at all, we know we have some major overhauls ahead. If the assessment data indicate that students are failing to meet or are barely meeting expectations, major adjustments in the way we teach or work with students need to be made. However, if nearly everyone is exceeding the program’s expectations, then no or few changes need to be made.

When we create scoring rubrics for the SLOs, it is wise to realize that any set of standards is somewhat arbitrary; there is nothing magical about three-point versus five-point or even twelve-point scales. What is important is to develop clear indicators of gradations of quality that enhance accurate scoring. One way to begin is to consult various models of effective rubrics, such as those included in Appendix P. A key guideline for rubric development is consistency. For example, if a five-point scoring system is chosen as the most workable number, then a five-point scoring rubric needs to be developed for the direct assessment of each and every SLO.

Once the SLOs and scoring rubrics are finalized, the data collection can begin. A snippet from a sample scoring sheet can be found below; the full sheet appears in Appendix S.
Assessment Data Sheet

Honors Seminar: ______________________ Faculty _______________
Department ___________________________ Date _________________

Instructions: Please fill out the appropriate area with the number of students who fit the criteria over the total number of students in the class. For example, if ten students in a class of 12 exceed the expectation of “Exhibit discipline-based and/or cross-discipline-based higher order thinking skills,” please enter 10/12 in that box, and please return this form to the honors office, 50/224.

Critical Thinking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Exceeds Expectations</th>
<th>Meets Expectations</th>
<th>Fails to meet Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apply discipline-based and/or cross-discipline-based higher order thinking skills to a range of topics and issues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select and organize credible evidence to support converging arguments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solve discipline-based and/or cross-discipline-based problems using strategies appropriate to the subject of the Honors Seminar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this example, using the scoring rubric as a guide, the instructor reviews the final culminating assignment and then fills in the appropriate box with the requested data as is shown in the example below:

Critical Thinking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Exceeds Expectations</th>
<th>Meets Expectations</th>
<th>Fails to meet Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apply discipline-based and/or cross-discipline-based higher order thinking skills to a range of topics and issues</td>
<td>8/15</td>
<td>5/15</td>
<td>2/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select and organize credible evidence to support converging arguments</td>
<td>6/15</td>
<td>7/15</td>
<td>2/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solve discipline-based and/or cross-discipline-based problems using strategies appropriate to the subject of the Honors Seminar</td>
<td>4/15</td>
<td>9/15</td>
<td>2/15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The sheets are then returned to the honors office, and the data are recorded in a spreadsheet. The entire process, including the data entry, takes less than thirty
minutes to complete. The data sheet used for assessing an honors thesis will be, naturally, much larger since that capstone project can be an opportunity to assess nearly all SLOs, but the process is the same. Once a student completes an honors thesis, the honors program office sends the form to the thesis director, who in turn fills out the form and sends it back to the honors office where the data are uploaded into the master spreadsheet. Faculty members who have directed honors theses recently report that it normally takes less than ten minutes to complete the form. Because the form takes such little time, a 100% return rate can be expected.

Direct assessment happens whenever faculty members evaluate the skill or behavior stated in the SLO in actual products of student work, but in some cases even faculty assessments must be safeguarded in order to ensure objectivity. A charge of bias can occur if there is an aura of suspicion or paranoia on a campus, in which case the accusation runs something like this: “These scores are way too high and therefore inaccurate because the faculty are basically reporting on their own effectiveness and making themselves look good by reporting that everyone is meeting or exceeding the standard.”

Here are a few ways to ensure that assessment data are gathered in an objective manner. The quickest and simplest is to find a node in the assessment plan where the student products can be evaluated by an independent group of faculty. The honors thesis or capstone project serves well as such a node. In order to glean solid and objective data, all one needs to do is assemble a faculty committee and give them copies of the honors theses (or other similar capstone projects or products, such as learning portfolios) that were produced during that academic year, along with the scoring rubrics and data sheets, and have the committee score the theses using the criteria. At large schools it may not be feasible to submit every thesis to this level of scrutiny; a representative cross-section is likely to yield the same information as when considering the entire corpus. Thus, a random sample (or maybe all the theses completed in, say, the fall term) can be sufficient. On campuses where honors is viewed with suspicion, assembling a scoring committee composed entirely of non-honors faculty will not only produce objective results but also establish allies for honors.

The only downsides to using outside evaluators are time and money, but on some campuses, a scoring group can be assembled with only an invitation and the promise of pizza at the scoring meetings. However, if the task becomes large and hence more onerous, a way would need to be devised to compensate the faculty for their time and professional judgment. Even though a portfolio-based assessment plan probably yields the most extensive and sensitive data on student learning, portfolio-based assessment plans are extremely expensive and time-consuming to implement, even with excellent rubrics and highly trained and efficient faculty. Typically, significant funding is required to compensate faculty for their time and professional judgment. For a small program with relatively few graduates each year, comprehensive learning portfolios would probably be the way to go, but for programs with more than 200
students, effective and accurate portfolio-based assessment would be prohibitively
time-consuming and expensive.

Step 6: Surveys and Interviews for Indirect Assessment — Assessment works best
when the data related to each specific SLO come from a number of different sources
and perspectives. Direct assessment represents the “Cadillac” approach and should
be given the most weight when using data to draw conclusions. However, it need not
be the only method used. Data from indirect assessment also yield insights into what
students are learning or not learning well. Yet, indirect assessments—particularly
surveys—are subject to the bias and error of self-reporting. Consequently, indirect
assessment instruments serve most effectively when different stakeholders are
surveyed or when they are used as supplements to other direct assessment measures.
For example, many programs will survey both faculty and students on the learning
outcomes promoted in a particular course experience. At times, a significant disparity
between what the students report they have mastered and what the faculty report their
students have mastered may emerge; and when this occurs, more exploration is
clearly warranted.

As with rubrics, it is advisable to consult models of surveys, such as those which are
found in Appendices G-K. In order to secure good data from a survey’s self-report
format, the survey needs to include questions that are linked to the assessment SLOs.
A portion of an assessment survey used at the University of West Florida appears
below (see Appendix P for the entire survey):

Your Learning
Please circle the response that best describes your sense of accomplishment for each
item listed below. If you did not take a course that applies to the question, please circle N/A.

29. I reviewed and evaluated the knowledge, concepts, techniques, and methodology central to my
honors thesis:

<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>At times</td>
<td>Regularly</td>
<td>Very often</td>
<td>Beyond all my expectations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

30. I identified the major issues, debates, or approaches central to my honors thesis:

<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>At times</td>
<td>Regularly</td>
<td>Very often</td>
<td>Beyond all my expectations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

31. I synthesized complex information central to my honors thesis:

<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>At times</td>
<td>Regularly</td>
<td>Very often</td>
<td>Beyond all my expectations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
32. I developed an argument or project and defend or present it appropriately in accordance with the methods of the discipline of my honors thesis:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>At times</td>
<td>Regularly</td>
<td>Very often</td>
<td>Beyond all my expectations</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

33. I exhibited discipline-based and/or cross-discipline-based higher order thinking skills in my classes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>At times</td>
<td>Regularly</td>
<td>Very often</td>
<td>Beyond all my expectations</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen at a glance, this survey uses a five-point Likert scale rather than the three-point scale used in direct assessment documents. Surveys that have already been developed can be expanded to include questions related to the SLOs, transforming an extant survey into one that supplies assessment data.

Exit interviews, in both individual and focus group formats, are also a good source of indirect assessment information. Some examples of questions used in exit interviews are included in Appendix I. The challenge is to capture and quantify the anecdotal data that always emerge in such interchanges, but if we have reliable data generated by direct assessment strategies, then the anecdotal data gathered in exit interviews can shed light on the practices of the honors program.

**Step 7: What do the data mean?** — Once all the sets of data have been gathered, what do we do with them? Obviously, if nothing is done to analyze the data meaningful changes are not implemented based on the data analysis, then the whole assessment process has been a waste of time. There is a widespread notion that assessment is silly or pointless, but the primary purpose of assessment is to improve our programs and teaching strategies; looking at the data for strengths and weaknesses allows us to see what needs improvement. Again, the analogy of automobile maintenance pertains. To illustrate how to close the assessment loop, we might imagine that the assessment data in the area of critical thinking indicate that students are smoothly progressing and assuming more and more challenging tasks. In this case, no changes in teaching would need to be altered, since ample evidence exists that critical thinking skills developed during the students’ tenure at college. On the other hand, if the data show that the students are not progressing at a satisfactory rate, then there is either a problem with the curricular design, with the pedagogical method, or both.

We need to recall, however, that assessment must be an ongoing and continual process in order to work well, and realistically the data from the first two years will probably be used primarily to establish a baseline for future comparisons. Because of the time-consuming nature of longitudinal assessment efforts, it is advantageous to focus on a select number of SLOs so that longitudinal data can be captured in addition to capstone data.
An effective assessment plan will identify areas of the program needing attention or improvement. If the plan yields a “Lake Woebegone” effect where absolutely everything is above average, then it is poorly designed and ineffective. For example, in one program’s assessment plan, the data returned indicated that some students were struggling with the writing of seminar papers and the honors thesis. The faculty reported that while 23.5% of the students exceeded and 51.7% met the standard, 24.8%—a full quarter of the student population—failed to meet this standard. In addition to being both surprising and dismaying, the data show that corrective action needs to be taken since writing is such a fundamental skill for success, both in the honors program and in students’ subsequent careers.

To address this problem, students, for example, could be exposed to the expectations of the thesis much earlier (their first term) in workshops led by honors seniors, or thesis workshops and thesis support groups can be developed. What this example suggests is that the cycle of assessment can encourage honors educators to be creative and to develop and try new strategies to fix the problem. That’s what assessment is all about.

Step 8: Closing the loop: using assessment data to improve what we do — Effective assessment practices make use of the data collected to improve:

- Instructional strategies,
- Curricular designs,
- Course offerings within the curriculum,
- Course sequencing in the curriculum, and
- Support and advising services.

These and other areas should be under constant review if we are serious about offering a high-quality and enhanced educational experience for our students. One of the NCHC’s “Basic Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors Program” is: “The program engages in continuous assessment and evaluation and is open to the need for change in order to maintain its distinctive position of offering exceptional and enhanced educational opportunities to honors students.”

The assessment loop is closed when we develop a culture of feedback and improvement, clearly establishing continuous and critical review. At least on a yearly basis, the honors administrators, faculty, and students should meet to review carefully the assessment results and devise appropriate courses of action. This process may reveal heretofore unnoticed problems in the curricular design or course sequencing; or it may be that certain desired skills are not being acquired as well as one might hope (as in the case of writing skills in the example above) or that certain activities do not create the “distinguished education” that honors strives to attain. Whatever information emerges, however, can be used to initiate and shape improvements. At the same time, thorough records and appropriate documentation will be essential when an external audience wants to see what we have done and also when the budget cycle rolls around.
Good assessment practice calls for continual re-evaluation of the assessment plan and practices. As time progresses, some of the SLOs may no longer be applicable, and other skills or behaviors may emerge as important, thus needing to be included instead. Similarly, rubrics, data-gathering devices, and spreadsheets need to be scrutinized regularly for their utility and potential improvement. Assessment should tell us not only how well we are teaching our students but also how well we are practicing assessment. Nothing is so well devised and executed that it is perfect on the first pass.

Assessment-based evidence allows us to move away from anecdotal or seat-of-the-pants decisions about refining our curriculum and classroom practices. Used properly, assessment can be one of the most powerful tools and potent practices we develop for honors education.
EVALUATION AND SITE VISITOR APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

BASIC CHARACTERISTICS OF A FULLY DEVELOPED HONORS PROGRAM

(Approved by the NCHC Executive Committee on March 4, 1994; amended by the NCHC Board of Directors on November 23, 2007; further amended by the NCHC Board of Directors on February 29, 2010)

Although no single or definitive honors program model can or should be superimposed on all types of institutions, the National Collegiate Honors Council has identified a number of best practices that are common to successful and fully developed honors programs.

1. The honors program offers carefully designed educational experiences that meet the needs and abilities of the undergraduate students it serves. A clearly articulated set of admission criteria (e.g., GPA, SAT score, a written essay, satisfactory progress, etc.) identifies the targeted student population served by the honors program. The program clearly specifies the requirements needed for retention and satisfactory completion.

2. The program has a clear mandate from the institution’s administration in the form of a mission statement or charter document that includes the objectives and responsibilities of honors and defines the place of honors in the administrative and academic structure of the institution. The statement ensures the permanence and stability of honors by guaranteeing that adequate infrastructure resources, including an appropriate budget as well as appropriate faculty, staff, and administrative support when necessary, are allocated to honors so that the program avoids dependence on the good will and energy of particular faculty members or administrators for survival. In other words, the program is fully institutionalized (like comparable units on campus) so that it can build a lasting tradition of excellence.

3. The honors director reports to the chief academic officer of the institution.

4. The honors curriculum, established in harmony with the mission statement, meets the needs of the students in the program and features special courses, seminars, colloquia, experiential-learning opportunities, undergraduate research opportunities, or other independent-study options.

5. The program requirements constitute a substantial portion of the participants’ undergraduate work, typically 20% to 25% of the total course work and certainly no less than 15%.

6. The curriculum of the program is designed so that honors requirements can, when appropriate, also satisfy general education requirements, major or disciplinary requirements, and pre-professional or professional training requirements.

7. The program provides a locus of visible and highly reputed standards and models of excellence for students and faculty across the campus.

8. The criteria for selection of honors faculty include exceptional teaching skills, the ability to provide intellectual leadership and mentoring for able students, and support for the mission of honors education.
9. The program is located in suitable, preferably prominent, quarters on campus that provide both access for the students and a focal point for honors activity. Those accommodations include space for honors administrative, faculty, and support staff functions as appropriate. They may include space for an honors lounge, library, reading rooms, and computer facilities. If the honors program has a significant residential component, the honors housing and residential life functions are designed to meet the academic and social needs of honors students.

10. The program has a standing committee or council of faculty members that works with the director or other administrative officer and is involved in honors curriculum, governance, policy, development, and evaluation deliberations. The composition of that group represents the colleges and/or departments served by the program and also elicits support for the program from across the campus.

11. Honors students are assured a voice in the governance and direction of the honors program. This can be achieved through a student committee that conducts its business with as much autonomy as possible but works in collaboration with the administration and faculty to maintain excellence in the program. Honors students are included in governance, serving on the advisory/policy committee as well as constituting the group that governs the student association.

12. Honors students receive honors-related academic advising from qualified faculty and/or staff.

13. The program serves as a laboratory within which faculty feel welcome to experiment with new subjects, approaches, and pedagogies. When proven successful, such efforts in curriculum and pedagogical development can serve as prototypes for initiatives that can become institutionalized across the campus.

14. The program engages in continuous assessment and evaluation and is open to the need for change in order to maintain its distinctive position of offering exceptional and enhanced educational opportunities to honors students.

15. The program emphasizes active learning and participatory education by offering opportunities for students to participate in regional and national conferences, Honors Semesters, international programs, community service, internships, undergraduate research, and other types of experiential education.

16. When appropriate, two-year and four-year programs have articulation agreements by which honors graduates from two-year programs who meet previously agreed-upon requirements are accepted into four-year honors programs.

17. The program provides priority enrollment for active honors students in recognition of scheduling difficulties caused by the need to satisfy both honors and major program(s) requirements.
APPENDIX B

CHARACTERISTICS OF A FULLY DEVELOPED HONORS COLLEGE
(Approved by the NCHC Executive Committee on June 25, 2005, and amended by the NCHC Board of Directors on February 19, 2010)

The National Collegiate Honors Council has identified these best practices that are common to successful and fully developed honors colleges.

1. An honors college incorporates the relevant characteristics of a fully developed honors program.

2. The honors college exists as an equal collegiate unit within a multi-collegiate university structure.

3. The head of the honors college is a dean reporting directly to the chief academic officer of the institution and serving as a full member of the Council of Deans if one exists. The dean has a full-time, 12-month appointment.

4. The operational and staff budgets of honors colleges provide resources at least comparable to those of other collegiate units of equivalent size.

5. The honors college exercises increased coordination and control of departmental honors where the college has emerged out of a decentralized system.

6. The honors college exercises considerable control over honors recruitment and admissions, including the appropriate size of the incoming class. Admission to the honors college may be by separate application.

7. The honors college exercises considerable control over its policies, curriculum, and selection of faculty.

8. The curriculum of the honors college offers significant course opportunities across all four years of study.

9. The curriculum of the honors college constitutes at least 20% of a student’s degree program. The honors college requires an honors thesis or honors capstone project.

10. Where the home university has a significant residential component, the honors college offers substantial honors residential opportunities.

11. The distinction achieved by the completion of the honors college requirements is publically announced and recorded, and methods may include announcement at commencement ceremonies, notations on the diploma and/or the student’s final transcript, or other similar actions.

12. Like other colleges within the university, the honors college may be involved in alumni affairs and development and may have an external advisory board.
APPENDIX C

Self-Study Outline

1. Self Study Based on Basic Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors Program or Basic Characteristics of an Honors College

2. History of the Honors Program/College
   Founding documents
   Policy documents
   Goals and objectives

3. Administrative design
   Director
   Tenure
   Duties
   Place in university administrative structure
   Staff
   Assistants/academic counselors
   Office and administrative staff
   Faculty Advising
   Advisory/Policy Council
   Authority
   Responsibilities
   Composition
   Budget
   Sources and basis
   Growth patterns

4. The Honors Student
   Criteria for participation
   Patterns of participation
   Success of students/alumni
   Financial aids
   Awards and recognition
   Community and identity
   Housing
   Student honors association
   Participation of non-traditional students
   Transfer students

5. Recruitment and admissions
   Criteria
   Publications
   Modes of contact
   Retention

6. Curriculum
   Pattern
   Honors courses
   Research
   Other curricular opportunities
   Faculty appointments and status
   Enrollment
   Evaluation of courses and faculty
   Profile of honors students

7. Survey results
   Faculty perception of program
   Honors student perception of program
   Honors alumni
Perception of program
Report of graduate study and support
Career status
Other surveys (Residence halls, non-traditional students, etc.)

8. Conclusions
APPENDIX D — THE HONORS ANNUAL REPORT

D-1. RECOMMENDED CONTENT FOR ANNUAL REPORT

1. Student statistics
   Enrollment (total and new students)
   Profiles of graduates
   Majors/minors
   Theses/projects titles
   Grade point average data
   Plans after graduation

2. Faculty statistics

3. Courses
   Evaluations

4. Budget

5. Lectures, Presentations, other events

6. Report of the Honors Student Advisory Council

7. Residence Hall Report (if applicable)

8. Goals

9. Sample newsletters, new recruitment materials, website, for example

10. Conclusions

D-2. TABLE OF CONTENTS OF SAMPLE REPORT

Table of Contents of 2003-04 University of Alabama at Birmingham Annual Report

Narrative Summary, pages 2-7

APPENDICES
1. Departmental Honors Options
2. Bylaws and Membership of the Honors Program Advisory Board
3. National and International Involvement
4. Graduate, Professional and Career Choices of Honors Graduates
5. Post-Baccalaureate and Extramural Scholarships
6. Comparative Statistics of Pre-College and Post-College National Test Scores
7. Syllabus for 2003 Interdisciplinary Course
9. Student Evaluation of Honors Program Interdisciplinary Course (Fall, 2003)
10. Retention Data of Honors Program
11. Comparative Lists of Students’ ACT Scores, Honors GPAs, and UAB GPAs
12. Descriptions of Graduating Seniors
13. List of Honors Program Extracurricular Activities
14. Honors Program Committee Descriptions
15. Statistics on Racial Diversity
16. Disciplinary Affiliations of Current Students
17. Student Evaluation of Honors Program
18. Alumni/ae Evaluation of Honors Program and UAB
19. Extramural Support
20. Applications, Admissions and Advising Data
21. Current Status of Scholarship Recipients
22. List of Students by Year, with High Schools and Majors
23. Special Information on Honors Students
24. Composition and Role of Honors Council
25. Responsibilities of Honors Program Administrators and Staff
26. Faculty Information Forms

2003-2004 Honors Program Publications, available on request
   Honors Program Student Newsletters (2)
   Alumni Newsletters (2)
   Honors Day Program
   2003-2004 Honors Program Student Handbook
   Journal of the National Collegiate Honors Council, III 1, III 2, IV 1, V 1
   Sanctuary 2003
   Reading Birmingham: City as Text© Explorations by Students of the UAB Honors Program
D-3. UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY HONORS PROGRAM ANNUAL REPORT
2007-2008

PURPOSE: The Honors Program provides students with an enhanced track for their lower and upper division course requirements. Students and faculty work together in intensive seminars, experimental classes, interdisciplinary courses, writing projects, and special activities. Members of the program earn honors credit on their transcripts and pursue one of three different honors degrees.

PERSONNEL: Dr. Christie Fox, Director; Danene Dustin, Administrative Assistant; Christa Anderson, Staff Assistant; Tasha Falslev, Honors Student Advisor; Amber Bowden, Honors Student Advisor (fall); Corey Clawson, Honors Student Advisor. Honors Fellows 2007-2008: Honors Fellows serve as Undergraduate Teaching Fellows for the honors breadth courses. They also assist at recruitment events and attend honors socials/service projects. (LIST OF 10 NAMES)

OVERVIEW: The Honors Program at Utah State was founded in 1964, and has evolved into a growing, thriving program that helps high ability students achieve success. The honors program graduated 32 students this academic year. We have now graduated more than 580 students, and the program continues to grow in steady appropriate ways. The fall 2007 honors freshman class comprised 11.5% of the overall freshman class. This was smaller than 2006, as the method by which students were enrolled in the honors program as freshmen changed. Whereas previously the honors program admission process had been conducted in an “opt-out” fashion for our high ability incoming students, it is now an “opt-in” choice. This change has caused our numbers to decline, but has not led to a decline in quality of student or student work. We expect that the size of the program will decrease slightly, but that the students who are in the honors program will now be more motivated to complete their honors degree, and we expect to see an increase in graduation rates. Incoming honors students had an average high school GPA of 3.90 and an average ACT composite of 29, compared to a general USU freshman GPA of 3.52 and ACT composite of 23.6. Note that while the USU overall ACT composite score declined, honors students’ score remained steady.

Overall, honors students comprised 3.47% of the undergraduate population at the USU Logan campus. Every year, we seem to add one course that adds significantly to the program. This year, the course focused on thesis writing, was team-taught by librarians, and was aimed at students in their junior year. The initial offering was successful, and we plan to offer the class again next spring. The newly created honors student council (HSC) is under the mentorship and advisement of Danene Dustin. There are 5-6 officers on the HSC, and they are responsible for organizing the monthly honors socials and service projects. As a result of instituting the HSC, we have had many more service projects, and in 2007-08, we had a year-long...
relationship with the Special Olympics. The student who attended the most socials and service projects in each semester won a gift basket. Our new staff assistant resigned in May, and we are delighted to welcome Amber Summers to our staff. Amber has a bachelor’s degree from the University of North Dakota and brings a unique set of skills to the honors office.

HIGHLIGHTS:
Selected Faculty Highlights:
David Peak, professor of Physics, was selected as the 2008 Last Lecturer. He was also was honored as the Faculty Advisor of the Year for the College of Science and received the Robins Award for Faculty Advisor of the Year. Lyle McNeal, professor of Animal, Dairy, and Veterinary Sciences, was honored as a 2007 Carnegie Professor of the Year. Fred Provenza, professor of Wildland Resources, received the D. Wynne Thorpe Career Research Award. Robert Schmidt, Service Learning Coordinator and Associate Professor was honored as Advisor of the Year for the College of Natural Resources. Terry Messmer, professor of Wildland Resources, was selected as the Graduate Mentor of the Year for the College of Natural Resources and also received the Outstanding Graduate Mentor Award. Alvan Hengge, professor of Chemistry and Biochemistry, was honored as the Undergraduate Research Mentor of the Year in the College of Science. James Powell, Honors math instructor and professor of Math, was honored as the Faculty Researcher of the Year in the College of Science. Keith Mott, professor of Biology, was selected as Faculty Teacher of the Year in the College of Science. He also received the Teaching Excellence Award for the College of Science. Christine CooperRompato, assistant professor of English, received the Teaching Excellence Award for the College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences and was also selected as Overall Teacher of the Year for the College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences as well as Teacher of the Year, Humanities Division, for the College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences. Alexa Sand, assistant professor of Art, was honored as Teacher of the Year, Arts Division, for the College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences. Basudeb Biswas, professor of Economics, was honored as Distinguished Professor of the Year for the College of Agriculture. John Morrey, research professor in Animal, Dairy, and Veterinary Sciences, was selected as Researcher of the Year for the College of Agriculture. Arthur Caplan, associate professor of Economics, was selected as Researcher of the Year for the Jon M. Huntsman School of Business. Kenneth Bartkus, professor of Business Administration, was honored as Undergraduate Research Mentor of the Year for the Jon M. Huntsman School of Business.
Wenbin Yu, assistant professor of Mechanical and Electrical Engineering, was selected as Researcher of the Year for the College of Engineering.
Tim Taylor, principal lecturer of Biological and Irrigation Engineering, was selected as Teacher of the Year for the College of Engineering.
Sarah Gordon, associate professor of French and instructor of Honors depth social science (Food and Culture) was honored as Faculty Advisor of the Year for the College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences.
Maria Cordero, associate professor of Spanish, was honored as Humanist of the Year in the College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences.
John Engler, English department and instructor of Honors Connections and English Honors, was selected as Lecturer of the Year.
John Stark and Timothy Gilbertson, professors of Biology; and Lance Seefeldt, professor of Chemistry and Biochemistry, received the Faculty Library Award.
Kathy Bayn, advisor in Engineering, received the Robins Award for Professional Advisor of the Year.

Selected Student Highlights
Four honors students were named Governor’s Scholars. This is an award recently created by Governor Jon Huntsman, Jr. to recognize and encourage the “best and brightest” of Utah’s college students.

(students listed)
18 honors students received Undergraduate Research and Creative Opportunity (URCO) Grants.
16 honors students presented at the Utah Conference on Undergraduate Research.
12 honors students received the prestigious A-Pin for fall 2007.
7 honors students presented at the National Conference on Undergraduate Research.
Jodie Barker-Tvedtnes was one of three students nationally to be awarded an Outstanding Student Award for Undergraduate Research by the Society of Physics Students. She will be an SPS guest to present her research at the 2008 International Conference of Physics Students in Cracow, Poland.
Luke Hanks, mechanical and aerospace engineering major, received a prestigious scholarship from the Science, Mathematics and Research for Transformation Program (SMART). The scholarship will total slightly more than $75,000 and be distributed over a three-year period.

(A long list student recipients of scholarship and awards are listed here.)

DATA:
I. Curricular Activities, 2007-2008
II. Extracurricular Activities, 2007-2008
III. Appendices
I. CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, 20072008
A. Students in the Honors Program
Entering 1st-years  
Fall 2007  327  
Fall 2006  424  
Fall 2005  350  
Fall 2004  354  
Fall 2003  271  

Students in Honors Courses  
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<th>Fall contracts</th>
<th>Spring Classes</th>
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<td>2003-2004</td>
<td>372</td>
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</tbody>
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B. Honors Graduates  
Number of students who received honors degrees in 2007-2008: 31  
The names of 2007-2008 honors degree recipients and the titles of their senior honors theses/projects appear in Appendix A.

C. Honors Courses  
Note on compensation: The honors program compensates courses listed with the HONR prefix, plus 2-4 sections of ENGL 2010H, and three math courses per year: Math 1220H, Math 2250H, Math 2210H. In the 1996-1997 academic year, the program began an effort to also compensate faculty for working with honors students in upper-division course work and on their theses/projects.  
A list of 2007-2008 honors courses and enrollment statistics appear in the Appendix B of this report.

D. Honors Degrees Offered  
Students work towards one of three honors degrees. These degrees now appear both on the students’ transcripts and their diplomas.  
University Honors: 27 total honors credits, comprising lower-division honors credits from the program’s approved course list plus completion of an individually designed upper division plan (including a senior thesis/project).  
Honors in University Studies with Department Honors: 27 total honors credits, comprising lower-division honors credits from the program’s approved course list plus completion of an approved upper-division Department Honors Plan (including a senior thesis/project).  
Department Honors: 15 total honors credits in an approved upper-division Department Honors Plan (including a senior thesis/project).
E. Faculty Participating in Honors

USU faculty participate in the honors program in a number of ways:
• teaching compensated lower-division honors classes;
• working with upper-division honors students in upper-division classes on a contract basis;
• serving on the honors advisory board (Appendix);
• serving as department honors advisors – guiding upper-division students on their department honors plans (see list in Appendix);
• advising students in their senior honors projects/theses;
• serving on Rhodes, Goldwater, and Truman campus committees and advising students in the completion of their applications.
• Appendix C lists faculty teaching honors courses; serving as thesis/project advisors;
• working with honors students on a contract basis; serving on the honors advisory board and as department honors advisors.

II. EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, 2007-2008

A. Fellowships, Scholarships, and Research Programs National and International Scholarship Programs:

The Honors Program serves as an informational and processing center for national scholarship programs, including Rhodes Scholarships, British Marshall Scholarships, Harry S. Truman, Morris K. Udall, and Barry Goldwater Scholarships. Starting fall 2005, the Fulbright Graduate Fellowships are administered through the office of the Vice Provost for International Programs.

We invite faculty to nominate exceptional students for these awards or to encourage qualified students to apply. Our office provides materials outlining each award. In addition, our files contain the application forms students will need for the various programs. The Truman and Goldwater programs provide awards for undergraduates nominated in their sophomore or junior years. Other programs are designed for students proceeding into graduate school.

2007-2008 was a good year for prestigious fellowships. For the first time at USU, all four of our Goldwater nominees were recognized by the Goldwater Foundation: Jodi Tvetndes (Physics) and Tamara Jeppson (Geology/Physics) were awarded Goldwater Scholarships, while Cody Tramp (Biology) and Sydney Chamberlain (Physics) received Honorable Mentions.

Two students applied for the Marshall Scholarship and one, Tamma Birningham, received an interview in Los Angeles. One student applied for the Rhodes Scholarship.

Two students applied for the Jack Kent Cooke Scholarship.
Luke Hanks received a scholarship from the Science, Mathematics and Research for Transformation Program. The scholarship will total slightly more than $75,000 and be distributed over a three-year period.

Honors Program Scholarships
Through generous donations, the honors program has established several endowed scholarships. The Helen B. Cannon and Lawrence O. Cannon Awards carry a monetary stipend of $500 at the time of the award and $500 upon the student’s graduation.
(Scholarship and students listed here)

The Honors Study Abroad Scholarship, supported by Art and Mary Heers, provides funds for students to pursue opportunities abroad. This year’s winners traveled to Malta, Brazil, Italy, and China.

B. Last Lecture
The 33rd Annual “Last Lecture” was given by Dr. David Peak, a professor in the Department of Physics. He was chosen by USU honors students to give, what for him, would be his last lecture to students and his faculty peers. Dr. Peak, who has had years of experience at USU, has made a noteworthy contribution to the education and mentorship of undergraduates—in the classroom, the lab, and in the field. Hear his lecture, “Complexity and the New Academy: They Put My Office Where?” by visiting honors.usu.edu.

V. APPENDICES
Appendix A
2007-2008
Recipients of Honors Degrees and Titles of Honors Senior Projects
(students are listed by name and project title)
College of Agriculture:
College of Business:
College of Education and Human Services:
College of Engineering
College of Science

Appendix B. 2007-2008
Honors Courses
Fall and Spring 2007-2008 (courses and instructors listed here)
Appendix C
2007-2008
Department Honors Advisors
(faculty and department/college listed here)

Faculty Teaching Honors Courses, Working with Students on a Contract Basis and Serving as Thesis/Project Advisor
193 total faculty, up from 150 last year, and representing 25.7% of instructional faculty, up from 20% last year. (list of names here)
APPENDIX E. CHECKLIST FOR AN EXTERNAL REVIEW

This checklist has been developed by the authors, with the assistance of the honors colleagues acknowledged in the Introduction, to guide honors program and honors college deans and directors in preparing for an external review.

a. A self-study or planning document including a summary of the history of the honors program or honors college.

b. Materials to be provided in advance of the visit as part of self-study/planning document or as separate documents:
   a. College (university) catalog
   b. Mission statement of the honors program/college
   c. Honors program (honors college) strategic plan [if applicable]
   d. Position descriptions for honors director (dean) and honors office staff
   e. Recruiting materials for the college (university) in general and the honors program (honors college) in particular
   f. Honors program (honors college) budget for the past five years, including salary for the honors director and an average salary figure for assistant or associate deans and directors across campus
   g. Honors program (honors college) policies and procedures documents
   h. Honors program (honors college) annual reports for past five years
   i. Listing and description of honors courses offered in past five years (if not included in annual reports)
   j. Longitudinal data of honors course offerings and student participation in the honors program (honors college) over the past five years (if not included in annual reports)
   k. Participation in NCHC and regional honors council activities (if not included in annual reports)
   l. Evaluation materials used for honors classes
   m. Evaluation materials used for honors advising
   n. Honors program (honors college) assessment approaches and results
   o. Information about any scholarships or scholarship programs dedicated to honors students
   p. Information about links between honors and overseas programs
   q. Guidelines or manuals for thesis or creative projects
   r. Information about any privileges (early enrollment, etc.) that honors students receive
   s. Information on role, if any, of the honors program (honors college) in promotion and tenure decisions
   t. Structure and administrative policies of the student honors organization
   u. Facilities of the honors program (honors college)
c. Conversations while on campus
   a. College (university) president and the chief academic officer of the college (university)
   b. Vice provost for academic affairs
   c. Deans of undergraduate colleges involved with honors program (honors college)
   d. Honors program (honors college) director (dean)
   e. Honors program (honors college) office staff
   f. Open meeting with faculty for honors courses [limited to these faculty]
   g. Faculty and student honors committees
   h. Open meeting with honors students [limited to these students]
   i. Others thought appropriate by those responsible for the review process
APPENDIX F

SAMPLE HONORS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES DOCUMENT

This policies and procedures document from The Honors College at Oklahoma State University is provided by way of example only.

Section 1 — The Honors College Mission Statement

Section 2 — Honors Councils
  2-1. University Honors Council
  2-2. University Student Honors Council

Section 3 — Admission, Continued Eligibility, and General Honors Award Requirements
  3-1. Admission
    3-1-1. Entering Freshmen by ACT (SAT) Score and High School Grade Point Average
    3-1-2. Entering Freshmen by Petition
    3-1-3. Transfer and Continuing Students
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Section 1. THE HONORS COLLEGE MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of The Honors College is to provide an enhanced and supportive learning environment for outstanding undergraduate students. This goal will be accomplished through the active involvement of faculty noted for their excellence in undergraduate teaching in small honors sections of regular catalog courses, interdisciplinary honors courses, special honors seminars, and opportunities for research. The Honors College shall be a unit with its own budget with a director who is administratively responsible
to the provost through the associate vice president for academic affairs. The director shall work in
close cooperation with a faculty university honors council and a university student honors council to
establish and review policies and procedures for The Honors College. Consistent with these policies
and procedures, The Honors College shall:

(1) disseminate information about honors requirements, benefits, awards, and honors college degree
recipients to prospective Honors students and other interested publics through direct communication,
university publications, teleconferencing, and the news media;

(2) admit students to The Honors College, maintain records concerning their continued eligibility for
The Honors College and their progress toward honors college awards, and certify their honors college
awards and honors college degrees to the Registrar;

(3) provide special honors academic advising through The Honors College Office by faculty and
professional staff who themselves have earned Honors Program or Honors College degrees;

(4) encourage and coordinate the creation and scheduling of honors sections of courses taught in the
undergraduate colleges;

(5) develop, schedule, and budget interdisciplinary honors courses and special honors seminars using
the HONR course prefix;

(6) promote honors students’ involvement in research which will culminate in a senior honors thesis or
project and public presentation of the research;

(7) facilitate communication within the OSU community among students, faculty, staff, and
administration with regard to honors matters;

(8) arrange special programs and events for the larger university community;

(9) equip and maintain The Honors College Study Lounge and computer facility in the Edmon Low
Library; and

(10) participate fully in the activities of the National Collegiate Honors Council and the Great Plains
Honors Council.

Section 2 — HONORS COUNCILS

2-1. University Honors Council. The University Honors Council shall be composed of the Director
of The Honors College (ex officio chair of the Council) and seven faculty members whose budgeted
assignment includes at least 0.25 FTE undergraduate instruction and who have a demonstrated interest
in The Honors College, appointed by the provost upon recommendation by the deans of the OSU
undergraduate colleges, as follows: Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (1), Arts & Sciences
(2), Business Administration (1), Education (1), Engineering, Architecture and Technology (1), and
Human Environmental Sciences (1). Members shall serve a term of three calendar years, beginning in
the fall semester, and they may be reappointed.

Terms shall expire at the beginning of the fall semester of the years indicated below and every three
years thereafter: Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, 1991; Arts & Sciences (#1), 1992; Arts

The University Honors Council shall be chaired by the director of The Honors College and shall: (1)
recommend to the provost policy concerning course requirements and other criteria for honors college
awards; (2) represent the interests and concerns of faculty in the members' respective colleges
concerning The Honors College; (3) represent The Honors College to the faculty of the members'
respective colleges and serve as contact points for faculty; (4) serve, along with two members of the
University Student Honors Council, as a committee to which students may appeal, in extraordinary
circumstances, to be permitted to continue enrollment in honors courses even though their cumulative
grade point averages do not meet normal requirements under honors college policy; (5) provide
recommendations to the director on any special situations concerning admission, etc., which may be
referred to it by the director; (6) review faculty proposals for honors seminars and other special honors
courses which are to be funded through The Honors College; and (7) encourage and support faculty
members seeking external funding through grants and contracts related to honors college development.

2-2. UNIVERSITY STUDENT HONORS COUNCIL. The University Student Honors Council
shall be composed of seven undergraduate students active in The Honors College, appointed by the
Director of The Honors College upon recommendation by the Deans of the OSU undergraduate
colleges, as follows: Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (1), Arts & Sciences (2), Business
Administration (1), Education (1), Engineering, Architecture and Technology (1), and Human
Environmental Sciences (1). Members shall serve a term of one calendar year, beginning in the fall
semester, and they may be reappointed. The University Student Honors Council shall elect its own
chairperson at the first meeting of the fall semester.

To serve on the University Student Honors Council, a student must have completed a minimum of
fifteen honors credit hours prior to appointment, have Oklahoma State University and cumulative
grade point averages of at least 3.50, and continue to be an active participant in The Honors College as
defined in Section 10-1, below. It is recommended that deans nominate students who have completed
the requirements for the General Honors Award or, if such students are not available, students who will
complete the requirements for the General Honors Award at the conclusion of the semester in which
they begin service on the University Student Honors Council.

The University Student Honors Council shall: (1) represent the interests and concerns of honors
students in the members' respective colleges; (2) represent The Honors College to the students of the
members' respective colleges and serve as a contact point for student concerns with regard to The
Honors College; (3) meet, as appropriate, in joint session with the faculty University Honors Council
to discuss matters of common concern; (4) provide two of its members to serve with members of the
University Honors Council as a committee to which students may appeal, in extraordinary
circumstances, to be permitted to continue enrollment in honors courses even though their grade point
averages do not meet normal requirements under honors College policy; (5) recommend and plan
special events for honors college students; and (6) make recommendations to the director on any other
matters concerning The Honors College.

Section 3 — ADMISSION, CONTINUED ELIGIBILITY, AND GENERAL HONORS AWARD
REQUIREMENTS

3-1. ADMISSION. Requirements for admission to The Honors College shall be as follows, with the
goal of 950 active participants:

3-1-1. Entering Freshmen by ACT (SAT) Score and High School Grade Point Average.

Automatic Admission: Entering freshmen whose applications are postmarked or submitted
electronically by February 1 prior to the fall semester in which they enter Oklahoma State University
shall automatically be eligible by meeting the following criteria: a composite score of 27 or higher on
the ACT (or comparable SAT score) and a high school grade point average of 3.75 or higher.
(Weighted high school grade point averages certified by high schools may be used for this purpose.)

Conditional Admission: Entering freshmen whose applications are postmarked or submitted
electronically after February 1 prior to the fall semester in which they enter Oklahoma State University
who meet the ACT and grade point average criteria above shall be considered for admission on a
rolling basis and be eligible for admission dependent upon a projection of the number of automatically-
accepted freshmen likely actually to enter the university, enrollment dates actually scheduled for
automatically-accepted freshmen, and anticipated number of continuing honors college students in order to reach a total of 950 active participants in the fall semester. Conditionally-admitted freshmen may enroll for honors classes during the summer enrollment period as long as space is available.

3-1-2. Entering Freshmen by Petition.

Entering freshmen who fall just short of the criteria specified above may submit a written petition for admission to The Honors College, using a form provided by the college at the request of the student. The director shall review the petition and supporting documents provided by the student and, in consultation with a University Honors Council faculty representative from the undergraduate college in which the student proposes to major (if a faculty representative is available), determine whether the student appears to demonstrate high potential for success in The Honors College and merit admission under this section. The number of new freshmen entering by petition shall be limited to no more than approximately five percent of the number of entering freshmen admitted to The Honors College.

3-1-3. Transfer and Continuing Students. Transfer and continuing students who have earned at least seven (7) college credit hours will be eligible on the basis of a cumulative college grade point average which meets eligibility requirements for honors course enrollment. [See §3-2-1.] Students other than new freshmen who do not meet the OSU and cumulative grade point average requirements because of grades earned at least two years prior to application for admission to the college may petition for provisional admission on the basis of a written OSU faculty recommendation and at least one semester’s academic performance at Oklahoma State University which shows to the Eligibility Appeals Committee (see Section 3-2-3) that it is highly probable that the student’s OSU and cumulative (not “retention”) grade point averages will be at least 3.50 at the time of graduation.

3-2. ELIGIBILITY FOR CONTINUED ENROLLMENT IN HONORS COURSES

3-2-1. GRADE POINT AVERAGES REQUIRED. To be eligible for continued enrollment in honors courses (defined as courses, sections, seminars, etc., with section numbers in the 700-range), students must maintain the following minimum OSU and cumulative (not “retention”) grade point averages:

1. Fewer than 60 hours earned 3.30 (See note below.)
2. 60 - 93 hours earned 3.40
3. 94 hours earned and thereafter 3.50

Note: Freshmen failing to earn at least 3.00 OSU and cumulative grade point averages during the fall semester shall not be eligible for continued enrollment in honors courses in the subsequent spring semester unless truly extraordinary circumstances justify approval of continuation in The Honors College by the appeals committee.

3-2-2. REVIEW OF RECORDS AND NOTIFICATION OF INELIGIBLE STUDENTS. At the end of the fall semester, the director of The Honors College shall review the academic records of all freshmen and all students granted one-semester appeal eligibility. [See §3-2-3.] In the case of freshmen who failed to achieve Oklahoma State University and cumulative grade point averages of at least 3.00, and in the case of students granted one-semester appeal eligibility who failed to achieve the cumulative grade point average required for continued enrollment in honors courses, the director shall notify the students by mail at their local and permanent addresses in the files of The Honors College that they are no longer eligible for honors course enrollment and that they will be dropped from their spring semester honors courses unless truly extraordinary circumstances have contributed to their failing to maintain the minimum grade point average required at the end of the fall semester. The director also shall notify the Registrar to drop these ineligible students from the class rolls for spring semester honors sections in which they had enrolled unless an electronic appeal is filed by the second day university offices are open after December-January holidays.
At the end of the spring semester, the director of The Honors College shall review the academic records of all students in the files of The Honors College to determine whether they meet the Oklahoma State University and cumulative grade point average criteria for continuation in the College. If it is determined that ineligible students have pre-enrolled for honors courses for the fall semester, the director shall notify those students by mail addressed to their local and permanent addresses on file with The Honors College that they are no longer eligible and that they must arrange to drop the honors courses within fourteen days. If the students fail to make the schedule changes within the time period specified, the Director shall notify the Registrar to drop the ineligible students from the class rolls of the honors courses for the fall semester.

3-2-3. APPEALS COMMITTEE FOR EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES. At the time students are notified of their ineligibility to continue in the honors courses for the fall semester, they also shall be notified that if their ineligibility is the result of truly extraordinary circumstances they may petition a faculty-student committee made up of members of the University Honors Council (with the Director not voting) and two students from the University Student Honors Council (if they are available) for an exception to the Oklahoma State University and cumulative grade point average requirement for continuation in honors courses. The student must notify the director of The Honors College (in writing, in person, or by telephone) of his or her intention to petition for an exception within the fourteen-day period specified in the ineligibility letter. (Upon receipt of such notification, the director shall refrain from directing the Registrar to drop the student from honors courses for the fall semester until the committee has reached a decision.) The student shall then transmit to the director of The Honors College a written statement outlining his or her extenuating circumstances in time to be received within seven days from the end of the fourteen-day period specified above. The committee shall consider the petition, and a majority of those voting shall be necessary to grant an exception to the cumulative grade point requirement. The committee, at its discretion, may grant a one-semester exception or a two-semester exception to the OSU and cumulative grade point requirements for continued enrollment in honors courses. The director shall notify the student of the committee’s decision and, if an exception is not granted, shall direct the Registrar to drop the student from class rolls of fall semester honors courses in which the student had pre-enrolled. (In the case of appeals by freshmen at the end of the fall semester, appeals specifying in detail the truly extraordinary circumstances must be sent by e-mail to the director of the Honors College by 5:00 p.m. on the second day university offices are open after December-January holidays.)

3-2-4. REGAINING HONORS COLLEGE ELIGIBILITY. If a student becomes ineligible for continuation in The Honors College and later regains eligibility by improved OSU and cumulative grade point averages, the student may reenter The Honors College and enroll in honors courses which are available at that time. The student must provide The Honors College office with official verification of the additional work which will restore the OSU and cumulative grade point averages to the level required for eligibility. (In the case of work appearing on the student’s OSU transcript, such verification may be obtained electronically in The Honors College Office.)

3-2-5. VIOLATION OF UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY (F! GRADE ON TRANSCRIPT)

3-2-5-1. HONORS COLLEGE ELIGIBILITY. No student who receives a grade of F! as a result of violation of the university’s academic integrity policy shall be eligible to continue in The Honors College until the ! has been removed from his or her transcript. It shall be the responsibility of the student to notify The Honors College when the ! has been removed.

3-2-5-2. HONORS COLLEGE AWARDS AND DEGREE. No student who receives a grade of F! as a result of violation of the university’s academic integrity policy shall receive any honors college award or honors college degree until the ! has been removed from his or her transcript.

(A) If an F! is recorded for a course in the same semester in which an honors college award or honors college degree is certified to the Registrar, that honors college award or honors college degree shall be removed from the student’s transcript.
3-3. REQUIREMENTS FOR GENERAL HONORS AWARD (CERTIFICATE & TRANSCRIPT ENTRY) — 21 HOURS

3-3-1. BREADTH REQUIREMENTS. Twelve hours of honors credit (grade of “A” or “B”) with a minimum of three credit hours per area from four of the following areas:

1. Courses Required of All OSU Students (English Composition, American History, American Government)
2. Humanities (courses designated “H”)
4. Natural Sciences (courses designated “N”)
5. Social Sciences (Courses designated “S”)
6. Other Courses with Honors Credit (which are not included in areas 1 through 5, above)

In the case of students for whom, because of AP or CLEP credit, it is impossible to earn honors credit in four breadth requirement areas without adding hours to their undergraduate degree requirements, the Director of The Honors College may waive one (1) of the four areas of the breadth requirement.

3-3-2. HONORS SEMINAR/INTERDISCIPLINARY HONORS COURSES. A minimum of two honors seminars or interdisciplinary honors courses with a minimum of four credit hours in honors seminars or interdisciplinary honors courses (which also may be used to satisfy a portion of the breadth requirement), grade of “A” or “B” required.

3-3-3. ADDITIONAL HONORS HOURS. Sufficient additional hours of honors credit (grade of “A” or “B” required), including at least three honors credit hours in upper-division work, to reach total of twenty-one credit hours. [Note: This amendment becomes effective for freshmen matriculating in fall, 2008, and thereafter.]

3-3-4. GRADE POINT AVERAGE. At the time of completion of the requirements for the general honors award, a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.50 must have been maintained. In the case of students who have transferred hours from other institutions, a 3.50 grade point average in all hours earned at Oklahoma State University must have been maintained as well as a cumulative grade point average of 3.50 for all college work undertaken.

3-3-5. HONORS CONTRACTS. Under normal circumstances, no more than nine credit hours within the 21-hour general honors requirement may be earned by honors contract. In the case that scheduling conflicts make it impossible for a student to meet the 12-hour minimum in honors sections, courses, or seminars (all designated by section numbers in the 700-range), upon recommendation of the student's academic college the director of The Honors College may permit an additional three hours of honors contract credit. Honors contracts may not be utilized by transfer students to meet the minimum of six hours of honors credit earned at Oklahoma State University for the general honors award. [See §3-3-6, below.]

3-3-6. TRANSFER HONORS CREDIT. In meeting the breadth requirements and honors seminar/interdisciplinary honors course requirements for the general honors award, students who have transferred from other institutions may utilize a maximum of fifteen (15) transfer honors credit hours, including hours graded “P,” “S,” etc., when letter grades are not awarded in these honors courses at the institution from which the credit has been transferred. The remaining six (6) honors credit hours must
be earned at Oklahoma State University through honors sections or honors seminars/interdisciplinary courses. Honors contracts may not be used for these six hours.

3-3-7. OSLEP CREDIT. With the approval of the director of The Honors College, up to four (4) credit hours graded pass (“P”) earned through the Oklahoma Scholarship-Leadership Enrichment Program (OSLEP) may be utilized toward the general honors award. The director shall designate the area(s) in which such hours may be counted on a case-by-case basis.

3-3-8. SPECIAL EXPERIENCE OPTION. Students who complete (1) a study abroad experience, (2) an off-campus internship, or (3) a cooperative education semester may use one of these experiences in lieu of one of the four distribution areas for the general honors award. If academic credit is granted for the experience, a grade of “A” or “B” shall be required, unless the experience is graded pass-fail, in which case a grade of “pass” shall be required. If academic credit is granted for the experience, the student may be exempted from an equal number of general honors award hours, up to a maximum of three (3) credit hours. If academic credit is not granted for the experience, the student shall petition for honors college approval in advance of the experience and then provide documentation of successful completion of the experience.

3-3-9. CERTIFICATE AND TRANSCRIPT ENTRY. Upon the student's completion of the curricular requirements for the general honors award with the necessary grade point average, the director of The Honors College shall prepare an appropriate certificate of award and notify the Registrar that the student is entitled to the “general honors award” transcript entry.

Section 4 — COLLEGE OR DEPARTMENTAL HONORS AWARD REQUIREMENTS (TRANSCRIPT ENTRY) — 12 HOURS

4-1. COLLEGE OR DEPARTMENTAL HONORS AWARD REQUIREMENTS. A college may elect to utilize a single college honors award or separate departmental honors awards subject to college-established minimum requirements, but there shall not be a combination of a college honors award and departmental honors awards within a single college. Criteria for admission to college/departmental honors programs and for continuation in those programs shall be established by the academic colleges, subject to the general requirement of 3.50 OSU and cumulative grade point averages and a minimum of twelve hours of upper-division honors credit including a creative component. In the case of students who have transferred hours from other institutions, a 3.50 grade point average in all hours earned at Oklahoma State University must have been maintained as well as a cumulative grade point average of 3.50 for all college work undertaken. [See “Top Ten Percent” alternative calculation in Section 4-4, below.]

4-1-1. INTERNATIONAL STUDY OPTION CREDIT TOWARD COLLEGE OR DEPARTMENTAL HONORS AWARD. With the advance approval of the student’s college, up to three (3) upper-division credit hours earned using the international study option (Section 5-6, below) may be counted toward the college or departmental honors award without honors credit being required in these credit hours. These credit hours may not also be used for the waiver provision of Section 5-6, but additional credit hours may be used for that waiver provision.

4-2. DOUBLE MAJORS WITH HONORS AWARDS IN BOTH MAJORS. In the case of students seeking to earn a double major with honors (any combination of departmental and/or college honors awards), the student shall fulfill the requirements for both awards (including a creative component in each) and shall earn a minimum of six (6) upper-division honors credit hours beyond the requirement for the college honors award or departmental honors award for the student's first major. The student may count a particular course toward the honors requirements in both majors if the course may be counted in the curricular requirements for both majors, subject to the requirement that six additional honors hours must be earned beyond the first major's honors requirements.

4-3. GRADE REQUIRED FOR HONORS CREDIT TOWARD AWARD. A grade of “A” or “B” shall be required in all work counting toward college or departmental honors awards.
4-4. CUMULATIVE AND OSU GRADE POINT AVERAGES FOR AWARD. At the time of completion of the requirements for the college or departmental honors award, a minimum 3.50 cumulative grade point average must have been maintained. In the case of students who have transferred hours from other institutions, a 3.50 grade point average in all hours earned at Oklahoma State University must have been maintained as well as a cumulative grade point average of 3.50 for all college work undertaken.

A college may, at its option, adopt a “top ten percent” calculation for the college or departmental honors award (for the entire college or for specified degree programs) to provide an alternative to the grade point average criteria specified in Sections 4-1 and 4-4, subject to a 3.25 OSU and cumulative grade point average minimum. Such a “top ten percent” policy shall be specified in writing by the college, approved by the dean, and submitted to the director of The Honors College. It shall be the responsibility of the college to determine which, if any, students qualify for the college or departmental honors award under the alternative calculation and to notify the director of The Honors College of the names and class rank of students meeting the criteria established by the college.

4-5. APPLICATION FOR COLLEGE OR DEPARTMENTAL HONORS AWARD. Candidates for the departmental or college honors award shall file an award application form, as specified by The Honors College office, before the beginning of their final semester or summer session. The award application form shall contain a working title for the senior honors thesis, report, or creative component as well as the names of two faculty members who will serve as the student’s committee. Prior to submission to The Honors College office, the award application shall be approved and signed by the faculty member responsible for directing the senior honors thesis, report, or creative component and by the honors director of the student’s college. If credit hours earned under the international study option are counted toward the college or departmental honors award, they shall be specified as such on the award application form.

4-6. DEFENSE OF CREATIVE COMPONENT. The senior honors thesis, report, or other creative component shall be defended before a minimum of two members of the faculty who have been selected to serve as the student’s committee by the department or college.

4-7. COLLOQUIUM PRESENTATION. Candidates for the departmental or college honors award shall make a public presentation of a summary of their thesis, project, or creative component in a colloquium sponsored by a department, one of the undergraduate colleges, or The Honors College. The method of presentation shall be that deemed appropriate for the discipline by the faculty members who serve on the student’s committee. Only in circumstances in which the dean or honors director of a college petitions the director of the honors college for a waiver of the presentation requirement may a student be excused from this requirement.

4-8. FILING OF APPROVED COPY AND ABSTRACT. Candidates for the departmental or college honors award shall file one approved copy of the thesis, report, or other creative component and a one-page abstract of findings with The Honors College office. In addition to the text, in a style and format appropriate to the discipline, the copy filed shall include an approval page as specified by The Honors College which shall contain the original signatures of at least two faculty members and of the honors director of the student’s college along with the date of the successful defense of the senior honors thesis, report, or creative component. The deadline for filing the approved copy of the thesis, report, or other creative component shall be the last day on which grades may be reported for the semester or summer session.

4-8-1. INCLUSION IN ELECTRONIC DATABASE. At the written request of the student (and with the written recommendation of the faculty thesis director and the honors director of the student’s college), the student’s thesis, report, or other creative component along with the student’s one-page abstract and the approval signatures page may be provided to the Edmon Low Library for inclusion in the electronic database of theses. In such case, the student shall provide electronic copies of the thesis, report, or other creative component and of the one-page abstract to The Honors College. The Honors
College shall provide a form with which the student may make such a request and on which the faculty thesis director and the honors director of the student’s college may indicate their recommendation for inclusion on the electronic database of theses.

4-9. TRANSCRIPT ENTRY. Upon completion of the college or departmental honors award, a transcript entry shall be made indicating “College Honors in [College]” or “Departmental Honors in [Department].”

Section 5 — THE HONORS COLLEGE DEGREE (TRANSCRIPT ENTRY, SPECIAL DIPLOMA) — 39 HOURS

5-1. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE HONORS COLLEGE DEGREE. A student who completes a minimum of thirty-nine (39) honors credit hours with a grade of “A” or “B,” including the requirements for both the general honors award and for the college or departmental honors award in his or her academic major with a minimum 3.50 cumulative grade point average at the time of graduation, shall receive The Honors College degree. A special honors diploma shall be prepared, a transcript entry showing “Honors College Degree” shall be made, and the interpretative information provided by the Registrar along with transcripts shall indicate that an honors college degree is earned by meeting the curricular requirements of The Honors College as well as the requirements for the bachelor’s degree. In the case of students who have transferred hours from other institutions, a 3.50 grade point average in all hours earned at Oklahoma State University must have been maintained as well as a cumulative grade point average of 3.50 for all college work undertaken.

5-1-1. Special Experience Option Credit Toward Honors College Degree. Students who are exempted from general honors award credit hour requirements under the special experience option (Section 3-3-8, above) are exempted from the same number of credit hours for the Honors College degree requirement.

5-1-2. INTERNATIONAL STUDY OPTION CREDIT TOWARD HONORS COLLEGE DEGREE. Up to three (3) upper-division credit hours earned using the international study option (Section 5-6, below) and counted toward the college or departmental honors award (Section 4-1-1, above) may be counted toward the Honors College degree without honors credit being required in these credit hours. These credit hours may not also be used for the waiver provision of Section 5-6, but additional international study option credit hours may be used for that waiver provision.

5-2. GRADES REQUIRED IN HONORS WORK. A grade of “A” or “B” shall be required in all work counting toward the honors college degree.

5-3. TOP TEN PERCENT OPTION FOR COLLEGE. A college may, at its option, adopt a “top ten percent” calculation for the honors college degree (for the entire college or for specified degree programs) to provide an alternative to the grade point average criteria specified above, subject to a 3.25 OSU and cumulative grade point average minimum. Such a “top ten percent” policy shall be specified in writing by the college, approved by the dean, and submitted to the director of the honors college. It shall be the responsibility of the college to determine which, if any, students qualify for the honors college degree under the alternative calculation and to notify the director of the honors college of the names and class rank of students meeting the criteria established by the college.

5-4. HOODS FOR HONORS COLLEGE DEGREE CANDIDATES. Colleges may elect to hood candidates for the honors college degree at their respective convocation exercises. If they elect to do so, only those students who are candidates for the honors college degree shall receive the undergraduate hood. (Colleges wishing to recognize students who have earned the departmental or college honors award at their convocation exercises may do so, but some form of recognition clearly distinct from the honors hood shall be employed.) The director of the honors college shall transmit to the Student Union bookstore a list of candidates for the honors college degree at a point near the middle of the semester.
5-5. COMMUNITY SERVICE OPTION. During the sophomore and junior years, an honors student with OSU and cumulative grade point averages of at least 3.50 may undertake community service with an agency or organization in Stillwater or its immediate vicinity to earn waiver of one (1) to three (3) of the thirty-nine (39) honors credit hours required for the honors college degree (not including any honors hours used toward the general honors award or the departmental or college honors award). Such community service must be undertaken while the student is enrolled on campus. A minimum of fifteen (15) hours of verified satisfactory community service shall be required for each honors credit hour to be waived, and no more than thirty (30) hours of community service may be counted from any one semester or summer session. Community service hours shall be verified by a supervisor from the agency or organization on a form approved by the Oklahoma State University Volunteer Center or by The Honors College. With the exception of tutoring performed through University Academic Services, on-campus activities shall not be considered community service under this option. The student must certify to The Honors College that the community service hours are not being used for any course, program, requirement, or assignment on or off campus other than The Honors College’s community service option under this section. Approval from the director of The Honors College must be obtained before beginning volunteer service with an agency or organization that is not approved through the Oklahoma State University Volunteer Center. Freshmen and seniors are not eligible for this option.

5-6. INTERNATIONAL STUDY OPTION. Honors students are encouraged by The Honors College to participate in international study. An OSU honors student with 3.50 OSU and cumulative grade point averages may earn a waiver of up to six of the six honors credit hours required for the honors college degree beyond the general honors award and the departmental or college honors award requirements.

This waiver will be awarded for college credit earned while participating in the Reciprocal Exchange Program through the OSU Study Abroad Office. One honors hour will be waived for each three (3) semester credit hours earned (with grade of “A” or “B,” or the equivalent grades in the institution attended) that count toward OSU graduation requirements. Courses completed with grades of “P,” “S,” etc. will be acceptable for this option when regular letter grades are not awarded in the courses at the international institution from which the credit has been transferred. The student is obligated to provide a detailed explanation of the grading system when applying for a waiver under this section.

Permission to make use of this option must be obtained in advance from the director of The Honors College or the University Honors Council.

Students wishing to earn a waiver under this Section by participating in international study other than through the Reciprocal Exchange Program administered by the OSU Study Abroad Office must petition the director of the Honors College or the University Honors Council in advance to do so and must demonstrate that the educational experience will be the equivalent of that offered through the Reciprocal Exchange Program in terms of classes at an international institution taught by that institution’s faculty and with that institution’s students.

5-7. AP and CLEP Credit Option. Students who earn credit hours by examination through the College Board’s Advanced Placement Program (AP) with a score of four (4) or higher or an equivalent score on the College Level Examination Program (CLEP) may earn waiver of one (1) to six (6) of the thirty-nine (39) honors credit hours required for the honors college degree (not including any honors hours used toward the general honors award or the departmental or college honors award). One honors hour will be waived for each three (3) semester credit hours earned by AP and/or CLEP. This option applies only for courses that may be counted for credit toward the student’s undergraduate degree.

5-8. INTERNATIONAL STUDY ENDORSEMENT TO HONORS COLLEGE DEGREE. Honors college students may earn the “Honors College Degree with International Study Emphasis” transcript entry and diploma notation by meeting one of the following sets of requirements:
(1) Completion of the requirements for one of the following academic minors with a minimum of three (3) credit hours earned in a study-abroad experience (which may be in an independent-study format): African American Studies, American Indian Studies, Ancient and Medieval Studies, Asian Studies, Central Asian Studies, Classical Studies, Foreign Language, Hispanic and Latin American Studies, Russian and East European Studies, International Business, or International Studies. The Honors College shall provide appropriate forms for this option.

(2) Completion of an international study program approved by The Honors College that includes a minimum of eighteen (18) credit hours of related courses, at least six of which must meet the requirements of the international study option (Section 5-6, above). The Honors College shall provide appropriate forms for this option. The student shall submit the proposed plan of study before undertaking the international study portion of the plan. If the honors college director does not approve a proposed international study program, the student may petition the University Honors Council and University Student Honors Council for approval of the proposed program.

Section 6 — HONORS COURSES

6-1. DEFINITION. An honors course is any undergraduate course, section, seminar, tutorial, or other academic credit offering designated as such by the college in which it is offered by assignment of a section number in the 700-range. The designation of an honors course is the prerogative and responsibility of the college granting credit.

6-2. FACULTY TEACHING HONORS SECTIONS. Honors courses normally shall be taught only by persons holding tenured or tenure-track faculty appointments. Upon recommendation by a department head and with approval of the director of The Honors College, visiting or adjunct faculty at the rank of visiting, adjunct, or clinical assistant professor and other persons holding terminal degrees appropriate to the discipline may teach honors sections when appropriate tenured or tenure-track faculty are not available. Honors laboratory sections may be taught by graduate students when there is a separate and distinct honors theory section taught by a person qualified to teach honors courses as provided in this section.

Except in highly unusual circumstances with the advance approval of the dean of a college and notification of the director of The Honors College, honors sections shall not be taught by faculty members in their first year on the faculty at Oklahoma State University.

6-3. HONORS LABORATORY AND DISCUSSION SECTIONS. When the honors component of a course is an honors laboratory or an honors discussion section (with honors students having the same theory section experience as other students in the course), the honors laboratory section or honors discussion section must be taught by a person holding faculty rank.

6-4. CONTENT AND GRADING IN HONORS SECTIONS. Honors sections may well cover more sophisticated material than that covered in the regular sections of the same course, more active student participation should be encouraged, and the method of evaluation of students’ work (examinations, reports, etc.) may be different. The grading standards at the end of the course, however, should not be designed to force the honors students to compete among themselves for a limited number of “A” or “B” grades regardless of their level of performance. Instead, their grades should be assigned on the basis of the quality of their work—in comparison with the overall population of the course (in regular and honors sections). In other words, the honors student should be graded in the context of all of the students enrolled in the entire course—and not just in the context of an honors section in isolation. Students who meet the challenge of an honors section should have this reflected in their grades, but there should be no hesitation to award low grades to honors students who do not live up to the expectations which are being met by other honors students.

6-5. ENROLLMENT IN HONORS COURSES. Only undergraduate students eligible to participate in The Honors College may enroll in honors courses (those with section numbers in the 700-range). The student's eligibility is certified to the Registrar by a trial study form stamped “honors” by the
student's academic college and also stamped “approved” by The Honors College office. If a student uses the drop-and-add process to add an honors course, the drop-and-add card must be stamped “honors” and “approved.” Simply having a copy of a trial study form stamped “honors” and “approved” will not allow the student to add an honors course at a later date through the drop-and-add process without having both required stamps on the drop-and-add card.

In the case of upper-division honors courses, if space remains after eligible undergraduate students have completed early enrollment, a dean or college honors program director may, at his or her discretion, permit participation by graduate students along with the undergraduate students from The Honors College under the following conditions: (a) the graduate student has earned an honors program or honors college degree or maintained at least a 3.50 cumulative undergraduate grade point average, (b) the graduate student enrolls in a non-honors section of a course number other than that of the honors course, (c) such enrollment is approved by the honors course faculty member on an individual basis, and (d) the total combined enrollment does not exceed the maximum originally established for the honors course. There is no right or presumption in favor of graduate student participation under the conditions specified in this section of the honors college policies and procedures.

6-6. MAXIMUM AND MINIMUM ENROLLMENT FOR HONORS COURSES.

6-6-1. MAXIMUM ENROLLMENT. The anticipated maximum enrollment for an honors course is twenty-two (22) students, provided however that the director of the honors college may, with the approval of the responsible department head, permit additional enrollment when it is likely that the normal attrition of the drop-and-add process will bring the maximum size to twenty-two students early in the semester or when requested to do so in special circumstances by the Dean of one of the college offering the course.

6-6-2. MINIMUM ENROLLMENT. The anticipated minimum enrollment for an honors course is twelve (12) students in lower-division (1000- and 2000-level) and eight (8) students in upper-division (3000- and 4000-level) honors courses and seminars. These minima are not applicable to independent study, supervised research, tutorial, or senior thesis/project courses, nor shall they preclude a department or college from offering smaller honors courses with the approval of the dean of the college.

6-7. EVALUATION OF HONORS COURSES. All faculty members teaching honors sections shall be encouraged to participate in the course evaluation process by distributing the University Student Honors Council’s course evaluation questionnaire in their honors sections shortly before or during pre-finals week and having the questionnaires returned to The Honors College office. In the case of faculty teaching honors sections funded by The Honors College, participation in the University Student Honors Council’s evaluation process shall be required. Participation by faculty in the University Student Honors Council’s evaluation process will be a factor taken into consideration for future funding by The Honors College.

Section 7 — HONORS CONTRACTS

7-1. CONTENT. Approval of the content of honors contracts shall be obtained from the dean or honors program director of the academic college of the faculty member responsible for the course. The honors contract project should be one that can be completed with 20 to 25 hours of work. In the case of undergraduate students enrolled in graduate courses as part of their undergraduate program, an honors contract may be filed indicating that the students are being graded by the same standards as graduate students in the course without requiring additional work for the honors contract.

7-2. COURSE INSTRUCTOR WITH FACULTY RANK REQUIRED. Honors contracts may be undertaken only in courses taught by persons qualified to teach honors sections under the provisions of Section 6-2, above. Petitions for exception to this policy may be considered by the University Honors Council and University Student Honors Council only in those cases, verified by the student’s honors advisor, in which it is not possible for the student to maintain active participant status in The Honors
College by other means. In the case of courses taught by persons not holding faculty rank as specified above, if the student’s petition is granted, the faculty member responsible for the course or some other faculty member designated by the department head shall be responsible for all aspects of the honors contract and the evaluation of the contracted work.

7-3. DEADLINES. Honors contracts must be approved by the appropriate academic dean or honors program director (see Section 7-1, above) and filed by the student with the director of the honors college not later than the end of the third week of the semester or the end of the second week of the summer session. The Director of The Honors College may approve the late filing of an honors contract on the recommendation of the student's academic college if the faculty member supervising the contract verifies that sufficient time remains in the semester or summer session to complete the contracted work.

7-4. GRADES IN COURSES WITH HONORS CONTRACTS. The student's grade in a course in which an honors contract is undertaken shall not be affected by the honors contract work. A grade of “A” or “B” must be earned in the course before honors credit will be reflected on the student's transcript.

7-5. REPORTING. The Director of The Honors College shall be responsible for obtaining reports on completion of honors contracts from faculty and shall submit to the Registrar a list of all students for whom honors credit should be reflected on the students’ transcripts, regardless of the college in which the faculty member is housed. The Registrar shall enter “honors” for each course so reported.

7-6. MAXIMUM NUMBER OF CONTRACTS. Honors contracts may not be undertaken in more than two courses in a semester or summer session. The Director of The Honors College may make exceptions to this limit on the basis of a student’s outstanding record in The Honors College, but no more than two honors contracts in a semester may be counted toward the number of honors credit hours required for active participant status in The Honors College.

7-7. HONORS CONTRACTS PERMITTED ONLY IN COURSES ACCEPTABLE FOR DEGREE CREDIT. Honors contracts are permitted only in courses that, at the time they are taken, may be counted for credit toward the student’s undergraduate degree.

7-8. HONORS CONTRACT PERMISSION AFTER NOT COMPLETING HONORS CONTRACT IN EARLIER SEMESTER. Students who undertake honors contracts are expected to complete the contracts. When a student fails to complete an honors contract in a course in which she earns a grade of “A” or “B,” the following procedures shall apply:

After not completing the first honors contract, the student’s honors advisor shall contact the student concerning honors contract expectations. The correspondence or other communication shall ask the student for a brief explanation of the reason that the contract was not completed and shall inform the student that upon receipt of such explanation, verbally or in writing, additional honors contract work may be undertaken.

After not completing a second honors contract, the student shall be required to petition of the University Honors Council and the University Student Honors Council in writing to request permission to undertake a subsequent honors contract. Based upon the explanation contained in the written petition, the councils (with the honors director not voting) shall determine whether or not the student will be permitted to undertake a subsequent honors contract. If the Honors Councils approve the student’s petition, the deadline for filing the honors contract shall be extended to one week following approval by the Councils.
Section 8 — HONORS ACADEMIC ADVISING

8-1. QUALIFICATIONS FOR HONORS ADVISORS. The director of The Honors College and the administrative and professional staff of The Honors College shall provide honors academic advising to honors college students concerning the requirements for the honors college awards. Honors College personnel who provide honors academic advising shall have earned an undergraduate Honors Program or Honors College Degree.

8-2. EVALUATION OF HONORS ADVISING. Active participants in The Honors College shall be provided an opportunity to evaluate honors advising at least once each academic year using an evaluation form approved by the University Honors Council and University Student Honors Council.

Section 9 — HONORS STATUS REPORTS

The Director of The Honors College shall report to each of the academic colleges the names of their students active in The Honors College at least once a semester and, following the conclusion of the semester, shall prepare a status report on each student to be distributed to the student, the student's college, and the student's academic advisor.

Section 10 — PRIVILEGES EARNED BY ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS IN THE HONORS COLLEGE

10-1. DEFINITION OF AN ACTIVE PARTICIPANT IN THE HONORS COLLEGE. An active participant in The Honors College shall be defined according to the standards set forth below:

(1) For students who have completed 0-59 credit hours (and who will not at the end of the current semester have earned the general honors award and six additional honors hours (including hours waived under the Community Service, International Study, and AP-CLEP Options), a minimum of six honors hours in each semester as well as a minimum of twelve honors hours in each two consecutive semesters shall be required to maintain active participant status. Calculation of the twelve-hour-per-two-consecutive-semesters minimum shall include the honors hours earned (grade of “A” or “B” required) in the immediately preceding semester and the number of honors hours in which the student is currently enrolled (in honors courses or by honors contracts). Summer session honors hours shall not be included in the computation.

(2) For students who have earned (or at the end of the current semester will earn) the general honors award and six additional honors hours (including hours waived under the Community Service, International Study, and AP-CLEP Options), and for students who have completed 60 or more credit hours, a minimum of three honors hours in each semester shall be required to maintain active participant status, subject to the exceptions provided in Sections 10-1(3) and 10-1(4).

(3) Students who have earned the general honors award and six additional honors hours (including hours waived under the community service, international study, and AP-CLEP options), and who continue to be eligible for honors college participation based upon their OSU and cumulative grade point averages, may be considered active participants for one subsequent semester without enrollment in honors courses or undertaking honors contracts by submission of a written request received by the director of The Honors College not later than the end of the third week of classes during the fall or spring semester.

(4) Students who have completed all of The Honors College curricular requirements for the honors college degree but have not yet graduated (and who remain eligible for honors college participation based upon their OSU and cumulative grade point averages) may be considered to be active participants until their graduation by submission each semester of a written request received by the director of The Honors College not later than the end of the third week of classes during the fall or
spring semester. Students who have completed all of The Honors College curricular requirements for the honors college degree except the senior honors thesis or senior honors project (and who plan to complete the senior honors thesis or senior honors project prior to graduation and remain eligible for honors college participation based upon their OSU and cumulative grade point averages) also may be considered to be active participants by filing the same form of written request.

(5) Part-time students (defined as students enrolled for fewer than twelve credit hours in either the fall or spring semester), upon their request, shall be considered active in The Honors College if the number of honors hours successfully completed in the immediately preceding semester and the number of honors hours in which the student is currently enrolled (in honors sections or by honors contracts) is equal to the proportion of honors hours normally required of a full-time student enrolled in twelve hours per semester under subsections (1) and (2), above.

(6) Students participating in the international study option of The Honors College (Section 5-6, above) who are enrolled in at least as many credit hours at the international institution as would be required by Oklahoma State University to be considered a full-time student for the current academic semester.

10-2. EARLY ENROLLMENT. The director of The Honors College shall report to the Registrar, through appropriate channels, the names and student identification numbers of those students who meet the definition of an active honors college student (see Section 10-1, above) during a given semester and therefore qualify for early enrollment for the next academic semester and/or summer session.

Active honors college students will be permitted to begin early enrollment at 8:00 a.m. on the date specified by the Registrar.

10-3. HONORS COLLEGE STUDY LOUNGE. Active participants in The Honors College are entitled to use The Honors College Study Lounge in the Edmon Low Library.

10-4. EXTENDED LIBRARY CHECK-OUT PRIVILEGES. Active participants in The Honors College are entitled to check out materials from the Library on the same basis as graduate students.

10-5. ACTIVE PARTICIPANT STATUS — EXCEPTIONS UNDER EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES. In the event of extraordinary circumstances that prevent a student from undertaking the necessary number of honors credit hours for active participant status in a given semester, a student may submit a written petition the Director of The Honors College to be considered an active participant in The Honors College.

The petition process under this section may not be used by students who have failed to earn the OSU and cumulative grade point averages required for eligibility in The Honors College.

Approval for such petitions shall be limited to unusual circumstances in which no reasonable alternative exists for the student.

Such petition may be approved by the Director of The Honors College or referred at the student’s request to the University Honors Council and University Student Honors Council for a decision on the basis of the student’s petition and record of performance in The Honors College.

Section 11 — HONORS ALUMNI BOARD

11-1. PURPOSE OF THE BOARD. The Honors College may establish an honors alumni board for the purpose of obtaining advice concerning special alumni events, career as well as graduate and professional school opportunities for Honors College graduates, ways to strengthen The Honors College, and cooperation with the OSU Foundation in developing external support for scholarships for honors college students and external support for other appropriate projects.
11-2. MEMBERSHIP SELECTION AND TERMS. The Board shall consist of nine to twelve honors alumni members appointed by the Director of The Honors College after consultation with the University Honors Council. Each of the six undergraduate colleges shall be represented on the Honors Alumni Board if possible. Members of the Honors Alumni Board may be reappointed. Initial appointments shall be designated for one-, two-, or three-year terms. Thereafter, members shall be appointed to three-year terms with approximately one-third of the Board being appointed each year. Terms shall expire on December 31. In the event of a vacancy, the director of The Honors College may appoint another member.

11-3. BOARD CHAIR OR CO-CHAIRS. The director of The Honors College shall designate the chair or co-chairs of the Honors Alumni Board for its first year. Thereafter the Honors Alumni Board shall select its own chair or co-chairs each November for the following calendar year.
APPENDIX G — HONORS ADVISING SURVEYS

G-1. HONORS COLLEGE ADVISING SURVEY — KENT STATE UNIVERSITY

YOU ARE IMPORTANT TO US. We will use your feedback to evaluate the strengths and limitations of our advising program. We will seriously consider your suggestions. Please complete this form. Turn it in at the front desk, and then enter your name in the advising survey drawing!

My advisor is (circle): Andrews, Bocchicchio, Craig, Crawford, Gares, Sampson, Sharma

My class is (circle): Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior

I have a declared major (circle): I have declared a major (circle): Yes No

How many times have you seen your honors advisor since school started this year? _____

Use this scale to rate the items in the two sections below:
1 - Strongly Disagree     2 - Disagree     3 - Neutral      4 - Agree     5 - Strongly Agree

Please rate yourself as an advisee.

1. I make an effort to know my advisor and to help my advisor know me. 1 2 3 4 5
2. I make and keep appointments with my advisor. I call to cancel an appointment if I can’t make it. 1 2 3 4 5
3. I strive to clarify my personal values and goals in advance of advising appointments. 1 2 3 4 5
4. I read the catalog and requirement sheet to try to understand my LER and program requirements. 1 2 3 4 5
5. I prepare a possible class schedule and options/questions BEFORE my advising appointment 1 2 3 4 5
6. I accept responsibility for my own academic progress. 1 2 3 4 5

Please rate your Honors College advisor.

6. My advisor is adequately available during regular office hours. 1 2 3 4 5
7. My advisor responds promptly to my telephone and e-mail questions. 1 2 3 4 5
8. My advisor takes time to become personally acquainted with me. 1 2 3 4 5
9. My advisor is someone with whom I can talk freely. 1 2 3 4 5
10. My advisor is a careful listener and checks to make sure we have understood each other. 1 2 3 4 5
11. My advisor provides me with information I need about the catalog. 1 2 3 4 5
12. My advisor is able to refer me to persons or offices within the university where I can get answers to questions. 1 2 3 4 5
13. My advisor is knowledgeable about honors requirements. 1 2 3 4 5
14. My advisor encourages me to get involved with campus activities. 1 2 3 4 5
15. My advisor suggests ways I can explore different majors. 1 2 3 4 5
16. My advisor has discussed my long-range life and career goals with me. 1 2 3 4 5
17. My advisor has discussed my academic goals and progress with me. 1 2 3 4 5
18. My advisor expects me to be a responsible partner in the advising process. 1 2 3 4 5
19. My advisor encourages me to make my own decisions. 1 2 3 4 5

Comments/Suggestions/Advice for your advisor:
G-2. HONORS ADVISING QUESTIONNAIRE — OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY

Please take a few minutes to complete this questionnaire and bring it with you to your honors advising appointment so that you can drop it in the box in The Honors College Office. Thank you.

1. Your honors advisor (please circle): Hill-Williamson       Ladd       Mohler       Roark       Spurrier

2. How long has this person been your honors advisor? _______________________

3. Your college (please circle): AG     AS     BU     ED     EN     HE     UAS

4. Your classification (please circle): Freshman     Sophomore     Junior     Senior

5. Approximately how many times have you seen your honors advisor this school year? _______
   Was this a sufficient number of times? (please circle) Yes       No
   If “no,” please explain briefly.

6. At this point, do you plan to complete your honors college degree? Yes       No       Unsure

7. How would you describe your experience with your honors advisor?

Please indicate your responses on items 8-12 dealing with your honors advisor, using “4” as the best score and “0” as the worst score. “N/A” means that this item is not applicable to you.

8. Knowledge and explanation of honors college policies 4     3     2     1     0     N/A

9. Assistance in planning your honors class schedule to meet Honors College award requirements 4     3     2     1     0     N/A

10. Ability to refer you to other services on campus (if requested) 4     3     2     1     0     N/A

11. Availability to answer your questions 4     3     2     1     0     N/A

12. Cares about you as a person 4     3     2     1     0     N/A

Please feel free to comment on any of these items.

13. What advice would you give your honors advisor?

14. How would you describe your regular academic advisor’s attitude toward your participation in The Honors College? (please circle)         Supportive Neutral        Not Supportive
APPENDIX H — HONORS STUDENT SURVEYS

H-1. HONORS STUDENT SURVEY — UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO

What is your current status on campus? Please circle one.

- freshman
- sophomore
- junior
- senior

When did you join the University Honors Program? Please circle one.

- freshman
- sophomore
- junior
- senior

What is your major?  ________________________________________________

What most interested you in the honors program at UNC? Check all that apply.

- Extra academic challenge
- Faculty involved with honors program and Life of the Mind
- Honors as a possible way to strengthen my career and/or graduate school opportunities
- Honors Connections Seminars (Hon 100/200 classes)
- Involvement of honors program in campus activities, such as Academic Excellence Week and the International film series
- Life of the Mind courses (MIND designated classes)
- Opportunity to do a thesis
- Prestige and recognition promised
- Scholarship opportunities
- Students already in honors program
- Student honors council and its activities
- A specific person (please specify)  __________________________________
- Other (please specify)  _____________________________________________

Of the choices given below, please rank the top 10 STRENGTHS in the University Honors Program administration, with 1 being the largest strength.

- Advising
- E-mail news and updates
- Enrichment provided in your major through the Honors experience
- Faculty involved with honors program and Life of the Mind
- Honors Connections seminars (Hon 100/200 classes)
- Honors handbook
- Honors newsletter
- Honors research/thesis courses (Hon 351 and 451 classes)
- Intellectual challenge
- Involvement of honors program in campus activities, such as Academic Excellence Week and the international film series
- Life of the Mind courses (MIND designated classes)
- Personal attention from faculty
- Recognition that you receive
- Relationships you establish with other honors students and faculty
- Research Day
Of the choices given below, please rank the top 5 WEAKNESSES in the University Honors Program administration, with 1 being the largest weakness:

- Advising
- E-mail news and updates
- Enrichment provided in your major through the Honors experience
- Faculty involved with Honors and Life of the Mind
- Honors Connections Seminars (Hon 100/200 classes)
- Honors handbook
- Honors newsletter
- Honors research/thesis courses (Hon 351 and 451 classes)
- Intellectual challenge
- Involvement of honors program in campus activities, such as Academic Excellence Week and the International film series
- Life of the Mind courses (MIND designated classes)
- Personal attention from faculty
- Recognition that you receive
- Relationships you establish with other Honors students and faculty
- Research Day
- Scholarship opportunities
- Student Honors Council and its activities
- Website
- Works in Progress Symposium
- Other (please specify)

What have been the most important student honors council activities for you? Check all that apply.

- Community service projects
- Fall retreat
- General meetings
- Honors newsletter
- International film series
- Intramural sports
- New student workshop
- Peer advising
- Pizza seminars
- Other (please specify)

Overall, how would you rate your University Honors Program experience?

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<th>1= Excellent</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5= Poor</th>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>In Advising</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
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</table>
Thank you!

Please return this survey to the University Honors Program office in Michener L-95 or mail it to Campus Box 13, Greeley, CO 80639 by October 31.

H-2. SALSBURY BELLA VANCE HONORS PROGRAM SURVEY
Year-end Online Survey Created and Administered using SurveyMonkey.com
--Richard England, Director

1. To win the $50 Barnes & Noble gift certificate, please enter your e-mail address. This information will be kept separate from your responses and will be discarded once the winner has been drawn at random.

2. About you, the honors student

At the end of this semester I will have the following number of credits (include transferred and AP credits)

- 0-30 credits
- 31-60 credits
- 61-90 credits
- 91 or more credits

3. I have a major(s) in... (check more than one if needed)

- Business (Perdue School)
- Liberal Arts (Fulton School)
- Education (Seidel School)
- Science (Henson School)
- I have not declared a major.

4. Apart from my studies, during the semester, the following activities take up this many hours a week.

- 0-5 hours/wk
- 6-10 hours/wk
- 11-15 hours/wk
- 16 or more hours/wk

- Paid work
- Volunteer service
- Athletics
- Performance (music, Drama, dance)
- SU clubs & groups
- Other (please specify and give estimate of hours/wk)

5. How important to you are the following aspects of the honors program?

Not important  Important  Very Important  Not Applicable
Discussion in classes
Interesting class choices
Gen ed credit for honors classes
Honors extracurricular events on campus
Honors priority registration
Honors field trips
Honors conference opportunities
24 hour access to Honors House
Honors advising

6. Which of these things are problems that the honors program needs to address?
Not a problem       This is a minor problem   This is a major problem  Not applicable
More course selection
Instructor quality
More interesting course topics
Honors-related advising
Better publicity for events
Helping students understand honors curriculum requirements
Absence of food in honors fridge

7. Which of the following might prove an obstacle to your completion of the honors program?
Not a problem          possible concern        this is significant to me     not applicable
Scheduling required classes
Graduating GPA requirement (3.5)
Effect of honors participation on GPA
Extra work required by honors classes
High standards expected by honors profs
Fear of honors thesis/research project
Advising problems

8. Please add any additional comments about the honors program. We are particularly interested in hearing about things you enjoy or things that concern you.
APPENDIX I. GRADUATING SENIOR SURVEYS

I-1. WESTMINSTER COLLEGE HONORS PROGRAM
GRADUATING SENIOR EXIT SURVEY

This survey helps us obtain information about your honors program experience. Your responses are very important because they will allow us to evaluate the strengths and limitations of the program and to make appropriate changes. Please complete this form as thoroughly as possible and return it by June 1, either in electronic format or as a hard copy. We really appreciate your thoughtful responses. Thank you.

NAME:

STUDENT ID#:

MAJOR(s):

MINOR(s):

GRADUATION DATE:

GRADUATING WITH (check one): [ ] Honors Degree [ ] Honors Certificate

TITLE OF THESIS (for Honors Degree Students):

POSITIONS OF LEADERSHIP IN WESTMINSTER COLLEGE’S HONORS PROGRAM (i.e. Student Honors Council, honors peer mentor, honors newsletter editor, Honors START Center advisor, etc.):

OTHER HONORS ACHIEVEMENT (identify/explain any that apply):

1. Honors writing awards (year/title/category):

2. Participation in honors regional/national conference (year/nature of participation):

3. Independent summer research grant (year/title of grant):

4. Published in Scribendi, the journal of the Western Regional Collegiate Honors Council:

5. Other:

What are your plans after graduating from Westminster (pick one that best applies)?

1. Name of graduate/professional school:
   Degree Sought:
   Scholarships/Fellowships:

2. Name of employer and title:

3. Uncertain. I am considering:
Five years from now, what do you hope to be doing?

NARRATIVE RESPONSES (please be as specific as possible)

1. From your experience, identify the most positive features of the honors program in its current configuration.

2. From your experience, identify any negative features. What recommendations would you have for strengthening the program?

3. What was the best honors course you took? What was it that made it the “best”?

4. What was the weakest honors course you took? Explain why.

5. How were your honors courses different from your non-honors courses?

6. Did you find your honors courses challenging? In what ways?

7. Was the honors program successful in giving you a sense of community? How could that community be strengthened?

8. How has the program changed over the years you have been here?

9. What other additions and/or changes would you make to the honors program?

10. Are you glad you participated in the honors program? Why or why not?

11. Identify the specific skills that the honors program has helped you cultivate, either through its curriculum or related programs.

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES (please identify the following honors-related activities that you participated in)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Once</th>
<th>A Few Times</th>
<th>Regularly</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pizza with Profs</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profs Pick the Flick</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Honorable Mention</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
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<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Spring Honors Banquet</td>
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<td>[ ]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annual Honors Writing Award Competition</td>
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<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Honors Resource Library</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
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<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sending a Message to the Honors Listserv</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**HONORS PROGRAM MISSION**

The honors program is guided by a mission statement designed by the honors council. Please consider the following features of the honors mission and think about how the honors program (curriculum and other resources) helped advance these aims. Check the box that applies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I developed confidence in my ability to understand and discuss complex ideas and texts.</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
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<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I developed confidence in my ability to engage in problem solving and research design.</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. I strengthened my written and oral communication skills.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I mastered an ability to work effectively in groups of diverse people.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. I made connections between disciplines.</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
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<td>[ ]</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I learned to apply new knowledge and skills in meaningful ways that will help me succeed in my professional and personal life following college.</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I had access to a range of supplemental experiences of an academic and social nature with similarly motivated and talented students.</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
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<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SUMMARY COMMENTS**

We believe that the best and most accurate representatives of the honors program are the students who participate in Honors. Please use this space to make any final, summary comments about your experience in Westminster College’s Honors Program. (Would you be willing to allow us to reproduce any of the comments below in publicity materials used in recruiting students—i.e. honors website, brochures, etc.? Yes [ ] No [ ] )
1. **REVIEW STUDENT FILE**
   Please review your personal folder in the honors office. You may add to your file any additional documentation that you feel reflects your academic, social, and community service experience as an undergraduate.

2. **SENIOR REVIEW FORM**
   Complete the “Senior Review” form and return with your complete packet. Please write legibly or type!

3. **UHP COURSEWORK FORM**
   Complete the “UHP Coursework Summary” form and return with your complete packet. Please write legibly or type!

4. **UNM TRANSCRIPTS**
   Submit an unofficial copy of your UNM transcript(s) with your complete packet.

5. **TRANSFER TRANSCRIPTS**
   If you are a transfer student, submit an unofficial copy of your transfer transcript(s) with your complete packet.

6. **SEMINAR PAPER**
   Include one written paper (essay, research, creative prose) from an honors seminar with your complete packet.

7. **SENIOR SURVEY FORM**
   Complete the “Senior Survey” form and return with your complete packet. Please write legibly or type!

8. **HONORS CERTIFICATE AND ACCOMMODATION REQUESTS FORM**
   Complete the “Honors Certificate” form indicating how you would like your name to appear on your honors certificate and indicate any needs for the graduation ceremony. Return the form with your complete packet.

9. **PHOTOGRAPH**
   Ask one of the Honors office staff to take a photograph of you. The picture will be placed in your student file for future reference (our memories aren’t reliable).

10. **EXIT INTERVIEW**
    After the senior packet deadline the UHP office will send a letter to you telling with whom you’ll interview and where to contact him/her. You ARE REQUIRED to have a 30-minute exit interview with a member of the University Honors Council or the UHP director. YOU are responsible for arranging an appointment for your exit interview. Interviews must be completed before the honors council meeting in.

11. **RECOGNITION CEREMONY**
    Information regarding your honors designation and the honors senior recognition ceremony, as well as complimentary invitations, will be mailed to you approximately two weeks prior to the ceremony. Attendance is expected of all seniors at the recognition ceremony. **Dress for the ceremony is semi-formal. (No Cap & Gown required.)**
Determining Levels of Honors for UHP Seniors

Range of GPA:

- 3.20-3.49  Cum Laude
- 3.50-3.89  Magna Cum Laude
- 3.90-4.00+ Summa Cum Laude

The honors program committee clearly does not rigidly apply set GPA cutoffs, but instead exercises flexibility in considering individual cases on their own merit.

Besides GPA, the following other criteria have emerged by consensus as the most important in considering the levels of honors.

1. **Honors Seminars**: Has the student taken a broad range of seminars from various professors vs. seminars from the same professor? Do the evaluations from the UHP faculty indicate honors-level engagement in the seminars? What kind of grades has the student received in Honors seminars? Does the student have the requisite number of courses? Has the student participated in cross-cultural/multicultural experiences or courses at UNM?

2. **Abilities**: Based on the written/artistic work included in the file and faculty evaluations, has the student demonstrated knowledge, writing ability, critical/creative thinking, and articulate oral expression?

3. **Breadth**: Has the student been able to fashion an academic program that gives him or her an expansive education in a variety of areas? Has the student taken advantage of international or national academic programs? Has the student taken advantage of field-based courses and programs or other hands-on type of educational experiences?

4. **Difficulty**: Has the student elected a course of study that has been challenging? Are a disproportionate number of courses at the lower level? If the student is in a department with a disciplinary honors program, has she or he taken advantage of it?

5. **Senior Options**: Has the student taken advantage of doing research to complete a thesis or project either interdisciplinary or disciplinary? How successfully? If the student chose the student teaching option, how successfully? Did the student participate in a senior colloquium? What was his or her project?

6. **Extracurricular Activities**: To what degree has the student been engaged in activities within the university, the community, and/or the honors program?

7. **Honors & Award**: Although levels of honors are not awarded on the quantity or type of award or honors a student may receive, they do reflect on the traits and qualities of a student and may thus assist in the process.
UNM UHP SENIOR REVIEW FORM

The following information will be considered by the University Honors Committee to determine your honors level. Committee members read senior review responses carefully. This form will be placed in your honors student file and treated as confidential. (Please type or legibly print all information.)

Name: ____________________________________________

_________ First  ____________ Middle  ____________ Last

Social Security #: ____________________________ Local phone Number: ______

E-mail address: __________________________

Local Address: _____________________________________________________________________________

Street /Apt., City, State, Zip Code

Permanent Address: _____________________________________________________________________________

Street /Apt., City, State, Zip Code

High School Attended: _____________________________________________________________________________

Name  Year Graduated

___________________________________________________________________________

City, State

Are you a transfer student?  Yes  No

If yes:  School: ____________________________________________ Total Transfer Credits: __

Name

___________________________________________________________________________

City, State

What UNM College are you graduating from?

College: ____________________________________________

Major(s) ____________________________________________ Minor(s) ____________________________________________

Current Cumulative GPA: __________________________ Total Credit Hours at Graduation: ______

Have you received any scholarships?  Yes  No

If yes:  Which scholarships?

__ Regents  __ Presidential  __ Amigo  __ Excel

__ UHP Stipend  __ Lottery Success  __ NM Scholars

__ Other: _____________________________________________________________________________
Have you received any educational loans? Yes No

Have you been employed during your college career? Yes No

If yes: For how many years: On campus: Off campus: Average Hrs Per Week: ____

**Campus Activities: (Indicate your role/any offices held)**

- H.S.A.C. ___________________________ Scribendi ___________________________
- ASUNM ___________________________ Fraternity/Sorority ______________________
- Resident Halls Government ______________ Sports __________________________
- Daily Lobo _________________________ Performing Arts ___________________
- Clubs/Organizations ___________________________________________________
- Other _______________________________________________________________

**Honors and Awards:**

- ___ Phi Eta Sigma  __ Sigma Tau Delta  __ Order of Omega  ___ Golden Key
- ___ Phi Beta Kappa  ___ Phi Kappa Phi  Other: ___________________________

Fellowship(s): ___________________________________________________________

**Publications/Presentations (Titles, Dates, etc.):**

- Scribendi ______________________________________________________________
- Conceptions Southwest _________________________________________________
- Best Student Essays ___________________________________________________
- WRHC Conference _____________________________________________________
- NCHC Conference _____________________________________________________
- Other ________________________________________________________________
Other Activities (National/International Studies, Co-op Education, Research, Internships, etc.):


Cross-cultural & Multi-cultural Experiences (List specific programs and courses, such as Conexiones, study abroad, languages, etc.):


Plans for the Next Year (Graduate School, Professional School, etc.):


Professional Plans for the Future:


UHP COURSEWORK SUMMARY

NAME: ________________________________  ID#: __________________

I. UHP REQUIRED SEMINARS - one at each level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEMINAR TITLE</th>
<th>GRADE &amp; YR</th>
<th>SEM. INSTRUCTOR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100 Level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200 Level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300 Level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>400 Level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Options:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colloquium</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Learning Project</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UHP Thesis Title</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Teaching (Course/Co-Teacher)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Department Honors Thesis/Project

Department ____________________________ Director ____________________________

II. UHP ELECTIVES - 6 credit hours for minimum 21 hours necessary to graduate with University Honors and additional seminars completed (If graduating under 2003 catalog, 24 total hours are necessary).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEM.</th>
<th>LEVEL</th>
<th>SEMINAR TITLE</th>
<th>GRADE &amp; YR</th>
<th>INSTRUCTOR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

III. WAIVED SEMINAR (requires prior approval by Director)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL</th>
<th>SEMINAR TITLE</th>
<th>GRADE &amp; YR</th>
<th>INSTRUCTOR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

IV. TRANSFER HONORS COURSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL</th>
<th>SEMINAR TITLE</th>
<th>GRADE &amp; YR</th>
<th>INSTRUCTOR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

To give the Council a sense of your overall undergraduate course distribution, indicate the number of credit hours completed in the following categories. Assign interdisciplinary courses such as Honors program, Women Studies, etc. to the most appropriate category possible:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMMUNICATION:</th>
<th>HUMANITIES:</th>
<th>BIOL/BEHAV.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English Writing</td>
<td>Literature</td>
<td>Anthropology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commun/Journ</td>
<td>History</td>
<td>Biology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linguistics</td>
<td>Phil/Religion</td>
<td>Psychology</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PHYSICAL SCIENCES:</th>
<th>SOCIAL SCIENCES:</th>
<th>FINE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Astronomy</td>
<td>Anthropology</td>
<td>Art History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>Dance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geology</td>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>Film</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>Political Science</td>
<td>Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sociology</td>
<td>Theater Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHERS:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td></td>
<td>Pharmacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td>Architecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td></td>
<td>Foreign Language</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

List: ______________________________________

_______________________________________

_______________________________________
I-3. Honors Exit Survey—University of West Florida

Exit Survey

Thank you for taking the time to give us feedback on how we’re doing. Please call our office if you have any questions (850.474.2934). Completed surveys can be returned in the enclosed envelope or taken to the honors office (bldg. 50, rm. 224).

Please circle your answer. If a question does not pertain to your experience, please leave it blank.

Honors Program Courses

1. I utilized the early registration benefit of being an honors student: Yes No

2. Rate the value of early registration to you:

   1  2  3  4  5
   No Value Poor Value Somewhat Valuable Very Valuable Extremely Valuable

3. I took Great Books: Yes No

4. Rate the value of the learning experience in Great Books to you:

   1  2  3  4  5
   No Value Poor Value Somewhat Valuable Very Valuable Extremely Valuable

5. I took an honors section of a general studies course: Yes No

6. Which honors sections of general studies courses did you take?

   ______________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________

7. The types of general education courses offered by the Honors program fit my degree plan and timeline:

   1  2  3  4  5
   Never Almost Never Sometimes Mostly Always

8. Rate the value of the learning experience in honors sections of general studies courses to you:

   1  2  3  4  5
   No Value Poor Value Somewhat Valuable Very Valuable Extremely Valuable

9. I took an honors seminar: Yes No

10. How many honors seminars did you take? ________
11. Rate the value of the learning experience in an honors seminar to you:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Value</td>
<td>Poor Value</td>
<td>Somewhat Valuable</td>
<td>Very Valuable</td>
<td>Extremely Valuable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12. I would like to see the following topics developed into seminars:

_______________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________

13. I completed an honors thesis: Yes No

14. Rate the value of the learning experience in an honors thesis to you:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Value</td>
<td>Poor Value</td>
<td>Somewhat Valuable</td>
<td>Very Valuable</td>
<td>Extremely Valuable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15. The benefits of being in an honors class I have experienced include: (check all that apply):
   ___ Small class size
   ___ More teacher-student interaction
   ___ More in-depth information
   ___ More engaging coursework
   ___ Other: _____________________

16. My favorite honors course (courses) was:

_______________________________________________________________________________

17. I would like the following to be offered as honors courses:

_______________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________

Honors Advising

18. What was your overall satisfaction with advising services in the honors program?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highly Dissatisfied</td>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>Highly satisfied</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

19. What was the value of advising services in the honors program to you?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Value</td>
<td>Poor Value</td>
<td>Somewhat Valuable</td>
<td>Very Valuable</td>
<td>Extremely Valuable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

20. My honors advisor was available during regular office hours:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
21. My honors advisor responded promptly to telephone and e-mail questions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

22. My honors advisor became personally acquainted with me:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

23. My honors advisor listened to my questions and was sure we understood each other:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

24. My honors advisor was knowledgeable about General Studies requirements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

25. My honors advisor was knowledgeable about Honors requirements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

26. My honors advisor discussed my academic progress and goals with me:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

27. My honors advisor discussed my long-range life and career goals with me:

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<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

28. My honors advisor expected me to be a responsible partner in the advising process:

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<th>1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Your Learning**

Please circle the response that best describes your sense of accomplishment for each item listed below. If you did not take a course that applies to the question, please circle N/A.

29. I reviewed and evaluated the knowledge, concepts, techniques, and methodology appropriate to the discipline of the honors thesis:

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</table>
I-4. KENT STATE UNIVERSITY HONORS COLLEGE
SENIOR EXIT SURVEY

YOUR RESPONSE MAKES A DIFFERENCE. As an honors graduate, you can provide us with valuable information to make membership in the honors college an even better experience. Please complete and return this form to the honors college office.

Ethnic Heritage: African American____ White/non-Hispanic____ Hispanic____
Asian____ Native American____ Other____

Gender: Female____ Male____

Where did you begin your undergraduate studies?
Kent Campus____ Regional Campus____ Other Four-Year Institution____
Community College____

How many years were you in the honors college? ____

Did you take Freshman Honors Colloquium (FHC)? ____Yes ____No
If yes, how did you use the skills and knowledge you learned in FHC throughout the rest of your undergraduate experience (writing, critical thinking, class participation, etc.)?

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

How did other honors experiences (e.g., LER’s, mixed classes, IHW’s, portfolio, etc.) challenge you academically?

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

In what ways was your honors education good preparation for graduate school, work, or other aspects of your personal life?

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

Did you complete a senior honors thesis/project? ____Yes ____No
If yes, rate it as a learning experience on the following scale:
____outstanding ____excellent ____good ____fair ____poor

Did you participate in a study abroad program while attending Kent State? ____Yes ____No
If yes, which program?

If yes, rate is as a learning experience on the following scale:
_____ outstanding  _____ excellent  _____ good  _____ fair  _____ poor

Did you complete a community service project as part of your honors experience?  
_____ Yes  _____ No
If yes, rate is as a learning experience on the following scale:
_____ outstanding  _____ excellent  _____ good  _____ fair  _____ poor

Were you awarded an honors scholarship?  _____ Yes  _____ No
If yes, how did that scholarship help you during your stay here?

During my freshman year:  _____ I lived on campus  _____ I was a commuter student.
If you were a residential student, did you live in an honors hall?  _____ Yes  _____ No
If you lived in an honors hall, rate it as a living/learning experience on the following scale:
_____ outstanding  _____ excellent  _____ good  _____ fair  _____ poor

Students can expect honors advisors to provide dependable, accurate, respectful, honest, friendly, and professional service. To what extent did your honors advisor serve your needs in light of these items?

What was your overall satisfaction with advising services in the honors college?  
(Circle)

Highly Satisfied  Satisfied  Neutral  Dissatisfied

Based on your perceptions, please answer the following questions by circling the appropriate number to indicate your response on this scale: (1) strongly agree (2) agree (3) neutral (4) disagree (5) strongly disagree.

My honors experience:

a. provided me with intellectual challenge.  1  2  3  4  5
b. had a significant positive effect on my educational development and creativity.  1  2  3  4  5
c. contributed significantly to my personal enrichment.  1  2  3  4  5
d. made me feel part of a community.  1  2  3  4  5
e. provided me with closer interaction with faculty and other honors students.  1  2  3  4  5
f. offered me opportunities for advanced, original and specialized work.  1  2  3  4  5
g. provided me with flexibility in meeting my individual needs.  
   1 2 3 4 5
h. encouraged me to take responsibility for my own learning.  
   1 2 3 4 5
i. improved my ability to think analytically.  
   1 2 3 4 5
j. increased my abilities in oral and written communication.  
   1 2 3 4 5
k. increased my awareness of other cultures.  
   1 2 3 4 5
l. other (please list).  
   1 2 3 4 5

If you had to make this decision again, would you choose to be a member of the honors college?  ____Yes  ____No

What is your strongest recommendation for strengthening the honors college experience?
_____________________________________________________________________

What are your future plans?
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

YOU ARE IMPORTANT TO US. Please stay in touch with us and join your Kent State Alumni Association. Continue to support the Honors College through membership in the Honors College Alumni Chapter. Contact Kim Brown (kbrown13@kent.edu) for information.
I-5. EXIT INTERVIEW Bowling Green State University

INTERVIEW GUIDE- 1 Year in Program or More

Use of Data
The resulting data will be aggregated and reviewed by University Honors Program staff to make recommendations regarding policy, practice, and staffing patterns. No personally identifying information will be attached to your responses (like your name).

Sample Demographic Questions
- Number of semesters in the honors program?
- Number of honors credits completed?
- Honors project completed?
- Will you graduate with University Honors?
- List the leadership positions held on campus?
- List the leadership positions held within the University Honors Program?

Sample Exit Interview Questions

1. Describe your original motivation for joining the honors program.

2. The BGSU Honors Program requires students to take a minimum of 23 credit hours of honors coursework to graduate with University Honors. What reasons do you see for such a requirement? In what ways, if any, were these courses valuable to you? Did your honors classes offer an appropriate level of challenge for you as a learner?

3. Describe the level of support received from honors faculty as you pursued your educational goals. From honors program staff? Describe ideal attributes of honors faculty and staff.

4. How are you different, that is, how have you grown by participating in the University Honors Program? Identify university-related experiences that have changed you.
Why are you leaving the University Honors Program?

**Sample Exit Interview Questions**

6. Describe your original motivation for joining the honors program.

7. The BGSU Honors Program requires students to take a minimum of 23 credit hours of honors coursework to graduate with University Honors. What reasons do you see for such a requirement? In what ways, if any, were these courses valuable to you? Did your honors classes offer an appropriate level of challenge for you as a learner?

8. Describe the level of support received from honors faculty as you pursued your educational goals. From honors program staff? Describe ideal attributes of honors faculty and staff.

9. How are you different, that is, how have you grown by participating in the University Honors Program? Identify university-related experiences that have changed you.

10. Why are you leaving the University Honors Program?
I-6. Exit Interview Questions from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire

Rationale
Exit interviews have been selected as an assessment procedure because this process provides both qualitative and quantitative data. Exit interviews provide contextual information about the UWEC learning environment. Also, the scoring procedure that has been defined for the exit interview project avoids the lengthy analysis usually associated with qualitative data and provides an added benefit of actually hearing from students how they have experienced the curriculum.

Sample Exit Interview Questions

1. UW-Eau Claire requires students to take general education courses. What reasons do you see for such a requirement? In what ways, if any, have general education courses been valuable to you? How are courses you’ve taken in general education related to your major?

2. What are your intellectual interests outside of your major? Did you pursue any of these while in college, either through coursework or otherwise? Did you already have these interests when you came to college or were they newly developed? Are there courses or other intellectual activities that you wish you had pursued? If so, why didn’t you?

3. What are the best things college has done to prepare you for life after college? Have you learned things in courses that you’ve used outside of the academic environment?

4. How are you different, that is, how have you grown by attending UWEC rather than taking a job right out of high school? Identify university-related experiences that have changed you.

5. In what ways have you actively participated in the university learning community? As you think over your college career, what learning experiences stand out in your mind? What learning experiences have you had outside of the classroom?

6. How has your experience here influenced the way you think about people of different races, cultures, or sexual orientation, and about people with disabilities? Have you ever been in a situation where someone else has been insensitive, and how did you respond?

7. In what ways did your experience at UWEC influence your interest in the arts?
8. What values do you use to guide your life? Have those values changed since you have been in college? Explain. Tell me a few experiences here that helped you to develop or demonstrate your values/rules.

Scoring Scales
The following scale will be used for all questions except 4d: 1-3

- Student has no understanding of issue or unable to make the relationship; inaccurate understanding; no acceptance/ internalization of the issue has occurred; deny value of issue

- Student provides a general or basic response; internalization may not have occurred

- Student demonstrates an in-depth understanding; specific examples or in-depth response provided; student can clearly connect the example to the issue

The following scale will be used for 4d:

- Communicates poorly; uses phrases and incomplete thoughts; unable to clearly present ideas

- Student exhibits appropriate nonverbal behaviors; interacted with interviewer appropriately; avoids excessive use of slang

- Outstanding communication; articulate; makes eye contact; appropriate pauses, interviewers understand the student
APPENDIX J - ALUMNI QUESTIONNAIRES

J-1. ALUMNI QUESTIONNAIRE — ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

Dear Honors Exes:

We’re asking for your help in our program review for the University. Please return this survey by the end of November. The advice you give us will help in improving curriculum and benefits. The HP is 18 years old and still having fun, challenging ACU’s brightest students. We appreciate your help.

1. What is your gender?
   a. Male
   b. Female

2. What is your age? _____ Years

3. What is your race?
   a. Black
   b. Asian
   c. White
   d. Hispanic
   e. Other

4. What is your marital status?
   a. Never married
   b. Divorced
   c. Widowed
   d. Married
   e. Separated

5. In what state do you live? ____________________

6. What is the size of your community?
   a. Rural of farm area
   b. Small town or city (under 50,000)
   c. Medium city/metro area (50,000 to 250,000)
   d. Large city/metro area (over 250,000)

7. What is your current employment status? (Circle all that apply.)
   a. Employed full-time
   b. Employed part-time
   c. Unemployed, seeking employment (go to question 11)
   d. Homemaker (go to question 11)
   e. Full-time student (go to question 11) where __________
   f. Part-time student (go to question 11) where __________
8. Are you currently employed in an occupation related to your major field of study?
   a. Yes
   b. No

9. What is your occupation? (Please be specific and include your job title.)

10. Last year, what was your income before taxes, excluding any income earned by other members of your family?
    a. Under $10,000  e. $40,000 to $49,999  i. $80,000 to $89,999
    b. $10,000 to $19,999  f. $50,000 to $59,999  j. $90,000 to $99,999
    c. $20,000 to $29,999  g. $60,000 to $69,999  k. Over $100,000
    d. $30,000 to $39,999  h. $70,000 to $79,999

11. If you received a bachelor’s degree from ACU, please give the degree(s), major(s), and date.

12. Did you complete the honors program requirements?
    ___ Yes. University Honors (30 hrs)
    ___ Yes. Department Honors (12 hrs)

13. If you received your bachelor’s degree from another institution, please indicate the institution, date, and field:

14. Did you receive a Master’s degree from ACU?
    a. Yes  (Please provide date and field:__________________________)
    b. No

15. What is the highest degree you have received from any institution?
    a. Bachelor’s  b. Master’s  c. Doctorate (PhD, JD, MD, OD, etc.)
    (Please indicate the institution, degree, date, and field if different from questions 13 or 14:__________________________)

16. Did you participate in any departmental activities while at ACU?
    ___ Band/Choir  ___ Missions trips  ___ Sports
    ___ Social club  ___ Volunteer work  ___ Publications
    ___ Musical  ___ Student Association  ___ Other
    ___ Sing Song  ___ Local Church Work
    ___ Theater  ___ Dept. Organization

For each of the following questions circle your answer by using the following codes:
   5= strongly agree, 4= agree, 3= undecided, 2= disagree, 1= strongly disagree.
17. Regarding my honors program work at ACU, I am satisfied with the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>U</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Overall quality of the honors program</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Quality of instruction in lower-level and colloquia courses</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Quality of instruction in upper-level contracts and projects</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Opportunities for interaction with the HP teachers (including director of contracts or projects)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>e. Professional competence of the HP teachers</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. Quality of the HP courses in preparing me for employment</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Quality of HP courses, contracts, or independent study in preparing me for graduate or professional school</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>h. Range of subjects available in HP courses including colloquia</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Availability of my honors advisor to meet with me</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. Range of options for meeting HP requirements</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k. Depth of engagement with subject matter in HP classes and projects</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>l. Challenge presented by the HP work</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>m. Fairness of grading in my HP courses</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>n. Availability of co-curricular activities for HP students (fall picnic, etc.)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>o. Practicum or internship experience for HP credit</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>p. Classroom facilities related to the HP and equipment used in HP work</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>q. Clarity of HP requirements</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>r. Opportunities for student participation in HP decisions</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>s. Influence of the HP on the ACU academic climate</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>t. Opportunities for student evaluation of instruction in HP classes</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u. My decision to finish or not to finish HP requirements</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
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18. At this point in my career, I am satisfied with

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<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>U</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. The level of my responsibilities</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. The type of work I am doing</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. My income</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
d. The field in which I am working  5 4 3 2 1 0

e. My prospects for advancement  5 4 3 2 1 0

f. My opportunities for professional development  5 4 3 2 1 0

1. Based on your career experience thus far, what else do you wish the HP had done to enhance your professional and personal life?

20. Was the HP work worth your time? Please explain.

21. Did the HP work help you get into graduate studies or get a job? If so, how?

22. Based on your career experience thus far, what single change would you make within the HP if given the opportunity?

23. The Honors Program is currently considering the option of offering 3 separate ways to graduate with honors program distinction: 18 hours of freshman/sophomore work = Honors Associate; 12 hours of junior/senior level work (3 hours of colloquia, two upper-level contracts, and a capstone project) = Departmental Honors; all of the above = University Honors. What do you think about having these three ways to graduate with Honors distinction? Should there be any more?

24. Assessment of honors developmental goals:

   My experience in the honors program at ACU has helped me to think more integratively and critically. 5 4 3 2 1 0

   My experience in the honors program at ACU has helped me become more globally aware. 5 4 3 2 1 0

   My experience in the honors program at ACU has helped me be able to present the results of critical reflection in a coherent and professional manner. 5 4 3 2 1 0

   My experience in the honors program at ACU has helped me be more markedly competent in at least one academic or professional field. 5 4 3 2 1 0

25. Do you have any other comments or information that might be helpful to us? If so, please put them below.
J-2 KENT STATE UNIVERSITY HONORS COLLEGE ALUMNI SURVEY

Please return this information in the enclosed pre-paid envelope. There is no need to put your name on this form. Thank you so much for making our Honors Program better!

Name
_____________________________________________________________________

(First)   (M.I.)   (MAIDEN)   (LAST)

Street Address
________________________________________________________________________

City/State/Zip
________________________________________________________________________

Daytime Phone __________________________      Evening Phone _________________

E-mail Address __________________________      Gender:    Male ______       Female ______

Year Graduated __________________________      Undergraduate Major _____________

Ethnic Heritage:    African American _____ White/non-Hispanic _____   Hispanic _____
Native American _____ Other __________________

Where did you begin you undergraduate studies?
Kent Campus _____  Regional Campus _____  Other ______________

How many years were you in the honors college? _____

What is your occupational status? (Check all that apply.)

___ working full time
___ working part-time:      _____ in school: full time ___  part-time

___ one __ two __ three + jobs ___      _____ unemployed, laid off, looking for work

____ retired

Who is your current employer?
___________________________________________________________

What is your present job title?
____________________________________________________________
What is your annual salary or wage (including commissions, etc.) in your current position?

_____ less than $20,000        _____ $60,000 - $79,999
_____ $20,000 - $39,999       _____ $80,000 - $99,999
_____ $40,000 - $59,999       _____ $100,000 and over

Have you reoriented your career goals since graduation?     Yes _____         No _____

If so, why?
___________________________________________________________________________

List the titles of your last three jobs.
_______________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________

List any post-baccalaureate studies you have undertaken/are undertaking.
DATE  INSTITUTION    MAJOR   DEGREE
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________

List a few of your graduate-level and/or career awards and honors if applicable.
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

In what ways, if any, was your Honors education good preparation for graduate school, work, or other aspects of your personal life?
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

Were you awarded a scholarship from the honors college?     Yes _____         No _____

If yes, did that scholarship make a difference in your decision to choose to attend Kent State?  
Yes _____         No _____

Was being a part of the honors college a factor in your decision to attend Kent State?
Yes _____         No _____

Based on your perceptions, please answer the following questions by circling the appropriate number to indicate your response on this scale:
   (1) strongly agree  (2) agree  (3) disagree  (4) strongly disagree
My honors experience:

a. had a significant positive effect on my educational development and

b. contributed significantly to my personal enrichment.

c. provided me with intellectual challenge.

d. was satisfactorily assisted and guided by my honors advisor.

e. prepared me for my future educational and career goals.

f. provided me with closer interaction with faculty and other honors students.

g. increased my awareness and appreciation of the arts.

h. increased my awareness of ideas and civilizations.

i. improved my ability to think analytically.

j. increased my abilities in oral and written communication.

k. made me feel a part of a community of scholars

l. reinforced my respect for scholarship.

m. offered me opportunities for advanced, original and specialized work

n. provided me with flexibility in meeting my individual needs.

Did you complete a senior honors thesis/project? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, rate it as a learning experience on the following scale:

  outstanding _____  excellent _____  good _____  fair _____  poor _____

Did your thesis/project provide you with the kind of learning you expected from it? Yes ___ No ____

If no, explain.

________________________________________________________________________

Have you published work drawn wholly or in part from your thesis project? Yes _____ No ______

Did your graduate thesis/dissertation grow our of your honors thesis/project work? Yes ____ No ____

Has your senior honors thesis/project been a factor in any other way in what you have done since graduation? Yes ____  No ____

If yes, explain

________________________________________________________________________

Now that you’ve been away for a while, please list two or three honors instructors who stand out in your memory and comment on why you remember them.

Did you participate in a study abroad program while attending Kent State? Yes ___  No _____

If yes, which program?

________________________________________________________________________
Please indicate how effective your study abroad experience was in developing the competencies listed below. Circle the appropriate number using this scale:

(1) very effective     (2) effective     (3) not effective     (4) not applicable

a. ability to be flexible and independent 1 2 3 4
b. ability to relate to people from other cultures 1 2 3 4
c. ability to see United States culture in a new light 1 2 3 4
d. ability to view issues with a global perspective 1 2 3 4

Have you participated in any international activities or programs (e.g., hosting a student, travel, business) since graduation? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, what?
__________________________________________________________________________

During my freshman year: I lived on campus _____ I was a commuter student _____.

If you were a resident student did you live in an honors residence hall?
Yes _____ No _____

If you lived in an honors hall, rate it as a living/learning experience on the following scale:
Outstanding _____ excellent _____ good _____ fair _____ poor _____

Did you participate in any volunteer or community service activities while you were an honors student?
Yes _____ No _____ If yes, what?
__________________________________________________________________________

Are you actively involved in volunteer activities today? Yes _____ No _____

What was the most positive aspect of your honors experience?
__________________________________________________________________________

What was the least positive aspect of your honors experience?
__________________________________________________________________________

If you could change anything about the Kent State Honors College, what would it be?
Are you a member of the Kent State University Alumni Association?
Yes _____   No _____

Would you like more information about the Honors College Alumni Chapter?
Yes _____   No _____

Please list anything else you would like us to know about you that is not covered in the above questions.

Please attach a business card if you have one and a list of your publications if appropriate. Thank you for completing and returning this survey by (date).
Alumni Census

Hi! What’s new in your neck of the woods? We love hearing from our alumni. Please return this questionnaire. It’s like a letter from home for us. Really.

Name: ____________________________________________________________

Name while at UNM (if different from above): __________________________

Alias you would use if you were a TV detective: _________________________

Address: __________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

Home telephone: __________________ Work telephone: ______________________

E-mail address: __________________ Web page: _____________________________

Family: Spouse or partner’s name: ________________________________

(Is your spouse or partner a UHP alum?  □ Yes  □ No)

Children’s names: _________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

Pet names/species: _________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

Education/Institution Degree Year Received Major field of study

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________
Awards, Publications, Affiliations, Et Cetera:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

It’s All about YOU

Where do you work? __________________________________________________________

For how long now? ____________________________________________________________

What’s new in your life? (Babies, grandbabies, marriages, un-marriages, scandals, promotions, sports trophies won, etc.)

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

What weird or memorable thing did you do in the past 12 months?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Do you have pictures of it? □ Yes □ No

Would you be willing to email us one? □ Yes □ No

It’s All about US

What was your favorite UHP course? ________________________________

Why? _________________________________________________________________

What was your least favorite UHP course? ________________________________

Why? _________________________________________________________________
Which of the following best describes how you felt about the program while you were in it?

- ☐ Rocked my world!
- ☐ Bumped my world
- ☐ Slightly tilted my world
- ☐ Barely rippled across my world

Which of the following best describes how you feel about the program today?

- ☐ Still rocks my world!
- ☐ Jogs my world
- ☐ Mildly jostles my world
- ☐ Wait a minute…I was in the Honors program?

Which of the following aspects of the program most benefited you during your undergraduate career? Mark all that apply.

- ☐ Seminars
- ☐ Teachers
- ☐ Grading Policy
- ☐ H.S.A.C.
- ☐ Advisement
- ☐ Staff Assistance
- ☐ Lectures
- ☐ Physical Space
- ☐ Community Volunteer Activities
- ☐ Senior Options (Colloquium, Teaching, Thesis)
- ☐ Contact with students of diverse disciplines
- ☐ Activities (Conexiones, Sacred Sites, Scribendi, Conference Opportunities)
- ☐ Other: ________________________________

Would you recommend the UHP to your son or daughter? Why or why not?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Have you attended any UHP alumni events? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If so, which one(s)? __________________________________________

How would you rate these events?

- ☐ Spectacular as a fireworks display
- ☐ Spectacular as a bottle rocket display
- ☐ Spectacular as a firecracker display
- ☐ A dud

What obstacles prevent you from attending our alumni events?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
Help Us Out Here!

You remember guest speakers, don’t you? Those wonderful individuals who volunteered their time to come in and share their fascinating knowledge of some arcane bit of academe? Well, you don’t have to be an academic to help UHP students.

Sure, I’m willing to volunteer! Sign me up for:

☐ Mentoring
☐ Being a guest lecturer
☐ Leading a discussion
☐ Teaching a seminar
☐ Serving on a search committee for faculty, Carruthers Chair, etc.
☐ Serving on selection committees for scholarships, fellowships, etc.
☐ Serving on mock interview panel (usually once a year to prepare students for scholarship interviews)
☐ Donation of books, videos, audio/visual equipment, artwork, etc.
☐ Donation to the University Honors Program Alumni Endowment

How would you suggest we improve UHP alumni relations?

______________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

Thanks so much for taking time to respond. We know how busy you are. Don’t be a stranger. Stop by in person to say hello sometime!
APPENDIX K. SAMPLE SITE VISIT REPORT

This sample site visit report was utilized as a training exercise at the 2004 NCHC Institute to train prospective site visitors. The institute facilitators provided the summarized information about “College #3” (a real, but unidentified, institution) presented below to give a framework from which institute participants developed a series of questions they would ask during a site visit. Following this exercise, a condensed version of actual site visit report was provided. (The honors administrator at “College #3” gave permission for use of this information, both at the Institute and in this Assessment and Evaluation Committee document.)

Type of Institution: 4-year Private Institution
NCHC Member: Yes
Attendance at Most Recent NCHC Conference: Director, Students
Undergraduate Enrollment: approximately 2,100
Honors Program Enrollment: approximately 150
Honors Director: 0.5 FTE
Honors Staff: part-time student assistants
Honors Office Facilities: Director’s office, reception area, conference room/classroom, student organization offices, computer lab, student lounge, storage room.
Operating Budget: $44,700 including released time for director and $15,000 in external funding (private donor)
Honors Program Web Page: Yes
Honors Committee: Yes, honors committee (includes one student member)
Student Honors Council: honors student organization
Detailed Honors Policies and Procedures: Somewhat detailed
Honors Scholarships: None, but honors students frequently receive scholarships from the College.
Honors Student Research and Professional Development Funding: Honors students who have completed 18 honors credit hours receive $600 per year for research and/or professional development activities.
Honors Alumni Organization: No (program is only six years old)
Development Officer: No
Honors Housing: Scholar floors in residence hall (but non-honors students may live there)
Priority Enrollment for Honors Students: No
Honors Advising: Yes, provided by honors director
Recruiting and Acceptance into Honors Program: Students may be admitted to the Honors Program by the director or, in the case of some scholarship recipients, by the Director of Admissions without consultation with the honors director.
Honors Program Admission Requirements:
  Entering Freshmen: 1220 SAT, 3.60 high school grade point average, or top 10% of graduating class
  Continuing or Transfer Students: 3.45 grade point average
Honors Program Retention Requirements: 3.45 grade point average (but students with 3.30 may contract courses and remain in Honors Program until it is mathematically impossible for them to reach the 3.45 level at graduation)
Curricular Requirements: 26 honors credit hours, including first-year seminars, interdisciplinary honors courses, an optional 1-credit thesis preparation course, senior honors thesis. Honors contracts may be used to transform regular 3-credit courses into 4-credit honors courses.
Honors Program Recognition: Honors courses designated on transcript, medallion at graduation, transcript entry at graduation.
Other Recognition: Students (including those not in the honors program) also may pursue “Honors in the Academic Major” completely separately from the Honors Program. The Honors Program will accept the “Honors in the Academic Major” thesis for the honors program thesis.
Honors Program Self Study: Honors director provided extensive documentation of history and current operations of the honors program, including how the program fits into NCHC’s “Basic Characteristics,” supplemented by the background information below.
Background Data Provided: College catalog, mission statements for college and honors program, position descriptions, budget data, course descriptions and syllabi, policies, reports, NCHC and regional honors participation, evaluation data, honors office manual.
On-campus Interviews: Arranged as requested by site visitors.
I. Introduction

[Reviewer #1, Name and Institution, NCHC Position] and [Reviewer #2, Name and Institution, NCHC Position] were invited by ________________ to serve as outside reviewers for the Honors Program at College #3.

We have divided our report into five sections: (I) an introduction, (II) a brief description of the process of the program review, (III) a general narrative discussing the strengths of the honors program, (IV) specific commentary on the structure and organization of the honors program, and (V) an analysis of the program in terms of the National Collegiate Honors Council’s “Basic Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors Program.”

II. Process of the Program Review

We requested the following information from ________________, Director of the Honors Program, by e-mail and asked that the materials be provided at least a month before our site visit:

1. As part of the self study/planning document, please include a summary of the history of the Honors Program. In addition, please use the National Collegiate Honors Council’s “Basic Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors Program” to assess how your honors program meets or does not meet each of the characteristics and how you envision your college/program’s position with regard to each characteristic in the relatively near future.

2. Materials to be Provided in Advance of the Visit (as part of self study/planning document or as separate documents)
   a. college catalog
   b. mission statement of the honors program
   c. position descriptions for honors director and honors office staff
   d. recruiting materials for the college in general and the honors program in particular
   e. honors program budget for the past five years, including salary for the honors director and an average salary figure for assistant/associate deans/directors across campus
   f. honors program policies and procedures documents
   g. honors program annual reports for past five years
   h. listing and description of honors courses offered in past five years (if not included in annual reports)
   i. longitudinal data of honors course offerings and student participation in the honors program during the past five years (if not included in annual reports)
   j. participation in NCHC and regional honors council activities (if not included in annual reports)
   k. evaluation materials used for honors classes
   l. evaluation materials used for honors advising
   m. information about any scholarships or scholarship programs dedicated to honors students
   n. information about links between honors and overseas programs
   o. guidelines or manuals for thesis or creative projects
   p. information about any privileges (early enrollment, etc.) that honors students receive
   q. information on role, if any, of the honors program in promotion and tenure decisions
r. structure of and administrative policies concerning the student honors organization
s. facilities of the honors program

3. Conversations While on Campus
a. President of the College
b. Provost or the Chief Academic Officer of the College
c. Dean of the College
d. Directors of undergraduate units involved with honors program
e. Honors Program Director
f. Honors program office staff
h. Open meeting with faculty for honors courses [limited to these faculty]
i. Faculty and student honors committees
j. Open meeting with honors students [limited to these students]
k. Others thought appropriate by those responsible for the review process

We appreciate the way in which ___________ responded to our request for information well in advance of the site visit. Materials provided were comprehensive, organized, and an invaluable asset in the review process.

Our schedule for the two-day visit included interviews with Dr. ___________, Director of the Honors Program; Mr. ___________, Registrar; Dr. ___________, Dean of the College; Dr. ___________, Associate Dean of the College; Dr. ___________, Provost; members of the Honors Student Organization Executive Committee; honors student staff; members of the Honors Committee and other members of the faculty experienced with the Honors Program; Dr. ___________, Vice President for Fiscal Affairs and Planning; Dr. ___________, Director of Admissions; Mr. ___________, Associate Director of Admissions; and Ms. ___________, Director of Financial Aid. In addition, one of the reviewers met with Dr. ___________, Chair of the Faculty Senate.

In an effort to avoid inadvertent errors on matters of fact, a confidential working draft of this report was sent to the honors director by e-mail before the final version was submitted to College #3. Following receipt of the written report, the provost contacted us about minor errors of fact that are corrected in this amended report.

With more than 700 institutional members, the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC) is the largest national organization concerned with honors education, but it does not serve as a formal accrediting body for honors programs or honors colleges. The members of the visiting team are NCHC Recommended Site Visitors, and they bring a range of national honors experience. This document, however, should not be construed to constitute a report from the National College Honors Council as an organization.

III. General Narrative

At every point during our campus visit, we were told of the importance of the Honors Program to College #3. President ___________ referred to it as a “centerpiece program,” and literally everyone else with whom we visited noted that the honors program had been instrumental in the recruitment of more and better students. The Director of Admissions indicated that the honors program was quite important in recruiting new students, and many of the students with whom we visited cited the honors program as one of the reasons they decided to attend the college. One student went so far as to state that he/she would not have considered any college that did not have an honors program. The students also indicated that they valued the opportunity to interact with other honors students and faculty in their honors courses and that they had found their honors contract experiences to be beneficial. The faculty with whom we met indicated that they found honors students to have raised the intellectual climate of College #3 in general and that in particular they had enjoyed teaching these students in honors courses and working with them on honors contracts. Such unanimity certainly is evidence that the Honors Program is a very good “fit” for College #3 and that the campus community has been able to adjust to having an honors program at the college.
IV. The Structure and Operation of the Honors Program

In this section of our report, we address structural and operational aspects of the Honors Program at College #3. This honors program still is relatively young. It originally was proposed as a part of strategic planning in 199X, and _________ was selected as honors program director in 199X. He/she has shaped the program’s development since its inception. The first honors students were admitted in Fall, 199X. Currently, the program’s enrollment is approximately 150 students.

A. Overall Administrative Support

The Honors Program has a direct line of responsibility to the provost, a structure that is fully consistent with NCHC Guidelines (see Part V of this report). The Honors Program is a truly campus-wide feature of College #3 that includes both curricular and co-curricular programmatic components.

B. Honors Program Staffing and Budget

The director is released at half time in order to assume administrative responsibilities for the program. This model was established in the original proposal when the number of students was half the number currently enrolled. The director, in addition to working closely with the honors committee for program governance, teaches a thesis-preparation course and a noncredit freshman course, serves as honors advisor for all students in the program, and is expected to make a significant contribution in college-wide recruitment efforts. It is not clear to the reviewers whether his/her extremely successful performance will count significantly in the promotion process, but to expect a faculty member to invest himself or herself so thoroughly in the position and then not to count it for promotion would be counterproductive. If half-time release based on half the students was appropriate six years ago, it may well be time to reevaluate the adequacy of this release based on programmatic growth.

The responsibility for day-to-day management of the honors office’s operations is delegated to seven honors students, supervised by the honors director, who by all accounts are dedicated and resourceful. This innovative strategy has allowed the honors director to keep the honors office open on a full-time basis with minimal budgetary commitment. Although there is general agreement that students gain leadership experience and effectively manage the honors office, this approach is at best a stop-gap measure.

To paraphrase the Brownlow Commission, “The honors director needs help.” While Dr. _________ has done a remarkable “smoke and mirrors” job in staffing the honors office with seven talented and dedicated student assistants, this is not a viable long-term solution. Providing a secretarial position for the honors program would be an important step forward, and it would mean that the honors office would be open during summer months instead of just during the academic year. (We would caution against a part-time, shared secretarial position because of the conflicting demands on the secretary’s time, but perhaps a 75% time position would be workable for a person who does not wish to have full-time employment.) Having said this, however, we wish to commend the current student employees who have done an excellent job and who recently have created an extensive honors office standard operating procedure manual for their successors.

Interest has been expressed in housing additional responsibilities such as prestige scholarship preparation (Marshall, Rhodes, Truman, etc.) in the Honors Program. If College #3 wishes to become competitive for prestigious national and international scholarships, the Honors Program is the logical place in which to center its efforts. Such additional college-wide commitments definitely require reconsideration of the faculty FTE provided for the honors program office. The addition of this function—in and of itself—would justify moving the current honors director’s position to 75% time, but the 75% release also could be divided between the director (50%) and an assistant director (25%) who would be primarily responsible for the college’s scholarship preparation efforts along with other honors program duties that might be appropriate assignments. Practice at NCHC institutions varies in this regard. In addition to continuing its NCHC membership, we recommend that College #3 consider joining the National Association of Fellowships Advisors (NAFA) if it wishes to become actively involved in preparing its students for such prestigious scholarships. The NAFA web page link is <http://www.nafadvisors.org/>.
C. Term of Honors Director

Early in our campus visit, we had the impression that the position of honors director was intended to be a rotational one with an initial three-year appointment and the possibility of one--and only one--reappointment. As our visit continued, however, we learned from senior administrators and faculty that the director's appointment, like that of department chairs, is a three-year appointment subject to renewal. We know of no honors program that is well-recognized in NCHC as a leader in honors education that employs a forced rotation model, and we were relieved to learn that such need not be the case at College #3.

We are aware that some may be concerned that faculty assignments such as that of honors director can become “administrative sinecures,” but one need only examine the workload undertaken by the current honors director (advising, teaching, and program administration) to dispel any such notions with regard to this particular position.

To term-limit an honors director who, by apparent unanimous agreement, has done and continues to do a splendid job in his/her position makes little if any sense. To do so for no reason other than “consistency” would be a pronounced disservice to the Honors Program in particular and to College #3 in general.

D. Honors Director Reporting Line

With the restructuring of the central administration at College #3 and the creation of the new dean of the College position, there has been discussion of having the honors director report to the dean of the College instead of reporting directly to the provost as is now the case. We believe that this change in reporting line could be problematic at best. The proposed reporting structure would put any honors director in a difficult position, having to argue in favor of college-wide priorities when his or her own department chair (sitting in the same administrative committee and also reporting to the dean of the College) could well take such arguments as being hostile to the more parochial interests of the department.

As we understand the new arrangements, a number of administrators with campus-wide assignments will report to the provost or president. These would include, by way of example, those responsible for admissions, information technology services, and the library. We believe that the honors director (with his college-wide responsibilities and need to interact with admissions, residential life, etc. on an ongoing basis) occupies a position more analogous to these positions than to a department chair reporting to the dean of the College.

President ___________ indicated that he/she is considering an approach to seek additional honors program funding from a donor who already is providing funds. It therefore would not seem to be an opportune time to “downgrade” the honors director in terms of his/her reporting line and thus perhaps send the message that the honors program is no longer as central to the college’s strategic plan as had been indicated in the past.

E. Possibility of Promotion for Honors Director

The honors director is a tenured member of the faculty at the rank of associate professor. For the future development of the honors program, it is important that success in the role of director be taken into account in the college's promotion process. We recommend that clear requirements for promotion be developed that take into account the contributions made to the College by successful direction of the honors program as part of the overall promotion criteria, remembering that an honors director may or may not have his or her department chair as a "champion" in the promotion process (depending upon whether the chair is supportive of the honors director's administrative assignment and responsibilities).

F. Admission to the Honors Program

There are clear criteria for admission to the Honors Program, although in practice we understand there is greater flexibility than might be understood from merely reading the printed criteria. A point of concern among some faculty was that the Admissions Office has taken on the authority to grant “automatic admission” to the Honors Program for certain scholarship students as part of its recruiting efforts. While we understand and support the Admissions Office’s efforts to use the Honors Program as an integral part of its recruiting efforts, we share the faculty’s concern about the process for admission to the Honors Program. Admissions personnel stated to the reviewers that they believe that they
can identify students who will be successful in the Honors Program through a 45-minute interview, but they did not have any supporting data available during the interview. Neither of the review team members would claim to have such ability, even after long experience in honors education. Admissions personnel, in response to follow-up questions, indicated a preference for honors program admissions including more non-majority students, a better gender balance (recruiting more men), and moving toward more of a “quality mix” instead of so much reliance on standardized test scores. While these criteria may be appropriate for College #3, we believe that the faculty—not the Admissions Office—should be establishing the criteria and making the decisions on admission to the Honors Program. Coordinating honors program admissions and scholarships so that the incentives are maximized in recruitment value certainly makes sense, but if a student being considered for a Presidential Scholarship understands that this scholarship confers automatic admission to the Honors Program, it devalues admission to the Honors Program. Furthermore, the honors committee and faculty, who can be very helpful in recruitment, are cut out of the process. We recommend that College #3 carefully reconsider the decision that allowed the Admissions Office to grant automatic admission to the Honors Program to recipients of certain scholarships without separate faculty approval from the Honors Program.

We also recommend (as noted elsewhere in this report) that the honors director continue to report directly to the provost. With the director of admissions reporting directly to the president of the College, we believe the director’s reporting to the provost to be particularly important.

It also is worth noting in the context of honors program admission and participation that having more female than male honors students is not unusual. Honors directors are well aware of this pattern, and from time to time questions and responses on NCHC’s electronic bulletin board point out that this pattern is more likely the norm than the exception in coeducational institutions. At College #3, with significantly more female than male students enrolled, the pattern is even less surprising.

College #3 can take pride in the fact that it provides an education to many first-generation students. Sometimes, however, these students may not have the stellar records in high school that would qualify them for immediate admission to the Honors Program—but they may perform quite well once they arrive on campus. We recommend consideration of more active recruiting of students who demonstrate their potential by their academic performance in their first and second semesters. A sliding scale could help with the retention figures by providing continuing students with a slightly lower expectation for performance, perhaps a 3.25 grade point average during the freshman year.

G. Facilities

The space allocated to the honors office represents a significant improvement over the previous physical location (a single office with a small reception area). In addition to the honors director’s office, there is a seminar room, offices for student organizations, a study room, a lounge, and storage space. The current honors facilities are well located in close proximity to the library and academic buildings, and external signage identifies The Honors Program to the public. More elaborate signage would showcase the program and provide image enhancement as one of College #3’s centerpiece programs.

The office space for the director is reasonably adequate. The space that serves as a classroom and a conference room potentially creates schedule conflicts; however, the space is comfortable for honors committee meetings. The computer lab/study area needs to be expanded soon by several more work stations to accommodate the increased numbers of students, and computer upgrades are recommended. The atmosphere in these areas was lively because of the students constantly buzzing around, resulting in a sense of community. The lounge space is attractive and many students report using this site. One improvement that could be achieved at minimal cost is a new coat of paint to enhance the overall appearance of the honors office.

In the longer term, as new buildings are constructed on campus during the next two to four years, moving the honors office to space in a more prominent location on campus may well enhance the all-important first impression made on prospective honors students and their families as they consider College #3.

The addition of a seminar room that could also function as a gathering place and meeting room for the honors committee would be helpful. We recommend undertaking a long-range plan for a move that would provide more and centralized space to accommodate larger student enrollment (particularly adequate space for the computer workstations and for advising) and the increases in staff position commitment recommended above. Newer above-ground facilities that are
close to the library will have symbolic value, make use of attractive traditional architecture consistent with the college, and provide an interior spaciousness that befits the honors program. Such facilities will make a clear statement about the importance of academic excellence to College #3.

**H. Honors Residence Hall Floor**

By providing honors students with the option to live on a scholars honors floor in the residence hall, College #3 is meeting the needs of approximately 20 academically talented students who seek a residential component to their honors experience. It is worth noting that many institutions with honors housing have found over time that demand increases, so we would recommend that advance planning take this possibility into account.

**I. Honors Committee**

The members of the honors committee with whom we met were uniformly positive about the development of the Honors Program during the past six years, and they gave high praise to the leadership efforts of the honors director.

The honors committee has been, and continues to be, very active in the operations of the Honors Program. The active engagement of these faculty members is a significant programmatic strength. Its membership involves faculty, some of whom are ex officio from other campus committees. The membership of the provost on the honors committee is somewhat unusual in that such committees usually are in the position of making recommendations to the central administration, yet under this arrangement the provost would be in effect reviewing his/her or her own recommendations. Another concern of the reviewers is that only a single student has membership on the honors committee. We recommend that consideration be given to increasing the number of students on the committee to three or four as a way to achieve balanced representation from the honors student body.

The honors committee has taken on the task of conducting interviews of honors students at the end of the fall semester, and summarized results were made available to the reviewers. These results were quite typical of what one might expect to find in any honors program or honors college across the country. Honors students usually like their honors courses, even when they are more challenging than “regular” courses. Honors students also seem likely to be involved heavily in extracurricular activities and leadership positions on campus. Time-management issues are quite common, regardless of institution type or size, as students must adjust to increasing academic demands.

**J. Curriculum**

At the heart of all honors curricular experiences is the dedication and creativity of the faculty who teach honors classes. College #3 has recruited a dedicated honors faculty who are committed to the notion of honors education. These faculty are central to the honors program’s teaching and learning and bear the primary responsibility for promoting, facilitating, and evaluating student learning. Honors teaching presents faculty with opportunities for unique blends in research and teaching and can serve as a curricular laboratory for the College. While the variations among honors programs and institutions certainly are wide, characteristically the faculty are interdisciplinary in their approach in many classes.

Based on our interviews and review of syllabi, quality of instruction seems excellent. Faculty are strongly committed to honors pedagogy through designing interesting courses, engaging students in active learning, challenging students to think freshly and critically, and honing their basic skills. Faculty are appropriately prepared and qualified for the positions that they hold. Most of the faculty hold terminal degrees and evidence ongoing scholarly agendas, e.g., presentations and publications at least within the past six years.

Faculty vitas do not consistently present evidence of honors scholarship that is typical for young honors programs. Ultimately, faculty could be provided with workshops for teaching portfolios. Experts could be brought to campus to create a teaching portfolio for an honors class. The value of such workshops is increased development of teaching philosophy and honors methodology. Another forum for faculty development is through the National Collegiate Honors Council publications and annual conference. One faculty member reported that it was attendance at an NCHC conference that convinced him to teach an honors course. Monographs such as *Teaching and Learning in Honors* are resources that promote curricular development, not only in honors programs but within the broader college community. Data were not evident within this program review regarding the general “non-honors” faculty’s knowledge of the honors
program and its related mission. This question suggests a need for campus-wide evaluation, possibly in the form of a survey. Faculty may not be fully cognizant of how rich an educational experience is available on their campus.

The Honors College requires 26 honors credit hours and a 3.45 grade point average for “honors graduation.” Interestingly, however, there is no requirement that students earn any minimum particular grade in their honors work (honors courses or honors contracts) or have a minimum grade point average in that work. It is at least conceivable that a student could meet the current criteria with more “C” grades in honors work than grades of “A” or “B.” Some honors programs and honors colleges require a minimum “B” grade for honors work to count toward “honors graduation,” while others require a minimum grade point average in honors work undertaken. We recommend that College #3 review this aspect of the Honors Program’s requirements to determine whether a minimum standard should be established for grades earned in honors work.

The requirement for a 3.45 grade point average for honors program students is a reasonable one, coming near the higher end of the spectrum among NCHC institutions. This is particularly true when, as we understand the process, students (particularly new freshmen) are given some leeway if they fall short of 3.45. An alternative that might be considered is a sliding-scale grade point average requirement that allows a slightly lower grade point average early in a student’s career and then moves upward to the 3.45 level for graduation. The advantages of the sliding scale are that it may be somewhat less discouraging to new students and that it would make the entire process somewhat more transparent.

The use of honors contracts (which allow students by extensive faculty-supervised additional work to transform three-credit courses into four-credit honors courses) appears to have worked well. Both students and faculty report satisfaction with this approach. College #3’s shift from three-credit to four-credit courses, however, will require reconsideration of this approach. As the Honors Program matures, we recommend that it make every effort to offer more actual honors courses and decrease reliance on the honors contract approach.

K. Priority Enrollment

An important feature of many honors programs across the United States is priority enrollment for honors students. This programmatic feature promotes comprehensive curricular development by honors students, many of whom pursue multiple majors and minors, study abroad, and internship experiences. Without priority enrollment, scheduling difficulties can limit student opportunities and frustrate their laudable goals. We were surprised to learn that College #3 already has de facto priority enrollment through the Professor Permit Process (PPP) mechanism that the Registrar reports involves 4,000 individual computer entries per semester after the paper forms are received in the Registrar’s Office. Honors students reported that they make frequent use of the PPP mechanism, particularly earlier in their academic careers. To us, this appears to be a labor-intensive process in the extreme that could rather easily be resolved by allowing honors students to earn the priority enrollment privilege on a semester-by-semester basis. At a bare minimum, the honors director should be able to give electronic clearance to honors students to enroll in honors courses without the necessity for a paper form.

Across the nation, even large universities offering a wide range of honors courses realize that honors students will have serious class schedule difficulties if they cannot enroll early in the process and build their “regular” class schedule around the honors courses they are required to take. One of the reasons for the attrition rate in College #3’s honors program is the frustration students face in fitting everything into their already crowded schedules—a problem that is likely to increase as a result of the change to four-credit core requirement courses. Add to this the fact that honors students are among those most likely to engage in double majors, multiple minors, study-abroad, and internship experiences and one begins to understand why priority enrollment has come to be seen as a necessity and not “special privilege” for honors students. We might add that those institutions providing priority enrollment for their honors students are not shy about using it as a recruiting advantage.

L. Student Research and Honors Student Development Funds

An honors student development fund was established for honors students who successfully complete 15 honors credit hours. Generally, students reported this was the most important benefit of honors program membership. Students described the following uses of this funding: graduate school application fees, parking fees in [City] related to research, laptop computers, membership fees for professional associations, and computer supplies. We recommend the Honors Program consider modifying the use of these funds so that they will more directly support senior theses or capstone
experiences. For example, students could submit small grant proposals that document how this funding will be used in their thesis research. The format of such grant proposals would provide experience in writing funding requests and support qualitative development of the project outcomes.

M. Honors Program Web Page

Many prospective honors students make extensive use of the Internet to gain information as they consider possible colleges and universities, as do students who already have arrived on campus. The web page for the Honors Program <http://www.__________> is attractive and informative, but we noted that some of the content has not been updated recently. In addition to the need for updating of some elements of the web page, a suggestion we offer is that the URL be provided to the National Collegiate Honors Council so that NCHC can establish a link from its membership page to the honors program web site at College #3. We also recommend that those responsible for the College #3 Admissions web page <http://www._______________> develop a link to direct prospective College #3 students to the honors program web page.

N. Two-tier Honors Recognition

Graduates of the Honors Program receive a transcript notation and a handsome medallion. In discussions with the Registrar, we learned that it also would be possible to endorse students’ diplomas to designate their graduation from the Honors Program. We recommend that this additional recognition on the diploma be implemented.

Many honors programs and honors colleges provide some form of recognition for their students part way through their undergraduate career. Terms such as “general education honors” and “general honors” come to mind. Such early recognition serves to motivate students and quite properly gives recognition for their honors academic achievements. We believe that it would be worthwhile for College #3 to consider such recognition. (There already is something in the way of informal recognition in that only students who have completed sixteen honors credit hours are eligible for professional development funding, so making the recognition more formal on students’ transcripts might not be a major change.)

“Honors in the Academic Major” at College #3 already is in place, and we recommend that similar recognition be made available to honors program students who do not pursue honors in the discipline.

As noted above, at College #3 students may earn recognition through the Honors Program and also earn Honors in the Academic Major. Because “Honors in the Academic Major” preceded the establishment of the Honors Program, it remains a separate option (although students may use a single senior thesis for both types of recognition). This arrangement is somewhat confusing to students, and we recommend that ways be considered to integrate “Honors in the Academic Major” into the Honors Program while at the same time retaining appropriate flexibility for departmental faculty and students in their respective majors.

O. Annual Reports

We very much appreciate the voluminous information provided by Dr. __________ in response to our request for information in advance of our visit to the campus of College #3. As founding director of a quite-new honors program, he/she was able to pull together the data and materials that we needed to prepare for our site visit, but through time this task will become more and more difficult. We recommend that annual reports for the Honors Program be prepared and that these reports be disseminated widely on campus in coming years. We also recommend that these reports be archived as part of the historical record of the Honors Program.

V. The Honors Program in the Context of the National Collegiate Honors Council’s Basic Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors Program

A brief analysis of the Honors Program at College #3 in terms of National Collegiate Honors Council guidelines is provided below. Although it is the largest national organization concerned with honors education, with more than 700 institutional members, the National Collegiate Honors Council does not serve as a formal accrediting body for honors programs or honors colleges.
BASIC CHARACTERISTICS OF A FULLY DEVELOPED HONORS PROGRAM

[NOTE: This site visit report was prepared before the most recent amendments to NCHC’s Basic Characteristics.]

No one model of an honors program can be superimposed on all types of institutions. However, there are characteristics that are common to successful, fully developed honors programs. Listed below are those characteristics, although not all characteristics are necessary for an honors program to be considered a successful and/or fully developed honors program.

A fully developed honors program should be carefully set up to accommodate the special needs and abilities of the undergraduate students it is designed to serve. This entails identifying the targeted student population by some clearly articulated set of criteria (e.g., GPA, SAT score, a written essay). A program with open admission needs to spell out expectations for retention in the program and for satisfactory completion of program requirements.

__________’s assessment is correct: the Honors Program has clearly defined admissions criteria suited to the pool of prospective students for the College although how consistently these criteria are upheld by the Admissions Office is unclear.

The program should have a clear mandate from the institutional administration ideally in the form of a mission statement clearly stating the objectives and responsibilities of the program and defining its place in both the administrative and academic structure of the institution. This mandate or mission statement should be such as to assure the permanence and stability of the program by guaranteeing an adequate budget and by avoiding any tendency to force the program to depend on temporary or spasmodic dedication of particular faculty members or administrators. In other words, the program should be fully institutionalized so as to build thereby a genuine tradition of excellence.

The Program has an approved mission statement that accords well with the College mission and an ongoing operating budget. The lack of its own personnel budget and its dependence on faculty contracts/appointments in departments may put staffing at risk, or at least create tensions, in the future if departments are shorthanded and resent the administrative load of the faculty member selected as honors director. Effective support by the provost can prevent such a problem.

The honors director should report to the chief academic officer of the institution.

At present, College #3 meets this criterion with a direct reporting line to the provost. As noted at some length in Part IV of this report, and for the reasons given there, the reviewing team believes that the honors director should continue to report directly to the provost instead of having the reporting line shifted to the new Dean of the College position—even if in some ways the dean of the college might be considered a “chief academic officer” for many purposes at College #3. (See IV-D, Honors Director Reporting Line, pages 5 and 6.)

There should be an honors curriculum featuring special courses, seminars, colloquia, and independent study established in harmony with the mission statement and in response to the needs of the program.

The curricular design is admirable. The first-year seminar is an outstanding cornerstone sequence by all accounts, and the subsequent special topics are interdisciplinary and unique, giving the honors students unusual opportunities to develop basic skills and integrative and critical thinking. The leadership seminar will bridge effectively the distance between these lower-division courses and the senior thesis. Some programs that lack this bridge lose many of their students who often fail to complete the program partly because of lost momentum. The only concern is the sustainability of this curriculum as sections must be added to accommodate the growing enrollment.

The program requirements themselves should include a substantial portion of the participants’ undergraduate work, usually in the vicinity of 20% to 25% of their total course work and certainly no less than 15%.

Twenty-six honors credit hours are required for graduation. This total represents 23% of the total number of credits required for graduation. As the honors curriculum is developed, development of core curriculum and integration with major requirements may contribute to increased offerings. Generally, the honors curriculum is within the standard range, i.e., 15-25%.
The program should be so formulated that it relates effectively both to all the college work for the degree (e.g., by satisfying general education requirements) and to the area of concentration, departmental specialization, pre-professional or professional training.

The program meets expectations well, partly thanks to the structure of the general education requirements for the College. Students reported that not all honors courses are accepted as credit for the core and “favor” English and History. Such reports are consistent with “early” development of an honors curriculum. Future goals may consider wider diversity of topics and general education curricular approval. Music majors and Education majors are reportedly challenged to include Honors in their academic programs. This trend is consistent with problems in academic planning inherent within the discipline, e.g., NCATE requirements. Again, future curricular planning may wish to consider the unique needs of these majors, and as a general matter care must be taken across campus not to disadvantage honors program students as the College shifts from three-credit to four-credit courses.

The program should be both visible and highly reputed throughout the institution so that it is perceived as providing standards and models of excellence for students and faculty across the campus.

As we have discussed in the earlier sections of this report, from everything we read by way of preparation and encountered during our site visit, the Honors Program is both visible and highly regarded at all levels of the College #3. We share the opinion that remarkable progress has been made in the brief history of the Honors Program.

Faculty participating in the program should be fully identified with the aims of the program. They should be carefully selected on the basis of exceptional teaching skills and the ability to provide intellectual leadership to able students.

By all indications, the Honors Program takes care with the faculty selected to teach honors classes and works closely with these faculty to make certain that they are aware of the program’s goals and adapt their courses appropriately.

The program should occupy suitable quarters constituting an honors office with such facilities as an honors library, lounge, reading rooms, personal computers and other appropriate decor.

The honors office space is well organized and serves a number of functions. While it could use a new coat of paint, it certainly is an improvement over the space available to the Honors Program in the past. If in the next few years, the honors office can, as part of overall campus construction and relocations, be moved to a ground-floor suite it could well be more attractive to students—both those already on campus and those whom the college wishes to recruit.

The director or other administrative officer charged with administering the program should work in close collaboration with a committee or council of faculty members representing the colleges and/or departments served by the program.

The director works closely with honors faculty and the honors committee, and the committee meets regularly. We recommend engaging the energy and thought of this group on an ongoing basis—for approving courses, planning the academic recognition, and wrestling with the current challenges of an expanding enrollment.

The program should have in place a committee of honors students to serve as liaison with the honors faculty committee or council who must keep them fully informed on the program and elicit their cooperation in evaluation and development. This student group should enjoy as much autonomy as possible conducting the business of the committee in representing the needs and concerns of all honors students to the administration, and it should also be included in governance, serving on the advisory/policy committee as well as constituting the group that governs the student association.

The student representation on the honors committee could be enlarged, especially as enrollment increases. The Honors Club, however, seems to have a good infrastructure, and students are considering ways to expand membership and student involvement.
There should be provisions for special academic counseling of honors students by uniquely qualified faculty and/or staff personnel.

Advising seems quite satisfactory, and the collaboration with departmental advisors seems to have been strengthened recently. Advising is mentioned as part of the first-year seminar. As noted about other aspects of the Honors Program, challenges in meeting students’ honors advising needs will come with increasing enrollment.

The honors program, in distinguishing itself from the rest of the institution, serves as a kind of laboratory within which faculty can try things they have always wanted to try but for which they could find no suitable outlet. When such efforts are demonstrated to be successful, they may well become institutionalized, thereby raising the general level of education within the college or university for all students. In this connection, the honors curriculum should serve as a prototype for things that can work campus-wide in the future.

The honors curriculum is indeed distinct from the rest of the College’s curriculum in its use of interdisciplinary, often team-taught, special-topics courses. It is not clear, however, whether this “laboratory” or “incubator” function has had any impact on the rest of the institution. This might be explained by the early establishment of curricular offerings. Honors can effectively model curricular and pedagogical innovations, but it commonly is difficult to take responsibility for spreading them into the larger institution and achieve results without receptive collaborators. In fiscally-challenging times, this effort becomes even more difficult. Team-teaching, smaller class sizes, and active learning methods, for example, may simply be seen as too expensive unless they are made an institutional priority. Interdisciplinary courses may also be seen as unwanted competition for traditional courses in the majors.

Finally, it was noted that non-honors students are permitted to enroll in honors classes under some circumstances. This enrollment pattern may contribute to the College’s community of teaching and scholarship. As the Honors Program grows, this practice should be reconsidered, however, because it influences student benefits and membership within the honors community. A primary feature of the Honors Program is classes dedicated to academically qualified students, and special care should be given to ways to be certain honors classes meet these students’ needs.

A fully developed program will emphasize the participatory nature of the honors educational process by adopting such measures as offering opportunities for students to participate in regional and national conferences, honors semesters, international programs, community service, and other types of experiential education.

The annual and five-year reviews are good tools, and the director has begun continuous improvement habits for the program. The five-year evaluation report was well done. Additional assessment methods would offer greater variety of perspective and a more robust picture of the program. Most important would be the establishment of a course evaluation process distinctive to honors courses, all the more helpful given the absence of a mandated institutional student evaluation of instruction except for pre-tenure faculty. This process could be optional and could invite response from both the instructor and students each semester. The director could be the sole or primary reader of such evaluations, but he or she could summarize them at the end of each year in the annual report. As the program expands, the evaluation of instruction may be even more necessary in order to monitor curriculum quality. A second area of needed assessment is the senior thesis. Currently no examining committee or oral defense is required. Instituting an oral defense (common in many honors programs) by a committee of three or four faculty members would provide more perspective on quality, but a strong first step would be to provide guidelines to thesis mentors that clarify quality expectations (while maintaining appropriate flexibility), along with an annual meeting of these mentors—and perhaps with students-in-progress as well.

The honors director, other College #3 administrators, faculty, and students have participated in National Collegiate Honors Council conferences in 2000 (Washington, DC), 2001 (Chicago), 2002 (Salt Lake City), and 2003 (Chicago). As part of their participation, ___________ has presented in several conference venues. Such early and consistent participation in NCHC’s conferences reflects very well on College #3.

___________ has been invited to serve on a “Developing in Honors” Workshop panel at the 200X NCHC conference in [City] on the topic of “__________________________.” This annual workshop is designed for experienced honors
administrators, faculty, and professional staff. From what we have seen during our review of the Honors Program, there is no doubt that he/she will be a valuable presenter for this workshop panel.

In addition to the extensive NCHC participation noted above, three honors students were presenters at the 2003 ______ Region’s honors conference in _____________________.

Fully developed two-year and four-year honors programs will have articulation agreements by which honors graduates from two-year colleges are accepted into four-year honors programs when they meet previously agreed-upon requirements.

This standard is satisfied although we found no separate articulation agreements specific to honors. Dr. ________ reports one student has successfully transferred from ________ Community College. If the articulation is working, however, and community colleges are made aware of the honors connection (for transfer), there may be no need for a separate articulation document.
PART ELEVEN. ASSESSMENT APPENDICES

APPENDIX L. USEFUL ONLINE BIBLIOGRAPHIES ON ASSESSMENT

The American Library Association:

http://www.ala.org/ala/acrlbucket/infolit/bibliographies1/assessmentbibliography.cfm

Clemson University:

http://assessment.clemson.edu/links/arbiblo.htm

Indiana University Southeast:

http://www.ius.edu/assessment/biblio.cfm

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

http://www.library.uiuc.edu/assessment/biblio.html

Other Resources Relevant to Assessment

APA Cyberguide on Assessment


http://www.aacu.org/About/statements/assessment.cfm

Educational Technology Training Center at Kennesaw State University

http://edtech.kennesaw.edu/

JNCHC. Vol. 7, No. 1 (Spring/Summer 2006).

North Carolina State University University Planning & Analysis Index of Assessment Resources

  [http://www2.acs.ncsu.edu/UPA/assmt/resource.htm](http://www2.acs.ncsu.edu/UPA/assmt/resource.htm)


University of Washington

  [http://depts.washington.edu/learning](http://depts.washington.edu/learning)

University of West Florida: Assessment Resources Page

  [http://uwf.edu/cutla/Tipsheet.cfm](http://uwf.edu/cutla/Tipsheet.cfm)

  [http://uwf.edu/cutla/Assessres.cfm](http://uwf.edu/cutla/Assessres.cfm)

University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire

  [http://www.uwec.edu/assess/plan/](http://www.uwec.edu/assess/plan/)


Washington State University

  [http://wsuctprojectdev.wsu.edu/](http://wsuctprojectdev.wsu.edu/)
## Appendix M: Bloom’s Taxonomy

### Action Words for Bloom’s Taxonomy

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Appendix N: Student Learning Outcomes

University of West Florida

Honors Academic Learning Compact
Student Assessment
Students wishing to achieve the status of University Honors Scholars will be assessed through their performance in the sequence of honors core classes. In Great Books 1, quizzes and short answer questions will be used to assess progress in the areas of critical thinking and communication. Formal papers and presentations in the honors seminars will be used to assess progress in the areas of content, critical thinking, communication, and integrity/values. The honors thesis, a demanding and discipline-specific capstone project, will be used to assess overall achievement in all five domains.

Student Learning Outcomes
University Honors Scholars should be able to:

Content
- Review and evaluate the knowledge, concepts, techniques, and methodology appropriate to the discipline of the honors thesis
- Identify major issues, debates, or approaches appropriate to the discipline of the honors thesis
- Synthesize complex information appropriate to the discipline of the honors thesis
- Develop an argument or project and defend or present it appropriately in accordance with the methods of the discipline of the honors thesis

Critical Thinking
- Apply discipline-based and/or cross-discipline-based higher order thinking skills to a range of topics and issues
- Select and organize credible evidence to support converging arguments
- Solve discipline-based and/or cross-discipline-based problems using strategies appropriate to the subject of the honors seminar or honors thesis

Communication
- Communicate effectively in one-on-one or group contexts
- Express ideas and concepts precisely and persuasively in multiple formats
- Employ writing conventions suitable to the research method and/or creative process of the subject of the honors seminar or honors thesis

Integrity/Values
- Practice civic engagement through honors-related service activities
- Practice appropriate standards related to respect for intellectual property
- Practice appropriate professional standards of behavior

Project Management
- Exhibit disciplined work habits as an individual
- Apply discipline-based and/or cross-discipline-based knowledge to design a problem-solving strategy
- Conceive and plan a high-quality research and/or creative capstone project in the appropriate disciplinary or multi-disciplinary context
Appendix O: Assessment Matrix

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Content

Critical Thinking

Communication

Integrity/Ethics

Project Management
## Appendix P: Scoring Rubrics

P-1. Model of a 4-Point Rubric Template from Kennesaw State University:

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<th>Developing 2</th>
<th>Accomplished 3</th>
<th>Exemplary 4</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Stated Objective or Performance</strong></td>
<td>Description of identifiable performance characteristics reflecting a beginning level of performance.</td>
<td>Description of identifiable performance characteristics reflecting development and movement toward mastery of performance.</td>
<td>Description of identifiable performance characteristics reflecting mastery of performance.</td>
<td>Description of identifiable performance characteristics reflecting the highest level of performance.</td>
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(\http://edtech.kennesaw.edu/intech/rubrics.htm#templates)
## P-2. Student Learning Outcome Scoring Rubrics

### Content

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<th>Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Exceeded Expectations</th>
<th>Met Expectations</th>
<th>Failed to meet Expectations</th>
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<tr>
<td>Review and evaluate the knowledge, concepts, techniques, and methodology appropriate to the discipline of the honors thesis</td>
<td>Review and evaluation demonstrated extensive breadth, highly selective quality and was and superbly organized; methods were well developed or employed cutting edge disciplinary techniques or exceptional creative processes and exceeded the range necessary for the project</td>
<td>Review and evaluation was solid, appropriate and adequate for the task but not extensive and may have failed in spots; methods recognized traditional and accepted disciplinary techniques or creative processes</td>
<td>Review and evaluation was incomplete spotty, inconsistent and inadequate to the task; materials revealed haphazard disorganization; methods were pedestrian and barely up to disciplinary standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify major issues, debates, or approaches appropriate to the discipline of the honors thesis</td>
<td>Major issues were addressed comprehensive, appropriately, were judiciously chosen, and well suited to the task, revealing exceptional care in approaching the project</td>
<td>Major issues were adequate to task but sometimes not appropriate or complete, portions seemed off task</td>
<td>Major issues were absent, approaches were outside of the discipline, unacceptable, inappropriate and off task</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synthesize complex information appropriate to the discipline of the honors thesis</td>
<td>The information and synthesis displayed insight and thorough development of ideas, strong support, sophisticated writing, mature thought</td>
<td>The information and synthesis displayed some consistency and depth as well as adequate support. The writing shows analytic skill, support, and convincing facility with major thoughts</td>
<td>The information presented lacks convincing support, no real analysis, little attempt to connect ideas, no real integration of ideas, no convincing ability to convey the argument or purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop an argument or project and defend or present it appropriately in accordance with the methods of the discipline of the honors thesis</td>
<td>Overall impact of the argument or project was comprehensive and deeply knowledgeable and thoughtful, the presentation revealed had clear depth and sophistication, the strategy was complex and rich</td>
<td>Overall impact of the argument or project was adequate and at times seemed comprehensive and mostly knowledgeable, the presentation was workmanlike and up to the task, but not overly impressive</td>
<td>Overall impact of the argument or project was incomplete, and inadequate, the presentation was flawed, poorly designed and unworkable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Critical Thinking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Exceeded Expectations</th>
<th>Met Expectations</th>
<th>Failed to meet Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Apply discipline-based and/or cross-discipline based higher order thinking skills to a range of topics and issues</strong></td>
<td>Applications revealed insight and thorough development of ideas with mature, rich, and sophisticated connections between ideas and/or concepts evident in analysis and/or synthesis over a wide range of topics and issues</td>
<td>Applications revealed some insight and some development of ideas with adequate connections drawn between ideas and/or concepts evident in analysis and/or synthesis over a sufficient range of topics and issues</td>
<td>Applications failed to reveal insight and development of ideas and/or lacked connections drawn between ideas and/or concepts; analysis and/or synthesis appeared weak, and the range of topics and issues insufficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Select and organize credible evidence to support converging arguments</strong></td>
<td>Documents reflect clear and well-developed controlling ideas that are well supported by evidence that has been judiciously and appropriately selected, all woven properly together into strong and highly convincing arguments</td>
<td>Documents reflect mostly clear and adequate controlling ideas that are mostly supported by solid and appropriate evidence; the parts fit together properly enough to create a credible argument</td>
<td>Documents lack clear and controlling ideas or the ideas are not supported well by solid evidence; the evidence selected seems inadequate or off the point, the sum of the parts don’t fit together well and don’t establish a credible argument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Solve discipline-based and/or cross-discipline-based problems using strategies appropriate to the subject of the honors seminar or thesis</strong></td>
<td>Strategies evinced were sophisticated, professional, and well developed throughout; problem solving skills seemed exceptional and salutary</td>
<td>Strategies evinced were sophisticated, professional, and well developed throughout; problem solving skills seemed exceptional and salutary</td>
<td>Strategies evinced were inadequate to the and/or inappropriate; problem solving skills seemed lacking or rudimentary</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Communication

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Exceeded Expectations</th>
<th>Met Expectations</th>
<th>Failed to meet Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communicate effectively in one-on-one or group contexts</td>
<td>Verbal communications were articulate, clear, concise and presented with poise and maturity in both one-on-one and group contexts; in one-on-one contexts superb listening and proper interpersonal skills were always in evidence; in group contexts superb listening skills as well as respect for differences in opinion and for others always apparent</td>
<td>Verbal communications were sufficiently clear, articulate, and concise as well as presented appropriately in both one-on-one and group contexts; in one-on-one contexts good listening and interpersonal skills were mostly in evidence; in group contexts good listening skills as well as respect for differences in opinion and for others were predominant</td>
<td>Verbal communications were unclear clear and/or rambling and/or suffused with bad verbal habits (lots of “ums” or vocal infelicities) in either one-on-one and group contexts; in one-on-one and/or group contexts listening and interpersonal skills were lacking; respect for differences in opinion and for others were not evident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Express ideas and concepts precisely and persuasively in multiple formats</td>
<td>Ideas and concepts in documents and projects were consistently presented with precision, clarity, and thorough development so as to be very persuasive, and also appeared in multiple written and verbal formats of varying length and focus</td>
<td>Ideas and concepts in documents and projects were mostly presented with adequate precision, clarity, and enough development to be persuasive; not all written and/or verbal formats evinced consistent quality of focus and appropriate length</td>
<td>Ideas and concepts in documents and projects lacked precision, clarity, and development and were not persuasive; no range in written and/or verbal formats attempted evinced; quality, focus and appropriate length lacking or ignored</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employ writing conventions suitable to the research method and/or creative process of the subject of the honors seminar or thesis</td>
<td>Presentation of work was exceptional and very well organized and reflected a highly competent and professional level of writing standards and conventions; the work revealed great familiarity with the disciplinary standards and followed appropriate APA, MLA, etc. guidelines</td>
<td>Presentation of work was adequate and mostly well organized and/or reflected at least the minimal professional level of writing standards, formats, and conventions as presented in disciplinary guidelines</td>
<td>Presentation of work was inadequate, sloppy, disorganized, and/or failed to recognize or follow professional writing guideline standards, formats and conventions</td>
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</table>

### Integrity/Ethics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Exceeded Expectations</th>
<th>Met Expectations</th>
<th>Failed to meet Expectations</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Practice civic engagement through honors-related service activities</td>
<td>Completed more than 60 hours of community/honors service</td>
<td>Completed 40 to 59 hours of community/honors service</td>
<td>Completed fewer than 40 hours of community/honors service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice appropriate professional standards of behavior</td>
<td>Interactions and practices reflected thorough advance preparation; interpersonal behaviors were characterized by consistent maturity, grace, poise, and high personal standards</td>
<td>Interactions and practices reflected some preparation and were adequate to the task; interpersonal behaviors were characterized by flashes of maturity, grace, and poise, but were not of consistent quality</td>
<td>Interactions and practices reflected little preparation and were often inadequate and lacking; interpersonal behaviors were immature and awkward with little evidence of inward personal standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice appropriate standards related to respect for intellectual property</td>
<td>Thoroughly professional and ethical behaviors were consistently in evidence; all appropriate boundaries related to property and persons were highly respected at all times</td>
<td>Professional and ethical behaviors were mostly in evidence; appropriate boundaries related to property and persons were mostly respected with only scattered and unintentional lapses evident</td>
<td>Professional and ethical behaviors were not in evidence; appropriate boundaries related to property and persons were not respected and/or acts of theft or fraud detected</td>
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</table>
## Project Management

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<tr>
<th>Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Exceeded Expectations</th>
<th>Met Expectations</th>
<th>Failed to meet Expectations</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Exhibit disciplined work habits as an individual</strong></td>
<td>Student kept all deadlines; material consistently presented in a professional and organized manner; no waiting until the last minute</td>
<td>Student missed a few deadlines; materials were adequately organized and mostly well presented; deadlines were an at times an issue</td>
<td>Student missed most deadlines and waited until the last minute; presented materials were unorganized and sloppy; missed deadlines created issues for the instructor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Apply discipline-based and/or cross-discipline-based knowledge to design a problem-solving strategy</strong></td>
<td>The problem-solving strategy reflected comprehensive and sophisticated familiarity with the discipline(s) and was well-thought out, complex, and very applicable</td>
<td>The problem-solving strategy was adequate for the task, reflected sufficient familiarity with the discipline(s), and was applicable and workmanlike, but not brilliant</td>
<td>The problem-solving strategy was inadequate for the task, revealed gaps in knowledge central to the discipline(s), or was not applicable or useful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conceive, plan, and execute a high-quality research and/or creative capstone project in the appropriate disciplinary or multi-disciplinary context</strong></td>
<td>Conception and planning of the project evinced comprehensive, knowledgeable, and wide-ranging familiarity with the disciplinary/multidisciplinary context; the project itself was rich, complex, or cutting-edge and reflected obvious and thorough mastery of the discipline(s) central skills and behaviors</td>
<td>Conception and planning of the project was adequate to the task and covered the necessary areas within the disciplinary/multidisciplinary context; the project itself was appropriate and reflected acceptable mastery of the discipline(s) central skills and behaviors</td>
<td>Conception and planning of the project was inadequate to the task with obvious omissions or holes within the disciplinary/multidisciplinary context; the project itself was substandard and did not reflect acceptable mastery of the discipline(s) central skills and behaviors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX Q: Critical Thinking Rubric

Guide to Rating Critical & Integrative Thinking
Washington State University, Fall 2006

For each of the seven criteria below, assess the work by:

a) circling specific phrases that describe the work, and writing comments
b) circling a numeric score

Note: A score of 4 represents competency for a student graduating from WSU.

1. **Identifies, summarizes (and appropriately reformulates) the problem, question, or issue.**

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<th>Emerging</th>
<th>Developing</th>
<th>Mastering</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2</td>
<td>3 4</td>
<td>5 6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Does not attempt to or fails to identify and summarize accurately.
- Summarizes issue, though some aspects are incorrect or confused. Nuances and key details are missing or glossed over.
- Clearly identifies the challenge and subsidiary, embedded, or implicit aspects of the issue. Identifies integral relationships essential to analyzing the issue.

Comments:

2. **Identifies and considers the influence of context * and assumptions.**

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<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>5 6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Approach to the issue is in egocentric or socio-centric terms. Does not relate issue to other contexts (cultural, political, historical, etc.).
- Analysis is grounded in absolutes, with little acknowledgment of own biases.
- Does not recognize context or surface assumptions and underlying ethical implications, or does so superficially.
- Presents and explores relevant contexts and assumptions regarding the issue, although in a limited way.
- Analysis includes some outside verification, but primarily relies on established authorities.
- Provides some recognition of context and consideration of assumptions and their implications.
- Analyzes the issue with a clear sense of scope and context, including an assessment of audience. Considers other integral contexts.
- Analysis acknowledges complexity and bias of vantage and values, although may elect to hold to bias in context.
- Identifies influence of context and questions assumptions, addressing ethical dimensions underlying the issue.

Comments:

(http://wsuctproject.wsu.edu/ctr.htm)
Appendix R: Data Collection Sheets

Assessment Data Sheet: University of West Florida

Honors Seminar: ______________________  Faculty ________________
Department __________________________ Date _________________

Instructions: Please fill out the appropriate area with the number of students who fit the criteria over the total number of students in the class. For example, if ten students in a class of 12 exceed the expectation of “Exhibit discipline-based and/or cross-discipline-based higher order thinking skills,” please enter 10/12 in that box, and please return this form to the honors office, 50/224.

### Critical Thinking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Exceeds Expectations</th>
<th>Meets Expectations</th>
<th>Fails to meet Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apply discipline-based and/or cross-discipline-based higher order thinking skills to a range of topics and issues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select and organize credible evidence to support converging arguments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solve discipline-based and/or cross-discipline-based problems using strategies appropriate to the subject of the honors seminar</td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Communication

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Exceeds Expectations</th>
<th>Meets Expectations</th>
<th>Fails to meet Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communicate effectively in one-on-one and/or group contexts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Express ideas and concepts precisely and persuasively in multiple formats</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employ writing conventions suitable to the research method and/or creative process of the subject of the honors seminar</td>
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### Integrity/Ethics

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<tr>
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<th>Fails to meet Expectations</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Practice appropriate professional standards of behavior</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice appropriate standards related to Respect for intellectual property</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Assessment Data Sheet

**Honors Thesis** of: ______________________   Faculty _______________
Department ___________________________   Date _________________

Instructions: Please mark the box that best describes the performance of your thesis student in each area. For example, if you thought that your student met the expectation of “Exhibit discipline-based and/or cross-discipline-based higher order thinking skills,” please put a check or “X” in that box, and please return this form to the honors office, 50/224.

### Content

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Exceeded Expectations</th>
<th>Met Expectations</th>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Review and evaluate the knowledge, concepts, techniques, and methodology appropriate to the discipline of the honors thesis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify major issues, debates, or approaches appropriate to the discipline of the honors thesis</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Synthesize complex information appropriate to the discipline of the honors thesis</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop an argument or project and defend or present it appropriately in accordance with the methods of the discipline of the honors thesis</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

### Critical Thinking

<table>
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<tr>
<td>Apply discipline-based and/or cross-discipline-based higher order thinking skills to a range of topics and issues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select and organize credible evidence to support converging arguments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solve discipline-based and/or cross-discipline-based problems using strategies appropriate to the subject of the honors thesis</td>
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</table>

### Communication

<table>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employ writing conventions suitable to the research method and/or creative process of the subject of the honors thesis</td>
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<td></td>
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</table>

### Integrity/Ethics

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Exceeded Expectations</th>
<th>Met Expectations</th>
<th>Failed to meet Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Practice appropriate professional standards of behavior</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice appropriate standards related to respect for intellectual property</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Outcome</td>
<td>Exceeded Expectations</td>
<td>Met Expectations</td>
<td>Failed to meet Expectations</td>
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<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhibit disciplined work habits as an individual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply discipline-based and/or cross-discipline-based knowledge to design a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>problem-solving strategy</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceive, plan, and execute a high-quality research and/or creative capstone</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>project in the appropriate disciplinary or multi-disciplinary context</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

30. I identified major issues, debates, or approaches appropriate to the discipline of the honors thesis:

<table>
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<th>1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>At times</td>
<td>Regularly</td>
<td>Very often</td>
<td>Beyond all my expectations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

31. I synthesized complex information appropriate to the discipline of the honors thesis:

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<td>Very often</td>
<td>Beyond all my expectations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

32. I developed an argument or project and defend or present it appropriately in accordance with the methods of the discipline of the Honors:

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>At times</td>
<td>Regularly</td>
<td>Very often</td>
<td>Beyond all my expectations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

33. I applied discipline-based and/or cross-discipline-based higher order thinking skills to a range of topics and issues:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
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<th>4</th>
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<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>At times</td>
<td>Regularly</td>
<td>Very often</td>
<td>Beyond all my expectations</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

34. I selected and organized credible evidence to support converging arguments in my writing:

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>At times</td>
<td>Regularly</td>
<td>Very often</td>
<td>Beyond all my expectations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

35. I solved discipline-based and/or cross-discipline-based problems using strategies appropriate to the subject of the honors seminar or honors thesis:

<table>
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<th></th>
<th>1</th>
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<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>At times</td>
<td>Regularly</td>
<td>Very often</td>
<td>Beyond all my expectations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

36. I communicated effectively in one-on-one or group contexts:

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
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</tr>
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</table>
37. I expressed ideas and concepts precisely and persuasively in multiple formats:

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<td>At times</td>
<td>Regularly</td>
<td>Very often</td>
<td>Beyond all my expectations</td>
</tr>
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</table>

38. I employed writing conventions suitable to the research method and/or creative process of the subject of the honors seminar or honors thesis:

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<td>At times</td>
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<td>Very often</td>
<td>Beyond all my expectations</td>
</tr>
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39. I demonstrated an active commitment to civic engagement through service:

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<td>At times</td>
<td>Regularly</td>
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<td>Beyond all my expectations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

40. I practiced appropriate professional standards of behavior:

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<td>At times</td>
<td>Regularly</td>
<td>Very often</td>
<td>Beyond all my expectations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

41. I practiced appropriate standards related to respect for intellectual property:

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<td>At times</td>
<td>Regularly</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

42. I exhibited disciplined work habits as an individual:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<td>At times</td>
<td>Regularly</td>
<td>Very often</td>
<td>Beyond all my expectations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

43. I applied discipline-based and/or cross-discipline-based knowledge to design a problem-solving strategy:

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<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>At times</td>
<td>Regularly</td>
<td>Very often</td>
<td>Beyond all my expectations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

44. I demonstrated the ability to conceive, plan, and execute a high-quality research and/or creative capstone project in the appropriate disciplinary or multi-disciplinary context:

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Not at all</td>
<td>At times</td>
<td>Regularly</td>
<td>Very often</td>
<td>Beyond all my expectations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

45. We welcome general comments you have about the academic portion of the Honors Program:

__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
**Honors Benefits**

**Housing**

46. Choose the housing option that best described your living situation (circle one):

- I lived in honors housing
- I lived in other on-campus housing
- I lived off campus

47. Assuming the Honors Program had space available in all three different residence hall options (The Village, South Sides, and North Sides), if you were given the choice between living on-campus in honors housing OR living on-campus in general housing, what would you choose?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Honors housing</th>
<th>Non-honors housing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Value</td>
<td>Poor Value</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

48. Rate the value of having honors housing space in North Sides:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Value</td>
<td>Poor Value</td>
<td>Somewhat Valuable</td>
<td>Very Valuable</td>
<td>Extremely Valuable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

49. Rate the value of having honors housing space in the South Sides/Villages:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
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<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Value</td>
<td>Poor Value</td>
<td>Somewhat Valuable</td>
<td>Very Valuable</td>
<td>Extremely Valuable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

50. Did you take advantage of any of the honors housing activities (Ice cream socials, etc.)? Yes No

51. Are special honors housing activities important? Yes No

52. Rate the value of special honors housing activities to you:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
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<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Value</td>
<td>Poor Value</td>
<td>Somewhat Valuable</td>
<td>Very Valuable</td>
<td>Extremely Valuable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

53. If the Honors Program had a new honors living & learning center near the center of campus, would you be drawn to live there?

- Yes
- No

54. What facilities would you like to see in a new honors living & learning center?

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

55. Did you have any problems with housing? If so, please describe.

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

56. How has living in an honors housing space been of value to you?

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________
57. We welcome general comments you have about housing.

__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________

Service Events

58. I participated in an honors service event. Yes No

59. Rate the value of service events to you:

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<tr>
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<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Value</td>
<td>Poor Value</td>
<td>Somewhat Valuable</td>
<td>Very Valuable</td>
<td>Extremely Valuable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

60. The service event I enjoyed the most was:

_______________________________________________________

61. I would like to see the Honors Program provide the following service event:

_______________________________________________________________

Social Events

62. I participated in an honors social event. Yes No

63. Rate the value of social events to you:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Value</td>
<td>Poor Value</td>
<td>Somewhat Valuable</td>
<td>Very Valuable</td>
<td>Extremely Valuable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

64. The social event I enjoyed the most was:

________________________________________________________

65. I would like to see the Honors Program provide the following social event:

_______________________________________________________________

Conferences

66. I attended conferences (NCHC, SRHC, FCHC) through the Honors Program: Yes No

67. Rate the value of conference attendance to you:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
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<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Value</td>
<td>Poor Value</td>
<td>Somewhat Valuable</td>
<td>Very Valuable</td>
<td>Extremely Valuable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

International Trips

68. I participated in an international travel opportunity that the Honors Program offered: Yes No

69. Rate the value of international travel to you:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Value</td>
<td>Poor Value</td>
<td>Somewhat Valuable</td>
<td>Very Valuable</td>
<td>Extremely Valuable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
70. I would like to see the Honors Program sponsor an academic trip to ____________________________

71. in order to study _______________________________________________________________

72. We welcome any general comments you have about our honors opportunities.
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________

73. How did being a member of the Honors Program make a difference to your personal growth as an individual and to your college experience (e.g., your thinking, self-image, personal outlook, values, friendships, intellectual development, preparation for subsequent academic work, career plans, etc.)?

74. If you had to make this decision again, would you be an honors program member? Yes No

75. What is your strongest recommendation for improving the UWF Honors Program experience?
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________

76. What are your future plans?
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________
Is there anything else you’d like to share with us?
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________
Appendix S. Measuring Learning Outcomes for Required Freshmen Honors Sequence: Overview

Our program evaluates how well students in the required first year, two-semester honors sequence meet the program’s goals and learning objectives. It does so by having clear program goals and learning objectives, an assessment rubric, and a first year portfolio tied directly to the learning objectives. Adjustments to the program are made each year after data is collected.

Goals of the Program

The goals of the Honors Program are as follows:

1) To create the opportunity for our most highly motivated students to seek a deeper intellectual experience

2) To create an environment in which students challenge themselves to pursue an advanced level of intellectual inquiry and independent thought

Learning Objectives of the Program

By fulfilling the Honors Program requirements, the student will:

- Develop the habit of intellectual curiosity
- Understand the concepts of “culture” and “theory” from a variety of academic perspectives
- Identify ways of thinking and knowing within academic and professional disciplines
- Comprehend challenging readings in primary and secondary sources
- Write academic papers that are intellectually sound and stylistically proficient
- Serve as models of intellectual seriousness and courage
- Assume leadership roles in and out of class
## APPENDIX T. MEASURING LEARNING OBJECTIVES FOR REQUIRED FRESHMEN HONORS SEQUENCE:

Assessment Rubric  
Sara E. Quay, Ph.D., Coordinator, Endicott Scholars Honors Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understand the concepts of “culture” and “theory” from a variety of academic</td>
<td>First year portfolio</td>
<td>At least 80% of honors students will describe ways in which honors</td>
<td>X% of first year students reported that HON100 and HON150 changed the way they</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>perspectives</td>
<td></td>
<td>courses explored the concept of culture from the perspective of</td>
<td>look at the world around them and expanded their understanding of culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>different disciplines.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First year portfolio: General Questionnaire (pre and post</td>
<td>At least 80% of honors students will show increased depth of understanding</td>
<td>X% of first year students gave improved definitions of the concepts of “culture”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>assessment)</td>
<td>between pre and post evaluation.</td>
<td>and “theory” at the end of the semester.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehend challenging readings in primary and secondary sources</td>
<td>First year portfolio</td>
<td>At least 80% of honors students will describe their honors course</td>
<td>X% of first year students reported that their understanding of complex reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>readings as challenging and will report a developing ability to</td>
<td>material improved over the course of the academic year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First year portfolio: Learning Reflection (pre and post</td>
<td>At least 80% of incoming honors students will show increased depth of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>assessment)</td>
<td>comprehension between pre and post evaluation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write academic papers that are intellectually sound and stylistically proficient</td>
<td>First year portfolio</td>
<td>At least 80% of honors students will describe their growth as academic</td>
<td>X% of first year students documented their growth as academic writers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assume leadership roles in and out of class</td>
<td>First year portfolio</td>
<td>At least 80% of honors students will have spoken at events, met with</td>
<td>X% of first year students participated in a leadership role outside of class.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples of leadership roles include:
Measuring Learning Outcomes for Required Freshmen Honors Sequence: First Year Portfolio

The foundational honors sequence—HON100 Honors Seminar I and HON150 Honors Seminar II—is assessed through a number of methods, including a year-end portfolio. The goals of the portfolio are tied directly to the program Learning Objectives. Faculty teaching the HON100/HON150 sequence are required to submit an end-of-the-year statement to the coordinator summarizing the portfolio findings as they relate to the program Learning Objectives.

First Year Portfolio

Assessment of HON100 Honors Seminar I & HON150 Honors Seminar II [Required freshmen honors sequence]

Introduction. Re-read the essay you wrote when you applied to the honors program as well as your answers to the Learning Survey you completed on the first day of class. Then, write a 1-page introduction that frames your portfolio from the vantage point of the start of your freshman year. Where did you start your journey? What were the major turning points along the way?

Learning Objectives 1 & 2

*Develop the habit of intellectual curiosity*
*Identify ways of thinking and knowing within academic and professional disciplines*

**Assessment:** Describe 2 concepts/readings/ideas from this course that you found especially interesting—that made you want to learn more or led you to think about the world around you differently. In a 3-4 page essay, describe each concept/reading/idea and demonstrate how it impacted you and your ways of thinking. (30%)

Learning Objectives 3 & 4

*Understand the concepts of “culture” and “theory” from a variety of academic perspectives*
*Serve as models of intellectual seriousness and courage*
Assessment: Throughout the year, we have read many different theories about culture and have applied these theories to different texts. Choose two of those theories and write a 3-4 page essay that: 1. summarizes, in your own words, the main ideas of each theory; 2. describes how each theory can be used to understand culture; and 3. compares and contrasts what happens when a similar cultural text is read through the lens of each theory. (30%)

Learning Objective 5
Comprehend challenging readings in primary and secondary sources

Assessment: Look back at the readings you were asked to complete as an honors student this year. Re-read Lindlof’s “Cultural Studies” essay, and an additional essay that you found particular challenging. Consider what aspects of the essay you understand at the end of the year. In a 1-2 page essay, describe your growth as a reader this year. Compare and contrast your confidence and comprehension from September to May. Identify 1-2 ways you can challenge yourself to be a better reader in the future. (10%)

Learning Objective 6
Write academic papers that are intellectually sound and stylistically proficient

Assessment: Choose three papers you wrote this year and in a 3-page essay describe how each registers your growth as 1. a student and 2. a writer. These papers do not have to be your best. Rather, they should be turning points in your understanding of yourself as a learner and as a writer. Feel free to draw on the in-class writing you did as evidence of your growth. At least one of the papers should be from the first semester. (20%)

Learning Objective 7
Assume leadership roles in and out of class

Assessment: Thinking back on your transition to college, it is important to note how you created a place for yourself in the college community. In a 1-2 page essay, tell the story of your transition to college and how you have built connections. Pay particular attention to leadership roles you have taken on this year—through in-class contributions and out-of-class activities—and set 2-3 goals around leadership for next year. (10%)

Conclusion. When you have completed the above sections, write a 1 page conclusion. Be sure to summarize the key aspects of your portfolio and to point the way toward your future goals and growth.
APPENDIX U — LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT —
NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY

READING ASSESSMENT GOALS for HON 190/191

The following is a list of reading skills that we expect our honors freshmen students to master 190/191.

**Contextual Analysis**

1. Students will be able to critique a work of fiction or non-fiction with respect to its genre, themes, issues, style, point of view, characterization, setting, plot, imagery, rhetorical strategies, prosodic techniques, and so on.
2. Students will be able to compare and contrast two written works with respect to their genres, styles, ideas, theses, settings, cultural contexts, and so on.
3. Students will be able to identify and critically assess a particular text’s audience.
4. Students will be able to critique a piece of writing with respect to *ethos, pathos, and logos*.
5. Students will be able to critique and contextualize their readings from a cultural, historical, sociological, psychological, scientific, religious, ethnic, and/or philosophical point of view.
6. Students will examine a text and will be able to persuasively argue the merits of a text with respect to certain assumptions, key concepts and ideas, claims, and supporting evidence.

**Applied Skills**

7. Students will be able to summarize, orally or in written form, the plot of a work of fiction or non-fiction (e.g., novel, short story, autobiographical essay, etc).
8. Students will be able to paraphrase, orally or in written form, a poem.
9. Students will be able to identify and summarize, orally or in written form, the thesis and main points of a secondary source (e.g., chapter in book of critical essays, journal article, newspaper article, refereed on-line web source, etc.).
10. Students will be able to create a well-organized and hierarchical outline of ideas, main points, and/or issues based upon their reading of a particular text.