2013-2014 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE FACULTY HONORS COMMITTEE AND HONORS PROGRAM

This report covers the 2013-2014 academic year and the summer of 2014. The Letters and Science Honors Program currently enrolls 1200 students. Three hundred and forty-seven first year students matriculated as L&S Honors students in the fall of 2013. In 2013-2014, 134 students graduated with Honors in the Liberal Arts (HLA), 92 students graduated with Honors in the Major (HM), and 29 completed both tracks earning Comprehensive Honors (CH).

The 2013-2014 academic year saw several innovations and new undertakings including expanding workshops for students preparing proposals to submit for the Trewartha/Mensink competition in the fall, the Summer Senior Honors Thesis competition in the spring, and the Welton Honors Sophomore Summer Apprenticeship program in the spring; development of a Facebook page to connect the Sophomore Summer Apprentices with one another; a dinner for apprentices and their mentors held at the end of the summer; workshops for students interested in applying for the Leadership Trust Award, and Study Café where we open Washburn up for individual study and group study and provide PB&J and other snacks for the students as they prepare for final exams. In addition, we held the third annual Senior Honors Thesis Symposium and began the process of developing group advising sessions for sophomores to be implemented in the fall of 2014.

The administrative structure of the program saw both change and continuity in this span of time. On July 21, 2014, Jacqui Guthrie joined the Program as Associate Director of Academic Services. Continuing staff members include Mary Czynszak-Lyne as Office Administrator, and Matt Kohlstedt as Associate Director of Administrative Services.

Innovations

Admissions

The 2013-2014 admissions cycle we implemented two significant changes to our admissions process. For incoming first year student applicants, we changed the deadline for admission so that each student has 30 days to complete the application based on when they first log-in to our system. In changing our deadline process, we hoped to make the L&S Honors Program more accessible by allowing students greater flexibility in when they applied to the Program later including making it possible for students to apply after they make the decision to come to UW-Madison (under the previous admissions policy, students were given an application deadline based on when they were admitted, and this deadline sometimes was earlier than the timing of their decision to come to UW-Madison. The change in procedure to the admissions process resulted in an increase in total applicants to 692 from 519 the previous year, an increase of onethird. The additional flexibility of the application process was evidently beneficial to a number of students. We are developing methods of handling the increased workload for application review, as well as to better anticipate the growth in applications, which will likely continue. Without additional staff, we would not be able to increase the number of admitted students. That number will remain at approximately 350. We will, however, be able to be more selective in admitting candidates.

We also changed the Continuing and Transfer Student application to eliminate a requirement for a faculty letter of recommendation. We now evaluate students based their student record and personal essays. By removing an additional hurdle, we hoped to encourage additional students to apply. The number of Continuing and Transfer Student applicants, though, remained consistent with past years' numbers. We will aim to further promote the Continuing and Transfer Student application. We admit most of the Continuing and Transfer Student applicants, as they tend to be highly-qualified, and we can accommodate them because we lose students each semester due to attrition from a number of factors, including transfer to other School and Colleges within UW-Madison.

Evaluation of Honors in the Major and Curriculum Changes

It has been fifteen 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 revised their HM curriculum this past year including: *English, Communicative Science and Disorders, and Religious Studies*. Each of these curriculum changes was approved by the Faculty Honors Committee and the L&S Curriculum Committee.

Undergraduate Initiative Fund (UIF) changes

During the 2013-2014 year, we implemented two significant innovations with respect to UIF: 1) holding information sessions for faculty interested in applying for UIF funding (to discuss logistics and goals of the program, and to promote the benefits of teaching honors courses especially to junior faculty), and 2) modifying the UIF application to encourage greater reflection from faculty on learning outcomes and goals for teaching. We plan to continue using this new application next year and actively reach out to individual faculty who might be interested in teaching small honors-only courses. UIF proposals are reviewed and approved by the Faculty Honors Committee.

"The Honors Challenge" Newsletter

Beginning with the Fall 2012 issue, *The Honors Challenge* (annual newsletter of the L&S Honors Program) we began to have a unifying theme, which gives the newsletter a cohesive feel. Print copies shifted from being black, red, and white to full color, allowing us to include more pictures and graphics to tell or enhance the stories. The 2013 issue was organized around the theme of Research: The Pursuit of Curiosity. Compelling stories were included that recount the research experiences of students who were supported by the Welton Honors Sophomore Summer Apprenticeship, Summer Senior Honors Thesis grants, and Trewartha Senior Thesis grants.

Honors Grants (process changes)

In spring 2012 we piloted the use of the <u>scholarships.wisc.edu</u> portal for one of our senior thesis grants. It was a successful trial and we have since converted three of our grants to the scholarships.wisc.edu portal. By the end of the 2014-2015 academic year, we hope to have live

online applications for all the Honors award applications that would work on the scholarships portal.

The Honors On-Line Blog

The Honors Program continues to make weekly blog posts about opportunities that may be of interest to our student body. The Honors Online (HOL) weekly emailed newsletter points students to these blog entries. Students regularly express gratitude for being informed of grant opportunities, study abroad information sessions, honors course offerings and more. During the 2013-2014 school year, we tracked approximately 1,500 individual page views of blog entries each month.

On-line forms (now available)

The Honors Program continues to improve and simplify the workflow of student forms whenever possible. In 2012 the program made electronic PDF forms to declare or withdraw students from the program available online. The Study Abroad petition, Green Sheet application and other forms that students used to have to pick up in our office are now also available online. As campus transitions to more automated, ISIS-based workflow for major declaration and other processes, the Honors Program will as well. Ultimately this will save students and staff time alike.

Ongoing Activities

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 Czynszak-Lyne HR Design, high administrative search committees, L&S
 Classified Issues Committee, L&S Climate Committee, Campus Transportation
 Committee, Campus Diversity and Climate Committee, Limited Term Employee
 (LTE) Advisory Committee (Chair), Temporary Emplyee (TE) Committee (co-lead),
 Institutional Conflict of Interest Committee, the On Wisconsin Society, and the
 Classified Staff Executive Committee.
- Jennifer Kaufmann-Buhler Council on Academic Advising, OAT committee, DARS 101 instructor (Office of Undergraduate Advising), Cete (committee on the biosciences), Campus Pre-Health Committee, L&S State of Advising Work Group, ex-officio member of the L&S Curriculum Committee. Jennifer has also participated in the L&S advisor training led by Rebekah Pare.
- Jacqui Guthrie Ex-officio member of the L&S Curriculum Committee, Council on Academic Advising (CAA), Orientation Advising Team (OAT), DARS 101 instructor and mentor to new L&S advisors (Office of Undergraduate Advising-appointed), Cete (committee on the biosciences), Campus Pre-Health Committee, ASECappointed Student Misconduct Hearing Panel committee, L&S Mandatory Declaration Implementation Team (appointment anticipated).
- Matt Kohlstedt University Honors Committee, L&S Career Initiative Retreat,
 Scholarship Stewardship Committee, L&S Scholarships Evaluation.
- Sissel Schroeder FIG Planning Committee, University Honors Committee, Faculty Honors Committee (Chair), L&S Dean's Prize Committee, Lakeshore Nature

Preserve Committee (Chair), consultant to Ethnic Studies Subcommittee of the Undergraduate Education Committee, Undergraduate Research Group, NAGPRA Committee on the Determination of Cultural Affiliation (Chair), and various committees in the Department of Anthropology, including Chair of the Merit and Budget 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. Each year, about 100 students produce a senior honors thesis/creative project. The third annual Senior Honors Thesis Symposium was held in the spring of 2014 and featured 43 seniors 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. In preparation, we offered a workshop for participants in which students learned effective strategies for giving an academic talk. Participants were encouraged to invite friends and family as well as faculty and staff with whom they have worked, 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.

Welton Summer Sophomore Apprenticeship Program

Funding for this program comes from grants from the Brittingham Fund and the Kemper Knapp Bequest as well as from a donor, the Welton Family Foundation. For the summer of 2014, the Faculty Honors Committee reviewed 41 applications for 30 apprenticeships. The 30 student apprentices who were funded had faculty and academic staff mentors in 21 different academic departments across four colleges (L&S, Education, CALS, and the School of Medicine and Public Health). In an effort to increase community among students in the Welton Sophomore Summer Apprenticeship Program, this past summer we created more opportunities for our apprentices to meet and interact, including creating a Facebook page for students to communicate with one another during the summer. There was an early reception at which students and mentors had the chance to mingle and meet, and a second meeting in which students learned about the logistics of the retreat in July, the annual retreat for students and their mentors held at Hilltop outside of Spring Green at the end of July, and a dinner for students and their mentors at the end of August. The result was increased camaraderie and a sense of community among the students in the program, and a more successful retreat. We also saw a significant increase in the number of apprentices who joined the welcome party for new first year students held on the Friday before classes start in the fall semester – and these apprentices shared their experiences with the incoming first year students, increasing interest in the program.

Senior Honors Thesis Workshop

In the spring of 2014 we held a special senior honors thesis workshop with the Writing Center for interested students to learn about our senior honors thesis grants and to learn about resources (such as thesis writing groups organized through the Writing Center) for completing a thesis.

Curriculum

In fall 2013 we were able to offer three honors FIGs: Globalization in Historical Perspective (19 enrolled), Vision: From Biology to Culture (20 enrolled) and The American Democratic Experiment (16 enrolled). In spring 2014 we offered one honors FIG: Greening the Greeks, Recycling the Romans (18 enrolled).

We continue to work closely with departments as they develop their honors offerings. Helping them determine which honors course designation is a best fit for a particular course and promoting the courses that they are able to create happens throughout the year.

Participation in the Wisconsin Science Festival

September 2013 was the third Wisconsin Science Festival hosted by UW-Madison. Washburn Observatory was visited by over 300 elementary students and members of the public. Washburn Observatory continues to be a featured sight for the Wisconsin Science Festival.

Outreach

It has long been part of the philosophy of the L&S Honors Program to actively recruit prospective students to attend UW-Madison and to join the Honors Program. Many applicants take a university's Honors offerings into account when considering which university to attend, and the Honors Program has been an enthusiastic partner with the broader university community in encouraging the best high school students to attend UW-Madison. In cooperation with the Office of Admissions, the Honors Program hosts approximately 45 prospective student information sessions each year, which are led by Matt Kohlstedt. The sessions are held on Fridays and attended by students and their families and they attracted over 1,000 registered guests during the calendar year. Matt Kohlstedt also attended Office of Admissions prospective student sessions in Milwaukee, and was a panelist and information session participant for the three Your UW Days. We regularly send representatives to other campus recruiting events such as those for Chicago Scholars. We have also increased our outreach efforts to other campus partners such as the Chancellor's Scholars Program and the Powers-Knapp Program.

Sissel Schroeder, Jennifer Kaufmann-Buhler, Matt Kohlstedt, and Mary Czynszak-Lyne presented an overview of the L&S Honors Program, particularly curricular matters and student grant opportunities, at one of the monthly L&S Administrative Topics sessions during the academic year.

Program Grants and Awards

For the 2014-2015 academic year, the Faculty Honors Committee and L&S Honors Program awarded \$144,000 to departments in support of 32 Honors-only courses (either small standalone Honors courses or faculty-taught sections of larger courses) and Honors curriculum development. In addition, the Faculty Honors Committee recommended funding for grants and awards totaling nearly \$125,000 to 61 students in several categories: Welton Sophomore Summer Research Apprenticeships, Trewartha Undergraduate Honors Research Grants, Honors Senior Thesis Summer Research Grants, the Leadership Trust Award, the Abraham S. Burack Travel Award for Study Abroad, the Directors' Travel Award for Study Abroad, and the Kurz and Bromley Conference Travel Grants.

Leadership Trust Awards

We have a generous grant from an anonymous donor to pay two semesters of in-state tuition and a \$3,000 supply allowance for student initiated programs that provide services and benefits to the University community and beyond in the spirit of the Wisconsin Idea. Since 2003, we have awarded funds for more than twenty different projects, many of which are still being continued by subsequent generations of students. In 2013-2014, the Faculty Honors Committee selected one Leadership Trust Awards. The recipient was AnaElise Beckman, who has created a program called "Sustainable Projects: Working with Middle School Students at Jefferson Middle School." These awards have stimulated some outstanding service projects among our students and have allowed the recipients to develop important leadership skills.

Program Enhancements

Speech Team of UW-Madison

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 also subsidizes a portion of 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. Support from anonymous donors has made it possible for a larger number of Team members to travel to competitions and get practice in formal forensics meets. The Team formally changed its name to Speech Team of Wisconsin in fall 2013.

Go Big Read

In 2010, the Honors Common Book Program was supplanted by the start of Go Big Read. 2013-2014 marked the third year in which the Honors Program collaborated with UW-Housing to cohost a luncheon during the fall semester with the author for Honors students, which allows our students to engage with the author in an intimate setting. In 2013-2014 the Go Big Read book was *A Tale for the Time Being*, by Ruth Ozeki. For the 2014-2015 academic year the Go Big Read selection was *I am Malala*, by Malala Yousafzai.

Student Retreats

In late July each year the Program sponsors the annual summer retreat at Hilltop Farm in Spring Green for students with Welton Sophomore Summer Honors Research Apprenticeships and for their faculty and staff 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 2013-2014, the HSO continued with the successful Wednesdays@Washburn monthly event. 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. In addition to Wednesdays@Washburn, HSO hosted an ice skating event, cosponsored a two-day group study café at the beginning of final exam week each semester, helped with fund raising for WPR, and served as hosts along with the Honors Program for the annual Honors Fall Kickoff welcoming incoming students and returning students. HSO also attended performances of the Madison Opera and other cultural offerings at the Overture Center or campus venues.

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 it has continued each year since, and attendance has been growing each year.

Advising

Graduate Student Assistantships in the Honors Program

Each year we are fortunate to have two 50% graduate Project Assistants (PAs) who are employed by the Honors Program as professional academic advisors. This is a fantastic opportunity for funding support for graduate students in the university, and a valuable professional development experience for them. By learning the basics of academic advising, curriculum and administration, these graduate students have more opportunities for careers in universities and colleges after they graduate, and it significantly enhances their understanding of undergraduate students, which better prepares them to teach and mentor undergraduates. In addition to being an opportunity for graduate students to develop professionally, the L&S Honors Program benefits from the unique skills, interests, and abilities that these graduate students bring to our program. We love the energy and creativity that all of our graduate students have brought to the program, appreciate the innovations that have grown from their interests, and believe that working with graduate students in this way is a benefit to the program, the college, and the university.

SOAR Advising

The L&S Honors Program continues to advise at every first-year student SOAR session. During the 2014 summer, we served 301 incoming first-year honors students over 30, two-day SOAR sessions.82% of L&S Honors SOAR attendee respondents to a survey about their SOAR experience agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I am satisfied with the academic advising experience at SOAR" and 86% with the statement "I received adequate individual attention to meet my needs".

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 conversational nature of the programming and interactive activities in the Honors advising room. Many left the space having exchanged contact information with other new Honors students whom they had met and saying things like "this was way less stressful than I thought it would

be". The Honors advising staff plan to continue the conversational, activities –based approach to SOAR going forward.

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. We continue to see strong attendance numbers for Honors 181 and 182 in the Fall of 2013. 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. Using group advising adds a level of efficiency to our advising practice. We teach concepts and tools that all students need to be familiar with in a group setting. This assures that individual advising appointments can be spent answering individual students questions, giving them personalized advise, helping them create individual plans to meet long-term goals, etc. rather than teaching them what was taught in the group session.

Beyond group advising, first-year honors students have many ways of accessing honors advisors. We offer chat advising four evenings per week, drop-in advising most week days, individual advising appointments and we answer emailed questions from honors students on a daily basis.

Advising for Second-Year Students

Recognizing that sophomores and juniors do not receive as much organized advising as first year students and graduating seniors, a new group advising program targeted specifically at second-year students was conceptualized, designed, and planned. This program, called Honors 183, is a series of topically focused workshops targeted at second-year students, and was first implemented in early fall 2014. The Honors Program staff partnered with The Scholarships office, Career Exploration Center and L&S Career Services to provide this program.

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. These efforts have led to fewer urgent phone calls and visits from students and parents alike, and has proven a very valuable use of advising resources.

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. Chat advising, offered most weekday evenings, helps students busy during business hours connect with advisors.

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.

Advisor Training and Evaluation

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. This 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. We occasionally use these weekly meetings to visit with other offices on campus to learn about their services to students and, in doing so, help the advisors make better referrals to other units. As part of the evaluation process the Associate Director for Academic Services sits in on advising appointments with each advisor to provide feedback and identify what additional training would be beneficial.

Challenges:

Like all units of the College our main challenges concern resources. For 2013-2014 we had one full-time academic staff member, one full time classified staff member, one three-quarter time academic staff member, a half-time faculty director, two half-time Project Assistants, and three undergraduate student workers. This is by far the smallest FTE to student ratio of any of the Honors Programs/Colleges among our CIC peer universities. Only about 50% of the CIC peers provide student advising, and our advising is considerably more comprehensive and high touch than the advising provided for Honors students at 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. Nonetheless, by working hard and working smart, we are still able to meet most of our mission, but any future cuts to the Program will jeopardize its viability. Among other things, 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 the Speech Team of Wisconsin, support of community service activities, etc. are based, in part or wholly, on annual proposals to a variety of funding sources

that are also in demand to fund other programs as well or being phased out all together under resource pressure. We continue to actively seek long-term continuous funding sources (endowments or bequests) to support our most successful programs and have had some success in the past year-and-a-half: gifts have made it possible for us to expand the Welton Sophomore Summer Honors Research Apprenticeships, grow the number of students on the Speech Team and allow more students to travel to competitions, and increase the range of opportunities we can offer our students. The generosity of donors has been most heartwarming to see, and has allowed the Honors Program to flourish in times of significantly reduced state support.

With all of the budget cuts over the past 7 years, now compounded by the emphasis on metrics as a tool for determining resource allocation, 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. We did begin to see greater diversity in the Honors course offerings in 2013-2014 compared to earlier years.

The cumulative effect of the budget cuts over the past 7 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 and have implemented a number of efficiencies in recent years to allow us to continue to meet our mission and programmatic goals with fewer state resources. For example, to maintain our mission goal of high impact advising practices we use well-trained peer advisors who are supported by unrestricted gift funds, in addition to two 50% PAs who serve as professional advisors; and we have begun the process of transitioning grant and scholarship applications to electronic web-based submission.

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.

2013-2014 Faculty Honors Committee Members

Bryce Aul (Student representative, Biology)

Susan Bernstein (English)

Dana Geary (Geoscience)

Liam Kane-Grade (Student Member, Journalism)

Marc Kleijwegt (History)

Susan Lederer (Medical History and Bioethics, History of Science)

Jenny Saffran (Psychology)

Sissel Schroeder (Anthropology, Chair)

Scott Straus (Political Science)

Tehshik Yoon (Chemistry)

Ex Officio:

Mary Czynszak-Lyne, Office Administrator Jennifer Kaufmann-Buhler, Associate Director of Academic Services Matt Kohlstedt, Associate Director of Administrative Services Jacqui Guthrie, Associate Director of Academic Services (beginning in July 2014)