Title: University Honors 2012-13
Start: 7/1/2012
End: 6/30/2013
Progress: Ongoing
Providing: University Honors Program

The University Honors Program fosters students’ capacity for personal and intellectual development by encouraging them to discover new beliefs and relationships, refine their notions of success, and accept responsibility for their own and others’ growth and learning.

In 1961, President Millett founded the University Honors Program, and over 150 first-year students enrolled in it. One year later, honors courses were offered in almost every department on campus, a student advisory council was formed, newsletters and coffee hours created, two residence halls opened, and a part-time director appointed. The number of students in the program continued to expand for the next ten years, reaching a total of 1000 students in 1970.

Two years later, the political climate of Miami shifted, and the UHP was eliminated and replaced with a “General Honors Curriculum,” which consisted of regular courses supplemented with special projects, was directed by a faculty committee, and was open to any student. In 1982, a formal program was re instituted with a new director appointed, advising options, student board, a first-year colloquium, and a co-educational honors residence. Over the next decade, a new full-tuition merit scholarship program (Harrison Scholars Program) was instituted, endowed research funds secured, and a summer internship program developed. Approximately 15-20 honors courses were offered each year.

As a result of increasing competition for high-ability students from other institutions across the region and nation, Miami decided in 2000 to assess the University Honors Program again. After benchmarking against exemplary honors programs and colleges, the UHP was expanded to include a new faculty mentoring program, a more expansive set of requirements, an array of new courses, a tuition waiver for summer study, and the development of two tiers of students, who would have varying levels of requirements. The staff was increased from two positions to nine (including a full-time director).
Since that time, the program expanded the size and diversity of the program.

Today, it serves 1600 students. It features an individualized liberal education plan, intensive advisement, holistic admission process, and a sequenced and developmental curriculum and co-
curriculum. The program offers three honors residential halls for students at various stages in their careers as well as grant opportunities for student-initiated projects and other intense learning opportunities.

Program Accomplishments

Organizational structure

The director of the University Honors Program reports to the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Studies.

See attached organizational chart for how the staff is organized.

Honors Org Chart

Constituencies

The University Honors Program serves undergraduate students from all majors across all three campuses at Miami University (Oxford, Hamilton, and Middletown).

The enrollment has fluctuated over the past seven years. The overall size of the program is determined based upon institutional needs and available resources. The target size of each entering class is determined in collaboration with the Office of the Provost and the Office of Enrollment Management.

Currently, we have over 1600 students in the program. The entering cohort size over the last seven years is as follows:

2006  340
2007  255
2008  333
2009  422
2010  525
2011  449
2012  439

Over 200 faculty members contribute to the program each year by teaching honors courses, advising honors student projects, reviewing applications and e-portfolios, or serving on an honors committee. See attached charts which detail the faculty contributions.

The University Honors Program also have over 3,000 alumni to whom we communicate four times a year in our electronic newsletter and involve in a variety of our operations, including reviewing ULIP applications and arranging internships for our current students.

Staff composition

UHP Staff Members
Cynthia Klestinec, Director
Kristin Burton, Senior Associate Director
Kari Taylor, Senior Associate Director
Erin Heyboer, Assistant Director
Dave Sheehan, Assistant Director
Mandy Hart, Assistant Director
Clifton McNish, Assistant Director
Staff Qualifications
The director is a full-time tenured faculty member. The associate directors carry master's degrees, and all of the assistant directors have master's degrees or are in the process of completing their master's degree. The ULIP coordinator has a master's degree. The assistant to the director and administrative associate have high school degrees and over six years of experience working in higher education.

Staff development and evaluation

The honors staff hold an annual fall retreat and meet approximately every other week for 90 minutes. Many of these meetings aim to offer professional development on topics of mutual interest.

Each honors staff member is entitled to request funds for professional development (workshops, conferences, books and other development supplies). Requests are approved based upon program priorities and available funds.

The staff member’s supervisor as well as the Director of the Honors Program must approve all requests in writing before staff members may apply for or enroll in the professional development opportunity. Staff members may make a written request by submitting this form.

Priority is placed on proposals that meet the highest criteria articulated below and that are proposed by staff who have not had any professional development in the past year. On average, successful applicants requesting conference travel funds receive approximately $700. For high priority needs, special efforts will be made to allocate more than the typical $700 amount.

Criteria used to determine approval of funding includes, in priority order:

a) The development opportunity relates directly to the staff member’s job responsibility and addresses a critical area of need for program improvement. The staff member can clearly identify their goals for program improvement in that area and demonstrate how the development opportunity will assist them in taking specific action to reach those goals.

b) The development opportunity relates to the staff member’s job responsibility and the staff member is giving a presentation, participating on a board, or offering a workshop.

c) The development opportunity relates to the staff member’s primary job responsibility and could possibly offer new ideas for improvement.

d) The development opportunity relates to the staff member’s secondary job responsibility and could possibly offer new ideas for improvement.

Professional Development

- Burton, K. D. student in the Master of Business Administration Program, Miami University
- Burton, K. D., CELTUA Faculty Learning Community for the Exploration of Social Media in Higher Education participant
- Egart, M. K. International Symposia for Contemplative Studies, Denver, CO, April 2012
- Egart, M. K. CELTUA FLING: co-leader for “Exploring Contemplative Learning” group on 3 campuses
Engel P. completed the following courses: BIS 401, COM 356, ECO 201, BTE 106, ATH 304, ITS 201, Graduating with a B.A. in Integrative Studies, August, 2012
Sheehan, D., CELTUA Faculty Learning Community for the Exploration of Social Media in Higher Education participant
Sheehan, D. student in the Master of Science in Miami University’s Student Affairs in Higher Education, Miami University
Sheehan, D., 31st Annual Lilly Conference on College Teaching, Miami University, Oxford, OH.
Taylor, K. B., analyzed interviews for the Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education

Staff Publications
• Taylor, K. B., contributed a chapter titled “Leaving the Crossroads: Predominantly Internal Positions” to an ASHE Monograph regarding assessing learning and development (in press).

Staff Presentations
• Armstrong, R. and Moore, P. "Outcomes-Based Honors Programs.” Mideast Honors Association Annual Conference, Columbus, Ohio. March, 2012.
• Heyboer, E. and Armstrong, R. "Can One Size Fit All? Considering the Appropriateness of Multiple Advising Philosophies.” Ohio Academic Advising Association Conference, June 2012.

Consulting & Program Review
• Haynes, C. Focus Visit for Higher Learning Commission, Northern New Mexico College, November 2011.

Staff diversity (provided by OIR)

Facilities/equipment description and adequacy to mission
In May 2012, we relocated our program offices from Bishop Hall to Old Manse. For the first time in
many years, all of the honors staff members are housed in one building in close proximity to one another. Old Manse includes a conference room, meeting room, small kitchen area, work room, and eleven offices.

Diversity

The University Honors Program believes that student development is advanced when students wrestle with diverse perspectives. It aims to advance diversity as an educational resource through:

- A set of student learning outcomes which include outcomes related to intercultural understanding. Students must demonstrate their development of intercultural understanding in an electronic portfolio which is reviewed and assessed each year.
- A holistic admission process which considers a multiplicity of factors, including a student's cultural, racial and ethnic background and life experiences, geographical location, standardized test scores, high school grades and difficulty of high school curriculum.
- A curriculum which advances intercultural understanding. When faculty propose honors courses, the proposals are reviewed, in part, on how the course will advance students' understanding of cultures and diversity.
- Outreach to and purposeful partnerships with diverse high schools and community colleges.

Professional accreditation status, if applicable

The University Honors Program is an institutional member of the National Collegiate Honors Council.

Programs and services

The University Honors Program offers the following benefits to its students:

- Over 170 honors seminars and intensive learning opportunities each year
- An alternative and individualized liberal education plan
- Optional living learning communities with purposeful co-curricular programming for high-ability students
- Personalized advising and academic support
- Grants for projects

It also provides the following programs and services for the University:

- Goldman Prize which is a $30,000 prize awarded to a graduating senior to complete a major project
- Undergraduate Associates Program which enables students to co-teach a course with a faculty member and experience academic life
- Urban Leadership Internship Program which is a selective, self-designed summer internship and service-learning program.

Powerpoint presentations which provide an overview of the program are attached.

Budget and Finances

Since fall 2008, the University Honors Program has worked diligently to operate as efficiently as possible while still advancing its core mission to foster students’ capacity for personal and intellectual development by encouraging them to discover new beliefs and relationships, refine their notions of success, and accept responsibility for their own and others’ growth and learning. Toward that end, we have focused on those services which advance the core principles of the mission and which cannot be assumed by other units on campus. Services that advance
our core mission include: personalized recruitment, holistic admission process, individualized advising, portfolio assessment, and honors-exclusive experiences (courses and intensive co-curricular programs).

2008-2009 Cost-Saving Measures
1. **Reinvention of program and change in program requirements**: In 2009, we completely revised the program to enhance our ability to recruit high ability students and improve student learning and development. We moved to a portfolio based program with individualized general education plans and advisement. This reform resulted in an increase in applications, the yield of enrolling students, and retention of students—at the same time that the guaranteed honors scholarship was eliminated. Another benefit of the new program reform is that it makes us less reliant on a large slate of honors seminar course offerings. Our offerings of honors-exclusive seminars has dropped by 20% since 2008.

2. **Elimination of recruitment, programming and faculty mentor for Harrison scholarship recipients**: We ended the special recruitment weekend, co-curricular programming and mentoring of Harrison scholarship recipients, saving us approximately $45,000 a year in salary and operating expenses.

3. **Elimination of staff-led community service opportunities**: In the past, staff members have led an Earned Income Tax Credit Program (which took hundreds of hours of time), alternative spring break trips, and other community engagement activities. We eliminated all of those opportunities. Since then, we have encouraged students to participate in community service opportunities offered through other units on campus.

4. **First Revision of honors tuition waiver**: In 2008, we altered the eligibility requirements for the tuition waiver. Students now must use the waiver to make room in their schedules or to prepare for a semester-long study abroad. This change has resulted in a cost savings for the University of approximately $40,000-$60,000.

5. **Oversight of prestigious fellowships and scholarships**: Prior to 2008, the College of Arts & Science Advising Office assumed responsibility for this major effort. We have undertaken this responsibility with no new resources or additional staffing. Many universities offer separate offices and staffing for this function. The Director of the University Honors Program has assumed responsibility for this job. At most institutions, this is a full-time job.

6. **Application process for professional development funds and student grants**: In 2008, we created a proposal process for staff to use when requesting professional development and for students to use when requesting grants for scholarly, leadership and service projects. This process has allowed us to use our funds more purposefully to reduce expenses and allocate funds to high priority needs of the program.

7. **Reduction of costs involved in the Urban Leadership Internship Program**: In 2009, we reduced the number of internships offered by 50% in order to save costs. We also now create all marketing materials for the ULIP in house to save costs.

8. **Reduction of food costs**: We eliminated catering and food-related costs in all recruitment events and greatly reduced food-related costs in all other program events and activities. Estimated cost savings: $8,000 per year.

9. **Elimination of operating budget costs for Living Learning Community events and program**: We now ask residence life student and professional staff to apply for funding through our application process or through the Office of Residence Life. We do not fund any programs or activities in our residence halls.

2010-2011 Cost-Saving Measures
1. **Reduction in recruitment costs**: In 2010, we analyzed the effectiveness of “search” marketing to suspects and determined the <3% conversion rate was not a good return on investment. In 2011, we decided to focus our resources on students who indicated an interest in Miami and/or Honors. By eliminating “search,” we saved approximately $30,000 per year on marketing...
costs. We also converted all marketing mailings into bulk rate rather than first class, which saved 50% on postage, approximately $3500 per year. We also eliminated purchasing T-Shirts for Honors Ambassadors, which has saved about $400 per year.

2. **SMART team staffing approach**: Rather than each staff member specializing and focusing entirely in one area, we instituted a shared team and results-oriented approach in which each assistant director participates in all components of the program and is responsible for producing specific results. We also asked each staff member to create a time grid for all responsibilities so that we could ensure that all staff members were working at maximum capacity. This approach has increased staff productivity and fostered greater flexibility. We also hope that it will more easily allow for leadership succession since not all of the knowledge of the program will be housed in one or two persons. We also hope that as staff develop new skills and knowledge, our costs will be further reduced. For example, we will be training staff in video editing and production, which will save about $1800 year in videographer fees while still allowing us to have an up-to-date, multimedia marketing/communication plan. See list of staff responsibilities attached.

3. **Increase of enrollment cap on honors courses and strategic planning for courses**: By raising the enrollment cap on honors courses from 20 to 24 in 2010, we reduced the number of honors course offerings by 20% (or a total 20 courses), while maintaining the same seat capacity we offer currently. This change amounts to a savings of $48,000 for the University. However, an increase in the enrollment of honors courses has discouraged faculty from offering honors courses.

4. **Elimination of Associate Director Position**: In 2011, one of the associate directors was terminated. We voluntarily elected to shift responsibilities among the staff and not fill that position, amounting to a cost savings of $50,000.

**2011-2012 Measures**

In December 2011, Amy Lorenz, a senior assistant director, resigned because her husband took a position in another location. Because Amy was responsible for advising approximately 400-500 students per year[1] (among other duties) and we already have maximized the responsibilities and duties of the existing staff, we cannot compensate for this staff loss by reallocating Amy’s duties to existing staff.

Consequently, with this new loss of a staff position, we were regrettably forced to reduce or diminish some core services and/or number of students we serve.

1. **Second Revision of Honors Tuition Waiver**: In the fall of 2011, the Office of the Provost mandated that we alter the terms of the honors tuition waiver in the future to reduce costs, and we agreed to do so. Currently honors students are eligible for a one-time summer tuition waiver which covers 90% of the cost for up to eight credits (if they agree to study abroad during the academic year for a full semester while at Miami). Beginning with the entering cohort of honors students in F’12, honors students will be eligible for a one-time summer tuition waiver which will cover only 50% of the cost for up to nine credits (if the student agrees to study abroad during the academic year for a full semester while at Miami).

2. **Simplification of Application**: To help keep our application numbers stable, we plan to simplify the F’13 high school application by reducing the number of essays by half and simplifying the scoring rubric. We hope that this step will reduce our workload, but we are not sure that it will do so. It may, in fact, encourage a greater number of applications and thus end up being the same amount of work.

3. **Simplification of Honors Program Requirements**: Currently students must demonstrate mastery of 23 learning outcomes in their portfolio (11 foundational outcomes; 6 intermediate outcomes; and 6 advanced outcomes). To help reduce the time our staff devotes to portfolio review, we plan to simplify the way that six of the 11 foundational outcomes are scored and reviewed to reduce our workload. We also ask students to report on the 6 advanced outcomes through one form. If we simplify the requirements any more than this, we will need to undergo the proposal
and approval processes of the University which could take up to three years.

The above steps can help to address the lost staff position but much more will need to be done to ensure that we can meet the basic needs of our already admitted students.

[1] Note: According to NACADA, the normal load for a full-time academic advisor is 200-250 students.

Walnut Hills High School Partnership

Over the past two years, representatives from the University Honors Program and Miami University have been collaborating with representatives from Walnut Hills High School to create a partnership designed to increase opportunities for WHHS and other high school students to attend Miami University and other colleges and universities. This year, some impressive strides were made:

- Institute for a Superior Liberal Arts Education: WHHS and MU are co-creating an annual institute for top leaders from liberal arts high schools and colleges around the nation to develop new ideas for advancing liberal arts education at the secondary and post-secondary levels.
- Dual Credit courses: The Department of Classics and Comparative Religion will be offering two dual credit courses at WHHS next fall.

Community Colleges

Significant steps were taken this year to build relationships with honors programs at two area community colleges in order to create a sustainable pipeline from area community colleges to Miami’s University Honors Program.

Sinclair Community College

- Transfer Workshop Series: With the help of the Sinclair Honors Program Director, Mandy Hart instituted a three-part workshop series regarding common concerns for students transferring from two-year colleges to four-year programs that were held on Sinclair’s main campus in Dayton. Roughly 50 students participated in at least one workshop.
- Honors Symposium: Miami participated as a community partner in the Sinclair Honors Student Symposia on November 15, 2011 and May 31, 2012.

Cincinnati State Community College

- Preliminary Partnership: Mandy Hart, with the help of former CSCC Honors Experience Director and current CSCC Provost, intends to present the transfer workshop series and participate in some honors experiences for CSCC in the future.

Regional Campuses

The Honors Program continues to grow in membership on the regional campuses, with roughly 10 students at Middletown and 25 students at Hamilton. Of these students, about half intend to relocate to the Oxford campus during their collegiate careers. As such, the partnership between the campuses has grown to include a sharing of data tracking to ensure student success. This partnership has resulted in the availability of honors program participation for students pursuing associate degrees, mirrored efforts in application review and course instruction, as well as a systematic streamlining of regional student record keeping and honors experiences.
### Endowed Accounts

The University Honors Program is fortunate to have a number of endowed accounts which are summarized below.

#### Funds For Program Activities – 4 Accounts

1) **Honors Endowment**

   To be used at the discretion of the Director of the Honors Program. HSAB also funded $3,000 per year from this endowment.

2) **Wilson**

   To be used at the discretion of the Director of the Honors Program.

3) **Brown**

   To cover leadership seminars, receptions, field trips and other activities to advance academic mission of UHSP.

4) **Gift**

   To be used at the discretion of the Director of the Honors Program.

#### Funds for Student Research Projects – 6 Accounts

1) **Britton**

   Award acknowledged in writing cc: University Relations

   Undergraduate research projects. To support as many students as possible rather than large awards that only benefit a few individuals.

2) **Borchers**

   Students must be enrolled in College of Arts & Science. To support undergrad research projects.

3) **Student Initiative**

   Undergraduate research grants. Projects should show unusual promise of enhancing opportunities for students to take serious intellectual or creative leadership in their field of study. Proposals must be submitted to Director & Associate Director. Students present results to broader audience.

4) **Patten**

   Award acknowledged in writing cc: University Relations

   To support undergrad research projects in Psychology. To support as many students as possible rather than large awards to only a few individuals.

5) **Nott**

   Award acknowledged in writing cc: University Relations

   To support undergrad innovative research projects. To support as many students as possible rather than large awards to only a few individuals.

6) **Stevenson**

   Students must be enrolled in College of Arts & Science. To support undergrad research projects.

#### Funds For Designated Purposes – 8 Accounts

1) **Faber**

   To bring three or more nationally recognized experts to campus each year. They must: 1) Teach one or more honors seminars, 2) Presentation to University Community, 3) Work with students’ research, 4) Participate in a Colloquium of faculty & students addressing the scholar’s current research interest.

2) **Luedke**
To support the Urban Leadership Internship Program. Nothing to be charged directly to this account, money to be transferred into HON707 once funding depleted from that account.

3) Kettering Fund
To support the Urban Leadership Internship Program. All expenses deducted from this account.

4) Goldman Prize
Graduating senior for year of independent study. To be eligible for the prize, a student must have compiled an outstanding academic record, demonstrated a capacity for independent work, and shown creative initiative in some field of scholarship or the arts. Awarded after they graduate, then six months later.

5) Hogan Research
Scholar Room for a male student of junior or senior standing. Pays room cost only for 106 Elliott Hall. Recipient must show: 1) Outstanding academic achievement, 2) Substantive research or scholarship plans, 3) Promise of future contributions (publications, conference, presentations, etc.). Annual award.

6) Dennison Research
Scholar Room for a female student of junior or senior standing. Pays room cost only for 301 Bishop Hall. Recipient must show: 1) Outstanding academic achievement, 2) Substantive research or scholarship plans, 3) Promise of future contributions (publications, conference, presentations, etc.). Annual award.

Stewardship Plan
The honors director sends thank you notes to all donors and contributors to the program each year. Students who receive endowed funds are required to write a thank you note to donors or the donor families.

Articulation Agreements
In 2010, the University Honors Program at Miami University created an articulation agreement with Sinclair Community College’s Honors Scholars Program. The agreement is attached here.

Articulation Agreement with Sinclair CC Honors Program
Each year, the University Honors Program sets strategic goals for improvement. The annual goals are attached below. These goals are then assessed each year. The annual assessment reports which can be found in this template provide the evidence of how effectively the goals were met.

Program Goals, 2005-06
Program Goals, 2006-2007
Program Goals, 2007-2008
Program Goals, 2008-2009
Program Goals, 2009-2010
Program Goals, 2010-2011
Program Goals, 2011-2012

The University Honors Program at Miami University is unique in its emphasis on student learning outcomes, constructivist-developmental approach to education, individualized liberal education plan and e-portfolio assessment practices. It is one of the largest honors programs in the nation and is able to provide high-quality and cost-effective services and programs that are akin to what students will find in much smaller honors programs.

Other info and reports of interest to department

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