

SINCLAIR HONORS PROGRAM

ANNUAL REPORT



MAY 2008

Purpose

The Sinclair Honors Program adheres to the core values statement of the National Collegiate Honors Council, of which we are a longtime member: our program “values an atmosphere that promotes academic opportunity and challenge for Honors students and faculty. Within this intellectual environment, members of Honors communities demonstrate integrity, respect, and excellence. Through the Honors experience, participants realize enhanced personal, social, and intellectual development. The NCHC recognizes the importance of life-long learning and social responsibility in preparing individuals for an increasingly complex world. These beliefs and values are reinforced among member institutions through the collegiality and shared purpose of the NCHC.”

History

The Honors Program at Sinclair was established in the mid-1980s at the initiative of Dean Clifford Barr at a time when many community colleges were just beginning to develop Honors curricula. Dr Mary Navarro was appointed to convene a committee and undertake to develop an academic Honors Program within the Division of Liberal Arts and Sciences. The committee drew up plans to offer a variety of course offerings, both core and special topics. The Board of Trustees approved the program and an operating budget. The Honors Committee was formally established to assist the Director, oversee the program, develop criteria for Honors course proposals, and to recruit students and faculty for the program. Dr Navarro was also advisor to Phi Theta Kappa, Sinclair’s Nu Pi chapter, the international honor society for two-year colleges.

We offered our first two courses (English 112 and Math 116) as pilots during winter quarter 1987. The program soon expanded to include courses in psychology, history, biology, humanities, and physics. During the 1990s we branched out into other divisions and departments, including fine arts, business, and communications. Interdisciplinary courses were first developed under a Sinclair Foundation grant for faculty planning. Interdisciplinary courses are an essential feature of any Honors program and are a key part of articulation agreements with four-year institutions. We define “interdisciplinary” as any HUM course and/or any cross-listed course.

The Sinclair Honors Program is an institutional member of the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC) and the Mid-East Honors Association (MEHA). We have agreements with Wright State University, Miami University and Wittenberg University allowing students who complete our program to apply for special scholarships at those institutions.

Katherine Rowell became Honors Director in 2006, after serving as Phi Theta Kappa advisor for five years.



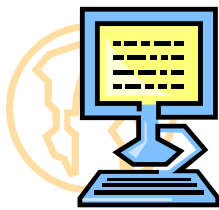
Accomplishments for 2007 and Proposals for 2008-09

1. Both Phi Theta Kappa and the Honors Program have begun discussing these student opportunities with staff and faculty at the Huber Heights, Englewood and Courseview campuses. Initially, a separate Honors Program will not be necessary, but some member

- of the staff or faculty at other campuses should be charged with representing the Honors Program. This need not be a full-time position. The "Honors Program Deputy" would report to the Honors Director, and would have the authority to approve honors contracts, honors sections and other day-to-day 'red tape.' Honors Scholars could also be recruited and interviewed.
2. First annual Honors Symposium was held May 13, 2008 in the Great Hall. A total of 13 students presented posters on their respective Honors projects. Plans are being made to hold a similar event in spring 2009. See the program and photos in the appendix.
 3. The Honors Program Aide and four students attended the Mideast Honors Association Conference in Indianapolis in April 2008.
 4. The first Honors Faculty of the Year was awarded to Samuel Sawaya in April 2008. Mr. Sawaya was nominated by students. See appendix for photo.
 5. The Honors Student and Honors Faculty handbooks were completed.
 6. The new process for students to register for Honors course work has been well received by students and most faculty have expressed positive comments about the process.
 - a. H1 Section numbers are given to stand alone honors courses, meaning that all the students registered for the course are honors students. Going forward, only one course will have this designation, English Composition I, II or III (depending on the quarter). The English department requires that students be recommended by an instructor to take the Honors course before they are given permission to register. An academic advisor or the Honors Program Director may give electronic permission to students who are recommended.
 - b. All the other courses are now listed in the bulletin as "This course is available for honors." This means that the faculty person teaching the course has agreed to teach the course for honors. For a student to take one of these courses for honors, they should:
 - i. register for the course;
 - ii. bring a copy of the fee bill listing the course to the Honors office, room 10-339;
 - iii. complete and sign the Honors Course Registration Eligibility Form in the Honors office. If the course is full, it is hoped that adding one student to the course for honors will be permitted by counselors.
 - iv. Honors designation will appear **only** on official transcripts.
 - c. For any course not listed as available for honors the student will need to contact the instructor to see if the instructor is willing to do an **honors contract**. Once the student has an honors contract and is registered for that course, the Honors Registration Eligibility Form can be completed in the Honors office. A student can successfully register for courses not officially listed as available for honors once they are registered for the course and the completed, signed and approved honors contract is filed with the Honors director. In other words, the instructor has to agree to do an honors contract with a student first and then the student can apply for Honors credit to be added to his transcript if he earns a final grade of A or B.

- d. For payload purposes, this process must be completed by the seventh day of the quarter. Specific dates are published on our website.
7. The Honors Scholars Medallion was envisioned by the students of the Sinclair Community College Honors Scholars Council and was created by former Sinclair Community College student Scott Hadley. Scholars completing all requirements of the Sinclair Honors Program will receive the medallion upon meeting all the requirements for graduation in a degree program.
8. Currently, Honors designation only shows on official transcripts. We would like to figure out a way for honors to be recorded on the unofficial transcripts printed from Web Advisor and campus kiosks.

Our websites



The Honors website (first set up in 1996) is one of the most complete, and most frequently updated, at Sinclair. It includes course listings and syllabi, and handbook for faculty, various forms, full descriptions of the program's activities, and links to related programs such as Phi Theta Kappa and Ohio Fellows. We have recently added a "testimonials" page with comments and news from former Honors Scholars who have moved on to graduate school or the working world.

When the my.sinclair website went online, the Honors Program also established a presence there. Honors Scholars, students in honors courses and others who scored high on the Accuplacer test are members of the Honors "organization" and receive updates and news via e-mail and announcements on the student homepage. This has proved to be a valuable recruiting tool for Honors courses. We will be converting and updating this website for the new Angel Learning software.

Recruiting

As with most Honors programs – particularly at nonresidential schools – our greatest challenge is informing students about the availability of Honors courses and persuading them to register. The most effective method of recruiting Honors students is through faculty announcing the availability of Honors course work in their classes and allowing students to add the Honors component after the first class has met. Other effective methods of marketing the Honors program include a new Honors brochure featuring real Honors students from Sinclair. Additionally, we include a list of Honors courses in each quarterly bulletin, on our website, and email that list to all the students in our my.sinclair groups.

Participation

Students may elect to participate in Honors two ways:

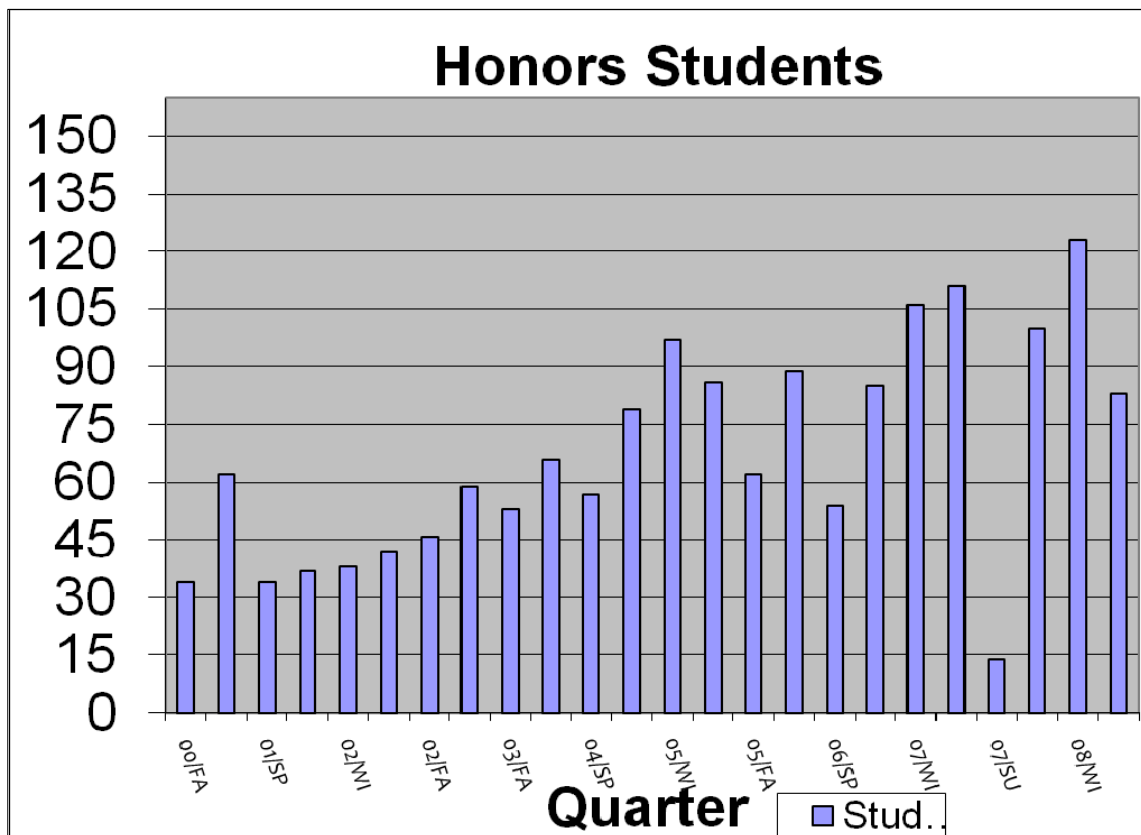
1. Honors Scholars Program

Students may apply to become Honors Scholars. Upon acceptance, scholars undertake to complete five honors experiences while maintaining an overall 3.25 GPA. Three of the five honors courses must be in different disciplines and one course must be Interdisciplinary Honors. In addition to other financial aid and scholarships, Honors Scholars may apply for up to six Honors Program Scholarships on a per-quarter basis during their time in the program. Honors Scholars are required to fulfill a Service Learning requirement before completing the program. Students will perform unpaid community service as part of a selected Honors course or through an Experience-Based Education (EBE) course.

2. Individual Honors Courses

Qualified students may enroll in individual Honors courses whether or not they plan to become Honors Scholars. To receive Honors credit, a student must earn a minimum of "B" in the course.

As of spring 2008, we have 83 active Honors Scholars, "active" meaning "enrolled this academic year, all requirements not yet completed." The term "active" is relative, however – some of these students attend full time and are conscientious about staying in touch with the Program; others are part-time and/or not enrolled every quarter; some we rarely hear from. In addition, there are about 20 students who were accepted into the program but have not completed the requirements and have not been heard from in several quarters: we consider them "inactive." Since 1998, about 40 Scholars have completed all requirements and moved on to four-year institutions.



Honors Program Leadership

The Director's responsibilities include:

- maintaining and supervising the Honors Program Office, room 10-339
- recruiting Honors faculty
- recruiting students for courses and for Honors Scholars Program
- coordinating Honors courses
- maintaining student records
- handling applications for Honors Scholars and Honors Scholarships
- developing in-service programs for Honors Faculty
- planning the quarterly Honors Symposium
- working with Honors programs at our transfer institutions including Wright State University, Wittenberg University, Miami University, and University of Dayton

The Honors Council member is expected to:

- oversee the development of new Honors courses
- help recruit faculty to teach honors courses
- help identify students as potential Honors Scholars
- interview students applying for admission to the Program
- support and assist the Honors Director and Phi Theta Kappa advisor
- review applications for Honors Scholarships
- help identify new Service Learning opportunities
- serve on a subcommittee

The members of the Honors Council are:

- Director of the Honors Program
- Advisor to Phi Theta Kappa
- a representative of the Admissions Office
- an academic counselor
- faculty members who teach, or may teach, Honors courses
- a student member of Phi Theta Kappa
- up to three (3) Honors Scholar students

The Program Aide

Our office manager and secretary, Linda Schock, is shared with Phi Theta Kappa and Ohio Fellows. This arrangement benefits all three programs, helping them to work together more closely – all three serve similar student populations, and there is overlap in membership and participation. Besides answering student questions and handling drop-in visitors to the Honors Program office, Linda maintains the website, tracks statistics, and takes care of routine office tasks like filing, typing and copying. Currently, Linda works ten hours a week in the Honors program office and there is no summer coverage for the Honors program. This is an issue that will need to be addressed in the future.

CRITERIA FOR ALL HONORS COURSES

Regardless of the type of Honors course, it must meet the following minimum criteria:

1. A significant portion of the grade must be based on research, writing and presentation. Some form of presentation should be required in every Honors course.
2. Students will be expected to interact and participate fully. Percentage of grade to be based on participation is at the instructor's discretion (unless there is a departmental rule).
3. Examinations and assignments that require students to demonstrate a command of the vocabulary and concepts of the subject; critical analysis and synthesis skills; problem solving; and mastery of the English language.
4. A class presentation by the student. This may take any number of forms. If special equipment is required, the instructor will make the arrangements.
5. For interdisciplinary courses, integration of two or more disciplines.

Financial Aid



We currently offer Honors Scholars Academic Excellence scholarships valued at up to \$400 per quarter for six quarters. These scholarships are also available to non-Honors students with the necessary 3.5 GPA, as long as they have completed 36 credit hours or more. This arrangement has worked well for us; we are almost always able to award some money to Honors Scholars who request it.

Service Learning

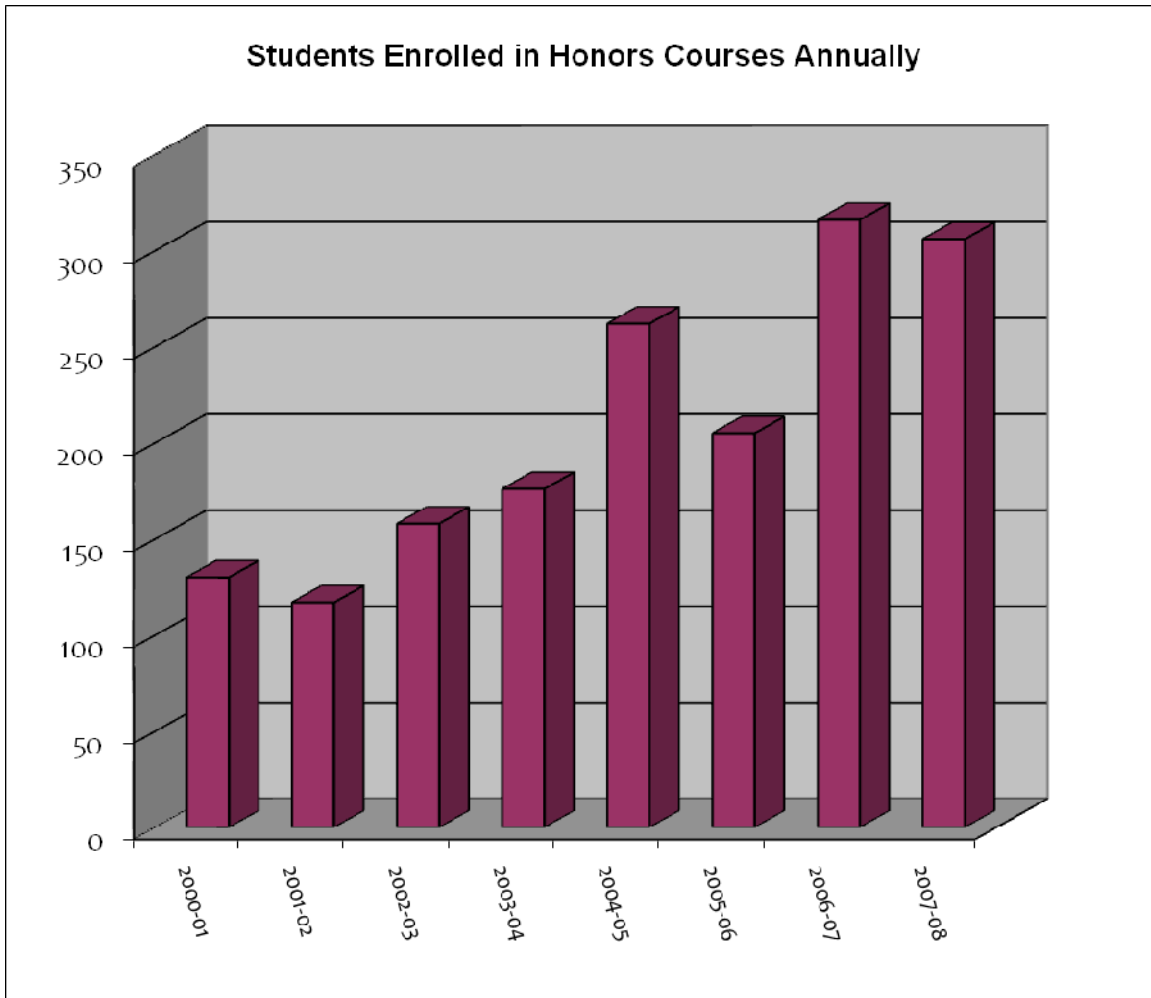
Beginning in January 1998, each student admitted to the Honors Scholars Program must complete a Service Learning project before "graduating" from the program. The Honors Council believes that Honors students, as leaders of tomorrow, should make a commitment to community service. You might volunteer at a local homeless shelter, work with the Lincoln School mentoring program, participate in a service project at your church, volunteer at a museum or outdoor education center, at the Park District, join a Habitat for Humanity project, serve on the board of a nonprofit organization -- the possibilities are endless.



In the Honors Program, "Service learning" is defined as a not-for-pay activity that benefits the public good. The Honors Committee has the sole right to determine whether a given activity fits this definition. This activity may be an internship such as that required by Ohio Fellows, but still must be not-for pay and for the public good.

Honors Course enrollment

Enrollment in Honors sections varies considerably from quarter to quarter, but there are some consistent patterns: ENG 111 and 112 always do very well; PSY 121 and 122 and ENG 113 usually have good numbers; HIS 111-112-113 sometimes have enough students for a stand-alone section, sometimes not; others like HIS 101-102-103 and BIO 171-172-173 always have a few students, but never enough for a stand-alone. The chart below shows a small but steady gain over the past few years in total numbers. 2007-08 will likely match last year's record setting numbers after summer enrollment is added to the 306 student total.



Appendix



Sam Sawaya, Honors Faculty of the Year



First annual Honors Symposium



Jacki Tipton, *Modern Day Tragedy: Child Soldiers in the 21st Century*



James Ryan, *Globalization and Guatemala*



Jason Buchanan, *A Brief Celtic History*



Colleen Lim, *Paul Laurence Dunbar Quilt*



Christopher Foote, *Virtual Migration*



Sabrina Metzger, *Freeganism*



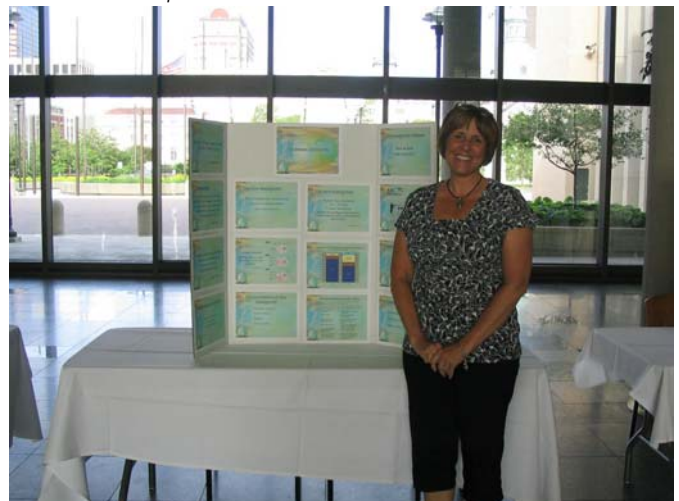
Lisa O'Hearn, *Unlearning Prejudice*



Therese Post, *A Wider Net to Gather in Our Students*



Tonya Barnes, *Future of Race and Ethnicity in the United States*



Deborah Wenger, *Future of Race and Ethnicity in the United States*



Charles Hammond, *The Atlanta Child Murders: Justice vs. Just Us*



Gil O'Bryan, *Sexuality and Sexual Ethics*



Gary Scott, *Body Image and College Students*



Sheri Yarbrough, *Research on Body Image and Women of Color*