September 11, 2018

Handout for Faculty Senate Meeting
University Honors Program

Objective:
Campus-wide exploration of the possibility to transition from an honors program to an honors college. Invitation to participate in open fora this month to develop materials for review.

Opportunity:
The University of Idaho has a mature honors program that has been around for 35 years. Our honors program basically meets all of the criteria of a fully developed honors program according to the professional association of undergraduate honors programs and colleges, the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC). The recent development in higher education to integrate existing honors programs into a distinct honors college or to create a new honors college has resulted in the fact that many of our northwest competitors and peer institutions now have an honors college (see list below). With the help of the wider campus community, we wish to explore this development and the opportunities connected with it along with possible challenges.

Boise State University: College (24,154 total students)
Idaho State University: Program (13,569)
University of Montana: College (named) (11,865)
University of Utah: College (31,860)
University of Oregon: College (named) (22,980)
University of Washington: Program (44,686)
Montana State University: College (16,703)
Utah State University: Program (27,679)
WSU: College (30,142)
Oregon State University: College (30,896)
Clemson University: College (named) (24,387)
Colorado State University: Program (33,058)
Kansas State University: Program (22,795)
New Mexico State University: College (named) (14,852)
North Dakota State University: Program (14,358)
University of Arkansas: College (27,558)
University of Nebraska: Program (25,260)
University of New Hampshire: Program (15,340)
University of Wyoming: College (12,397)
Michigan State University: College (50,543)
Virginia Tech: College (32,304)
Iowa State University: Program (36,321)
University of Idaho: Program (11,780)

23 institutions: 13 colleges, 10 programs
12 NW institutions: 8 colleges, 4 programs
Why an honors college and what is the difference from an honors program?
While the creation of, or the transitioning to, an honors college takes resources and time, the institutions listed above (and many more nationally) believe that having an honors college leads to tangible advantages in the areas of student recruitment and retention, student placement after graduation, and the reputation of an institution, amongst other things.
NCHC has created a list of criteria for both, honors programs and honors colleges (please see additional handouts). We reviewed the criteria and concluded that our honors program basically meets all of the NCHC criteria of an honors program -- we meet 15 out of 17 criteria with 1 "do not meet" in the area of administrative structure and 1 "meet maybe" in the area of infrastructure/space. Likewise, we believe that our program meets 9 out of 13 honors college criteria-- with 3 "do not meet" in the area of administrative structure, and 1 "meet maybe" in the area of honors curriculum (please see additional handouts).

Where are our students?
University Honors Program students’ majors cut across all university colleges and programs. There are currently 714 students enrolled in the University Honors Program:

Break-down by college (created September 7, 2018):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College:</th>
<th>Total Number of Honors Students in Primary College:</th>
<th>Percentage of Honors Students:</th>
<th>Total Number of Honors Students in Secondary College:</th>
<th>Percentage of Honors Students:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural &amp; Life Sciences</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art &amp; Architecture</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business &amp; Economics</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education, Health, &amp; Human Sciences</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters Arts &amp; Social Sciences</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Resources</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>714</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Where are we now and what happens next?

We have hired a consultant, who assisted us with the evaluation of our program based on the above mentioned NCHC criteria using two evaluation instruments. I wrote two reports based on this evaluation for the consultant.

Now, I am working on a third report, which, based on meetings and open fora on campus, will summarize what a university-wide honors college would mean to us, how it would serve our institutional strategic goals and land-grant mission, and what are some of the challenges we see and how we would address them.

The consultant will summarize the three reports and additional materials and come to campus in late October or early November to meet with stakeholders. In preparation, we are inviting everyone’s help in developing these materials and ideas for an honors college that we feel would be beneficial to the university. If, as a campus, we feel that we want to move forward with a college, we would develop a transition time frame together.

In the meantime, there is a process in place regarding possible resources. I have been asked to submit a UBFC proposal in January 2018. The UBFC proposal entails a funding request for a curriculum delivery model that moves away from extra-section course buyouts towards a pass-through model of funding that is based on faculty fellows/administrative fellow as briefly summarized here:

The main purpose of this funding request is to advance essential curricular and administrative elements of honors as outlined by the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC). NCHC honors college curricular guidelines include substantial course opportunities across all four years of study and a significant percentage (ideally 20 percent) of a student’s degree program in honors. NCHC curricular guidelines also include that honors should have considerable control over the selection of faculty delivering its curriculum. To approach these guidelines, we are seeking one-time funding for five (5) part-time Honors Faculty Fellows and one (1) part-time Honors Administrative Fellow to assure delivery of honors courses and their administration across all colleges and in General Education for a growing number of honors students. To date, honors has about 700 students, or about 9-10 percent of the full-time undergraduate population, up from 385 students in Fall 2012. Our request for faculty fellows, a nationally recognized curriculum delivery model, enables us to offer honors learning experiences in a cost-effective and robust way. As a consequence, the investment will further amplify honors’ existing contribution to our institution’s strategic goal 3 through the continuous development and delivery of an innovative curriculum and high impact practices, including undergraduate research, study abroad, service-learning and professional development courses by faculty fellows that prove essential to higher recruitment, retention, and graduation rates. The implementation of this model would be developed in collaboration with university colleges and departments.

While this is not the only curriculum delivery model, it possibly requires less resources than other models, such as a tenure-track honors college faculty model or a model based on departmental honors tracks delivered by academic units and overseen by the honors college administration. We are seeking input and feedback from the campus community about how to best use our resources to benefit all students and the institution as a whole.
Draft Questions for Open Fora in September (Qualtrics survey):
There will be two open fora sessions scheduled in late September for the campus community to provide feedback and ideas for this project. We are in the process of developing questions for a qualtrics survey:

Please answer the following questions either from your perspective as a faculty or staff member or stakeholder in your department/college and/or your thoughts from a U of I perspective.

1. How would an honors college contribute to recruitment and retention?

2. How would an honors college help with undergraduate research and professional development?

3. How would an honors college help student placement in graduate and professional programs?

4. How would an honors college help increase success with distinguished scholarships and other awards?

5. How would an honors college help shape faculty experience and opportunity at U of I?

6. How would an honors college serve our institution’s strategic goals and land-grant mission?

7. What does a university-wide honors college at the U of I mean to you?

8. What are some of the challenges you see in transitioning to an honors college?

Questions and Comment:

Questions and comments are always welcome! Please contact me any time at sreineke@uidaho.edu or (208) 885-7702.

Sandra Reineke, Ph.D.
Director, University Honors Program
Associate Professor of Political Science
Idaho Commons Room 315A
University of Idaho
NCHC Definition of Honors Education

The National Collegiate Honors Council recognizes an honors college, program, institute, or equivalent descriptor, as the academic unit on a collegiate campus responsible for devising and delivering in-class and extracurricular academic experiences that provide a distinctive learning environment for selected students. The honors college or program provides opportunities for measurably broader, deeper, and more complex learning-centered and learner-directed experiences for its students than are available elsewhere in the institution; these opportunities are appropriately tailored to fit the institution's culture and mission and frequently occur within a close community of students and faculty. In most cases, the honors community is composed of carefully selected teachers and students who form a cross- or multi-disciplinary cohort dedicated to achieving exceptional learning and personal standards. The National Collegiate Honors Council recognizes “departmental honors” as educational experiences that are similar but restricted to cohorts of students pursuing the same field of academic study.

https://www.nchchonors.org/uploaded/NCHC_FILES/PDFs/Definition-of-Honors-Education.pdf
Basic Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors College

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 fulltime, 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.

13. The college regularly assesses and evaluates program goals and learning outcomes as articulated in the National Collegiate Honors Council’s Definition of Honors Education and modes of honors learning, and as appropriate to the institution’s culture and mission.

Approved by the NCHC Executive Committee on June 25, 2005, and amended by the NCHC Board of Directors on February 19, 2010, further amended by the NCHC Board of Directors on June 19, 2014.

June 2017
Basic Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors Program

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 preprofessional 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 regularly assesses and evaluates program goals and learning outcomes as articulated in the National Collegiate Honors Council’s Definition of Honors Education and modes of honors learning, and as appropriate to the institution’s culture and mission.

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.

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 19, 2010; further amended by the NCHC Board of Directors on June 19, 2014.
How do we think we score?

The National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC) lists these as basic characteristics of a fully developed Honors Program:

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   **YES**

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.

   **YES**

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

   **NO**

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.

   **YES**
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%.

YES

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.

YES

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

YES

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.

YES

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.

MAYBE

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.

YES
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YES

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YES

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YES

14. The program regularly assesses and evaluates program goals and learning outcomes as articulated in the National Collegiate Honors Council’s Definition of Honors Education and modes of honors learning, and as appropriate to the institution’s culture and mission.

YES

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.

YES

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.

YES

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.

YES
Honors Program Criteria:

17 criteria in the areas of mission, enrollment, administrative structure, curriculum, infrastructure, and student services.

YES = 15

NO = 1 (administrative structure, line of reporting)

MAYBE = 1 (space, infrastructure)

**

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YES

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

NO

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 fulltime, 12-month appointment.

NO

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

NO
5. The honors college exercises increased coordination and control of departmental honors where the college has emerged out of a decentralized system.

YES

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.

YES

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

YES

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

YES

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.

MAYBE

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

YES

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.

YES

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.

YES
13. The college regularly assesses and evaluates program goals and learning outcomes as articulated in the National Collegiate Honors Council's *Definition of Honors Education* and modes of honors learning, and as appropriate to the institution’s culture and mission.

**YES**

*Approved by the NCHC Executive Committee on June 25, 2005, and amended by the NCHC Board of Directors on February 19, 2010, further amended by the NCHC Board of Directors on June 19, 2014.*

June 2017

**Honors College Criteria:**

13 criteria in the areas of mission, enrollment, administrative structure, curriculum, infrastructure, and student services.

**YES = 9 times**

**NO = 3 times** (administrative structure, reporting line and budget)

**MAYBE = 1 (honors curriculum)**