

University Honors Advisory Council

Minutes

24 April 2015

10-11.30am

Graduate School Conference Room

Present: Beckmann, S; Belasen, A.; Bell-Werner, M.; Berger, C.; Caveny, I. (guest); Crk, I.; Hecht, K.; Rowbothan, M. (substitute for Virginia Cruz); Smallman, L.; Toberman, I. (guest); Voss, E.; Ruckh, E. (chair)

I. Announcements

A. Website Redesign

All filming for the new website has been completed; review of footage begun. Webpage templates for the new website have been created; the director and his intern will begin construction of the website in mid-May. Target for completion of new honors website: 15 July.

B. Honors Focused-Interest Communities (FIC's)

The filling of the 1st-year honors/scholars FIC continues. Efforts to establish an upper-class-honors FIC did not work; the director will meet with the director of university housing to assess why and to plan another effort in Summer 15.

C. Diversification of Honors Program

D. Meridian Selection Committee

E. Meridian and Provost Scholarships

The director discussed the AY14-15 Meridian selection process: both the workload of the committee and new strategies to increase the diversity of the Meridian program were discussed. The director highlighted: the addition of implicit bias training to the training sessions for Meridian interview teams and the discussions that the Meridian Selection Committee intentionally had about how legally to increase the diversity of under-represented groups in the final yield of scholars. A lively discussion ensued. Members who served as interviewers praised the process and highlighted some of the remarkable stories of potential scholars as well as the range of the economic diversity. The Council was unanimous in supporting the idea that the size of the Meridian Selection Committee be increased to accommodate the review of increased numbers of applications. The Council also thought it important that the Chancellor clarify the institutional goals of the Scholarship.

II. Approval of Minutes of 6 March 2015

After minor revision, Dr. Berger motioned the approval of the minutes of 6 March 2015; Dr. Voss seconded. Minutes were unanimously approved.

III. New Business

Discussion of key components of draft reform package with aim to approve in principle by end of semester Spring 2015

The Council discussed the proposed 15 credit-hour core. It was comfortable with the proposed courses. Dr. Voss asked that case studies be developed to see how the proposed curriculum would impact select majors. Such case studies help inform both the Council and the Faculty Senate in their evaluations of the proposed curricular modification. The Council heartily agreed and the Director will work with the Advising Office in constructing such case studies over the summer.

The Council discussed the proposed 9 credit-hour cluster. The Council liked the idea of providing honors students with an opportunity to take responsibility for a part of their curriculum and making it the focus of the mentoring component of the program. Discussion of the issue will continue at the Council's next meeting.

The discussion of other issues in the draft reform proposal will continue at the next meeting.