

Honors College

Continue To Enhance The Honors College Impact On Undergraduate Research

Goal Description:

Through the dramatic success of the Undergraduate Research Symposium, the Honors College has established itself as a major player in undergraduate research. Now it is time to connect our success with other, new initiatives on and off campus.

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS-----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Connecting With Other Undergraduate Research Programs And Initiatives

Learning Objective Description:

The Honors College will continue to enhance its own role in undergraduate research, especially through our Undergraduate Research Symposium, but we will also seek to work with other campus programs to share our experience and expertise in undergraduate research. We will also seek to connect with, learn from, and contribute to regional and national undergraduate research initiatives.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Dedicated Coordination With Other Undergraduate Research Initiatives.

Indicator Description:

The indication of success in this area will be records of contact and exchange with campus departments and programs, as well as outreach and coordination with external agencies and organizations, especially regional and national efforts in both honors education and undergraduate research. We will also continue to measure progress in our own URS.

Criterion Description:

The general criteria for assessment which cover this objective are the National Collegiate Honors Council statements and guidelines concerning undergraduate research.

Findings Description:

The URS expanded quite a bit in 2016 with over 300 people in attendance as either presenter, moderator, or audience member. Honors Ambassadors were instrumental in coordination and involvement to reach out across the university by connecting with faculty and students and encouraging researchers from all disciplines to participate. Scholars from each of the Colleges presented at the symposium with new representation of disciplines such as agriculture technology and film studies. We added a dedicated panel session to promote University initiatives for example, the Common Reader Program. The URS was so successful that we added scholarships for Honorable Mention and an award for Best Senior presentation. Our funding from the various colleges and administrative departments increased also.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Role of Honors

Action Description:

Goal Description

After a significant growth trajectory, it is time to step back and reconsider the role of the Honors College on the SHSU campus.

Enhance The Honors Educational Experience Without Sacrificing Quality.

Goal Description:

The Honors College will continue to mine NCHC literature and conferences, as well as ideas from other honors programs inside and outside our region, for ways to enhance the honors educational experience without sacrificing quality.

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS-----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Strengthen And Enhance The Quality Of Honors Teaching

Learning Objective Description:

The Honors College will undertake a focused effort to increase and strengthen faculty involvement in honors classes by providing faculty development and support. This initiative will take shape in the form of written documents circulated to faculty and workshops/idea sessions on honors teaching effectiveness.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Honors Faculty Development Survey

Indicator Description:

During 2014-15, the Honors College will undertake specific faculty development initiatives, particularly with the objective of increasing faculty understanding of honors educational practices and objectives. At the end of the year, we will survey honors faculty on the effectiveness of our faculty development effort.

Criterion Description:

In seeking to enhance our connections and communications with honors faculty, we will follow criteria for honors teaching and faculty standards set by the National Collegiate Honors Council. We will produce our own teaching document to communicate these standards and criteria to our honors teaching faculty, both those who teach in seminars and those who teach in honors-only sections of regular courses.

Findings Description:

The Honors College deans met with each of the six college deans or associate deans to recruit their faculty to teach honors courses, particularly with the objective of increasing faculty understanding of honors educational practices and objectives. A form for prospective seminar faculty was created to evaluate future seminars and to lead the faculty toward incorporating honors practices in their curriculum (thesis, research opportunities, URS participation, and community engagement). Workshops on honors teaching effectiveness and a survey on faculty development efforts are in progress.

Improve Contacts With, Tracking Of, And Support From Honors Graduates

Goal Description:

The Honors College will begin a targeted effort to make contact with former honors students and to discover trends in post-graduate education and career paths.

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Increase Support For Honors Students’ Post-graduate Careers

Performance Objective Description:

The Honors College will seek to provide increased support for Honors students’ post-graduate academic careers. We will seek to increase level of support through various means, such as conference and research stipends, opportunities for presenting undergraduate research, preparation resources, and counsel for post-graduate educational success.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Tracking Student Post-graduate Academic Outcomes

KPI Description:

This initiative will be a success if this initiative results in a measureable increase in students having academic papers accepted for presentation or publication. Another indicator would be an increase in the rates of acceptance into graduate programs, plus an increase in the support offered by those programs.

Results Description:

This objective has been achieved. This academic year, an increased number of honors students presented at conferences in their disciplines and at the Undergraduate Research Symposium. Honors students gave poster presentations at the NCHC. Numerous honors students are completing research projects and presentations in collaboration with the McNair Scholars program. Systematic tracking of the indicators requires additional staff and resources.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Role of Honors

Action Description:

Goal Description

After a significant growth trajectory, it is time to step back and reconsider the role of the Honors College on the SHSU campus.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Tracking Alumni Career Paths And Enhancing Alumni Contributions

Performance Objective Description:

The Honors College will perform systematic tracking of the career paths and graduate work of honors graduates with the objective of setting up giving networks and support initiatives for the Honors College, as well as to use alumni outcomes as measurements of program success in preparing graduates for further education and for careers.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Improving Contact With And Response From Honors Alumni

KPI Description:

This initiative will be a success if we achieve measureable gains in honors students who establish or re-establish contact (Facebook, event attendance, etc.) with Honors and who donate to Honors.

Results Description:

This objective has been achieved through increased social media communications with former hsonors college students. The SHSU Honors College facebook now has total page likes of 1,333, and a weekly outreach of 4,349. In addition, the Honors College newsletter

chronicles alumni career information and Honors alumni are invited to the Let's Talk fundraising event each year. Honors College donation have increased this year.

Rexamine, Refine, And Redefine The Honors Role On The SHSU Campus

Goal Description:

After a significant growth trajectory, it is time to step back and reconsider the role of the Honors College on the SHSU campus.

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

Objectively Examine Perceptions And Realities About The Honors College On The SHSU Campus

Performance Objective Description:

After a period of significant growth and enhanced visibility, it is time to examine perceptions about the Honors College on campus and how these perceptions match the reality. We will seek to discover through comprehensive assessments how various honors demographics compare with the general student body and measure the comparative results. We will also look for ways to measure current perceptions about Honors among faculty, staff, and students and then consider whether we need to take action to enhance or correct those perceptions.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

Comparison Of Honors Versus Non-honors Demographics

KPI Description:

In order to reach a fuller understanding of our role and perception on campus, we will examine relative statistics of Honors versus general student body in the following areas: percentage of first-generation college goers, minority population (especially African-American and Hispanic), graduation rates, grade point average, percentage of international students, percentage of students from states other than Texas. Attachmnet 1 shows the relative percentages (honors to total student body) of first generation students and minority students, at the beginning of the Fall 2013 semester.

Results Description:

The Honors College continues to work with Institutional Effectiveness to monitor the honors/non-honors comparison. Each fall, data is collected on the demographics and specific variables for honors and non-honors students. The Honors College uses this information to assess the honors students' demographics and to assist in planning curriculum and programs.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

Role of Honors

Action Description:

Goal Description

After a significant growth trajectory, it is time to step back and reconsider the role of the Honors College on the SHSU campus.

Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement

Previous Cycle's Plan For Continuous Improvement (Do Not Modify):

Honors College Plan for Continuous Improvement

Actions Remaining from the 2014-15 Strategic Plan

Goal I. Re-examine, Refine, and Redefine the Honors Role On The SHSU Campus

Objective A. Expand Honors Outreach and Service

Action Statement. The Honors College “Project Intrepid” was a success, and now we will build on it—continuing it and expanding our involvement. The Zimbabwe experience opened other, far-flung outreach possibilities. We expect to continue and expand our

Plan for Continuous Improvement.

- Continue the Project Intrepid into a second year and expand the number of students participating.
- Facilitate Honors student contact with the Zimbabwe health clinics.
- Continue and expand the number of Honors ACE seminars.

Goal II. Enhance The Honors Educational Experience Without Sacrificing Quality.

Goal II, Objective A: Develop An Ongoing And Robust Honors Study Abroad Program

Action Statement.

The 2015 Honors Seminar In Zimbabwe was successful to the degree that the Honors College is now fully committed to conducting one (and possibly two) study abroad classes each year.

Plan for Continuous Improvement.

- Continue to establish connections with study abroad agencies.
- Begin final planning for the 2016 London seminar.
- Begin long-term planning for study abroad programs in Zimbabwe, Greece, and Costa Rica.
- Include studies abroad opportunities in honors recruitment literature.

Goal II, Objective B: Strengthen And Enhance The Quality Of Honors Teaching

Action Statement.

While the Honors College did provide some enhanced guidelines for honors faculty (including meetings in which we articulated guidelines and objectives for conducting honors seminars), we still have much work to do in this area. We will plan more structured outreach for the coming year, including more careful communication with the instructors of honors sections in the disciplines and honors contracts.

Plan for Continuous Improvement.

1. Improve communications with instructors of honors courses in the departments and honors contract instructors.
2. Plan teaching workshops for honors seminar faculty.
3. Develop guideline statements for honors seminars

Goal III. Comprehensive Evaluation Of The Honors Admission Process

Goal III, Objective A. Re-examine the Standards for Honors Admission

Action Statement. We will this semester begin evaluating the Fall 2015 incoming class, particularly with demographic measures. However, it will be a year at least before we begin to get a full picture of how active, engaged, and successful this Fall 2015 class of new honors students proves to be. Preliminary outcomes are promising, but through this year, we will actively follow up these new students in terms of their academic success, participation in honors activities, and other such measures. We will pay particular attention to those new honors students who might not have been admitted under previous admission practices.

Plan for Continuous Improvement.

- Begin immediate evaluation of the incoming class from demographic measures.
- Begin immediate evaluation of the incoming class in terms of their overall engagement in honors relative to previous classes.
- Plan for a one-year post analysis in the fall of 2016 and in subsequent years.
- Use these data to make further changes in the honors admission process.

Goal IV. Continue To Enhance The Honors College Impact On Undergraduate Research

Goal IV, Objective A. Continuing The Success Of The URS

Action Statement. The 2015 Undergraduate Research Symposium was another great success, but we did identify certain areas for revision and improvement. We will continue with this model while continuing to refine and improve.

- Improve the student-faculty mentor process.
- Seek additional funding from the colleges.
- Look for ways to improve participation in certain under-represented disciplines (and colleges).

Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:

Each continuous improvement plan was attempted and progress was achieved; although, some initiatives were postponed due to lack of funding and failure to secure additional staff. Plans for an additional study abroad seminar were postponed. The Fall High School Honors Dinner was cancelled. With less funding, we charged for guests at our events, and ordered fewer tickets for the cultural outing events. We reduced Honors office students workers from 4 to 3.

1.) Study Abroad improvement: In Zimbabwe, student contact with health clinics was achieved. We had one honors senior research project on health clinics in Zimbabwe and had an honors seminar study abroad class visit 2 clinics to learn more about them.

2.) Strengthen quality of honors teaching: Guidelines for seminar instructors and additional communication with contract faculty was achieved. Teaching workshops are being developed.

3.) Evaluation of honors admission process: We have gathered 3 years of honors demographics data and began assessing admissions standards and scholarship requirements. The admission process was streamlined and more faculty readers are serving on the honors admissions committee. We are also gathering data on First Year Experience and Living Learning Honors Community that will aid in future course planning, and in assessing student engagement with the Honors College. Each semester, an increased number of students received New Honors Student honors advising and more students attended the Welcome Retreat, both instrumental for increasing retention rates.

4.) Enhance Honors College impact on undergraduate research: The URS improved by all measures: increased funding, attendance, and interdisciplinary scope. Faculty in more departments across campus are sending students to the URS. Registration has been streamlined and EURECA involvement and funding improved.

Goals and Objectives for Continuous Improvement

Closing Summary:

1. Initiative 1: Increase support for honors staff and students

1. Add full-time staff member (Administrative Associate II or III)
2. Find additional honors-dedicated space on campus (seminar and study rooms)

2. Initiative 2: Address and resolve the ongoing, systematic shortage of the Bowers Endowment

3. Initiative 3: Develop a Sustained Undergraduate Research Agenda

1. Secure guaranteed funding dedicated to Undergraduate Research
2. Provide funding for student research and conference travel
3. Increase support for students writing honors theses
4. Continue to offer scholarships for students studying abroad (including for our seminar)
5. Offer competitive research scholarships
6. Work more closely with EURECA to promote scholarship opportunities

4. Initiative 4: Improve communication between the Honors College and students and faculty

1. Convert all documents to pdf forms that can be completed and sent electronically
2. Create faculty information webpage
3. Create and revise FAQ sheets for contracts and theses
4. Develop our FYE Living and Learning community
5. Integrate the Terry Scholars (who may or may not be members of the Honors College) into the life and culture of the Honors College