

University Honors Advisory Council
14 September 2015
3-4.30pm
Provost's Conference Room
Minutes

Present: Beckmann, Sterling; Dean, Vicky (guest); Smallman, Lora; Strasen, Christian (guest); Tucker, Cheryle; Toberman, Ian (guest); Voss, Eric; Ruckh, Eric (Chair)
No quorum

I. Approval of Minutes

Lacking a quorum, the minutes of 1 May and 31 August could not be approved.

II. Updates

A. Enrollment Report

We discussed the Fall Honors Census report. Robust numbers. There are currently 451 honors students enrolled.

B. New Lecture Series for Honors Program

The Chancellor's Office is encouraging the growth of honors culture by agreeing to modify two events formerly held exclusively for Meridian scholars: a fall event for freshmen and sophomores; a spring event for juniors and seniors. All honors and Meridians will be invited to the fall event (in late October): it will short lecture/talk on how qualities of leadership and how leaders initiate or catalyze change. The spring event for juniors and seniors will continue the tradition of awarding medallions to graduating Meridian Scholars, but add the awarding of honors medallions to graduating honors students. Again, there will be a brief talk.

C. Meridian Selection Process

Eric R. updated the council on changes to the Meridian selection process. Council members asked questions about how admissions counselors are being trained to score the essays and if the essays will be run through Turn-it-in. Eric R. will ask Todd Burrell for clarification.

D. Jeffery Waple, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs will be visiting on Monday, 21 September 2015

E. Meeting with Provost Ansari on 11 September

Eric R. met with Parviz and Denise on 11 September. At the meeting, Parviz expressed enthusiastic support for the development of the honors program and support for the honors reform package developed over the last year by the Honors Council. He wanted to convey his thanks to all Council members for their thoughtful work and commitment to honors reform, which he identified as a university priority. He gave us approval to move the reform package to the Faculty Senate as expeditiously as possible. After discussing the content of the reform package, we discussed costs. The Honors Program budget will be held at its current level for FY16 and will grow in FY17 to support the rollout of the first year of the new program (if the reform package is approved by the Faculty Senate). The Provost is also aware of the need to expand the budget of honors for at least four years to support the development of the complete reform package. He and Denise are enthusiastic about honors reform and committed to supporting its success. Parviz will join us at our meeting on 5 October (he was invited to come sooner, but because of scheduling conflicts, could not).

III. Review of Honors Reform Package

Discussion of honors reform proposal. In relation to the executive summary, Eric Voss suggested that the development of a diversity plan begin during this academic year, along with the development of an assessment plan. Even if the processes unfold at different rates, it is important that discussion of a diversity plan begin to signal the program's commitment to it. General concurrence. Cheryle Tucker, also commenting on the executive summary, asked for consistency in identifying the offices and units the honors program will work with; she suggested the removal of names. General concurrence. In revisions, Eric will make these revisions.

A longer discussion ensued after Ian Toberman asked for clarification of the linkage between Honors 120 and Honors 121. Eric said that the question of clarifying this linkage had been requested as well by Sharon James McGee, Chair of English. By linkage, we mean that all students in a particular section of 120 will be required to be in a coordinated section of 121 because the faculty teaching the two classes will be delivering content in a coordinated manner. So all students in 120_FR1 will have to take 121_FR1. Cheryle and Ian noted that such linkages are sometimes difficult for students to understand. It is possible that even if a student is put in one section, they may try to drop and get in another. There was also question of what happens if a student fails Honors 121 (Rhetoric) and passes Honors 120. Some suggestions: simply make Honors 120 a 6-credit-hour course, with clearly designated rhetoric component; or a clearly designated recitation component to discuss the topic (friendship). Some concerns about this approach: making the skill (rhetoric component) less visible; some concern about perceptions of the value of rhetoric and perceptions of equality of instructors. Eric will ask Laura Strom about types of

linkage and how to control enrollment in the parallel sections. Eric generally thinks that because this set of courses is generally for first-semester incoming students, these difficulties can be handled through advising and Springboard. In addition, if a student were to fail one of the classes, a solution could be found. For example, if a student were to fail Honors 121 (Rhetoric), they could be required to take English 201 (Intermediary Composition). If a student fails the linked Honors 120 section, they could be required to take a breadth course with an Honors contract. Eric is disinclined to change the linked structure. Cheryle Tucker reiterated that advising could manage the linked structure, if it is approved.

Ian Toberman then updated the Council on the work he has been doing to map the proposed changes into the curricula of various programs. He is working on a wide sample of about 15-20 such mappings. The most difficult will be Pharmacy. In relation to all others, there are curricular savings. Ian showed us, as examples, sample curricula of Business Administration (BS), Nursing (BSN), Chemistry (ACS Certified), Biochemistry (BS), and Civil Engineering. In each case there was either parity or 2-3 credit-hours of savings. The Council thanked Ian for his work and thought it would be compelling and powerful. Eric R. said that he had already asked Ian to join him before the Faculty Senate.