

Colleges of the Arts and Sciences Honors Committee
Report to the Arts and Sciences Senate
May 12, 2010

The Arts and Sciences (ASC) Honors Committee consists of 20 members: 15 faculty members (three from each of the Arts and Sciences divisions); 5 students (representing the divisions); and the Executive Associate Dean for Arts and Sciences. In addition, members of the ASC Honors Office counseling staff, the honors office director, the associate provost for Honors & Scholars, and the director of the Honors Collegium all serve as ex officio members of the committee.

As well as conducting business as a full group, the committee also is divided into three subcommittees, each composed of five faculty members (representing each of the divisions). Those subcommittees are: (1) the Honors Curriculum Subcommittee, which reviews proposals for new honors courses on behalf of the full committee; (2) the Graduation Honors Subcommittee, which reviews and approves proposed Honors Contracts; the Senior Counselor in the Arts and Sciences Honors Office, Aurelia Kubayanda, reviews and approves applications for graduation *with research distinction*; and (3) the Research Scholarship Subcommittee, which reviews applications for Undergraduate Research Scholarships and awards the funding provided by the Office of Student Financial Aid specifically for undergraduate research; the Research Subcommittee also reviewed applications for the new Undergraduate International Research Award funding which has been made available by the Arts and Sciences Executive Dean's office.

Thus far in the 2009-10 academic year, the Arts and Sciences Honors Committee has:

1. Continued the review of Honors Contracts. For the past few years, a pre-screening subcommittee (currently Merijn van der Heijden and Mary Ellen Jenkins) has reviewed all honors contracts as they are submitted, to determine which can be approved as a matter of course and which should be forwarded to the Graduation Honors Subcommittee for further review.
2. Continued to monitor the issue of teaching of honors courses by non-regular faculty. Dossiers for non-tenured faculty teaching Arts and Sciences honors courses have been regularly reviewed by the Honors Curriculum Subcommittee.
3. Discussed and developed guidelines for awarding program honors as a result of completing an Honors Contract ("*with honors in the Arts and Sciences*") for students graduating with more than one degree from Arts and Sciences. General agreement that honors students who are pursuing dual degrees in the Arts and Sciences could be expected to go beyond the minimum requirements for breadth and rigor in the general education curriculum if they wish to graduate *with honors in the Arts and Sciences* on both degrees.

4. Discussed ability of departments to define format of Honors Thesis. Committee concluded that while all thesis projects should include an oral examination and a written component, the format of the thesis can otherwise be defined at the departmental level. Committee members agreed that efforts should be made to educate faculty honors advisors in departments about what can constitute a thesis project.
5. Discussed need to re-evaluate logistics of Honors Contract and subsequent revisions. Current (paper) format and process is too cumbersome; update to electronic format (for evaluation, approval and revisions) is highly desirable. Discussion also delved into possibility of renaming current Honors Contract to Honors Curriculum Proposal.
6. Discussed concerns about grade inflation. Generally noted that average grade in honors courses tends to be higher than in other classes. Noted that CESP reviewed concerns related to grade inflation few years ago and concluded that there was no significant grade inflation. Noted that the perception of grade inflation may be a function of the change in the type of student attending Ohio State these days.
7. Explored proposal for an interdisciplinary undergraduate research initiative. While members agreed this is an exciting initiative, details about the format and logistics have yet to be determined.
8. Participated in a discussion generated by student representatives on the ASC Honors committee about the need foster a greater sense of community among Honors students. Discussion in committee was followed by discussion with students in focus group, which included student members of the ASC Honors Committee as well as members of the Honors Student Advisory Board. No formal recommendations have been made.
9. Heard regular updates from Terry Gustafson regarding semester conversion.
10. Heard regular updates from Linda Harlow regarding the Honors Collegium and University Honors & Scholars Center activities and events.
11. Approved proposals for honors versions of the following courses:
 - Anthropology 650H (Research Design and Ethnographic Methods)
 - Communication 460H (Honors Communication Research Methods)
 - English 367.02H (Literature in the U.S. Experience)
 - English 367.03H (Film in the U.S. Experience)
 - English 367.04H (Technology, Science, and Communication in the U.S. Experience)
 - English 367.05H (The U.S. Folk Experience)
 - Linguistics 367.01H (Language, Sexuality, and Gender)
 - Spanish 604H (Spanish Phonetics)

- Women's Studies 110H (Gender, Sex, and Power)
12. Approved proposals for the following new honors courses:
 - Anthropology 597.05H (Global Food Crisis)
 - Comparative Studies 524H (Varieties of Christianity)
 - Film Studies 783H (Honors Research)
 - German 590H (German Reflection on Secularization and Society from the Enlightenment to the Present)
 - Mathematics 594H (Combinatorics)
 - Slavic H520.01H (The City of Sarajevo)
 13. Approved proposal for the following new honors embedded course for all campuses:
 - Psychology 543E (Psychology of Women)
 14. Approved proposal for the following new honors embedded course for the regional campuses only:
 - Psychology 220E (Introduction to Data Analysis in Psychology)
 15. Awarded \$12,000 in International Research Grant funds for Undergraduates in the Arts and Sciences to 3 students (\$4,000 per student). The emphasis of this new grant has been first and foremost on international exposure, providing students and faculty with an opportunity to expand the context in which they conduct research. The maximum total amount of \$20,000 for this fund will likely be available again in the 2010-11 academic year. Faculty may apply for up to \$4,000 for student support. Funds may be requested for one student per application.
 16. Awarded \$177,000 in Undergraduate Research Scholarship funds to 53 students, in amounts varying from \$1,000 to \$8,500, during the spring quarter, 2009 scholarship competition. During the autumn quarter (2009) scholarship competition, \$147,880 in Undergraduate Research Scholarship funds were awarded to 61 students, in amounts varying from \$430 to \$5,000. The Research Scholarship Subcommittee met again in early May (2010) to review applications that were submitted in April for the spring competition, for funding for the 2010-11 academic year.
 17. Reviewed 598 proposed Honors Contracts, 519 of which were approved.

In addition, the Arts and Sciences Honors Committee would like to report the following:

- The AU09 class of new Arts and Sciences honors students numbered 520, which represents approximately 36% of the University's entering honors population.

- 83 Arts and Sciences students graduated “with honors in the Arts and Sciences” SU09-WI10, and approximately 386 have applied to do so in SP10, for a total of at least 469 for 2009-10. This represents an increase of 48 students over last year’s total number of students graduating “with honors in the Arts and Sciences.”
- 23 Arts and Sciences students graduated “with research distinction” SU09-WI10, and at least 141 have applied to do so in SP10, for a total of at least 164 for 2009-10. This represents an increase of 23 students over last year’s total number of students graduating “with research distinction.”
- 369 sections of honors (including 2 sections of honors embedded) courses were offered SU09-SP10 by departments within the Arts and Sciences, with a total enrollment of 7881. This represents a decrease of 2 sections and an increase of 18 enrollments over last year.