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Honors Programs: Development, Review, and Revitalization

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Honors Programs:
Development, Review,
and Revitalization

by

C. Grey Austin



Monographs in Honors Education

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INTRODUCTION

This is a monograph on the development and review of honors programs. Both subjects are treated in a single handbook because the materials presented here are useful in each process. The section on principles and practices of honors education in the United States (the overview) is background for those who would plan an honors program; for those who are reviewing and evaluating an existing program, the overview provides the means for educating those whose experience with honors is limited to the honors program of a single institution. It may add little or much to the director's knowledge, but it is likely to broaden the perspectives of faculty and student members of an honors council, and of central administrators.

The self-study outline is based on the overview and provides an organizing pattern for the planning process as well as for the review of an existing program. When used by program planners, it should help with the assessment of the resources and readiness of the institution to host an honors program and should define the shape of the projected program; as a guide for the review of an existing program, it will suggest categories for review. When completed, the review document will furnish information for use by an outside consultant and by those within the institution who will be responsible for reshaping the program.

Since both the planning and review of honors programs often include the use of an outside consultant, a major section on making effective use of a consultant follows the self-study chapter.

Chapter four presents sample questions for the construction of survey instruments for gathering course, instructor and program evaluation from students, faculty, and alumni/ae and suggests patterns for the administration of those instruments. The gathering and presentation of evaluative data take on special significance in times when the administrative watchword is "accountability." Periodic program review is often mandated.

A proposed schedule for a visiting consultant is presented as Appendix A.

There is no one model of an honors program that can be superimposed on

institutions that are as different as community colleges, liberal arts colleges, and comprehensive universities — or even upon institutions nominally of the same sort but different in history, administrative structure, disciplinary organization, budgetary support, or student mix. The basic honors question is: What opportunities must we make available in order to assure that the ablest and/or most highly motivated students *in this institution* may have their educational needs met? Starting from this premise, whether developing a new program or reviewing an existing one, we seek to discover not whether a program has all of the features on a prescribed list but whether the range and mix of honors opportunities constitute what the ablest (I will use this term to include a combination of competence and motivation for learning) students in that setting need. In the development or review of an honors program, attention is paid to its constituent parts, to the integrity of the program as an entity, and to the fit of the program to the institution.

The development or review of an honors program may be approached through an internal process alone or through a combination of internal and external resources.

Internal Development and Review

Internally, the development or review of an honors program is based in a self-study. The self-study is essential whether or not there are to be outside consultants. While the perspective and recommendations of a visiting expert can be extremely helpful, change can be brought about only through the institution's own efforts, by those who are aware of its personal, political, and historical peculiarities.

It may be that the institution has its own internal requirement for periodic program review. Such a pattern has several advantages: it can, at regular intervals, involve in a more intensive way a number of faculty and students who too easily take the program for granted; it can generate new ideas; it can bring attention to a low profile program; and it can provide justification for new administrative action in support of the program.

Whether periodic review is mandated or not, the honors program can adopt a continuing process of monitoring and documenting quality that can build the program into the academic and administrative fabric of the institution.

Course evaluations can be reported as documentation for promotion and tenure; departmental contributions to honors through providing courses, instructors, advisers, and supervisors of honors research may be reported as data for budget allocations; assessment of student learning may be reported for the benefit of the individual student and as an indication of the extent to which the program goals are achieved; and the honors director's quantitative and qualitative reports of departmental or college contributions to the honors enterprise can provide material for budgetary allocations, the institution's annual reports, and the president's public addresses. Additionally, a pattern of ongoing evaluation can forestall a hostile evaluation.

Each institution will have its own set of objectives for its honors program, and these will provide the focus for evaluation. The overview section of this monograph suggests general educational and institutional objectives, and these might serve any institution as a starting point. Beyond the general statement, however, it is important to state as specifically as possible the objectives of each element of the honors program. So, within the program, objectives will be stated for curriculum, for faculty development, for pedagogy, for student admission and retention, for the student association, for academic advisement, and for recognition procedures. When these are in place and known to the honors community, there will be a firm basis for evaluation. The more specific the objective, the easier its attainment can be assessed. For a clear statement of this approach, with helpful examples, see the small volume by Benjamin Samuel Bloom, *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: The Classification of Educational Goals*, New York: McKay, 1956. When an institution and its honors program have thoroughgoing statements of operational objectives, there is a basis for ongoing review.

In recent years, assessment techniques have been developed for the measurement of student and program outcomes, and both institutional and state authorities have begun to expect, and sometimes mandate, accountability reporting. Honors directors who have previously reported measures of student, faculty, and alumni/ae satisfaction, liberally enhanced with anecdotal success stories, now find that they are required to produce "hard" data in support of claims that honors education produces superior results. To help with this process, NCHC has produced a monograph: *Evaluating Honors Programs: An Outcomes Approach*, by Jacqueline Reihman, Sara Varhus, and William Whipple.

While some institutional needs can only be satisfied by quantifiable data, it is very important to indicate where quantification is invalid. Anecdotal information is useful when used sparingly and to illustrate (not prove) a point. The larger need is to present both hard and soft data in a context that suggests appropriate interpretation of those data. Not only are we called back to our *raison d'etre*, we are reminded of the value of happy accidents and unintended consequences as well as the proximate attainment of objectives. In this process of looking at the larger picture, visiting consultants can be particularly helpful.

External Resources

While national norms have not been stated by NCHC, there is, among experienced honors directors, some degree of consensus about honors ideals. Institutions that invite outside consultants will find, therefore, that while the honors program is reviewed in terms of the objectives held for that particular honors program, the program, as well as its objectives, will also be exposed to the light of certain norms that are probably held rather universally, though with different degrees of focus.

A consultant or a consultative team might be chosen, then, for balance of perspective as well as for experience with an institution of the type under review. The visiting individual or team would be expected to assist in the planning process or in the review of the existing program in terms of the institution's own objectives for honors and from the value perspectives rooted in the commitment and experience of the consultant(s). To review only in terms of the institution's objectives would prevent those objectives from being questioned.

The benefits of using an outside consultant were cited by Betty Krasne (Mercy College) in an article, "Consultancy: Adversary Proceeding?" in *The National Honors Report*, Spring 1990. Her institution undertook the self-study preliminary to the visit by the consultant. She reported that although many persons perceive an outside evaluation as a threat, it was, in fact, a very positive experience. The assembling of the self-study document helped them to discover their historic roots. "First, it was reassuring to finally have on file in one place the relevant documents. Second, the effect of this part of the study was to emphasize the organic nature of the program.

. . . to plant the Honors Program firmly in the context of the larger institution." (P. 8)

"The historical view thus emphasized the ways in which the program was an authorized creature of the larger institution and not a kind of whimsical excrescence. . . . the ties that bind program and institution turned out to be older and firmer than this director can perceive on a daily basis." (P. 8)

Krasne also noted that, "The institutional focus on programs under inspection, which gives them priority status on campus, is a significant reason for an evaluation visit. . . . President, Provost, Deans, Chairpeople, and Faculty make themselves available to fit into the schedule you assemble for the visit. . . . the importance of the Honors Program is already being attested to by the events themselves: that the consultant is present, that everyone who is anyone is meeting with him (or her), are facts which of themselves make a powerful statement about the importance of honors." (P. 8)

She continues, "Fallout from the visit was all positive, if one excepts the fact that more work was involved for the director." "The final report was a most useful document. . . . it led to more definition, articulation, variations, offerings. . . . The report became a tool which metamorphosed before one's eyes. Sometimes it was a blueprint, sometimes it was that magic wand again, sometimes it was an agenda for further discussion. It became a checklist against which the Honors Program could measure its preparation for a stronger role in the upcoming decade." (P. 9)

The Catalytic Process

The process of planning or review appears external when outsiders are sent a self-study, visit the campus for interviews and observations, and write recommendations, but it is not. The chief benefits of the process are in the awareness created by the self-study, the stimulation of ideas by the discussion of persons and committees with the visitors, the attention given to the visitors (and therefore to honors) by administrators, and the commitments made or implied and inferred during the visit. Betty Krasne reported "a sharpened interest in the Honors Program (as) chairpeople wanted their departments to work more closely with the Program while individual faculty

had specific requests for new courses of action the Program could take (and students wanted more of certain kinds of things.” (P. 9)

An open, though systematic, process will provide time for the unrestricted conversation that can generate new ideas and for the review of assembled data not simply to answer prescriptive questions but to discover unanticipated areas of significance. The process itself, and, to an even greater extent, the outside consultant, serves the catalytic function of stimulating a process of on-going planning and evaluation, with continuing involvement of students, faculty, chairpersons and administrators.

Perspective

Further light may be thrown on the catalytic process by contrasting the approach of this monograph with that of the monograph on the outcomes approach to evaluation. A distinction is made between operational, or process, evaluation and outcomes evaluation. The approach taken in this monograph is *operational*, i. e., it has to do with the program’s entire operation and how that fits the ongoing mission of the larger educational institution. It is *contextual*, not only with respect to the host college or university but also with respect to other programs in the larger honors movement. It is *comparative*, seeking cross fertilization of ideas among institutions, primarily through the use of outside consultants.

The *process* approach of this monograph is evident in its focus on evaluation as an on-going, built-in feature of the program, rather than an event outside its boundaries, on evaluation as a highly participative learning experience for all constituents of the program rather than an approach limited to the assessment of how effectively the goals of a program are being met.

Finally, and in summary, the evaluational pattern presented here is *holistic*. It assumes that planning and evaluation are most complete and most effective when all constituents are involved, both as sources of and as interpreters of data; when the process includes both interested and disinterested parties; when methodology is both objective and whatever its opposite may be; when evaluation is integrated within the total operation of the program and with the planning for its future; and when the program is integrated with its institution and with the honors movement.

In an effort to assist that process — both internal and external and both for development of a new program and for program review — this document is offered. An overview of honors is followed by an outline for an institutional self-study (for internal planning or review), a guide for the use of consultants (the external component), and material for use in building and administering instruments for the evaluation of courses, instruction, and programs.

CHAPTER ONE: The Principles and Practices of Honors Education: An Overview

Honors education consists of the total means by which a college or university seeks to meet the educational needs of its ablest and most highly motivated students. Honors learning is promoted whenever a faculty member responds to an inquisitive student's special interest or an adviser helps a student select courses that will call forth his or her best efforts. Anyone who identifies and fosters the growth of academic talent is engaged in honors work. An honors program, as Halverson (1973) notes, is simply a planned set of arrangements to serve the needs of talented students more adequately than if the matter were left entirely to the enthusiasms of individuals.

While a commitment to an educational ideal is the common thread in honors programs, patterns for implementing that ideal vary with types of institutions and the nature of the student constituency. After 70 years of identifying special courses as "honors" and more than 30 years of nationally organized professional attention to the honors movement, only a limited consensus exists about the most effective ways of assuring honors education. This overview is, therefore, more descriptive than prescriptive; it approaches the latter only when a rather clear consensus can be perceived among the experienced honors directors who have refined their programs and their ideas about honors through the sharing that takes place in regional and national meetings and in publications devoted to honors work.

In 1975, an overview of honors (Austin) omitted reference to two-year colleges, non-traditional students, pre-college education of the gifted, experiential education, relations of honors with the larger community,

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assessment of outcomes, and applications of cognitive and learning style theory. That these topics must now be included is an indication that the honors movement remains dynamic and experimental, and, consequently, resistant to the setting of consensual standards.

History

The history of honors education is coexistent with the history of higher education. The Socratic dialogue, the Oxford tutorial, the German seminar and the Guild apprenticeship continue to serve as models for contemporary honors programs.

The modern history of honors work in this country dates from 1922, when Frank Aydelotte established the innovative pass-honors approach at Swarthmore. In 1924 he issued his pioneering report, "Honors Courses in American Colleges and Universities." During the same period, Sidney L. Pressey was publishing articles on the psychology of education for superior students, particularly stressing acceleration. From those early beginnings, institutions of higher education developed a variety of approaches to honors education.

In 1957 the launching of Sputnik called attention to the need to foster talent, making that year pivotal for the development of honors programs. Joseph W. Cohen, who had been developing an honors program at the University of Colorado since 1928, founded the Inter-University Committee on the Superior Student (ICSS) and became, as he said, a modern Johnny Appleseed sowing interest in honors across the nation. The work of the ICSS, including its journal, *The Superior Student*, was funded by a grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York. In 1966, when the funds ran out and Dr. Cohen was ready to pass the reins to others, the ICSS was superseded by the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC), which continues to provide a variety of services to those responsible for and participating in college and university honors programs.

Rationale and Objectives

In any institution in which the student body is intellectually heterogeneous, two groups of students are disadvantaged by the regular curricular offerings.

At the one end of the continuum are those whose ability or preparation renders them incapable of meeting the challenge of the full program, and at the other extreme are those of such ability and previous achievement that the regular program provides insufficient challenge. There is no difficulty in recognizing that the former group needs specialized counseling, a degree of curricular flexibility, and courses at an appropriate level of difficulty. The premise governing programs for the disadvantaged is that all students should be encouraged and enabled to develop the talents they have. The same premise furnishes the rationale for honors education.

An egalitarian mood is sometimes responsible for charges that honors programs are elitist or undemocratic. Most of these charges are quieted by the response that both democratic and educational principles require not that the same programs be offered to all but that all persons have the opportunity to develop their talents to the fullest. Honors education becomes elitist, at least in the pejorative sense, only when it departs from meeting educational needs and engages in the favoritism of providing special privileges.

Building on the rationale stated above, the Halverson (1973) report posited both educational and institutional objectives. The educational objectives of an honors program are: (1) to identify students whose ability and motivation are so high that their academic needs would not be met adequately by existing programs; (2) to provide academic opportunities of such caliber that the students thus identified are challenged to perform at the highest level of excellence of which they are capable and through which they may become independent learners; (3) to establish an environment that will encourage the aspirations of and the achievements by these students and that will foster in them dignity, self-esteem, and a sense of their potential; and (4) to derive from the program benefits for the wider academic community, such as focusing attention on quality education and a concept of excellence, giving faculty members the psychic reward that derives from working with gifted students, and attracting to the campus scholars and speakers who would not otherwise be there.

Beyond these educational objectives, certain institutional objectives may also be served by an honors program. These include the following:

First, honors programs assist in attracting students of outstanding academic

ability. Many candidates for participation in an honors program have already discovered what it is to be bored by an insufficiently rigorous secondary school program. Those who are worthy of being designated as "honors students" will be seeking a program that will challenge them to the fullest. The very existence of an honors program attracts those students who can benefit most from such a program. These students are an asset, not only for their participation in the teaching-learning process, but also for their contributions in leadership roles and for the enhanced possibilities of winning Rhodes, Marshall, NSF or other prestigious scholarships.

Second, honors programs can assist in attracting and retaining faculty members committed to quality education. The opportunity to teach honors students, like the opportunity to teach graduate students, has a special attraction for many college teachers. Outstanding teaching talent is always in short supply, and honors teaching may attract and hold those whom the institution would least like to lose.

Third, honors programs can assist in attracting funds that would not otherwise be available. A significant number of honors programs have participated in projects funded by both public and private agencies and donors.

Finally, honors programs can enhance the public image of the institution as a place where superior scholarship is honored and encouraged. A college that maintains an honors program exhibits to the world that the cultivation of learning is a value that is cherished. Phi Beta Kappa asks institutions that apply for a chapter to provide a description of the honors program and evidence of strong student participation.

Curriculum

Enrichment. Although honors programs differ in many ways, they have in common the offering of rigorous, coherent, and integrative academic experiences and a high degree of student-faculty interchange. In smaller institutions and in some comprehensive universities, an honors core curriculum will consist of, or include, sequences of interdisciplinary courses or colloquia. In universities that prescribe distribution requirements, the honors courses are likely to be rigorous, low-enrollment, faculty-taught

versions of regular courses, with integration achieved through individualized curricula that are required to be coherent as well as rigorous and that may include interdisciplinary seminars. An honors education is often capped by an individual research experience that culminates in a senior thesis and an oral examination. The tutorial relationship that characterizes the senior research project is sometimes extended to other facets of the curriculum as well.

Most honors curricula may be subsumed under one of two categories: general and departmental honors. General honors refers to alternatives to the regular general education program. Subject matter is explored with greater intensity and depth, concepts are examined, and research patterns are introduced. The sections, courses, or interdisciplinary colloquia are taught by faculty members who are adept at the seminar approach and who are able to work particularly well with students of exceptional ability and commitment to learning.

Honors classes are small (eight to 25 students), because, as McKeachie (1969, pp. 79-80) points out, bright students learn better than other students in a highly participatory process and because the target audience is never more than a small percentage of the student body. Wherever appropriate in such courses, primary sources and original documents replace textbooks. Lecturing is at a minimum, and the subject matter is usually approached selectively. Honors courses in the sciences, mathematics, and certain other fields require attention to the sequence of study, but they can be taught imaginatively with challenging problems that go beyond the "cookbook" approach, extended laboratory hours, and an introduction to independent research. The honors-section approach need not be limited to basic or lower division courses, but the need is most evident at that level. This approach is economically most feasible as an alternative to a large lecture class.

An honors approach to teaching, combining intensive attention to content with participatory learning and close student-faculty collaboration, is designed to match developmental functions. The intended outcome of an honors education is a knowledgeable *and* effective person. Consequently, there is concern not only with how information may be transmitted most effectively but also with how it can be integrated with other knowledge the student possesses and with his or her developing skills, appreciations, and

perspectives. In an increasing number of honors programs, faculty are applying William G. Perry's (1968) theories of cognitive and ethical development, experimenting with the building of effective learning environments, responding to differences in learning and teaching styles, and planning courses in accord with what is known about structures of knowledge in various disciplines and in interdisciplinary areas. These factors affect both formal instruction and the informal interaction that characterizes life in honors housing, honors lounges, and other aspects of the honors community.

The mainstay of departmental honors is independent study in a tutorial relationship with a faculty member — an apprenticeship with a practicing scholar and an invaluable experience for the prospective graduate student. In most such programs the project will span the senior year or even the junior and senior years. The culmination of the project is the senior honors thesis or creative project on which the student is examined by a faculty committee. This experience is enhanced if it has been preceded by or carried on concurrently with honors seminars in basic concepts and methodology. Many universities now support the research projects by awarding undergraduate research scholarships or grants.

The Honors Contract is a device that permits students to build their own curricula in consultation with faculty members, and it is subject, usually, to the approval of a faculty committee. The experience of constructing a rationale for one's education and of selecting courses and other experiences to meet those academic objectives is, in itself, an important educational experience. The guidelines for the Contract will usually specify certain degrees of freedom from regular degree requirements and will require that the total contract have a strength and coherence not characteristic of the programs of other students. There may be freedom, for example, to elect an unconventional major, to organize thematic clusters of courses, and to transcend disciplinary boundaries that are closed to other students. The emphasis is usually placed on meeting the intent rather than the letter of degree requirements. The Contract may be particularly useful in institutions in which interdisciplinary experiences are limited. Honors students are capable of understanding, and are often eager to explore, the interrelationships of traditional fields of study, and they are rightly impatient if those intellectual opportunities are withheld from them.

Some institutions have combined special classes, independent study, and interdisciplinary approaches into a fixed honors curriculum quite different from the regular program, with interdisciplinary colloquia at each level. Others have offered a freshman program of special and often interdisciplinary colloquia from which students then move into more traditional patterns of specialization, sometimes with departmental honors seminars and independent study.

Acceleration. The curricular elements of an honors education may contribute to the acceleration as well as to the enrichment of the honors student's academic program. Means for academic acceleration respond to the extent of knowledge acquired before college entrance and to the pace at which the bright student learns. Thus most programs encourage students to earn credit by examination, both through the institutions's own proficiency examinations and by acceptance of credit and placement for acceptable scores on tests conducted by the Advanced Placement Program (APP), the College-Level Examination Program (CLEP), and other agencies. Accelerated programs may also offer immediate advanced standing upon matriculation, placement beyond elementary courses, permission for credit-hour overload, a three-year degree, combined bachelor's-master's curricula, and combinations of these. Although most honors directors emphasize stronger and more liberal, rather than speedier, programs, a truly comprehensive honors program serves its students by making it possible for them to move as quickly as they are able to the graduate and professional level.

Many honors programs are serving the local community while providing opportunities for accelerated learning through the sponsorship and facilitation of opportunities for pre-college education of gifted young people. College or university facilities and personnel are mobilized into offerings that supplement the programs of the local public and private schools, with planning shared by school and college representatives. In some programs, college honors students participate in planning, serve as role models, and teach or assist in teaching.

These pre-college programs range from Saturday morning or late afternoon classes for young children to concurrent credit enrollment of high school students in regular or honors courses in college. Subject matter varies as widely as imagination permits, but attempts are made to avoid duplication

of work available in the schools. Programs may include intensive work in the visual and performing arts, the study of literature through myth, and a number theory approach to mathematics, to cite only a few examples. Summer, on many campuses, offers a special opportunity for intensive, residential institutes. The development of closer ties between institutions of secondary and higher education has advantages for each.

Innovation. Educational innovation and honors have often been allied. The development of honors courses and curricula is necessarily an exercise in innovation. New courses, new majors, living-learning centers, and community-centered programs have been developed within honors programs and sometimes made available to the entire campus. When other functions of importance to the university are combined with academic challenge, as, for example, in an “Honors and Experimental College,” the need for a clear statement of the program’s rationale and objectives is evident.

Honors curricula differ widely, and should be expected to, because they are tailored to meet the educational needs of the most capable students in each unique setting. The need in some institutions may be met within a four-year liberal arts program; in others, the ablest students may be in such undergraduate professional programs as engineering, business administration, and agriculture where honors coursework will help them develop broadened perspectives for leadership roles in their professions and in society.

The newest arena for honors work is the two-year college, although a few have had honors programs for many years. Community and junior colleges benefit from the propensity of gifted students to matriculate inexpensively and close to home, and urban colleges find excellent students among those who remain within the family home. Honors programs in the two-year colleges tend to parallel those in the first two years of a four-year institution with the single exception that independent study in a tutorial relationship with a faculty member may occur in the sophomore year. Involvement of the college with the local community may find expression in pre-college education of the gifted and in internship arrangements with area businesses, agencies, and institutions. Since most two-year college honors students will continue study in a four-year college, there is an increasing need for four-year honors programs to be flexible enough to accommodate transfer students through articulation agreements.

Experiential components are frequently a part of honors education. An important example is found in the National Honors Semesters that are sponsored by NCHC in cooperation with a college or university located near the semester site. Each honors semester provides a field-based residential learning experience in which honors students from all parts of the country engage in relevant and integrative seminars while participating in the life of a unique geographical area and its institutions. A major, integrative research paper is required. College credit is awarded and may be transferred back to the student’s home institution.

Experiential honors education is also provided through programs in leadership and community service, in which academic seminars are coupled with internships. Often these are experiences in volunteerism.

Advising

At the heart of counseling honors students is encouragement—the constant expectation that they explore the limits of their potential. Insofar as possible, faculty members should counsel able students throughout their college careers. Honors students are often as ready to interact with faculty members as faculty are to respond to the approaches of bright undergraduates. Of course, faculty members will supervise senior research projects, but it is also appropriate for them to advise in the preparation of individualized curricula. Their value as career models for honors students cannot be overstated.

Faculty advisers will need help, especially in a complex institution where they are seldom familiar with the courses outside their own disciplines, with the faculty members who teach them, or with the intricacies of degree requirements and the provisions for exceptions to them. An administrative office for honors is the repository of this information and can also refer students to those faculty members who can provide the most appropriate advising. In many institutions, an honors staff member serves as a general counselor on degree requirements, as a source of information to both students and faculty, and as the point of contact between the honors student and the university as an institution. In some universities, a small group of faculty members, released from some teaching responsibilities, are trained to bring a university-wide perspective to the advising of honors students; in others, full- or part-time counselors are maintained in a college or university

office for these functions. In smaller institutions these arrangements may be more informal, but they should be institutionalized, lest the fate of honors rise or fall with the enthusiasm of a single individual.

Community and Identity

The place of honors students in any but the most selective college or university is anomalous. These students are members of a small and, it may seem to them, alien group. Through an honors program they may be offered the best libraries, laboratories, and faculty, but unless there is an environment that fosters their intellectual and social growth outside the classroom, the values of their formal academic experiences will be severely limited.

Bright students need the companionship of students who share their interests and commitments and of faculty with whom interests aroused in class can be pursued informally. For this interchange, some dedication of space and time is necessary. Space for use by an honors community is usually provided in one or both of two ways. The more common is a centrally located honors center in which offices are linked with a lounge-library, study area and, in some instances, seminar rooms. The center could be enhanced by a collection of books, selected periodicals, computer terminals, music equipment, connection to the campus listening center, kitchenette, and other amenities. This space could also be the location for colloquia, coffee hours, poetry readings, and art exhibits. Students would turn to such a setting in the sure knowledge that intellectual stimulation could be found there.

An alternate, preferably a supplemental, approach to space for an honors community is honors housing. A residence hall or certain floors of a residence hall designated for honors students can provide both the setting in which able students find kindred spirits and an atmosphere in which serious study is possible. On some campuses, the honors dormitory may house offices for the honors program and faculty, may furnish classroom space, and may be the setting for a variety of non-classroom activities. In such a setting, a high degree of community can be found, but care must be taken to prevent honors from becoming isolated from the central academic functions of the campus and so exclusive that the antagonism or scorn of the rest of the campus is aroused. Further, a reliance on a housing unit as the sole

locus of community may place non-residential honors students at a disadvantage.

The development and maintenance of the desired atmosphere in an honors center or in honors housing require that the honors director and professional staff be willing to move away from desk and classroom duties to meet with student committees and councils, to give students a role in honors governance, to encourage faculty to visit the honors center, to develop formal and informal programs, and simply to relax and enjoy student friendships. Participation in the honors community should be as rewarding for staff as for students.

The development of identity is a necessary growth stage for young people, and identity as an honors student contributes to the acceptance of special abilities and the development of appropriate aspirations. Identity derives from membership in a program that offers a common core of academic, cultural, and social experiences.

Organization

Just as there is no single model for honors curricula, neither is there a single model for placing an honors program in the organizational and budgetary structure of a college or university. There are honors programs, honors colleges, honors and experimental colleges, an honors tutorial college, and a host of variations, a few of which assiduously avoid using the word "honors." Some programs are comprehensive and university-wide; many are limited to the liberal arts. In complex universities, a director may coordinate relatively autonomous programs located in the several undergraduate colleges.

In some programs, the honors director or dean of an honors college reports to the provost or the president and participates in a council of deans; in others the director may be an assistant liberal arts dean; in many smaller colleges, the honors director functions like a department chairperson. Some have one or more full-time directors, assistants and other staff members; others release a faculty member part-time to develop and administer the program and to counsel honors students. Probably all honors programs have a governance role for both faculty and students through an advisory and

policy committee or separate faculty and student committees. A provision for periodic or ongoing evaluation is usually included in the charter of an honors program.

Evaluation

Honors programs should expect to participate in the same periodic review procedures that apply to other academic and non-academic programs at their institutions. Annual reports provide a basis for administrative review and budget allocations. Less frequent but more substantive reviews may involve a special review committee, often with the assistance of an outside consultant. Data for the review would be derived from student and faculty evaluations of courses, reports on enrollment and grading patterns, trends in admission and retention, surveys of student, faculty, and alumni/ae satisfaction, fellowships awarded, and the like. Increasingly, objective measures of student outcomes are requested or mandated. For help with this process, see the NCHC monograph, *Evaluating Honors Programs: An Outcomes Approach*, by Jacqueline Reihman, Sara Varhus, and William R. Whipple.

Financing

Patterns of financing vary and are likely to correspond with patterns of organization. Some programs have full instructional budgets for use in commissioning honors courses from departments, and these have special advantages in their flexibility to develop interdisciplinary offerings and in the explicit authority of the honors director or council to select faculty and to control the quality of honors courses. A variation of this pattern is the direct assignment of a number of faculty positions to the honors program. These may be used for scholars-in-residence, a small core of honors faculty, the purchase of courses from departments, or a combination of these alternatives. The disadvantages of direct instructional funding are that programs that are large and seemingly prosperous may be seen as competing with the departments for funds, and that the visibility of their funding may make them unnecessarily vulnerable to cuts in lean times.

Some programs find it possible to operate with no instructional budget. In these programs, honors courses are offered entirely within the academic

departments, and a major task of the honors director is to develop departmental good will and commitment to the honors ideal. The director's control over honors offerings, choice of instructors, and the like is limited to his or her powers of persuasion, relations with the departments and faculty, and the degree of esteem with which the honors program is viewed. Success in this pattern is indicated when instructional units accord a priority to honors courses in their own budgeting and staffing. If a program funded in this indirect way is to function effectively, it is essential that the honors director report as directly as possible to the chief academic officer and have that official's full and visible support. Continuity in the office of the honors director is an asset.

Two other sources of financing are worth mentioning. One state university has had a direct legislative allocation for the support of its honors program. Others have found that private donors respond to an appeal to contribute for the education of gifted and talented young people, particularly for special projects, research scholarships, and the like.

Although an honors program cannot be undertaken without a financial commitment, honors education can be enhanced by a number of low-cost or no-cost adjustments. An honors discussion section of a large lecture class can be formed with the lecturer serving as leader. A junior honors colloquium in almost any discipline may consist of presentations by senior faculty members, perhaps on their own research. In some instances, the size of lecture courses, already too large for class discussion, can be increased to support an honors course. Curricular flexibility for honors students should permit them to enroll early in advanced courses and in graduate seminars and colloquia. Proficiency credit can be encouraged for independent study as well as for pre-collegiate preparation. Through counseling and the mechanism of an Honors Contract, students can be encouraged to construct, from regular as well as honors course offerings and independent study, rigorous and coherent programs which meet the spirit of degree requirements. Low enrollment courses, overlooked or thought too difficult by other students, can be recommended. So can courses offered for the first time, when enrollment may be low but the enthusiasm of the teacher is at its peak.

No matter how the program is organized and financed, the major expense is faculty time. Honors programs are heavily dependent on the willingness of

selected faculty members to carry the demanding load of teaching, advising, and tutoring. Because it is satisfying to the academic conscience and rewarding to work with eager and alert young people, there is a tendency for honors faculty members to accept psychic income in lieu of real income. Institutions are all too willing to accept the gift. There are several reasons, however, for avoiding such exploitation of faculty. First and most important is the need to establish the honors program as integral to the basic academic mission of the institution by regularizing its budgeting and staffing. Honors work should be compensated; it should never be an overload; it should receive appropriate consideration in promotion and tenure decisions. Second, the reservoir of good will is exhaustible, and if our commitment is to a continuing program, we will avoid diminishing the supply of the best candidates for honors teaching. Third, the legalisms of collective bargaining may tend to eliminate expressions of faculty generosity.

When compared with regular undergraduate instruction, honors instruction is expensive. It should be undertaken only when there is clear recognition that the benefits are worth the cost.

Alliances

A variety of alliances may be formed, not to provide special privileges to honors students, but to meet their educational needs. The honors director should work closely with the library to maximize its use. Ties should also be maintained with admissions, financial aids, residence halls, scheduling offices, and the like. The scholarly honorary societies — Phi Beta Kappa, Phi Kappa Phi, Sigma Xi, Phi Theta Kappa — may need a permanent secretariat, and the honors office is an appropriate location for that function. Recruiting and screening for the Truman Scholarship and for such post-baccalaureate awards as the Marshall, Rhodes, Mellon, and Fulbright Scholarships could be assembled in the place where worthy students often gather. At the very least, the honors director should be a member of those screening committees. A close relationship should exist between honors and study abroad programs.

Recruiting

The educational objectives of an honors program will require the identifi-

cation of those who should be offered honors opportunities; and the institution will want to increase its number of qualified students. Neither of these tasks is easily accomplished, and neither is worth the effort unless those identified and recruited can be offered an array of choices that will stimulate and challenge them. If any of the program's goals are to be realized, the honors program must be more than window dressing.

At one extreme, an honors program may be a small, intimate community of aspiring scholars, selected for their intellectual potential, as indicated by test scores and grade average, and for motivation, insofar as it can be identified from an application essay, recommendations, and/or an interview.

At the other extreme is a non-membership pattern in which it is not the student but the course or other academic opportunity that is characterized as "honors." In this pattern the student is informed of the rigorous offerings available, is counseled about abilities and aspirations, and then is able to choose his or her own degree of honors participation. In this open pattern the freshman year is seen as an introduction to honors work for a relatively large number of students, perhaps 10 to 15 percent of the entering class, whereas at Commencement it may be found that no more than one or two percent will have chosen to complete a full honors education. Between matriculation and graduation many students will have been served by honors courses and seminars, counseling, special programs, and comradeship with no stigma attached to the decision not to participate more fully. Although the open program is more complex to administer than the membership program, its potential for serving able students, particularly transfer, minority, and non-traditional students, is greater.

The identification of potential honors students should, then, be both early and continuing. Students should find the encouragement and the chance to excel as soon as they enter college, but the process of predicting who will respond to honors work is uncertain at best; the program should be structured so that entry and exit (without the onus of failure) are possible at any time.

Achievement in high school and performance on one or more of the standardized tests — PSAT, SAT, ACT — are reasonably predictive for college honors success, and the cut-off points for the honors invitation are

usually computed to include the top five to eight percent for the institution. But to rely on these measures alone is to miss a number of students whose readiness and ability to perform at an honors level are, for whatever reason, not indicated by test scores and high school grades. To rely on these measures alone is to overlook motivation — a factor that may change almost overnight in later adolescence. Some colleges also use recommendations of high school teachers or counselors; others use a process of self-selection in which the student is informed about the program and is helped through advising to determine whether he or she should participate. An opportunity for the student to try one honors course will tell both the student and the institution more about the student's honors potential than will ever be indicated by test scores and high school grades. An initial interview and frequent continuing contact between the student and the honors staff provide the best setting for the mutual exploration of honors participation.

For the student already enrolled, a review of grades and courses or a system of faculty referrals is usually effective. As the honors program becomes known, students in residence will select themselves to participate in an open program.

Non-traditional students constitute a special clientele for honors programs. Their maturity and motivation may cause them to be impatient with regular courses and students, particularly at elementary survey levels, while in the honors program they may find both an academic and a social milieu that values their experience and aspirations. Needless to say, high school records and test scores have little relevance for assessing the readiness of adult students for honors work. They need encouragement, respect, and freedom to discover the pace and intensity at which they can immerse themselves in the academic world.

One should not expect that all of those capable of honors work will choose it. Some students who have honors ability will choose the regular program in order to devote time to student government or other extra-curricular affairs, or from the fear (largely unwarranted) of a lower grade average, or simply out of a lack of self-confidence. They should have these options, but they should not be denied the challenge to test themselves more fully.

The existence of an honors program is an attraction for good students, but

only if it comes to their attention. The best ambassadors are satisfied customers who return enthusiastically to their own communities. A systematic approach can be made through services provided by the American College Testing Program and the College Entrance Examination Board, and through participation in sponsorship of National Merit and National Achievement Scholarships.

Recognition

It is incumbent upon any institution of higher learning to proclaim to the world that the product of which it is most proud — the person in whom its mission is fulfilled — is the student who has participated fully and successfully in opportunities to develop intellectual, cultural, and appreciative capabilities. Certainly such a student should receive no less acclaim than the athletic hero.

Traditionally, public acclamation for academic achievement has taken the form of graduation *cum laude*, *magna cum laude*, and *summa cum laude*. This model, when based on grade average alone, has lost some of its significance because it is too often possible to build an impressive GPA while electing a most unimpressive collection of courses. Awards based on grades alone do not necessarily honor scholarly achievement.

On many campuses, graduation *With Distinction* in a field of specialization is awarded to those who have completed a senior thesis or other work of scholarship or creativity and who have defended it in an oral or written examination conducted by a faculty committee. Graduation *With General Honors* or *With University Honors* or with a separate honors degree and diploma is accorded on some campuses for completion of an honors education, with or without the thesis. An appropriately high level of achievement, as measured by grades, is required of these graduates, but awards are primarily for scholarship. When scholarship is rewarded, honors graduates find deserved recognition, younger students find an incentive to excel, and the institution reaffirms its primary mission.

How to Begin

The starting point for any consideration of honors education is the question:

If the ablest students at this institution are to be challenged to the fullest, what opportunities must they have?

An inventory of the *ad hoc* opportunities provided by dedicated teachers is the base on which an honors program may be built. The next step is to determine what further offerings are needed to meet educational and institutional objectives and how those offerings may be presented to students who need the academic challenge. The curriculum should be rigorous and liberal, for undergraduate professional students as well as for liberal arts majors, and should foster independent scholarship. In matters of advising, financing, organization, and administration, an honors program is most likely to be successful when it is clear about rationale, is integral to the mission of the institution, has continuity of leadership, has centrality that permits the director to participate in educational policy decisions, cooperates rather than competes with other academic units, is adequately funded, and includes faculty and students in the governance of the program.

The self-study is a device with which those who have participated in an accreditation visit, either as visitors or receivers of an accreditation team, are thoroughly familiar. While the ostensible purpose of the accreditation self-study is to provide the outside evaluators with the information that will serve as a basis for on-campus interviews leading to the final report and recommendations, the process of preparing the self-study is acknowledged to be of significant value to those who prepared it and who will be responsible for implementing the recommendations that result from it. It serves a catalytic function.

Most of the material for the self-study will be provided by the honors director and staff from a variety of sources — the founding documents, the curricular plan, the evolving program, the experience of the honors director and faculty, and the evaluation instruments administered to faculty, students and alumni/ae. The outline is not intended as a statement of NCHC norms for a full honors program; rather it is a check list intended as a pattern by which planning and review may be organized.

It is important that the body responsible for completing the self-study be sufficiently broad-based that credibility is assured. On many campuses, the student-faculty honors council may be the appropriate responsible body, with the honors director serving, in this case, as staff to the council rather than in a leadership capacity. On other campuses, it may appear best to appoint a review committee from among those who have some knowledge of the honors enterprise but who are not currently involved with the program. Such a committee would need the services of the honors administration to provide much of its data.

Since a review of the program inevitably includes a review of its director and staff, by design or implication, there will be portions of the self-study process in which confidentiality is to be protected. Those who commission

An earlier version of this material was published in the *Handbook on the Evaluation of Honors Programs*, NCHC, 1981.

the study will also determine the extent to which the honors director and staff participate in deliberations by the group that carries out the self-study.

The paragraphs above have referred, of course, to the review of an existing program. For the planning of a new program, the outline of the self-study will suggest all of the categories to be considered by the planning committee, and the completed self-study will serve as the basis for a consultant's visit and/or for the actual program proposal. For purposes of planning a new program, self-study questions will be restated: How *will* honors courses be evaluated? How *will* instruction be funded? To whom *will* the director report? The responses become a draft of a program proposal, to which a consultant may respond with recommendations, and to which the administration will ultimately respond.

When a self-study report is sent to the consultant(s), it should be accompanied by annual reports, planning documents, college catalog, material used in honors recruitment, any other honors program descriptions and forms currently in use, and a schedule for the consultant(s) visit (see Appendix A).

SELF-STUDY OUTLINE

Rationale and Objectives

1. What is the rationale for the honors program?
 - a. Is it consistent with the educational mission of the institution?
 - b. Is it democratic?
 - c. Is it generally accepted by administrators, faculty, students?
2. What are the educational objectives of the program?
 - a. For identification of students to be served
 - b. For academic offerings to serve those students
 - c. For an environment to support and encourage honors learning
 - d. For benefits to the wider academic community
 - e. Other
3. What are the institutional objectives of the program?
 - a. For attracting able students
 - b. For attracting and holding faculty
 - c. For enhancing the institutional image
 - d. For locating new funding sources
 - e. Other

Curriculum

1. What should constitute the academic experience of an honors student at this institution?
 - a. What is the integrating or organizing principle of the honors curriculum?
 - b. How is the honors rationale related to the institution's curricular rationale?
 - c. Is the honors curriculum intended to provide enrichment?
 - d. Is the honors curriculum intended to provide acceleration?
 - e. Is the honors program expected to be experimental?
2. What is the honors curriculum?
 - a. Is there a prescribed core curriculum for honors students? Outline it.
 - b. Does it include general education honors work? What are the provisions?
 - c. Does it include departmental honors work? Describe.
 - d. Does it provide honors opportunities in undergraduate professional areas — business, education, engineering, nursing, etc.? What are they?
 - e. Are there opportunities for independent research?
 - f. Are off-campus educational experiences — internships, honors semesters, study abroad, community service — available? encouraged? What are they?
 - g. Are honors courses and seminars disciplinary, interdisciplinary, both? Describe.
 - h. Are there provisions for credit by examination? What are they?
 - i. Is the honors curriculum articulated with high school programs for the gifted, community college honors programs, graduate and professional programs? Describe articulation arrangements.
 - j. Does the honors curriculum include intentional learning communities? Describe.
 - k. Are there provisions for study and experience with community leadership and volunteerism? What provisions?
3. Are honors classes so organized that students are challenged to work at a high level of excellence? Note the ways.
 - a. Limitation on size
 - b. Teaching assignments

Outline for Self-Study

- c. Screening of students
 - d. Intensity and depth of content
 - e. Methodology
 - f. Expectations for performance
4. How are honors courses evaluated?
- a. Are there stated criteria for honors courses and stated procedures for approval and monitoring of them? Attach statements of criteria.
 - b. Are honors courses evaluated by students? Attach form(s).
 - c. Are honors courses evaluated by faculty? Attach form(s).
 - d. How are these evaluations used?
 - (1) To improve the course
 - (2) To review the course for honors designation
 - (3) To review the teaching assignment
 - (4) To support tenure, promotion, salary consideration
 - (5) To support budget requests
 - (6) To furnish material for reports and promotional brochures
 - (7) Other
 - e. How is the performance of independent study evaluated?
5. Does the honors curriculum provide flexibility for adapting programs to student needs and interests? Attach statement of criteria for flexibility.
- a. With respect to graduation requirements
 - b. With respect to distribution requirements
 - c. With respect to formulating unconventional majors
 - d. For bypassing prerequisites
 - e. In whom is the authority for approving curricular exceptions vested?
6. In what areas of study are the ablest students enrolled?
7. Is the honors work offered in those areas sufficient to meet the needs of those students?

Faculty

1. Is faculty interest in honors regularly discovered and put to work? By what process?
2. Do faculty find honors work rewarding?
 - a. Do they find psychic rewards?
 - b. Is honors work given positive consideration in promotion and tenure decisions? In salary decisions?

Outline for Self-Study

- c. Do faculty seek honors teaching and advising?
3. Do honors faculty remain integrated with their disciplinary colleagues or is there a separation that may be damaging to professional growth and advancement?
 4. What is the mix of experienced with younger faculty in honors teaching, advising, and governance?
 5. Is the honors faculty diverse with respect to gender, ethnicity, minority status?
 6. Is the faculty an active source of ideas for the honors curriculum? How are ideas sought?
 7. What opportunities are offered for faculty development in collaborative learning, interdisciplinary and team teaching, honors course development?

Organization and Administration

1. How is the program organized?
 - a. Honors College
 - b. Honors Program
 - c. Collection of autonomous programs
 - d. Collection of decentralized programs coordinated through a University Honors Office
 - e. Is the arrangement identified as "Honors?" What other name is used?
2. To whom does the honors director or dean report?
 - a. Does the honors director/dean have a voice in councils that make decisions that affect honors work? What are the lines of authority and responsibility?
 - b. Is there provision for continuity of leadership? What are the provisions of appointment?
 - c. Is the directorship a full-time position? If not, what is it?
 - d. How long is the director's term of office?
3. Is supplemental staff provided?
 - a. Administrative and programmatic
 - b. Advisement
 - c. Secretarial
 - d. Other
4. How is the program governed?
 - a. Is there an honors council or committee?

- b. It is advisory, policy, or both?
 - c. Are faculty members involved in governance?
 - d. Are students involved in governance? in which functions?
 - e. Is there a student honors council or committee?
 - f. What are its functions?
 - g. Is there an appropriate balance of faculty and student representation in governance of the program?
 - h. Are faculty and student terms on the governance council sufficiently long to assure continuity and sufficiently short to assure new ideas and to avoid dominance by any faction?
Describe arrangements for terms of service.
5. Is there evidence of administrative support for honors?
- a. Public pronouncements
 - b. Budget
 - c. Honors location and facilities
 - d. Ceremonial participation
 - e. Other
6. Are institutional data readily available to the honors director?
7. What provision is made for ongoing and periodic evaluation?
- a. Assessment of student outcomes
 - b. Annual reporting
 - c. Periodic review

Budget

- 1. From whom does the honors program receive its budget allocation?
- 2. What is the budgetary process?
- 3. Is there administrative and budgetary assurance that the program will continue?
- 4. Is there sufficient support to permit continuity and stability in the offering of an honors curriculum?
- 5. What items are included in the honors budget?
 - a. Instructional funds
 - b. Administrative and staff salaries
 - c. Operating funds
 - d. Travel
 - e. Support for student activities
 - f. No-need scholarships

- g. Undergraduate research grants
 - h. Lectureships
 - i. Prizes, award money
 - j. Discretionary funds
 - k. Other
6. If some of these items, e.g., scholarships and grants, are located in other budgets, to what extent is the honors director able to control or influence their use?
7. How is honors instruction funded?
- a. Is there an instructional budget for funding honors courses through the honors program office?
 - b. Are faculty positions assigned to the honors program?
 - c. Are honors courses supported from departmental budgets?
 - (1) If so, how are honors instructors selected?
 - (2) If so, is departmental support of honors courses given special consideration in budgetary allocations to the departments?
 - d. If instructional budgeting has a student credit-hour base, is an exception made for honors instruction?
 - e. Is there funding to release faculty from other duties in order to develop honors courses?
 - f. Are honors courses taught as overloads?
8. Are funds regularly sought from alumni/ae and other private donors?
9. Is the honors program perceived as competing with departments for scarce funds?
10. What new projects or programs would be undertaken if funds were available?

Community and Identity

- 1. Is there consciousness of a need to build an environment that fosters intellectual, cultural, and social growth outside the classroom?
- 2. Is it easy and natural for students and faculty to interact outside the classroom, or must such contacts be intentionally fostered? If the latter, how may student/faculty interchange be encouraged?
- 3. Does the honors pattern foster identity as an honors student?
- 4. Does the honors pattern avoid an aura of exclusivity?
- 5. Is honors a membership program or an array of honors opportunities available for self-selection?

6. Do honors staff and faculty devote time to community-building functions?
7. Is there honors housing?
8. Is there an honors meeting place?
9. Is there an honors student activities association?

Recruiting, Admissions, and Retention

1. What is the profile of academic potential of entering students?
2. What criteria are used to identify prospective honors students?
 - a. Are the criteria for admission and retention in honors low enough to attract a critical mass and high enough to assure quality of courses and the respect of students and faculty?
 - b. Is there sufficient flexibility in honors admission criteria to allow for late bloomers, non-traditional students, minority students, highly motivated students who are poor test-takers, and transfer students? How is this flexibility administered?
 - c. Is diversity in the membership of the program actively sought?
 - d. If students are permitted to self-select participation in honors, what provisions are made for informing and advising them so that wise decisions are likely to result?
 - e. Are records of students-in-residence screened for invitation into honors?
3. Is honors recruiting and admissions integrated with the institution's recruiting and admissions process?
 - a. What use is made of mailings, brochures, telephone, high school visits by college or university persons, of campus visits by students and their families?
 - b. Is honors information prominent in college bulletins and other publications? Attach examples.
 - c. Are honors brochures attractive, informative, accurate, current? Attach current copies.
 - d. Are admissions staff members who visit high schools and who counsel prospective students knowledgeable about honors and related opportunities?
 - (1) Are their attitudes and perspectives appropriate to honors recruiting?
 - (2) What is done to train them for honors recruiting?

- e. Do honors students participate in recruiting, admissions, and orientation? In what ways?
 - f. What is the procedure for identifying and contacting prospective honors students?
4. Does the institution project an image of commitment to academic excellence?
 - a. In its bulletins and publications
 - b. In location, furnishing, staffing, and facilities for the honors program
 - c. In the place of honors in the orientation program for new students
 5. Are no-need scholarships offered?
 - a. Are they an integral part of recruiting honors students?
 - b. Does the honors staff participate in the process of recruiting and selecting scholarship recipients?
 6. Are honors students offered prerequisites?
 - a. Credits accepted for APP, CLEP, and other proficiency examinations
 - b. Honors residence
 - c. Housing preference
 - d. Scheduling priority
 - e. Financial aid consideration
 - f. Curricular flexibility
 - g. Other
 7. Are honors alumni/ae informed about the current status of the honors program, and do they participate in recruiting?
 8. Are recruiting efforts matched by a significant honors program?
 - a. Is the honors program more than window dressing?
 - b. Is it neither oversold nor undersold?
 9. What is the attrition record of the honors program?
 10. Is exit from the honors program managed with minimum damage to student self-esteem? How is this process handled?

Recognition

1. Are there forms of recognition based on honors work in addition to those based on grade average? What are they?
2. Are there public ceremonial occasions for the recognition of honors students? Describe.

3. Do honors students (and the program) receive recognition in student and institutional publications? In public utterances of administrators? Cite examples.
4. Is the honors staff involved in identifying and screening applicants for Truman, Rhodes, Marshall, Mellon, and other scholarships and fellowships?
5. Is the honors staff involved with the local chapters of national academic honorary societies — Phi Beta Kappa, Sigma Xi, Phi Kappa Phi, Phi Theta Kappa, and others? In what ways?
6. Are honors courses and/or honors membership identified on the transcript? Attach sample.

Advisement and Counseling

1. Does honors advisement encourage students to explore the limits of their potential?
2. Who performs honors advisement?
 - a. Honors program staff
 - b. Faculty members
 - c. Honors students
 - d. What combination of staff, faculty, and students?
3. Is honors advisement continuous from entrance to graduation?
4. Is honors advisement related to the curricular process in such a way that advisers are thoroughly familiar with curricular options and exceptions available to honors students?
5. Does honors advisement provide services for the undecided student as well as the focused student?
6. With what other services is honors advisement related?
 - a. Pre-professional advising
 - b. Career counseling
 - c. Minority advising
 - d. Psychological counseling
 - e. Health services
 - f. Financial aids
 - g. Housing
 - h. Other student services

Overview

This section is intended to raise questions of balance and fit, to discover significance among the data, to determine the extent to which there is correspondence between intention and reality, perception and fact.

1. How does the faculty perceive the honors program?
 - a. Central or peripheral to the academic mainstream?
 - b. Strong or weak in administrative support?
 - c. Capably or poorly administered?
 - d. Strong or weak in quality and commitment of students?
2. How do students — honors and non-honors — perceive the honors program?
 - a. Central or peripheral to the academic mainstream?
 - b. Strong or weak in administrative support?
 - c. Capably or poorly administered?
 - d. Desirable or unrewarding experience?
3. Do faculty and student perceptions match those of administrators? of honors director and staff?
4. Does the honors program fit the institution or is it an anomaly? Document your answer.
 - a. In its mission
 - b. Organizationally
 - c. Administratively
 - d. Budgetarily
 - e. Programmatically
5. Does the honors program offer a balanced pattern of opportunities for intellectual, cultural, and social growth for students in *this* institution?
6. Are administrative claims of support reflected in budget, facilities, location, staff, participation in ceremonial events, and the like? Cite examples.
7. Is honors allied with other expressions of academic excellence on and off the campus? Identify alliances.
8. Is the honors program as comprehensive as it is intended to be? What would make it more comprehensive. Why is (are) this (these) element(s) missing?
9. Does honors receive appropriate consideration in the institution's reward systems?

- a. Exempted from student credit-hour budgeting
 - b. Considered in departmental budgeting
 - c. Positive factor in program review
 - d. Considered a positive factor in promotion and tenure and salary decisions
 - e. Other
10. Does the program elicit a sense of pride and enthusiasm among faculty, students, alumni/ae, administrators? Cite examples.
11. Is there evidence that honors students and faculty carry an honors perspective into other courses and into activities outside the classroom? Cite examples.
12. If honors and experimental functions are included in a single program unit, is there a clear separation of the two in rationale, clientele, and program offering?
13. Does the honors staff have sufficient authority to grant curricular exceptions and in other ways to modify the student's environment in the service of a rigorous and coherent education?
14. Is the honors director/dean effective?
- a. Is the director's style of leadership appropriate to the assignment? Document.
 - b. Does the director understand how the institution functions? Demonstrate.
 - c. Is the director connected with key committees and offices? Note assignments.
 - d. Is the director an effective spokesman for honors — with prospective students and parents, with enrolled students, with faculty, with central administrators? Cite anecdotes.
 - e. Does the director work effectively with faculty, department chairpersons, deans, students? Give examples.

CHAPTER THREE:
On Making Effective Use of Consultants

There are three basic forms of consultation with honors programs. The object of the first is to assist in establishing a new program; the object of the second is to review and make recommendations for strengthening or revitalizing an existing program; the object of the third, not of major concern in this monograph, is to help with the development of specific program components.

The planning and consultation processes for the first and second of these are similar. If a new program is to be developed, then the local campus needs to be assessed for its readiness for an honors program and for the resources, including faculty and administrative interest, that may be available to the program. In the usual pattern, first, student demographics and curricular patterns are reviewed for their relevance to honors; second, working programs in similar types of institutions are searched out for useful examples to follow; third, a proposal is written by a faculty/student committee; and finally, a response is received from administrators who have the power to allocate budget and assign faculty. The self-study outline in the preceding section should be a useful guide for the committee and administrators who seek to establish a new honors program. It is a common pattern to invite an outside consultant or team of consultants to advise in setting up the planning process, to serve as resource to the local planners, and to critique the planning document in its various drafts.

A general program review requires similar advance preparation. Ideally, it should begin with an honors program self-study in which (1) the goals and objectives of the program are reviewed; (2) student and faculty participants evaluate themselves, each other, and the program elements; (3) measures of alumni/ae satisfaction are gathered; (4) data from assessment instruments are taken into consideration; and (5) hopes realized and unrealized are recorded. If consultation is desired, again for assistance with the process, as a resource, and to conduct an on-site review of the program, then the self-study report should be sent to the consultant(s) well in advance of the visit, along with annual reports, college bulletins, planning documents, and other pertinent information. The time of the consultant(s) can be used most

effectively if both the institution and the consultant(s) have done their homework.

It is important that the consultant be someone who can provide a shot in the arm for the local honors planning process and who can stimulate the interest of the central administrators in honors because it is likely that such a focus of attention on honors will not occur again for another five to ten years. Of nearly equal importance is the support and encouragement that an honors director can gain from conversations with a colleague who knows what is happening elsewhere in honors. The consultant serves as a catalyst to the local planning and review process, and all who are involved in the consultation must be aware that the only decisions that will make a difference to the institution are those that are made by its own constituencies. Unless the consultant stimulates that internal process, the consultation visit and report will be of little use. A consultation is most likely to succeed when it takes on the air of a working holiday as students, faculty, and honors director and staff are drawn away from their regular schedules to instruct the visitor(s), to participate in thoughtful consideration of their own program, to hear of successful ventures elsewhere, and to dream and plan for what they might be able to create in the best of all honors worlds. If some of this deliberation should also be the occasion for exceptional dining, the quality of the consultation is enhanced for all.

Hospitality should, however, stop short of bribery. The consultant is, after all, hired to produce an honest and objective report, and probably not all of the news will be good. The consultant is not there to ratify all local decisions. The unqualified seal of approval may not be forthcoming. It should be expected, however, that bad news, if any, will be presented with positive recommendations, and with encouragement and hope for better days ahead. If there are genuine problems with the program, then it is highly likely that the director already knows about them and that the process of calling attention to them will include a recommendation that there be sufficient administrative and budgetary support to correct them. The director may have been saying the same thing for years, but the recommendation from an outside consultant can carry enough more weight to produce the desired results.

It is well to keep in mind that a consultant may wear several hats during the

course of the consultation. He, she, or they will be a resource for information about program components used at other institutions, stimulators of the local planning process, fellow brainstormers, evaluators of the program or program proposal, recommenders of changes to enhance the program, and advocates. It should be clear, both to consultant(s) and to local people, that advocacy is on behalf of honors education, never on behalf of the local program or director, and never on behalf of the particular form(s) of honors program that the consultant(s) direct.

Selection of the appropriate consultant(s) to assist in the development or revision of an honors program should not be difficult. There are a number of leaders in the honors movement who have consulted with a variety of institutions and programs, who are familiar with a wide array of honors components, who understand the history and rationale for honors education, and who have a credible style of contact with faculty, students, and administrators. The following pattern is suggested: ask a few experienced directors to recommend three to five names for consideration; ask for vitae from those whose names appear on more than one list; discover and read what they have written on honors topics; find out where they have consulted recently and call someone there for a reference; call the potential consultant(s) and discuss the local situation and the role that a consultant might play; decide, invite, agree on schedule, report, fee, and expenses.

A sample schedule of a two-day program review visit is attached as Appendix A. It may be modified to fit the institutional pattern and the number of consultants.

It is appropriate to expect that a final report will be delivered in a timely fashion. Some time must be allowed for the consultant to catch up with his or her own work, and a team of consultants will need extra time to reach consensus on the document, but, generally, the report should be submitted within three weeks of the close of the visit. Sometimes it is useful for the consultant(s) to submit a draft of the report for the purpose of getting factual information verified and corrected and to discover whether recommendations need further clarification. Under no circumstances, however, should the institution have an opportunity to require that the substance of the report be altered.

It is important for the consultant, as well as for the institutional officials, to be clear about who has done the contracting and to whom the report is to be directed. Seldom has a review been conducted by central administrative officials for the purpose of eliminating a program or its director, but such an occurrence is not unknown, and a wise consultant will find a way of identifying any hidden agenda before accepting or carrying through such an assignment. The consultant cannot, however, control the use to which the report will be put.

It is also appropriate to expect that the consultant(s) will continue to show interest by being available for phone conversations and for review and comment on written proposals. After the report has been submitted, however, there is little that the consultant can do, or this monograph can suggest, about how the local institution will respond to the consultant's recommendations. The consultant will have presented a clear and practical document, and having done so will hope for wide distribution to all constituencies (or, at the least, their representatives), careful attention by those who will make program, funding, and staffing decisions, and, at a later time, a report of the implementation of the recommendations. The institution will have, after all, an investment of time, energy, and money in the planning or review process, such that the mere filing of still another report is unlikely. Optimism is in order.

The third form of honors consultation — assistance with the development of specific program components — follows a different pattern. As examples, the need may be for building a learning environment or an intentional learning community, or for developing a plan for writing and thinking across the honors curriculum, or for faculty development toward greater collaborative learning, or for the inclusion of more opportunities for experiential education, or for the development of a plan for assessment of student learning. Consultations on these topics are likely to take the form of workshops for which the consultants act as trainers and facilitators. These persons may be invited periodically to repeat and expand the training process. In such an arrangement, continuity of leadership has value.

Within the NCHC membership there are specialists in each of these areas; potential consultants will be found among those who have written articles on the subjects in issues of the *Forum for Honors* and the *National Honors*

Report or who have presented workshops that respond to these issues at regional and national conferences. Those who have planned and directed National Honors Semesters have become such experts on experiential learning that they are regularly included in the leadership of programs and workshops conducted by the Council for the Advancement of Experiential Learning (CAEL). Institutions that have learning communities and that have built assessment of learning into their programs are also readily identifiable.

For the consultative services described above, the institution should expect to pay an honorarium and expenses. While there is no established honors consulting honorarium, the amount should not be less than the institution pays for other consultative services. To expect to receive these services for less is to identify them as of little value, clearly a mistake when the desire is to have the administration give serious attention to the results of the consultation.

CHAPTER FOUR: Evaluative Forms and their Use

Presented here are notes on the kinds of forms used for the evaluation of honors programs, their components, and their participants, and the administration of those evaluative devices. Forms were gathered from several colleges and universities prominent in the honors movement. They have been compared, analyzed, and thought about in preparation for the following presentation.

The colleges and universities that have shared their materials for this purpose are Eastern Michigan University, Ohio State University, Radford University, University of Alabama (Computer Based Honors Program), University of Alabama at Birmingham, University of Georgia, Western Michigan University, and Wright State University. Some of the forms used here were also used in the forerunner of this monograph, *Handbook for the Evaluation of an Honors Program*.

The subjects of evaluation are the following:

- the honors course, with evaluation by students and by the faculty member(s) who taught it
- the honors "cluster" (a special form of an intentional learning community), evaluated by its students
- the instructor, evaluated by the students
- the project director of independent study, evaluated by the student
- the arrangement by which a non-honors course is taken for honors credit, evaluated by the student
- the honors student, evaluated by the instructor
- the honors student, evaluated by an instructor for purposes of nomination for a special scholarship (Truman, Marshall, Rhodes, etc.)
- the honors program, evaluated by senior students, alumni/ae, and faculty members who have taught in it

Each of these areas of evaluation will be treated separately, without identifying specific institutions except where an approach is unique to a single college or university. One such unique item is a booklet of *Guidelines and Information for Honors Program Faculty*, published by the University of Georgia Honors Program. It contains information about the Honors

Program, criteria for appointment, continuation, discontinuation and resignation, and reinstatement of honors faculty. A form for application for membership in the honors faculty is included, along with copies of the various evaluative forms that the honors faculty member uses, with guidelines for their use. For copies, write Honors Program, 302 Academic Building, University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602.

Evaluation of Honors Courses

It is common for honors programs to ask instructors to make time for students to fill out course evaluation forms some time near the end of the semester or quarter. In a typical pattern, the honors instructor will be informed at the beginning of the term that the evaluation procedure is a regular part of honors teaching, and a copy of the form(s) will be furnished at that time as a way of letting the instructor know what characteristics of their teaching are valued by the honors program. About three weeks before the end of the term, he or she will receive enough evaluation forms so that each student in the class will have one.

An alternate pattern is to give the forms to a student in the class to distribute at a time that the instructor designates. In either case, the instructor may be asked to leave the room for about fifteen minutes so that students may complete the form. A designated student will then collect the forms and return them to the honors office. There are institutions that will ask the instructor to turn in the completed forms along with his or her own evaluation, but such a procedure does little to assure students that the instructor will not see the completed forms until after grades have been awarded.

After the term has ended, some honors programs will return the forms to the instructor in the belief that the best use of them is to provide feedback that may improve the course the next time it is taught. Other programs, particularly those that use computer-scored forms, will send the instructor a summary of the class evaluations. The summary may be in the form of a letter that the faculty member may place in his or her personnel file. Programs that monitor honors teaching closely will report course evaluations to an honors council that makes decisions about the assignment of faculty to honors courses. In other programs, the honors director may take

to a council the evaluation of only those courses that will require some special consideration.

In a well-managed honors program it is unlikely that the honors director will be surprised by the evaluation of any course. The relationship with students is sufficiently close and the ambience sufficiently open that complaints, and praise, will be heard long before the end of the term, and the director, in all probability, will have visited with honors instructors, if not regularly, at least in response to any indication of problems. Such a visit will not be accusatory, will respect confidences, and in all likelihood will be welcomed by the instructor as an opportunity to solve a problem of which he or she is all too well aware. The director regularly serves as a consultant to honors teachers, passing along words of praise as readily as bringing up problems for discussion.

As indicated above, some honors programs will provide written summaries of course evaluations while others will return copies of the evaluation forms. Faculty members will often accept the honors director's offer to send copies of evaluation letters to their chairpersons and deans for use in tenure and promotion consideration or for placement in personnel files.

Here are questions that often appear on the course evaluations that students are asked to complete. To include all of them in an evaluation form would create a lengthy and redundant instrument; a careful selection of items from each category, adapted to the specific honors program, should serve the purpose of building a strong pattern of honors course evaluation.

General Identification

- Department
- Course number
- Semester or quarter and year
- Instructor
- Credit hours
- Student's rank
- Self-reported grade average
- Student's major

Evaluation on a Rating Scale

On a scale of one/five or one/seven or one/ten, students are asked to rate the course in some or all of the following categories:

- rigorous - not rigorous
- interesting - not interesting
- met - did not meet course objectives
- incorporated - did not incorporate material beyond the textbook
- much - little student participation
- substantial - too little content
- stimulated - did not stimulate new ideas
- increased - did not increase my interest in the field of study
- heavy - light workload
- fair - unfair grading
- valuable - not valuable learning experience
- appropriate - inappropriate methods and materials for an honors course
- frequent - infrequent feedback from instructor to students
- diverse - not diverse writing assignments included among tools of evaluation
- quizzes, exams, and papers fair and meaningful - not fair or meaningful
- high - low quality of special features, e.g., guest lecturers
- more - less demanding than other honors courses I have taken
- more - less interesting than other honors courses I have taken

Narrative Evaluation

In addition to the questions that can be answered by checking points on a scale there are those that call for a paragraph or a list. Some course evaluation forms will ask for a more general narrative response to some of the questions listed above. The following open-ended questions are sometimes added to the quantitative questionnaire: What did you like about the course? What did you dislike about the course? What suggestions do you have for improving the course the next time it is taught?

Evaluation of the Course as a Personal Experience

In keeping with a holistic approach to teaching and learning, some programs will ask a few additional questions that relate to the overall intellectual and personal consequences of taking the course, to be answered either with ratings or paragraphs:

- Did you gain an understanding of the concerns, issues, or principles of the subject matter?
- Did you learn effective techniques of analyzing, organizing, and evaluating materials in this area of study?
- Were you able to convey this new knowledge in papers or on exams?
- Were you encouraged to participate in class?
- Did you increase your interest in the subject matter?
- How have you especially benefitted from the learning experience in this course?
- Did the course bring about any changes in your attitudes or your life? If so, what were they?

Faculty Evaluation of Honors Courses

Students are not alone as evaluators of honors courses. Some institutions ask the course instructor(s) to report their perception of the effectiveness of the course. One institution asks its honors faculty to respond to these questions:

- Please describe the methods used in your honors course and indicate how effective you think they have been in realizing your course objectives. You might address such things as the role of guest speakers, films, in-class exercises, and group projects; your success (or failure) with the seminar format; how your lectures, handouts, tests, and exams were changed to fit your honors course.
- Please discuss any insights you have gained about the teaching/learning process that might be applicable to other honors courses. Do you intend to incorporate anything from your honors course into a non-honors course?
- Please comment on the quality of the students enrolled in your honors course, their greatest strengths, their weaknesses.
- What suggestions do you have for future instructors of this course?

- What was the distribution of grades in the course?
- Please indicate any ways in which you think the honors program should be strengthened.

Evaluation of a Course Cluster

Special adaptations may be worked out for course clusters, intentional learning communities, courses that are preparatory for research experiences, and the like. As suggested earlier in this monograph, a clear statement of objectives for the program component will indicate the questions that are to be asked on the evaluation instrument. For example, an arrangement by which the same students are enrolled in three courses that make up a course cluster might be evaluated with these questions:

- Did a supportive and friendly atmosphere exist among the members of the group?
- Was there distinct intellectual interaction between the students of the group?
- Were you able to apply materials and approaches learned in one course to other courses in the cluster?
- Were you able to work with the materials at greater depth than if you had taken the three courses at different times with random groups of honors students?
- Did you feel that the instructors worked well together?
- Do you feel that the courses of this cluster really belong together?

Evaluation of the Honors Instructor

It is difficult to separate evaluation of the course from evaluation of the instructor. Some directors will avoid asking students for direct evaluation of the instructor, believing that the course evaluation will inevitably indicate the instructor's adequacy for honors teaching and the instructor is more likely to cooperate with the evaluation process if it is directed toward the course rather than the instructor. Other directors will say that the persons chosen to teach honors courses will not resist evaluation.

Evaluation on a Rating Scale

The following characteristics of instructors lend themselves nicely to rating on a scale:

- demonstrates enthusiasm for subject matter
- presents the course material in a clear and understandable manner
- meets course objectives as stated in the syllabus
- provides a variety of collaborative learning experiences
- respects the viewpoints and opinions of others
- requests timely feedback from students about the course
- is willing to work with students on individual problems and concerns
- is prepared for class, as indicated by conduct of the class in accordance with some general plan
- is able to stimulate general intellectual interest
- is able to relate the material of the course to broader areas of intellectual and practical concern
- general quality of instruction or overall effectiveness

Narrative Evaluation

Some of the questions about the quality of instruction may be asked in an open-ended fashion. These questions are often included:

- What did you like about the instructor?
- What did you dislike about the instructor?
- Was the level of instruction appropriate to your ability to comprehend?
- Was the instructor accessible and helpful in meeting your individual needs?
- Would you recommend this instructor to your honors friends? Why? Why not?

Student Evaluation of the Director of an Independent Study Project

This variation on the student evaluation of instruction applies to those tutorial situations that exist in all honors programs and that are central to a few. These questions, using a five-point rating scale, are taken from a form to be completed by students in a computer-based program in which each student undertakes a major project under the direction of a faculty member:

- (My project director) was easy to work with.
- . . . knew what he/she expected from the project.
- . . . gave clear instructions.
- . . . had office hours that allowed me to meet with him/her if problems arose.
- . . . met with me on a regular basis in order to monitor progress.
- . . . was flexible when problems arose.
- . . . worked by my side on this project.
- . . . made it a point to go strictly by the contract we developed and did not make unreasonable demands.
- . . . could be used as a resource if I ran into a problem.
- . . . took the time to explain what the project would be used for in the future.
- . . . looked on this project as a learning experience for both of us.
- . . . is someone I would recommend to other honors students.
- I preferred the project to the director.

The student is also asked to write a brief description of the project and to add other comments that might be helpful to future students who might be working with this project director.

Student Evaluation of Honors Credit in a Non-honors Course

On some campuses it is possible for an honors student to earn honors credit for special, and usually additional work, in a non-honors course. The emphasis intended in these contractual arrangements is on the quality of the learning experience rather than the quantity of work, rendering these agreements between individual faculty members and students particularly

difficult to monitor. The following questions may be asked of students who earn honors credit in this manner:

- Did you find the honors credit assignments challenging? Elaborate.
- Did these assignments fit your educational interests? Elaborate.
- What role did the instructor play in helping you to complete your assignments? Was it what you had in mind when you formulated the proposal? Elaborate.
- Did the honors credit assignments help you accomplish what you hoped to accomplish in this course? Elaborate.

Faculty Evaluation of Honors Students

In addition to questions about the general ability of students in a given course, instructors may be asked for the names of any students found to be truly outstanding, with comments on each of them. The question about students is intended to help with the identification of prospective candidates for the major fellowship competitions.

Another approach is to ask honors instructors to complete a student evaluation form for each student enrolled in an honors course. It asks for the professor's name, quarter and year, and course, then the student's name and approximate rank in the course. There follows a rating scale for writing ability, oral ability, technical skills, creative ability, reasoning ability, dependability, and interaction and relationship with classmates. The form also asks whether, in the instructor's opinion, the student should be in the honors program and what academic or personal factors should be considered if the student is thought not to be qualified for honors. Space is provided for additional information and insights.

Evaluation of the Honors Program

Useful information about the perceived effectiveness of the honors program may be obtained from graduating seniors, from alumni/ae, and from faculty members who have taught honors courses, who have supervised independent study projects, and/or who have participated in program governance through membership on the honors council.

Graduating seniors should be able to provide a fresh perspective on the recent and current operation of the program. Programs that work with small numbers may want to conduct an exit interview with each senior; larger programs will find it more convenient to gather information by use of a questionnaire. The same questions will serve either process. The basic information includes name, home address and phone, degree received, major, graduation date, and social security number. Other general information to be gathered: honors received (honorary societies, awards, merit-based scholarships, etc.); plans after graduation; acceptances from graduate or professional schools; offers of graduate/professional fellowships, assistantships, or grants, with amounts; other colleges or universities attended and for how long (if not all work was done at the one institution). You may also find it interesting to know how many quarters or semesters were necessary to complete the undergraduate program.

Evaluation of the honors program will be obtained from the following questions: Have your honors courses been superior to your regular courses? Were your honors instructors superior to your regular course instructors? Did you have to work harder in your honors courses than in your regular courses? Was the honors office responsive to your needs? Were you able to obtain sufficient financial aid (or how was your education financed)? Did you live in honors housing; how did it contribute to your academic, social, cultural development? Did you find a supportive community as an honors student? (The honors director may wish to know whether that community was based in the honors program, in honors housing, or in some residential or other activity outside honors, such as forensics, athletic team, musical organization, or academic department.) What feature(s) of the honors program did you like the most? The least? If you could make changes in the program, what would they be (structure of the program, curriculum, faculty, administration, advising)? Who were your best professors?

The evaluation form for alumni/ae will be quite similar, though you will want to gather information about post-baccalaureate education and support for it, further honors and awards, employment history (or at least current employment), and perhaps information about career changes since graduation. Questions will be in terms of how the alum now finds his/her honors education to have helped in further study, in career, in personal attitudes. You will want to know what, from this longer perspective, the graduate now

remembers as most significant experiences as an honors student, and you will want to know, again from longer range, which faculty members are remembered with greatest appreciation. You will still be open to suggestions for changes in the program, and you will be alert to ways in which alums may be interested in, and in a position to help, the program. At least one institution has a formally-organized honors alumni association which interests itself in recruitment, in development, and has a representative on the honors council. Alumni may return as speakers, role models, supervisors of business, government, or community interns, fund-raisers, or faculty. You will want to include information about the current program with the evaluation form, and you may wish to develop an alumni/ae honors newsletter to keep them aware of the program, and, perhaps, involved with its further development. Certainly you will want to report back to them the results of the survey.

Faculty provide a unique and continuing perspective on the program. Some of them will have taught in it year after year; others will come in with a fresh perspective after having taught non-honors courses; still others, now in increasing number, will have had experience as students in an honors program and as teachers in an honors program at another college or university. By way of general information, you will want to know the number of honors courses they have taught, and at which level, and in what other ways they have participated in the program (membership on the honors council, supervisors of senior projects, etc.).

Faculty members might be asked the extent to which participation in the honors program has affected professional growth, contributed to personal enrichment, improved teaching, permitted experimentation with teaching methods and organization of subject matter, and been intellectually challenging, and how much time it has demanded compared with conducting regular courses.

Faculty members can tell us how honors students compare with regular students in academic ability, motivation for learning, self-discipline, reliability, abstract thinking, ability to apply knowledge, creativity, oral communication skills, written communication skills, breadth of knowledge, sensitivity to their experiences, energy level, self-confidence, flexibility, and enthusiasm. You will want to know, and they may be eager to tell you,

whether honors students meet faculty expectations or were not much more able than non-honors students.

Finally, faculty members may be asked to indicate whether they have received sufficient support from the honors program for their honors teaching. Were there funds for field trips, special lab equipment, books, time off for course development, supplies for course projects, or opportunities to attend a regional or national honors conference? Are there other forms of support they would like to have available? In their estimation, does the honors program do what it purports to do? How could the program be improved?

As noted early in this monograph, continuing evaluation that involves a wide representation of students, faculty, administrators, and alumni/ae is preferred over occasional or crisis evaluation that is mandated by either outside or inside authority. The evaluation forms that can be compiled from the material presented above, when administered systematically, analyzed, and reported, can provide those who oversee the honors program with assurance that the objectives of the program are visible to its participants and that perceived flaws in the program will be quickly identified for action. Reports compiled from these evaluations will supplement the objective data (enrollments, grade averages, test scores, measures of student learning, credit hours earned, etc.), and will find their way into annual reports, budget requests, other communication with top administrators, recruitment materials, newsletters, fund drives, material provided to outside consultants, and the like. Problems will be quickly followed up in a consultative, collegial manner. As a result, courses will be improved, students and faculty will feel good about "their" program, and both educational and institutional objectives will be met to the extent that a worthy honors program can meet them.

APPENDIX A: Sample Schedule for Consultant's Visit

Arrive late afternoon

- | | |
|------------|--|
| 7:00 p.m. | Dinner and briefing — with honors director, chair of honors planning or review committee, etc. |
| 9:00 a.m. | Meet with dean(s) or provost |
| 10:00 a.m. | Attend honors class |
| 11:00 a.m. | Meet with honors students |
| 12:00 noon | Lunch with honors committee |
| 2:00 p.m. | Meet with other deans or vice presidents |
| 3:00 p.m. | Meet with honors faculty |
| 4:00 p.m. | Open meeting for interested persons, for questions, answers, complaints, testimonials |
| 7:00 p.m. | Dinner with some combination of central administrators and/or honors staff and committee |
| 8:00 a.m. | Breakfast with honors director |
| 9:00 a.m. | Meet with directors of admissions, financial aids, housing, etc. |
| 11:00 a.m. | Meet with president |
| 12:00 noon | Lunch with honors committee |
| 2:30 p.m. | Time to consolidate notes, draft recommendations |
| 4:00 p.m. | Informal report to provost and/or honors director, honors committee, others |

Departure

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