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Honors Program

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Reso: Routing #10 79-80

Resolution #9
1979-1980

Honors Program

TO: PRESIDENT ALBERT W. BROWN

FROM: THE FACULTY SENATE Meeting on 11/19/79
(Date)

RE: XX I. Formal Resolution (Act of Determination)
II. Recommendation (Urging the fitness of)
III. Other (Notice, Request, Report, etc.)

SUBJECT: Honors Program

(See attached)

Signed RG Kemmerling Date Sent 11/27/79
(For the Senate)

..... R. G. Kemmerling, President, Faculty Senate.

TO: THE FACULTY SENATE

FROM: PRESIDENT ALBERT W. BROWN

RE: I. DECISION AND ACTION TAKEN ON FORMAL RESOLUTION

a. Accepted. Effective Date 12/13/79

b. Deferred for discussion with the Faculty Senate on _____

c. Unacceptable for the reasons contained in the attached explanation

II., III. a. Received and acknowledged

b. Comment:

In principle with need for more specificity.

DISTRIBUTION: Vice Presidents: Dr. Douglas

Others as identified:

Distribution Date: _____

Signed: Albert W. Brown
(President of the College)

Date Received by the Senate: 12/17/79

HONORS PROGRAM (1979 Revision)

History of the Honors Program:

An Honors Program has been in existence, at least on paper, since 1975 at SUC Brockport. In 1978 the Honors Program Committee was asked by Vice President Farris to investigate the causes for the failure of this program, to consider whether there was a real need for an Honors Program at Brockport, and if so, whether an improved program could be designed. As reported to Dr. Farris on February 23, 1979, the committee concluded that the program had failed because of insufficient publicity, defects in the program's design, and a lack of faculty and administrative support. However, the committee felt that there was a need, perhaps even stronger now, to make an Honors Program available to the students at SUC Brockport.

The following proposal for a redesigned Honors Program has resulted from the committee's deliberations and has been developed in accord with suggestions made by the GE Steering Committee and the Undergraduate Academic Policies Committee of the Faculty Senate. It is the feeling of the Honors Program Committee that this proposal represents an improved and more viable design for an Honors Program at SUC Brockport.

I. Objectives of the Honors Program

- A. To provide an enriched program of studies which will challenge the ability and broaden the academic perspectives of both the Honors students and faculty.
- B. To provide a program of study which will allow for a variety of teaching methods, such as interdisciplinary courses, traditionally designed courses, sequential courses, team teaching, etc., which could lead to a richer learning experience.
- C. To provide a program of studies that will promote collegiality among Honors students, within the college faculty, and between the students and the faculty in general.

II. The Structure of Lower Division Honors (a sample schedule for a lower division student is contained in Appendix A).

- A. Admission of students into the Lower Division Honors Program.
 - I. Lower division Honors students should be actively recruited from the entering freshman class. Primary weight should be given to proven academic ability.

2. Students who have completed their first semester courses may also apply for admission to the Honors Program. In special circumstances, students who have completed their freshman year may apply to the Honors Program. However, these students will be expected to fulfill all lower division Honors Program requirements.
3. A group of between 50-60 new Honors Students each year, i.e. in each Freshman class, would provide the critical number of students necessary to ensure a successful lower division Honors Program.
4. Students who are not officially enrolled in the lower division Honors Program would also have the opportunity to take Honors courses with the permission of the course instructor. However, classes should not be allowed to expand beyond designed enrollments.

B. Official Recognition of Honors Courses and Programs.

1. Students enrolled in Honors courses will automatically receive an "H" on their transcripts next to each successfully completed Honors course.
2. Those students who have been admitted into lower division Honors and successfully complete all lower division Honors requirements will have their transcripts stamped "LOWER DIVISION HONORS." In addition, special letters written by the Honors Program Director should be placed in their placement folders.
3. If possible, special scholarship funds, perhaps raised by the Alumni or Brockport Foundation, should be made available on a competitive basis to Juniors who have successfully completed lower division Honors. These scholarships should be awarded solely on the basis of a student's academic and personal achievements and not according to need.

C. Lower Division Honors Requirements.

All Lower division Honors students will be required to complete a general education core similar to that required for other Brockport students. Completion of the lower division Honors requirements will satisfy the SUC Brockport General Education requirements.

1. Honors Introduction to Liberal Studies (3 credit hours)

This three credit hour course would be similar to the GE course Dimensions of Liberal Education. Its goals would also be to examine the nature, purposes, and scope of a liberal education, to introduce the wide variety of available campus and community facilities, and to provide intellectual focus for the students. In addition to these DLE design goals, the Honors Introduction to Liberal Studies would be designed with a substantial course content, a wide range of readings, a requirement for individual student research, and would be oriented to the specific goals of the Honors Program.

- a. It is desirable that this course be taught by the Honors Program Director. Hence, students would be brought into contact with this individual not only as a mentor/advisor, but also as a course instructor.
 - b. This course would be a major element in establishing a feeling of communality among Honors Program students.
 - c. The course should be as interdisciplinary in its approach as possible, perhaps utilizing the services of several additional faculty on an invitational basis. Such an approach would introduce the students to some of the variety and values of the disciplines available at Brockport and also promote an integration of discipline perspectives through the focus on a single problem or topic.
 - d. The course would have very substantial content organized around a particular but broad theme that would lend itself to an interdisciplinary approach, e.g. "Death," "Crime, Punishment, and Madness," "Technology and Future Society," etc.
2. Cognitive Skills Requirements (9 credit hours).

Honors Students will be expected to fulfill the cognitive skills requirements as outlined in the college's General Education requirements. Because the three cognitive skills courses, Communications I, Communications II, and Quantitative Skills, are competency-based, there will be no specially designated Honors courses in these areas. It is, however, expected that a significant number of Honors students will qualify for a waiver (D level) in one or more area.

3. Lower Division Honors Breadth Requirements (24 credit hours).
- a. Honors students will be expected to fulfill The General Education Breadth Requirements, i.e. eight courses (24 credit hours) in the four areas--Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, and Natural Sciences and Mathematics--with at least two courses in each area.
 - b. Honors breadth courses will be developed in accord with the General Education guidelines.
 - 1) The normal Honors Breadth Course would meet the GE breadth requirements in an enriched and more challenging manner.
 - 2) Another type of Honors Breadth Course would be a two semester (6 credit hour) Cluster Course, interdisciplinary in scope. Such a cluster course might be taught within the same primary unit for its duration, but in this case it would be designed in consultation with the GE Committee to meet the spirit of the GE requirements.

- a) This sequential Honors course is intended to enable both the students and the instructor(s) to investigate a single topic or problem in greater depth and from the perspective of several disciplines.
- b) It is also hoped that such a sequential course will foster a greater sense of collegiality among the students and between the students and the instructor(s).
- c. Honors students will be expected to complete eighteen out of the required twenty-four credit hours for ^{the} breadth component with Honors ("H") credit courses.
 - 1) Honors students will receive Honors Program credit for all Honors courses in which they earn a "B" or better.
 - 2) One two-semester Honors Cluster (6 credit hours) must be included in the eighteen required credit hours.
4. Design of Honors Courses.
 - a. All Honors courses will be rigorously examined to ensure that they fulfill the goals of the Honors Program.
 - b. Because of the new curricular requirements resulting from the General Education program and the redesign of core courses to meet its goals and stipulations, it is expected that the normal Honors course will be a newly designed enriched course.
 - c. Some Honors courses could be specially designated sections of multi-section courses. These Honors Sections would be more demanding in terms of written assignments, laboratory work, readings, discussion, etc., in order to provide an enriched learning experience.
 - d. A limited number of contractual Honors courses may be developed by individuals or groups of students. Such courses could be enriched versions of already existing courses or new courses.
 - 1) The Honors Program Director should work closely with the course instructor to assist in the design and implementation of an enriched program.
 - 2) Honors students are limited to only one such contractual course for the fulfillment of the Honors breadth requirements.
 - e. It is imperative that the size of Honors courses not be allowed to exceed a limit compatible with an enriched learning experience.
 - f. Honors courses will be selected from proposals solicited from the entire campus faculty.

5. Criteria for Admission to all Honors Courses.

- a. Entering freshmen would be invited to participate in the lower division Honors Program on the basis of their high school records, Regents exam SAT scores, or equivalent materials.
- b. Students who have completed no more than 30 credit hours of college work may also petition for admission into the Honors Program.
- c. All students with a "B" average or better would be able to enroll in an individual Honors course with the permission of the instructor.
- d. Any student not fitting the above criteria would be allowed to enroll in an individual Honors course with the permission of the course instructor and the Honors Program Director.

D. Collegiality in Lower Division Honors.

Close personal and intellectual relationships would be fostered by the program outlined above. The Honors Program Director would have immediate classroom and advisement contact with the entering freshmen. If the two semester cluster course were to be taught by the same instructor(s), closer student/teacher relationships could also develop here. The structured program for Honors students would put them in Honors courses less than half of their first two years of college work. Furthermore, collegiality would be enhanced if the Honors program had a physical "home", perhaps a classroom or two set aside for many of the Honors courses and/or an office for the Honors Program Director.

E. Faculty Participation, Course Development, and Course Selection in the Honors Program.

If the lower division Honors Program were designed in accord with the GE requirements, as described above, there should be little problem getting faculty involved or quality courses designed. As in the existing GE program, courses could be newly designed or produced by modifying existing courses.

Course proposals will be solicited from the entire campus faculty. The Honors Program Committee will select a limited number of courses (to ensure adequate enrollments) for inclusion in the Honors Program. Selection will be based on an attempt to ensure the highest quality of individual courses, to construct the best overall Honors Program, and to share the instructional responsibility among individual faculty and college departments and divisions.

III. Upper Division Honors

It is recommended that the exact nature of upper division Honors be developed in the 1979/80 academic year. During the fall semester, 1979, the Honors Program Committee will discuss in detail the best models for such an upper division program. At present the Committee feels:

- A. Upper division Honors should be primarily located in individual departments or units. The specific design of upper division Honors programs would be developed by individual departments or units in consultation with the Honors Program Director and would be subject to the approval of the Honors Program and the Faculty Senate.
- B. Individual departments or units will have the responsibility for making both the programmatic and admission decisions for their "Honors majors." All majors, not just those who have completed Lower Division Honors, would be eligible for admission by the department or unit into its upper division Honors program.
- C. A requirement for individual work, original research, or an Honors thesis is being considered for upper division Honors.
- D. A requirement for an integrative seminar, interdisciplinary in approach, is being considered. Such a course might be confined to one area of study, e.g., Problems in Contemporary Scientific Research, or be broadly interdisciplinary. The goal of such a course would be to integrate a student's four years of college studies, to sum up the college experience, to examine the student's major from the perspectives offered by the other disciplines, and to examine areas of significance in human life from the perspective of the student's major discipline.

IV. Administration of the Honors Program.

- A. Responsibilities of the Honors Program Director.
 1. Co-ordinating and/or teaching the Honors Introduction to Liberal Studies.
 2. Advising the Honors Students.
 3. Chairing the Honors Committee.
 4. Publicizing and recruiting for the Honors Program.
 5. Handling administrative tasks connected with the Program.
 6. Overseeing the academic integrity of the Program as a whole.
- B. Honors Program Committee

A joint faculty-student-administration committee should meet once or twice a semester to review the status of the Honors Program, evaluate student work as necessary, review incoming freshmen's admission materials, invite qualified students into

the Program, and award scholarships if a scholarship fund is established for outstanding Honors students. This committee should include one representative from each of the six faculties (appointed by the appropriate Dean), one administration representative, the Director of General Education, and two students from the Honors Program.

C. Relationship of the Honors Program to the G.E. Steering Committee

1. Since the Honors Program has been designed to be consistent with SUC Brockport's General Education requirements, facilitating transference into and out of the Honors Program, there will need to be a close relationship between the GE Steering Committee and the Honors Program Committee. It is recommended that to ensure this close relationship the GE Director serve on the Honors Program Committee.
2. Honors courses that are intended to satisfy GE requirements will be screened by the Honors Program committee to ensure their enriched design and value in the total Honors Program and also by the GE Steering Committee to ensure they satisfy GE requirements.

V. Implementation of the Honors Program (for schedule, see Appendix B)

- A. It is recommended that an Honors Program Director be selected and the Honors Program Committee formed in Fall Semester, 1979.
- B. It is recommended that a pilot Honors Introduction to Liberal Studies be taught in Spring Semester, 1980, by the Honors Program Director.
- C. The 1979/80 academic year should provide enough time for the specific design of the few Honors courses that will be necessary for introductory year of the Honors Program, 1980/81. During this year, in addition to the Honors Introduction to Liberal Studies, only three to six Honors breadth courses would need to be taught. There should also be little danger of under-enrollment in the Honors courses because of the known number of students in the program, the limited number of courses offered, and the close relationship between advisement and course offerings.
- D. The 1979/80 academic year should provide the time necessary for an effective recruitment of the 50 to 60 entering students needed if the Honors Program is to succeed.
- E. The 1979/80 academic year should also provide enough time for a clear indication of the administrative, faculty, and student support necessary for the success of the Honors Program.

APPENDIX A -- SAMPLE SCHEDULE OF A LOWER DIVISION HONORS STUDENT

FRESHMAN YEAR

Fall

- Communications Skills I
- * Honors Intro to Liberal Studies
- * Honors Breadth
- GE Breadth
- Elective

Spring

- Communication Skills II
- Quantitative Skills
- * Honors Breadth
- * Honors Breadth
- Elective

SOPHOMORE YEAR

Fall

- * Honors Breadth Cluster
- * Honors Breadth
- Elective
- Elective
- Elective

Spring

- * Honors Breadth Cluster
- GE Breadth
- Elective
- Elective
- Elective

APPENDIX B---IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

December 1, 1979	Selection of the Honors Program Director and the Honors Program Committee.
December, 1979	Consideration of a possible pilot Honors Introduction to Liberal Studies in Spring, 1980.
Fall-Spring, 1979/80	Preparation of Honors Program description for students; Start recruitment effort for lower division Honors Program for fall semester, 1980.
Fall-Spring, 1979/80	Active solicitation of departments and Area Coordinators to prepare Honors courses for the academic year 1980/81. This solicitation should be by both the Honors Program Director and the Honors Program Committee.
Fall-Spring, 1979/80	Discussion of Upper Division Honors, polling of departments, etc., with specific recommendations forwarded to the Undergraduate Academic Policies Committee.
Spring, 1980	Possible teaching of pilot Honors Introduction to Liberal Studies.
April, 1980	Entering freshmen selected and invited into Honors Program for fall, 1980.
Summer, 1980	Evaluation of pilot Honors course, revision if necessary.
September, 1980	Orientation and Advisement for Honors Students.
Fall, 1980	Lower Division Honors Program in place with the Honors Intro. to Liberal Studies and three to six Honors breadth courses. Active solicitation of departments and areas to design honors courses (and especially the cluster courses) for fall, 1981.
Spring, 1981	Evaluation of Fall, 1980, Honors courses. Planning and design of complete range of Honors courses for 1981/82.
Fall, 1981	Complete Lower Division Honors Program in place (including cluster courses).
1983/84	Full-scale, independent evaluation of Honors Program by Faculty Senate appointed committee.