

2003-2004 REPORT OF THE FACULTY HONORS COMMITTEE

1. Introduction

Academic year 2003-2004 continued to see a high fraction of the students admitted to the College of Letters and Science eligible for admission to honors—5,007 of 10,517 in fall, 2003, and 5,060 of 10,901 in fall, 2004. As a consequence, classes of incoming honors students now number between 450 and 475. We have stabilized the admissions at this level so as not to overrun the number of classroom honors seats available, even though this is a reduction from admission of 500 students in 2002. There has been a concurrent expansion in applications for sophomore summer apprentices and summer senior thesis grants, with requests for support of sophomore apprentices reaching an all time high this year. Because of these constraints we expect that next year a larger fraction of students potentially eligible for honors work will be unserved.

Nonetheless, individual departments and the Honors Program have found some ways to improve and extend opportunities available to honors students even with constant or declining dollars from the state budget. These enhancements come in four categories—classes available, advising opportunities and staff services, grants and awards for research and outstanding achievement, and new programs.

2. Classes Available

Even when a stringent budget situation challenges faculty morale, arranging to offer honors classes is a welcome opportunity which benefits both faculty and students. The Honors Program in 2003-04 used Undergraduate Initiative Funding to help several departments institute honors in courses which had previously not offered it. Among the departments increasing their offerings by this means were the Departments of Spanish and Portuguese, Sociology, and History—all departments with a very significant honors demand. These courses were both small seminars restricted to honors students and larger lectures with an honors only discussion section taught by the professor.

In addition, the Honors Program sponsored its first offering of a team-taught, all honors course aimed at first- and second-year students and conferring Honors breadth credit: English 175: Literature and Other Disciplines. The course was team taught by Professor of English Susan Bernstein and Professor of History of Science Lynn Nyhart. The model for this kind of team taught course is one in which two faculty members divide the lecturing responsibility in a course of 75-80 students, entirely taught at an honors level, with each faculty member taking two discussion sections. One faculty member gets the “normal” credit for the course and one Department can apply to the Honors Program for replacement lecturer funding for the other professor. The result is 80 students offered honors instruction for the lecturer replacement funding that would otherwise have provided a class for 20 students—while preserving contact between student and faculty members in a setting of a small discussion section. Such team-taught courses offer opportunities for extremely innovative instruction on broad fundamental questions. The program is still under development. Interested faculty and departments should contact the Honors Program.

3. Advising Opportunities and Staff Services

In order to enhance our services to faculty and staff in L&S departments as well as students in the Honors Program, the Program developed a new position, Associate Director for Advising and Curriculum, and appointed a full-time academic staff member to that position in February 2005. In addition, there are two professional advisors and three peer advisors trained to know the details of Honors Program policy, the three Honors degree tracks, Honors grants and fellowships, and HSO activities.

In the past, the Program offered two types of advising services: walk-in advising (brief drop-in meetings on a “first-come, first-served” basis for students needing assistance with course selection, an explanation of Honors policy, or assurance that they are on track with regard to degree requirements) and advising appointments (half-hour meetings scheduled in advance for students with special problems, complex questions, or several issues to discuss). In Fall 2004, the Program began to offer a third service, small group advising sessions. It now requires all first-year students to attend a small group session before making individual appointments. These sessions assist students in understanding L&S requirements as well as those required by the Honors Program. Peer advisors (advanced Honors students) lead the groups and cover frequently asked questions regarding registration, DARS reports, course selection, and declaring a major. After students have attended a small group advising session, they can schedule an individual appointment with any of the advisors. Since instituting the requirement, advisors have found that individual meetings are more productive because there is time to explore areas of student interest and need.

Honors staff members also meet with visiting families and prospective students, advise new students at SOAR, and assist students in the preparation of grant proposals and fellowship applications.

In an effort to improve communication and collaboration with advisors in the departments, the Honors staff created the *L&S Honors Undergraduate Advising Handbook*, a 50-page pamphlet that explains Honors tracks and Program policies, describes grants and awards available to Honors students, gives an overview of the Honors Student Organization, outlines advising options, and provides an introduction to the staff. In March 2005 staff members were invited to speak at the L&S Advisors Consortium, where they presented an overview of the Honors Program and distributed the new *Handbook*. Materials in the pamphlet are also available online, in the section labeled “For Undergraduate Advisors” in the new Honors website: <http://www.honors.ls.wisc.edu>.

4. Grants And Awards For Research And Outstanding Achievement

Through the generosity of private donors, the program continues to offer a wide array of awards available to Honors students for research at both the introductory and senior thesis levels, for study or research abroad, for service, and for undergraduate career achievement. Among these awards are:

- *The Leadership Trust Award. Applicants must be L & S Honors students who demonstrate evidence of achievement and leadership in co-curricular or public/community service activities. The donor, who has elected to remain anonymous, endowed the award for one or more students who submit the best proposals for a project, which will “improve the UW-Madison, the university community, and/or the University student body.” In the Fall of 2004, due to the success of the Leadership Trust program, the donor provided through a deferred annuity an additional endowment of \$250,000 which will support the annual award of a second Leadership Trust Award in the future.*

The L&S Honors Program Faculty Honors Committee awarded the 2004-2005 Leadership Trust Award to Kristen Petroschius for her project, “Action Dialogues,” intended to help the University address its need to make the campus a more welcoming place for students who are members of minority groups. The campus has established a goal to enhance its minority membership by 2008 and is eager to have programs that are able to improve the campus climate for all persons, including those of diverse backgrounds. Kristen sought a Leadership Trust Award for a project intended to train a core group of 20-25 undergraduate students to be facilitators in the use of a theater and performance-based pedagogy developed by Paulo Freire and Augusto Boal. This technique can be described as: “A system of physical exercises, aesthetic games, image techniques, and special improvisations whose goal is to ...[turn] the practice of theater into an effective tool for the comprehension of social and personal problems and the search for their solutions (Augusto Boal).”

Kristen's project has helped move the University community further toward its goals of increased awareness, understanding, and acceptance of diversity on campus, as well as provided an on-going mechanism through which such important issues as race, privilege, and diversity can continue to be addressed and the overall campus climate improved.

- *The Ann J. Haney Infinite Boundaries Scholarship* was established in 2003 with a gift from an anonymous donor in memory of Ann J. Haney and of her efforts and accomplishments in the area of women's health. This annual award provides a currently enrolled L&S Honors student with \$2,500 to support research on women's health.

The 2002-2003 recipient of the Infinite Boundaries Scholarship was Sarah Hoffmann. The award provided support for Sarah to participate as a Summer Sophomore Research Apprentice in the research program of Dr. David H. Abbott of the Dept. of Obstetrics and Gynecology and the National Primate Research Center. Among her accomplishments from this experience Sarah presented a paper at Northwestern University for a regional polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) laboratory meeting at which she was the only undergraduate in attendance. Through the Infinite Boundaries Scholarship, Sarah was able to continue her research program, focused on PCOS, under Dr. Abbott's supervision and recently received a Hilldale Undergraduate Research Fellowship to conduct Honors Senior Thesis research on "Fetal androgen excess programs lutenizing hormone hypersecretion in a nonhuman primate model for polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS)."

- *F. Chandler Young Distinguished Student and Travel Awards*. The Norman Bassett foundation has begun an annual gift to the program which will recognize the most distinguished senior honors student with a \$2,500 prize awarded at graduation and will provide a \$2,500 travel award to a junior honors students. Both awards were given at graduation, 2004, with three runner-up prizes from other gift funds recognizing the outstanding quality of applicants and nominees for these awards.
- *Funding and Expansion of the Summer Sophomore Research Apprenticeship Program*. The Honors Program continues to seek permanent funding for this very important program as well as to enhance the number of wards offered to above 40. 35 Sophomore Apprenticeship Grants were awarded for the summer of 2004 – 3 in the Humanities, 16 in the Natural Sciences, and 16 in the Social Sciences. Nineteen different academic disciplines were represented among the awards.

5. New Programs

In November of 2004 the Honors Program's new website, www.honors.ls.wisc.edu, went live. The development of the site was funded by a generous gift from Stanley and Linda Sher. The website now contains extensive content about the program, including its degrees and curriculum, as well as content targeted at specific constituencies such as students, faculty, prospective students and their families, and departmental undergraduate advisors. Since its inception, the site has become a major communication tool for the program as well as an important resource for faculty, staff, and students.

During the summer of 2003, the Honors Program developed and sent out a newsletter, *The Honors Challenge*, to program alumni and to the parents of currently enrolled Honors students. Over 4,000 newsletters were sent out. The newsletter contained a greeting and update by the Faculty Director, an overview of the Honors Program and its history, features on Honors student research including senior thesis and Sophomore Apprenticeship experiences, and features on several students who received some of the program's most prestigious awards such as the Mensink, Hamrin, Leadership Trust, and Distinguished Senior Honors Student awards. A request was sent to alumni to let us know where they are now, and over 30

responses were received. Response to the newsletter was very positive. A new newsletter is currently in production for distribution this coming summer.

The First-Year Student Common Book Program continued and expanded with the Fall 2003 and Fall 2004 events. With continued and increased support from the Evjue Foundation, each incoming Honors first-year student was provided a free copy of that year's Common Book and was asked to read it before arrival on campus. The first meeting—reception—for the Program was a dinner meeting at which the author lectured on her book, received questions and first-year students divided into peer-led (upper class Honors student) discussion groups to explore the books and the issues and ideas raised by them. The Fall 2003 Common Book was *Love at Goon Park* by Prof. Deborah Blum of the Dept. of Journalism and Mass Communication. The Fall 2004 Common Book was *Talking about Politics* by Prof. Katherine Cramer Walsh (a alumna of the Honors Program) of the Dept. of Political Science. With *Talking about Politics* the Common Book Program took on a community service component where interested members of Madison's retirement communities were sent free copies of the Common Book. Discussions of the book took place later at the retirement communities and were facilitated by Honors student volunteers.

The Program participated in the Freshman Interest Group Program in Fall 2003 and Fall 2004. In the Fall 2003 term three FIG's conferred honors credit in one or more of the three linked classes. In addition, some Honors students were enrolled in two Biology Interest Groups. In the Fall 2004 term two FIG's conferred honors credit, and Honors students also enrolled in the two Biology Interest Groups offered.

The Program this year has continued a particularly active array of co-curricular activities available to honors students. Among these activities are the Honors Professional Development Workshop Series (a series of nine workshops), cultural events like a trip to the American Players Theatre and a theatrical production, volunteer activities in the community such as the spring Dinner for the Homeless, and recreational opportunities such as intramural sports. A fuller account of those programs is included in the report that follows.

The Honors staff has continued to provide timely academic advice to program students, both at SOAR and in registration advising. With the smallest honors staff in the Big Ten, the program does find itself strapped for staff to carry out the full range of activities appropriate to a degree-granting honors program in a major public research university, just as it is in need of more small honors courses and lacks space in which honors students may meet, study, use the computer network, listen to lectures or discussions and talk with faculty and other students. The program is looking for ways in which these needs may be addressed in the future.

6. Faculty Honors Committee

The Faculty Honors Committee is responsible for discussing and approving the policies of the Letters and Science Honors Program, reviewing proposals for new honors-in-the major programs, and awarding Undergraduate Initiative Funding. It also participates in a variety of programs for honors students and makes decisions about other funding awards as needed. The chair of the Faculty Honors Committee is the Director of the Letters and Science Honors Program.

Members as of spring 2005:

Charles Camic, Sociology (on leave)
Booth Fowler, ILS and Political Science
Christopher Kleinhenz, French and Italian and Medieval Studies
Laura McClure, ILS and Classics

Cyrena Pondrom (Chair), English and Women's Studies
Charles Snowdon, Psychology and Zoology
Anthony Stretton, Zoology
James Weisshaar, Chemistry
Eric Wilcots, Astronomy (beginning Spring 2005)
Ashley E. Dallman, Honors Student Representative

Ex Officio:

Jeffrey Shokler, Associate Director for Administration, L&S Honors Program
Charlotte Frasca, Associate Director for Advising and Curriculum, L&S Honors Program

Curriculum and Policy Actions of the Faculty Honors Committee (Fall 2003 – Fall 2004)

During the past year, the Committee considered numerous proposals for changes in Honors Program policy as well as modifications in the Honors in the Major curriculum for several departments.

Curricular changes include the following:

Approval of request to expand the Medieval Studies Certificate Program to include the study of Arabic, 4 November 2003.

Approval of request to change the Honors in the Major program in Biochemistry, 4 November 2003.

Approval of proposal to expand the list of courses that can be used to satisfy the Honors requirement for the Bacteriology major; additional courses now include those from Biochemistry and Chemistry, 9 March 2004.

Approval of proposal for Honors in the Major in History, 14 April 2004

Approval of request to award three Honors credits for Math 221 followed by Math 275, 20 September 2004.

Approval of request to change Honors in the Major in English, 16 December 2004.

Approval of new courses for Honors in the Major in Communication Arts, 24 February 2005.

Honors Program policy changes include the following:

Decision to award Honors credits for international study in Florence, 4 November 2003.

Decision that the same Honors science courses should not be required for science and non-science majors, 4 December 2003.

Decision to require approval from both major departments when a student wants to use one senior thesis for two Honors degrees, 21 October 2004.

Decision to submit proposal to Curriculum Committee for Interdisciplinary Honors courses, 27 January 2005.

Approval of revised language for the L&S Policy Book regarding Honors students in graduate courses, 10 March 2005.

Approval of revised language for the L&S Policy Book regarding senior honors thesis, 10 March 2005.

7. Honors Program Staff

The Honors Program staff advises Honors students, administers admissions, policies, grants and awards, and helps organize student activities. The Faculty Director of the program also serves as the Chair of the Faculty Honors Committee which is responsible for program oversight, governance, and policy.

Cyrena Pondrom, Faculty Director (50%)

Jeffrey Shokler, Associate Director for Administration, L&S Honors Program (100%)

Charlotte Frasca, Associate Director for Advising and Curriculum, L&S Honors Program (100%, since Feb. 2005)

Mary Czyszczak-Lyne, Office Administrator, Program Assistant 3 (100%)

Molly Todd, Academic Advisor, Project Assistant (50%)

Christopher Hoppe, Academic Advisor, Project Assistant (50%)

Ben Jedd, Associate Instructional Specialist, Forensic Team Coach (10 hr/wk)

Matthew Berg, Peer Advisor, Student Hourly

Lynnae Fischbach, Peer Advisor, Student Hourly

Kevin Tao, Peer Advisor, Student Hourly

Rachel Tabak, Office Assistant, Student Hourly

Claire Kervin, Office Assistant, Student Hourly

Honors Advising

In order to assess advising load over a six month period between July 1, 2004 and December 31, 2004, advising contacts were analyzed from data in the program's Advising Database. During this time, the Honors Program's advising staff consisted of only two 50% Academic Advisors (Project Assistants) and three Peer Advisors (student hourlies who work between 6-8 hours per week). Over the course of the six months, this small group of advisors handled over 1,200 advising contacts (789 by Academic Advisors, 258 by Peer Advisors). The total number of contact hours represented was 346.5 hours spread among small group advising sessions, walk-in advising meetings, scheduled appointments, e-mail contacts, and phone contacts. With the recent hiring of the program's new Associate Director for Advising and Curriculum, a full-time academic staff position, the program's advising capacity will increase significantly. Every summer, Honors advisors also staff SOAR and serve as the primary advisors for incoming first-year Honors cohorts numbering about 450 students.

8. Program Statistics

The total Honors student population as of December 31, 2004 was 1,496. They were enrolled in the following programs:

Number in Honors in the Liberal Arts only (HLA): 1,159 (77.5%)

Number in Honors in the Major only (HM): 202 (13.5%)

Number of Students Doing Comprehensive Honors (both HLS and HM): 135 (9.0%)

9. Undergraduate Initiative Funding (UIF)

Honors Program received \$190,000 in Undergraduate Initiative Funding in 2003-2004 and 2004-2005. A major portion of UIF funding is used to encourage offering of new and high demand Honors courses or discussion sections. The funding enables a faculty member to teach an Honors course by providing funds to staff the course the faculty member would otherwise teach, or encourages a faculty member to teach an Honors discussion section by providing \$750-\$1,000 of supplies and expense funding. In Fall 2003, 9 lectures and 8 discussion sections were supported, and in Spring 2004, 12 lectures and 15 discussion sections were

supported. And, in Fall 2004, 10 lectures and 6 discussion sections were supported. UIF funding is also used for Honors summer senior thesis research support.

10. Student Awards

The Honors Committee selects winners of the Mensink, Hamrin, and Trewartha grants for Senior Honors thesis work in November of each year. In the spring of each year UIF funding is allocated for Senior Honors Thesis awards for research in the summer. As a result of a gift from the Bassett Foundation, the committee now selects one senior to receive the F. Chandler Young Distinguished Senior Honors Student Award and one sophomore or junior to receive the F. Chandler Young Travel Award, which supports research-related travel or study abroad. The Program also grants one Leadership Trust Award to a student proposing a project of benefit to the University and its community. Each spring the committee also selects recipients of Sophomore Summer Research Apprenticeships. These grants carry a stipend of \$1,500 for the summer, and have been funded by the Regents Scholars Fund, the Brittingham Fund and the Knapp Fund. Application requires sponsorship by a faculty member. Students present the results of their work in late July at a retreat at Hilltop Farm near Spring Green. The program funded 35 awards in spring 2004.

The grants awarded from Fall 2003 through Fall 2004 are tabulated below:

<u>Grant/Award</u>	<u># of Awards</u>	<u>Total Funding</u>
A. Fall '03 Trewartha Undergraduate Research Award \$13,158.80	20	
B. Fall '04 Trewartha Undergraduate Research Award \$17,036.68	21	
C. Fall '03 Mark Mensink Honors Research Grant	1	\$7,708.06
D. Fall '04 Mark Mensink Honors Research Grant	1	\$8,799.36
E. Fall '03 Tricia Nordby Hamrin Research Award	1	\$2,500.00
F. Fall '04 Tricia Nordby Hamrin Research Award	1	\$2,500.00
G. Spring '04 Ann J. Haney Infinite Boundaries Scholarship	1	\$2,500.00
H. Spring '04 Honors Sophomore Summer Research Apprenticeship Grant	35	\$52,500.00
I. Spring '04 Leadership Trust Award	1	\$8,000.00
J. Spring '04 Honors Summer Senior Thesis Research Grant	12	\$31,002.10
K. Spring '04 F. Chandler Young Travel Award	1	\$2,500.00
L. Spring '04 Abraham S. Burack Scholarship \$500.00	1	
M. Spring '04 F. Chandler Young Distinguished Senior Honors Student Award	1	\$2,500.00
N. Spring '04 Dean's Distinguished Senior Honors Student Award	3	\$7,500.00
	100	\$158,7044.90

11. Annual Co-Curricular Activities

The Honors Program staff together with the Honors Student Organization (HSO) sponsors a variety of activities and events during the year so students can extend what they are learning beyond the walls of the classroom to the larger world and, in the process, build a strong sense of community with their peers, faculty, and staff members. HSO focuses its efforts in four main areas: community service, extracurricular social events, community building outreach, and professional development. Honors students are encouraged to initiate their own groups and projects that are supported and facilitated by the HSO advisor and officers. The HSO also publishes a weekly e-mail bulletin, Honors On-Line, of campus events of special interest to Honors students.

The Honors Common Book program, inaugurated in 2003 and very well received, continued. In Summer 2003, all incoming Honors students received a copy of *Love at Goon Park: Harry Harlow and the Science of Affection* by UW-Madison professor of Journalism Deborah Blum. Students read the book during the summer and discussed it at the first Honors reception in the fall. The Fall 2004 Common Book was Prof. Katherine Kramer Walsh's (Dept. of Political Science) book *Talking about Politics*. Prof. Walsh is also an alumna of the L&S Honors Program.

Community service is the primary activity of the HSO, thanks to the strong interest expressed by Honors students. The broad interests and background of students make the possibilities for service nearly endless. The HSO has limited funds available to assist students with transportation and other costs associated with their projects. One of the most successful events was a dinner for Madison's homeless population that took place at St. Paul's Catholic Church in April 2004.

Other events in 2003-2004 included a trip to American Players Theater to see *The Tempest*, an outing to the Madison Repertory's production of *Drawer Boy*, Sunday brunch followed by a chamber music concert at the Elvehjem, a hiking trip to Devil's Lake, and a trip to Chicago to spend the day roaming through the Art Institute.

In support of students' academic endeavors, HSO organized a senior thesis reading group that enabled students to network with other thesis writers, read and comment on one another's drafts, work with a graduate student mentor, and present their research informally.

<u>Partial Listing of Fall 2004 Events</u>	<u>Number</u>
<u>Attending</u>	
<u>September</u>	
9/12, 10am American Players Theater in Spring Green, <i>Othello</i> and dinner	20
9/16, 5pm @ Red Gym HSO Fall Kickoff Meeting	50
<u>October</u>	
10/15, Oakwood Retirement Community Common Book Extension	10
10/28, 3:30 in the Red Gym 15 Professional Development Workshop: Careers in Medicine & Law	
<u>November</u>	
11/12, Friday night @ the Memorial Union Concert: Midori	10
11/14 (Sun), 7:30 pm @ the Civic Center <i>Jesus Christ Superstar</i>	40
11/15, 3:30 in the Red Gym 25	

Professional Development Workshop: Careers in Non-Profits

11/20 (Sat), 9:30 am

20

Day Trip to Milwaukee Art Museum

December

12/1, 11:30 am - 12:20 pm

HSO on 91.7 WSUM's Pathways to Excellence Program

12/1, 3:30 pm in the Red Gym

20

Professional Development Workshop: Graduate School

12. The 2004 CIC Honors Council Conference

In May 2004 the L&S Honors Program hosted the annual, two-day CIC Honors Council conference. Twenty-nine Honors Directors, Deans, and staff members from 14 CIC and non-CIC affiliated institutions attended (a record for both number of attendees and institutions represented).