

2010-2012 REPORT OF THE FACULTY HONORS COMMITTEE AND HONORS PROGRAM

The Letters and Science Honors Program currently enrolls approximately 1300 students. Three hundred and seventeen students matriculated as first-year honors students in the fall of 2010-11 and 341 in the fall of 2011-12. Two hundred and sixty-four honors degrees were awarded in 2010-11 with 102 students receiving Honors in the Liberal Arts, 117 receiving Honors in the Major and 45 receiving Comprehensive Honors (completing requirements for both Honors in the Liberal Arts and Honors in the Major). In 2011-12 there were 203 Honors graduates with 67 students receiving honors in the Liberal Arts, 95 receiving Honors in the Major and 41 receiving Comprehensive Honors.

The period from fall 2010 through the end of the spring semester 2012 saw several innovations, including the first Senior Honors Thesis Symposium in April 2012, which received rave reviews from faculty, staff, parents, and students and will become an annual event each spring semester; travel grants for students to attend professional conferences and present the results of their thesis research; and the initiation of a monthly event, Wednesdays@Washburn, which involved the Honors Student Organization (HSO) issuing an invitation to one faculty member each month to join Honors students for dinner and conversation.

The administrative structure of the program saw some changes in this span of time. Professor Charles Snowdon (Psychology) continued as Director until August 1, 2012, when he was replaced by Professor Sissel Schroeder (Anthropology). The full-time staff consists of Jeffrey Shokler continuing to serve as the Program's Associate Director (until October 31, 2012), Mary Czyszak-Lyne as its Office Administrator, and Jennifer Kaufmann-Buhler as Assistant Director with oversight of the program's advising and curricular operations.

Innovations

Admissions

Incoming first-year honors cohorts have continued to number in the low 300s since the fall of 2008 when the program welcomed its first cohort following the transition to its new admissions process and philosophy. The size of these cohorts is within the optimal range of ca. 300-400 students that the program, its curriculum, and its advising capacity can handle and maintain a high level of service to the students. The gender, residency, demographic, and academic profiles of the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 cohorts remained consistent as well. Compared to the pre-fall 2008 cohorts, the only "anomalous" signal that has also remained consistent is the inversion of the resident to non-resident representation with current cohorts being roughly 60% non-resident compared to pre-fall 2008 cohorts consisting of roughly two-thirds resident students.

Efforts to increase targeted minority interest in the program among incoming first-year students have been successful in terms of increasing the number of targeted minority *applicants* to the program, but the outcome in terms of *yield* has remained flat (most targeted minority applicants to the program do not end up matriculating at UW-Madison). A new approach to increasing student ethnic diversity in the program is being considered that will focus on increasing interest and engagement among targeted minority *continuing and transfer* students in both the Honors in the Liberal Arts and Honors in the Major degrees.

Evaluation of Honors in the Major and Curriculum Changes

It has been fourteen years since the establishment of the "new" honors curriculum that created the Honors in the Major, Honors in the Liberal Arts, and Comprehensive Honors degree options for students in the College. In our 2008-2010 report to the Faculty Senate, we noted that there was considerable variation among departments in what is required for Honors in the Major. While we appreciate the value of

diversity across different disciplines, we started to review programs and develop a set of best practices drawn from the curricula and experiences of different departments. Following efforts to reach out to departments about implementing constructive changes to their Honors in the Major (HM), several departments significantly revised their HM curriculum including *Comparative Literature*, *Zoology*, and *Spanish*. Each of these curriculum changes were approved by the Faculty Honors Committee and the L&S Curriculum Committee. These changes have helped make the HM program more manageable for these departments to sustain (in terms of curriculum), and for students to complete (in terms of requirements).

Honors 480 and 180 Diversity Dialogues

The Honors Fellows program, which ran successfully for three years, was put on hiatus by the Honors Program in the spring of 2011 in order to reallocate staff resources to advising.

Continued Engagement with Campus Initiatives and Committees

Staff in the L&S Honors Program participated in a number of different campus committees and activities.

- Mary Czynzak-Lyne - HRS, HR Design, high administrative search committees, L&S Classified Issues Committee, and the L&S Climate Committee
- Jennifer Kaufmann-Buhler - Council on Academic Advising, SOAR Advising Committee, Co-Chair of the Subcommittee on Peer Advising for CAA (2011-2012), reader for L&S Scholarships, ex-officio member of the L&S Curriculum Committee. Jennifer has also shared updates on Honors issues and processes with the L&S Advising Consortium and the “Big Ten” majors in L&S.
- Jeffrey Shokler - Advising Architecture Review Board (co-Chair), ANS Task Force (co-Chair), Academic Staff Executive Committee (Chair), University Honors Committee, University Academic Planning Council, Administrative Excellence Advisory Committee, University Student Query Team/Administrative Processes Committee
- Charles Snowdon - Go Big Read, FIG Planning Committee, SOAR Vision Committee, University Honors Committee

Senior Honors Thesis Symposium

In the fall of 2011 the L&S Honors Program created a new initiative to showcase the research experiences of our Honors in the Major students working on a Senior Honors Thesis. The first Senior Honors Thesis Symposium was held in the spring of 2012 and featured approximately sixty students who shared their research in a professional-style conference. Students were required to register for the event and submit an abstract, and papers were grouped in an inter-disciplinary fashion to encourage students to hear from other students outside of their own discipline. Participants were encouraged to invite friends and family, and underclass honors students were encouraged to attend to learn more about research. The event was very successful, and we are excited to offer it again this year.

Policy

In the spring of 2012, the L&S Honors Program began a major update and clean-up of the L&S Honors section of the L&S Policy Book. These changes included updates to our study abroad petition process, updates on our admissions process, updates to the green sheet process, clarification of the dual thesis, and clarification of HLA curriculum rules particularly language on breadth, topics courses, and graduate level courses in the HLA curriculum. All of these changes were approved by the Faculty Honors Committee and submitted to L&S for inclusion in the policy book in the summer of 2012.

Curriculum

In 2010 we were unable to offer any Honors FIGs, but in 2011 and 2012 we were able to offer three honors FIGs each year.

Charles Snowdon and Jennifer Kaufmann-Buhler continued reaching out to departments and faculty to encourage greater participation in honors curriculum and have seen several new honors courses developed as a result including courses in Music, Population Health, African American Studies, Women's Studies, and History.

Center for Pre-Health Advising

The Letters and Science Honors Program served as the administrative home for newly created Center for Pre-Health Advising (CPHA) effective July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012. CPHA is a Madison Initiative for Undergraduates (MIU). This provided great synergy between Honors and CPHA staff. Chuck Snowdon served as the supervisor of CPHA until it successfully spun off as an independent advising center in July 2012.

Participation in the Wisconsin Science Festival

September 2011 was the first Wisconsin Science Festival hosted by UW-Madison. Washburn Observatory was visited by nearly 400 elementary students. In conjunction with the festival, the Honors Program hosted a small outreach/donor event for our students and local Honors alums. The skies were clear thus allowing for stargazing along with dessert.

Program Grants and Awards

The L&S Honors Program annually awards approximately \$150,000 to departments in support of their Honors courses (either small stand-alone honors courses or faculty taught sections of larger courses) and Honors curriculum development. In addition, the Program provides grants and awards to students in several categories: Welton Sophomore Summer Research Apprenticeships, Trewartha Undergraduate Honors Research Grants, Honors Senior Thesis Summer Research Grants, Leadership Trust Awards, the Mark Mensink Honors Research Award, and the Abraham S. Burack Travel Award for Study Abroad.

National Scholarships

The majority of UW students who received nationally competitive scholarship awards in 2010-12 were students in the L&S Honors Program. Most notable among these is Alexis Brown, who is one of just 32 students from across the country to receive the prestigious Rhodes Scholarship to study at Oxford University in England. Only 8 of the awards went to students from public universities. Alexis, who majored in English and History, graduated in May 2012 with Comprehensive Honors. She received many awards from the Honors Program, including the Mark Mensink Honors Senior Thesis Grant, a Sophomore Summer Apprenticeship, and a Leadership Trust Award. Evan Mast, a senior from Menominee Falls, Wis., was a finalist for the Rhodes Scholarship. Evan majored in economics and mathematics.

Leadership Trust Awards

We have a generous grant from a donor who wishes to remain anonymous to pay two semesters of tuition and a \$3,000 supply allowance for student initiated programs that provide services and benefits to the University community and beyond. Since 2003, we have awarded funds for twenty-two different projects, most of which are still being continued by subsequent generations of students. In 2010-2011 and 2011-2012, we awarded 5 Leadership Trust Awards. The recipients were Alexis Brown who produced the *Madison Journal of Literary Criticism*; Dustin Koury who created the MASTARY Mentors program; Alexandra Miller, who developed Slow Food Friends - Celebrating the Relationship between Food, Health, and Community; Evan Mast, who initiated a Running Club at Wright Middle School; and Axel

Adams, who innovated DIY-UW, a division of the F. H. King Students for Sustainable Agriculture. These awards have stimulated some outstanding ideas among our students and have allowed the recipients to develop important leadership and service skills.

Program Enhancements

Honors Programs Abroad

The Honors Program continues to collaborate with the Office of International Academic Programs on an honors program at University College Utrecht in the Netherlands (students can go for one or two semesters). In 2010, the Faculty Honors Committee approved an honors study abroad opportunity in Quito, Ecuador, which is offered by the UW-Madison L&S Honors Program in conjunction with the Ceiba Foundation for Tropical Conservation and UW-Madison Study Abroad Program. Students participating in the program receive a total of eleven Honors credits: 3-credits in Conservation Biology and a total of 8-credits in Tropical Ecology covering Terrestrial Ecosystems and Marine Ecosystems. Before beginning the fieldwork component of their study abroad program, students take classes at the Universidad San Francisco de Quito. During the last month of the semester, students select one of several internship or research opportunities with an Ecuadorian conservation or development organization on topics such as reforestation, environmental education, sea turtle monitoring, and organic farming. These internships allow students to apply knowledge and language skills obtained during coursework and provide them with first-hand experience in international sustainable development and conservation.

UW Forensics Team

The L&S Honors Program assumed sponsorship of the UW Forensics Team in 2003. Forensics had effectively died at the UW in 1992 but was resurrected by a core of active students in 2001. These students, on their own initiative, began training and competing in local and regional forensics meets and, shortly thereafter, began seeking official sponsorship at the university. The Honors Program has also subsidized the part-time salary of a coach for the team, Ben Jedd, who has been able to make great strides in making the team competitive at all levels.

Common Book Program

In 2010, the Honors Common Book Program was supplanted by the start of Go Big Read. Honors staff actively partner to work on selection of books and create opportunities for honors students to meet with the authors. The Honors Program is in its third year of collaboration with UW-Housing to co-host a luncheon with the author for Honors students, which allows our students to engage with the author in an intimate setting. In 2010-2011 the Go Big Read selection was *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*, by Rebecca Skloot. In 2011-2012 the Go Big Read book was *Enrique's Journey*, by Sonia Nazario; in 2012-2013 the Go Big Read book is *Radioactive: Marie and Pierre Curie, A Tale of Love and Fallout*, by Lauren Redniss.

Student Retreats

In late July each year the Program sponsors the annual summer retreat at Hilltop Farm in Spring Green for students with Sophomore Summer Honors Research Apprenticeships and for their faculty mentors. Student presentations are quite impressive in terms of their grasp of the research problems they have been studying and their poise in presenting their work to a broad audience. The annual Fall Retreat for our first-year Honors students is held in September or October each year and provides first year students with a chance to meet faculty and staff and ask questions about a variety of topics including disciplinary and career interests, study abroad and service learning opportunities, and to how to obtain balance in their lives.

Community Building Efforts

Honors Student Organization (HSO)

HSO is a student led organization with limited staff assistance that works to build a sense of community among Honors students. In fall 2011, the HSO kicked off the year with organizing, planning and hosting Wednesdays@ Washburn. The students select and invite UW-Madison faculty to have a conversation with Honors students in an informal setting with a light supper at Washburn Observatory. This initiative has carried into the 2012-2013 academic year. In addition to Wednesdays@ Washburn, HSO has prepared dinners at the Ronald McDonald House, hosted ice skating events, held fund raising events and served as hosts along with the Honors Program for the annual Honors Fall Kickoff welcoming incoming students and returning students. HSO has also attended performances of the Madison Opera and other cultural offerings at the Overture Center.

Honors Fall Kickoff

In the fall of 2010 we hosted the first Honors Fall Kickoff to welcome our incoming and returning Honors students with an ice cream and cookie reception. In the fall of 2011, we moved the Honors Fall Kickoff to the lawn at Washburn and had a Wisconsin-style tail-gate/picnic. This was such a success that we continued it in the fall of 2012.

Advising

SOAR Advising

L&S Honors Program was heavily involved in the development of the new SOAR advising model that was piloted the summer of 2012. Through the 2011-2012 academic year, Jennifer Kaufmann-Buhler served on the SOAR Advising Committee and, starting in the spring of 2011, Charles Snowdon participated in the SOAR Vision Committee. In response to the changes occurring in the SOAR structure, the L&S Honors Advising Team re-conceptualized their SOAR advising model, created new materials and a new presentation, and established new SOAR activities to engage students in the advising process. The L&S Honors Program continued to advise at each first year SOAR session, typically seeing between 8-12 students per day.

This summer (2012) 88% of students who responded to the SOAR survey indicated that they were satisfied with their academic advising experience in our unit. Comments in the SOAR survey indicate that students in the L&S Honors advising room appreciated the individual advising that they received. Students commented that they felt comfortable in the space, found the academic and peer advisors helpful, and appreciated the presentations and activities in the Honors advising room.

Advising for First-Year Students

The L&S Honors Program Advising staff continued to offer small group advising (Honors 181 and Honors 182) in the fall semester. In the fall of 2010 we made a significant change to Honors 181, reducing the set content, and opening more of the session to general questions. In our evaluations since that time we have seen a marked increase in the number of students who found the session useful. This change has also helped increase our attendance for Honors 181 and 182: in the fall of 2010, 178 students attended Honors 181 and 155 students attended Honors 182; in the fall of 2011, 245 students attended Honors 181 and 246 attended Honors 182; and in the fall of 2012, 265 attended Honors 181 and we anticipate similar attendance for Honors 182. Greater attendance means that more of our students are familiar with honors requirements and opportunities, and have learned critical advising and enrollment tools such as DARS and the Student Center. These group advising sessions have also provided a timely way to alert students to critical upcoming deadlines (particularly drop deadlines) and to encourage students to talk with us if they are thinking about dropping a class. We have seen a decrease in the number of first year honors students who end up on probation after their first semester.

Advising for Graduating Seniors

To assist the registrar's office in clearing up honors graduation deficiencies, in the fall of 2010, the L&S Honors Program Advisors began individually auditing students for graduation (based on students who had declared their intent to graduate in each semester), and proactively contacting students about dropping honors, or coming in for advising to discuss graduation options. We also have been more proactive in enforcing our good standing rules for the Honors in the Liberal Arts Program in order to reduce the number of graduation deficiencies. We have offered drop-in advising specifically for graduation checks so that graduating honors students could check with an advisor to ensure that they were able to graduate in their intended semester.

Advising for All Students

The L&S Honors Program website publicizes our Advising Syllabus, provides advisor profiles, answers to frequently asked questions, and provides information about the various advising options offered through our office. Advisors link their advising profiles to the walk-in hours posted on the Web Calendar. An instant messaging chat advising program has been initiated that is available two hours a day (Monday through Thursday), including evening hours that has proven popular among our students studying abroad.

In the Spring of 2012, the L&S Honors Program Advisors put together a professional development series in collaboration with career services for honors students. We organized workshops on internships and marketing a liberal arts degree, as well as an L&S Honors alumni event in which several graduates shared their post-graduate experiences.

Advising Collaborations

Since 2010, the L&S Honors Program Advising Team has collaborated with the Center for Pre-Health Advising to offer on-going training and professional development for our advising staff. The two units meet together regularly to learn about campus resources and discuss advising issues as a group. As a result of our partnership, both units have had the opportunity to learn more about the different kinds of advising that we do.

Advising Training

In the summer of 2011, Jennifer Kaufmann-Buhler created a new Peer Advisor Training program that included a new peer advising handbook, multiple group meetings, discussions, and activities to help our new peer advisors learn about the goals of the honors program, our policies and procedures, and the process of advising. Our Advisor Development Program continues to successfully provide new and continuing Honors advisors (both professional and peer advisors) an overview of the advising field with particular emphasis on conceptual and relational issues of advising. Readings, group activities, role plays and discussions were used to explore the definitions and values of advising, to examine the commonalities and diversities of our target population of high-achieving students, and to build and enhance advising-related skills. The advising team meets weekly to enhance their skills and discuss any particularly difficult issues that have arisen. As part of the evaluation process Jennifer Kaufman-Buhler sits in on an advising appointment with each advisor to provide feedback.

Advising Innovations

Starting in the fall of 2010 through the summer of 2011, the L&S Honors Program advisors updated our in house materials including the development of a new SOAR workbook, a major redesign of the Honors Guidebook, and the creation of new prospective materials about the Honors Program. One of our goals in

creating new materials was to better target each publication to the advising needs of students, and reduce overlap in content.

In the spring and fall of 2011, The L&S Honors Advising Team created an on-line form for students to use in submitting materials for green sheets and our study abroad petition process. These new on-line materials have made it easier for students to understand our process for reviewing and approving green sheets and study abroad petitions, and have helped make our office more efficient in reviewing and processing these requests.

Awards

Mary Czyszczak-Lyne received a 2011-2012 Letters and Science Classified Staff Excellence award. Jennifer-Kaufmann-Buhler was nominated for the L&S Advising award in 2011. Chuck Snowdon received a Distinguished Honors Faculty Award in 2012.

Challenges:

Like all units of the College our main challenges concern resources. We have only 2 full-time academic staff, one full time classified staff member, a half-time faculty director and two half time Project Assistants plus six students hired as student hourlies. This is the smallest FTE to student ratio of any of the Honors Programs/Colleges among the CIC peer universities (only about 50% of the CIC peers even provide student advising). We also provide more comprehensive advising than our CIC peers – not only do we provide general academic advising throughout the year, but we also provide advising as part of new student orientation, which most of our peers do not do. Nonetheless, by working hard and working smart, we are able to meet most of our mission. We utilize the intelligence and motivation of our undergraduate students as Peer Advisors, who we currently support with Gift Funds.

At Wisconsin, we do not have to worry about the academic profile of our undergraduates and, philosophically, we in Honors prefer need-based scholarships over merit based awards. However, many of our signature programs – the Welton Sophomore Summer Honors Research Apprenticeships, support of Forensics, support of community service activities, etc. are based on annual proposals to a variety of funding sources that are also in demand to fund other programs as well. We continue to actively seeking long-term continuous support (endowments or bequests) to support our most successful programs and have had some success in the past two years: we have been able to add the annual Welton Family Foundation's support of the Sophomore Summer Honors Research Apprenticeships, Todd Franks provided support for the first annual Senior Thesis Symposium, and donations from previous directors of the Honors Program continue to come in to the Director's Fund.

With all of the budget cuts over the past 5 years, it has become increasingly difficult for departments to collaborate with us in offering honors level courses. Although we can provide lecturer replacement funds for several courses, many departments cannot afford to have their faculty diverted from their regular teaching needs to teach honors courses. Some wonderful faculty are actually doing overloads in order to be able to teach an honors class, but we should not count on faculty volunteering to have an overload in order to sustain an honors program. Our hope is that with the MIU hires at least some departments will be able to increase Honors offerings as a part of the high impact practices that are required in accountability for MIU positions.

Although we have not been affected by budget cuts each year, the cumulative effect of the budget cuts over the past 5 years has reduced our 101-funded operating budget to the bare bones. As is the case with many units across campus, we are doing more with fewer state resources. For example, we have developed innovative approaches to advising through the use of well-trained peer advisors who are

supported by unrestricted gift funds, which allows us to maintain our mission goal of high impact advising practices.

With our vision of Honors that is consistent with intellectual curiosity and the goals of the Wisconsin Idea, we hope to maintain an exciting and vibrant program with diverse students who will be the future of our state, our nation and our world.

2010-2011 Faculty Honors Committee Members:

Greg Downey (Journalism & Mass Communication and Library & Information Studies)
Dana Geary (Geoscience)
Sabine Gross (German)
Mary Halloran (Zoology)
Renee Kramer (Student Member, Psychology)
Sissel Schroeder (Anthropology)
Charles Snowdon (Psychology, Chair)
Laura Stewart (Student Member, History)
Peter Timbie (Physics)
John Witte (Political Science)
JingCai Ying (Student Member, Political Science and English)

Ex Officio:

Mary Czyszczak-Lyne, Office Administrator
Jeffrey Shokler, Associate Director
Jennifer Kaufmann-Buhler, Assistant Director

2011-2012 Faculty Honors Committee Members

Susan Bernstein (English)
Greg Downey (Journalism & Mass Communication and Library & Information Studies)
Dana Geary (Geoscience)
Sabine Gross (German)
Mary Halloran (Zoology)
Renee Kramer (Student Member, Psychology)
Cathy Middlecamp (Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies)
Sissel Schroeder (Anthropology)
Charles Snowdon (Psychology, Chair)
John Witte (Political Science)
JingCai Ying (Student Member, Political Science and English)

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