

UNM Honors College

Fall 2015 Academic Program Review

Introduction

This first academic program review in the history of the Honors College/Program at the University of New Mexico comes right at the cusp of the change from a program to a degree-granting college. Thus, this is an appropriate time for review but also a time when the plans for the development of the college are far from complete.

As a part of the university's program review process, at the invitation of Provost Chaouki Abdallah, our academic review team, consisting of the following, served as reviewers of the Honors College: External reviewer, Philip Phillips, Associate Dean, University Honors College, Middle Tennessee State University, member of the Assessment & Evaluation Committee of the National Collegiate Honors Council; External reviewer, Tamara Valentine, Director of the Honors Program, University of Nevada, Reno, National Collegiate Honors Council Recommended Site Visitor; and UNM internal reviewer, Diane Marshall, Associate Dean for Curriculum and Instruction, College of Arts and Sciences, University of New Mexico. The visit took place on the UNM campus on October 22-23, 2015.

The team was asked to evaluate the extent to which the UNM Honors College satisfies the criteria, policies, and procedures stipulated by the UNM academic review process. As reviewers, we approached our task as benevolent auditors working in partnership with the continuous improvement processes of the Honors College. As such, we interacted with appropriate institutional personnel to gain a fuller understanding of the operation and role of the college in order to help the Honors College to improve. During the course of our two-day visit, we met with a wide range of university administrators, faculty, professional staff, and students.

Prior to our campus visit, we received and reviewed materials, including a self-study report of the UNM Honors College Academic Program Review, and supplemental supporting documents. We evaluated the program on the specific criteria listed on the Academic Program Review Team Worksheet. In addition, we presented a summary of our views to the Provost, Associate Provost, Honors Dean, Honors Associate Dean, and faculty of the Honors Program at the closing of our visit on the overall strengths and challenges of the college, and made some recommendations for advancement of the college.

The UNM Honors Program was founded in 1957. Between 2010 and 2012, a university-wide task force unanimously recommended that the Honors Program transition to become an Honors College. In the fall of 2013, the Honors College accepted its first class of Honors students. The creation of the Honors College was an important goal of UNM's 2020 strategic plan, whose first objective was to “fully implement an Honors College by Spring 2015.” Several aspects of UNM Vision 2020 addressed the expansion of the Honors College as both a magnet for recruiting and retaining the best and brightest students from New Mexico and beyond and as means by which to develop student competencies on an accelerated path. The Honors College is expected to help make UNM a "destination university" for high-achieving students.

The central mission statement of the UNM Honors College is “to provide challenging opportunities for an intensive interdisciplinary and cross-cultural liberal educational to highly motivated talented and creative undergraduates in all majors and to build a community of scholars.” There is no doubt that the UNM Honors College has accomplished its objectives and is of vital importance to the intellectual and personal growth of the university community. The Honors College has built a strong learning community and culture among students and faculty, and has made inroads into the community. The UNM Honors College is admired nationally and

by this APR committee for being one of a handful of institutions that hires faculty for tenure-track positions in the Honors College.

To advance the recommendations of the UNM task force, this academic program review, the first formal review in the history of the Honors Program/Honors College, provides an excellent baseline for improvement and future development.

The review team addressed the *nine common criteria* expected of all self-study documents and describes each in detail in the following formal report. Generally speaking, the UNM Honors College meets the nine criteria. Below, the academic program review team's report identifies and describes program strengths and shortcomings to determine appropriate recommendations.

Program Strengths

The UNM Honors College serves as a community of high achieving students with a unique interdisciplinary program. Its emphasis on providing students with an interdisciplinary track separates the Honors College from other forms of honors at the University of New Mexico; university honors is based on cumulative GPA at graduation and discipline-based honors is based on disciplinary research and the completion of a thesis. The students we met clearly value the opportunity to work with other high achieving students outside their disciplines, to work under the supervision of UNM's prominent research faculty, and to stretch their own abilities by enrolling in classes that are outside their major focus. Development from an Honors Program into an Honors College, elevates the status of this endeavor and puts UNM on the path to a fully realized honors college. The Honors Program suffered somewhat from lack of representation on committees and councils that affect policy and develop programs for student success. Now that there is a Dean of the Honors College, the Dean is part of the Dean's Council, and the Honors

College is represented on appropriate university committees such as the Provost's Committee on Academic Success. Recognition as a college provides a better recruitment opportunity as the college becomes more visible to students who consider attending the University of New Mexico.

The university has invested wisely in highly qualified tenured and tenure-track faculty for the Honors College. These faculty were hired through competitive national searches structured as all faculty searches are at the University of New Mexico. There were clear, approved job descriptions, national advertisements of the positions, and search committees of highly qualified faculty. The search committees included both faculty from the Honors College and faculty from the disciplinary homes of potential hires. This structure has resulted in hiring Honors faculty with a high level of preparation and a clear commitment to interdisciplinary studies. These faculty members work individually with students on research projects and activities, teach thoughtfully, conduct excellent scholarship in their own disciplines, and have a dedication to honors education. They value the opportunity to work with small groups of highly qualified students and to conduct scholarship that crosses disciplinary boundaries. We commend Dean Krause and the university for investing in these new hires who are undergoing the same tenure and promotion process as all faculty members at the university. The Honors faculty continue to develop their own scholarship in addition to scholarship of teaching and learning in honors.

The three levels of student engagement that the Honors College offers--Honors designation, Honors minor, and Honors major--provide opportunities for students to participate meaningfully in honors while completing other curricula. Students in many STEM disciplines may have time for only the Honors designation, but they can complete the Honors designation in straightforward fashion by completing a number of core courses offered by the Honors College and by finding a course in their major that meets Honors College criteria. The students told us, and we agree, that

the addition of the Honors minor is particularly important in attracting students to participate in interdisciplinary education. Most majors in the university's largest college require a minor. Being able to complete that minor in the Honors College is a very attractive option. The Honors major is likely to remain small, but, for the appropriate students, giving students the opportunity to enroll in over 25 percent of their coursework as advanced and accelerated Honors courses is appealing to the student who is graduate school bound.

The environment within the Honors College is warmly collegial and supportive. Students speak highly of the faculty and activities. In fact, the students were so articulate and involved in the program that we wish we had had more time to speak with them. The faculty recognize and support each other's work and spoke thoughtfully of the opportunities afforded them by the college's unique environment.

The Honors Program has had a long, recognized history with the national and regional honors organizations. The Honors Program has long been involved in the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC) and the Western Regional Honors Council (WRHC); and the former director of the program, Dr. Rosalie Otero, was an involved, senior member of this organization. This long history gives credibility to the newly established Honors College.

While there remains some concern that the Honors Program was isolated and the Honors College continues to be isolated, we found that assumption not necessarily to be the case. The Honors faculty reach out to other departments for research collaborations; courses in various departments are used for credit in the Honors College; and faculty from other colleges teach in the Honors College. A recent program to bring in Distinguished Fellows to the Honors College buys faculty time to teach and reside in the Honors College. The College is exploring other models that bring faculty members from other disciplines into Honors. Students who participate

in the Honors College represent all majors and disciplines across the University; thus, the Honors College serves the entire university.

Having recently developed a degree program, the Honors College is well on its way to implementing a meaningful assessment program. Prior to 2012, the Honors Program did not offer a major. Therefore, according to university guidelines, a student outcomes assessment program was not required. With the change in status and the development of an Honors major and Honors minor, assessment has become a necessary activity in the college. The college has developed student learning outcome (SLO) goals for the Honors designation, the Honors minor and the Honors major. Although university policies require assessment of only the major, the Honors College plans to assess all three programs. The College has aligned the SLOs with the curriculum and is working to ensure that all faculty, including adjunct faculty, evaluate and assess their courses. Rubrics for assessing each goal have been developed or are under development through a process that includes wide faculty involvement. Formal assessment has begun and the Honors College/Program already has developed a culture of discussing student performance with respect to program objectives.

The Honors College has implemented a number of ways to rigorously evaluate teaching effectiveness. In addition to using university wide forms for evaluating teaching, the Honors College also uses peer evaluation of teaching and has recently begun work with an outside evaluator. The outside evaluator visits classes and spends time interviewing the students in the absence of the instructor. This practice is a more rigorous program of evaluation than that used by most of the rest of the university.

Students who participated in the Honors Program graduated at significantly higher rates than students with similar entry characteristics who did not participate in the Honors College.

Honors students graduate better prepared for the changing career opportunities of the 21st century. Data were presented showing that students who participated in Honors outperformed a matched cohort of students. That is, Honors students were compared to honors-capable students with similar entry characteristics who chose not to participate in the Honors Program/College. This documented increase in graduation and retention is a strong endorsement of the college.

We found the Honors students to be mature, articulate, interesting, and highly supportive of the program. They were an impressive group. The students we met included some from Albuquerque and some from other states. All students told us that the opportunity to be part of the Honors College was an important reason for choosing UNM. These students were juniors and seniors who arrived at UNM during the Honors Program-College transition. Therefore they were unable to select the Honors major option; they did, however, choose the Honors minor option. The students noted, however, that if they had been given the Honors major option, they would have declared the Honors major.

Concerns and Recommendations

Given the long history of the UNM Honors Program, it is expected that transitioning to an Honors College comes with growing pains and challenges. As cited in the summary above, there are several areas that should be addressed that include developing and implementing a curriculum of Honors courses that satisfies an Honors major, an Honors minor, an Honors designation, and UNM's core; increasing the hiring of qualified Honors faculty and staff; developing new marketing strategies; developing evaluation tools for assessments of teaching effectiveness; and increasing space. The review committee, therefore, makes the following recommendations.

Honors Curriculum

Aspects of the development and implementation of the curriculum of Honors courses are unfolding and should be addressed:

First, the Honors College proposes three ways to achieve Honors status: bachelor's degree in interdisciplinary liberal arts that includes 36 HON credits and the completion of an independent thesis or project; minor in interdisciplinary studies that includes 24 HON credits; and designation that includes 15 HON credits. First, the role of the Honors major is not yet clear, and few students have yet chosen this option. The Honors College anticipates that the major will be in place in 2.5 years. In coordination with the major, the minor needs to be "beefed up."

Second, because the Honors College curriculum advances students in a scaffolded way, students can build or accumulate Honors credits and move progressively toward a higher level of Honors--from the designation, to the minor, to the major. The five student learning outcomes (SLOs) are built around this concept: the first two SLOs address effective written and oral communications; the next two SLOs address critical and creative thinking; and the fifth SLO addresses integrating knowledge, technologies, and skills. The designation is fulfilled primarily through the core classes and Legacy courses (SLOs 1-3); the minor is fulfilled through the core and upper-level (SLOs 1-4); and the major is fulfilled through the core, upper-level, seminar-based and experiential classes, and thesis (SLOs 1-5). The scaffolding within the curriculum is not complete. It is clear that students completing any components of the Honors curriculum will complete SLOs 1-3, but meeting SLO 4 is not well worked out.

Third, the question arises as to whether Honors courses need prerequisites to move from one level to the next. We recommend that a curriculum plan be put in place that considers the true scaffolding of Honors instruction.

Fourth, both the placement and assessment of activities that meet SLO 5 for the Honors minor and Honors major need further development. We recommend that the Honors College develop, implement, and assess the curriculum to satisfy the major and the minor in line with the five SLOs.

Fifth, both the assessment process and evaluation for learning goals for the Honors College are in progress. An Honors faculty member has been assigned the task of implementing assessment and a three-year plan. The review team recommends that a curriculum map be developed to account for the scaffolding of the curriculum. It also recommends that the new UNM assessment director assist in the assessment of the Honors College.

Sixth, Honors classes are open to non-Honors students if space is permitting. Offering “mixed” or embedded Honors courses comes with challenges to the instructor and to the Honors student. Engaging students of different abilities or levels of preparation can be a challenge to instructors. Honors students who have applied to the Honors College may feel resentment toward the class for sharing the experience of an enriched, challenging learning experience with students who have not applied and who are not fully committed to the completion of the Honors College. We recommend that the Honors Program explore the possibility of offering Honors classes to Honors students only.

Continue to Create and Develop a Distinctive Honors Culture

It is important to capitalize on the strengths of the past Honors Program while taking advantage of the new Honors College status. This strategy requires a commitment from the administration, budgetary support, a respectable Honors center, an Honors residential program, dedicated tenure-track Honors faculty, staff, and students, steady growth of recruits and

graduates, a sound developing curricular structure, a growing alumni base, and improved campus and public perception across campus, in the community and beyond.

Although honors program communities come in all shapes and sizes, to reap the greatest benefits, the UNM Honors College is ready to market these strengths and develop a distinct identity, one that distinguishes the Honors College at UNM from other honors programs in the state and nationally. The honors learning community holds the potential to provide transformative experiences and opportunities to the best and brightest in New Mexico and beyond.

The Honors College at UNM is feeling the pangs of quick growth. We recommend a college-wide marketing plan to increase visibility, change negative perceptions, and highlight the successes of Honors students at UNM. With the help of university marketing, the Honors College should develop an overall advertising campaign and media strategies to achieve a branding image. Whether creating a phrase or logo to identify the UNM Honors College, building an effective website, or producing attractive brochures and recruiting materials, posters, newsletters, permanent displays, or public service projects, strengthening the academic profile of the Honors College is a must. Currently, support for marketing the Honors College both within and outside the university is not adequate. Promotional materials and activities are now carried out around the regular tasks of faculty and staff. The Honors College, for example, recently established an Honors alumni chapter and held a well-attended, well-received campus event. Its promotion was a missed opportunity for fundraising. More support from University Communications and Marketing (UCAM), IT (Web design), enrollment management and recruitment is needed. The budget should allow for investing in campus-wide efforts to enhance the image of the Honors Program and develop a culture of Honors at UNM. All colleges,

departments, and units should be a part of disseminating the mission and vision of the Honors College.

Development

Support from a designated senior development officer is essential. The current development support is inadequate. There is no dedicated foundation officer to advance the mission and vision of the Honors College, which supports the vision of the university as a whole. Nationally, honors programs have attracted substantial gifts from donors specifically interested in the development of the undergraduate mission of a given institution targeted at highly talented students. The Honors College at UNM has a number of projects that might be of interest to donors, including support for the Honors Research Initiative, diversity efforts, mentorship programs, speakers series, international study, student research funding, annual retreats, the *Four Houses* program, and named scholarships. Fundraising, however, is best accomplished by an individual with the appropriate connections to potential donors as well as by an individual with the appropriate expertise and background. It cannot be left to a dean who wears two hats. Efforts should be made to recruit and hire a development officer assigned specifically for the UNM Honors College, and who will work in tandem with the growing Honors alumni chapter.

Perception

There is a history of problems in the perception of the Honors Program/Honors College at UNM. While the perception may be moving in a more positive direction with the creation of the college, the review team is still concerned that the Honors College has a credibility issue, more so internally than externally. The review committee observed that the UNM campus does not fully understand the mission of honors education on a university campus, that the Honors Program had developed weak relations across campus, and that preparation for the transition to a

college was deficient. We understand that the Honors College might have inherited remnants of the Honors Program, but the review team recommends that the Honors College make an all-out effort to engage other colleges, departments, and academic units to accept and offer an honors education to their students.

The review team heard comments such as the UNM Honors College is “insular,” “invisible,” and “elitist”; “there is a high ratio of part-time instructors and lecturers to full-time Honors faculty”; the Honors classes “lack rigor”; Honors is “incompatible with other degrees” such as engineering; the Honors College “does not work well with all colleges and departments”; the Honors College has a “funny grading system;” and Honors faculty are “tenured on teaching not research.” The view outside the UNM Honors College is that the unique preferential grading system of A, CR (credit), or No Credits lacks substance, that hiring and tenuring of Honors faculty do not meet the standards of the rest of the university; that the interdisciplinary focus lacks depth in any one discipline and the Honors faculty are seen as “generalists.” Although these remarks may be distorted, there is a concern that inaccurate perceptions persist throughout the campus.

The Honors staff is dedicated, hardworking, and committed to providing an exceptional honors education to the high-achieving students at UNM. The staff can be characterized by engagement with students, commitment to student success, attention to the quality of interdisciplinary instruction, individualized attention to Honors students, and supportive attitude of honors education across the colleges and departments.

The review committee recommends the following:

a. The Honors College should collaborate with the academic units in the university to create a more ambitious, coherent, and integrated Honors curriculum, paying particular attention to building the curriculum at all levels toward a culminating project and/or capstone experience.

b. The Honors College should clarify, articulate, and promote its role within the institution.

c. The Honors College should promote an environment that increases Honors faculty engagement in interdisciplinary scholarship with other academic units. It should continue to develop collaborations with the other colleges including use of courses in other programs for Honors credit and finding new opportunities for faculty from other colleges to teach in the Honors College.

d. The upper administration needs overtly to support and promote the Honors College and to praise the excellence of the UNM Honors College, its dedicated faculty, and special population of Honors students.

e. If the University expects the Honors College to grow in line with UNM's *2020 Vision*, then expansion of the Honors College space, faculty hires, and support staff must be considered.

f. As mentioned above, the budget of the Honors College should allow for investing in campus-wide efforts to enhance the image of the Honors Program and develop a culture of Honors at UNM.

Honors Advisement and Recruitment

The Honors College should enrich Honors advising to involve more than peer advising and counting Honors units or checking low GPAs. It is recognized that Honors students have specific characteristics that require special consideration. The National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC) recognizes Honors advising as a crucial part of the overall operations of any

honors program. It recommends that there be “provisions for special academic counseling of honors students by uniquely qualified faculty and/or staff personnel.” Professional advising responsibilities include “regularly scheduled formal advising sessions; unscheduled, unpredictable, informal advising sessions; liaison with departmental advisors; career counseling; and personal counseling.” Although the Honors College offers peer advising and advising for nationally competitive fellowships, there is much more to advising Honors students: making connections with the Honors College and the honors community, retaining students in the Honors College, discussion on post-graduate opportunities, nationally competitive fellowships (Rhodes, Fulbright, Goldwater, etc.) opportunities and application processes, research prospects, international study, and scholarly and research activities, and so on. Often, advisors help in the recruitment process and retention efforts as well. The review committee was highly impressed with the maturity and knowledge of the student peer advisors, and endorses this practice, but we recommend that “peer advisor” be renamed to reflect that students are assisting in the advising efforts, and we recommend that the Honors College conduct a national search for a professional academic advisor to coordinate advising in the Honors College, help recruit highly talented students, and help retain students in the Honors College. The Honors advisors will interact with other academic advisors on campus to share the policies of the Honors College.

In addition, it is recommended that all Honors staff should participate actively in the university’s recruitment efforts: attend prospective student events, previews, new student orientations, on-campus recruitment activities, and campus tours; visit high schools throughout the state; and make individual contacts with high school seniors.

Resources

Transitioning from an Honors Program to an Honors College requires additional funding, resources, and institutional support to carry out its mission. Staffing levels are not at the appropriate level for the curricular and extracurricular programs and activities that the college offers. The college has a greater range of required tasks and reporting than the Honors Program did. The expansion of curriculum, services, programming, and assessment will require additional faculty and professional lines. Honors faculty need support from the university to find new funding opportunities for their scholarship and teaching. As the Honors College continues to expand, space needs, classroom technology, and laboratory facilities need to be addressed. To increase visibility of the Honors College, consideration should be given to relocate the Honors College to a more prominent place on campus.

College Dean

Currently, Dr. Kate Krause is Dean of both the Honors College and University College. The model of one Dean for two colleges should be re-evaluated. The review team thinks that Dean Kate Krause is doing an excellent job and has established herself as a respected, dominant force on the UNM campus. However, the role of the dean of University College is very different from that of the Honors College. The mission, purpose and initiatives are different for each college. The review team observed that Dean Krause's attention, time, and interest are split between two Colleges. It is inevitable that a conflict of interest between the colleges will occur. Most importantly, the Honors College will suffer. In order to promote honors education and carry out the mission of the Honors College, one individual should be in charge with a strong commitment to one academic unit.

Review of Specific APR Criteria

Criterion 1. Program Goals

The UNM Honors College clearly articulated its goal “to provide challenging opportunities for an intensive interdisciplinary and cross-cultural liberal education to highly motivated, talented and creative undergraduates in all majors and to build a community of scholars.” The designation, the minor, and the major all address this mission. The UNM Honors College's mission is consistent with UNM's mission, and the program is particularly relevant to the *UNM 2020 Vision's* goal of becoming a "destination university." According to the Honors students that we met, the goals and mission of the college are clear. However, we are not sure that the mission, vision, and goals are stated on the Honors College website or in any of the recruitment materials, nor are presented at recruitment events. We are not sure that it is widely understood that the Honors College is open to and seeks students from all majors.

Criterion 2. Teaching and Learning Curriculum

2A. The Honors College has five broad Student Learning Outcomes for its curriculum. The faculty are working to scaffold the curriculum such that students completing the designation will meet SLOs 1-4 while those in the Honors minor and Honors major will meet all 5 SLOs. Thus, the college intends to have good alignment between courses and SLO's. Accomplishing this alignment is still in progress due to the short time that the Honors College has been established and the difficulties in coordinating broad curricular goals with the part-time instructors who teach some of the courses. However, regular meetings of the faculty who teach in the first year courses are moving the curriculum into alignment.

2B. Coordination with other units is much improved because 100- and 200-level courses now satisfy the core curriculum. With the creation of the core courses, the Honors College automatically interacts with other colleges. The unit continues to communicate to advisors and faculty across the university although we are not sure that all of the other colleges are yet aware

of the option for their students to complete core curriculum courses in the Honors College. The tenured and tenure-track Honors faculty reach out to their disciplinary home departments for collaboration on research activities as well as participate in committee work. More interaction in the other direction would be helpful.

2C. The Honors College has a number of extracurricular activities and is emphasizing those that meet program goals. For example, the regional Honors literary magazine, *Scribendi*, is an award-winning publication that is produced by Honors students under the direction of a faculty member. In addition, the new house structure where groups of students compete for the Honors Cup by completing activities that meet the program mission is increasing student participation in extracurricular activities. Over 50% of students complete international programs. The Honors College works with the Global Education Office. Perhaps the best example of a transformative education abroad experience is *Conexiones*, an intensive program of culture and language study at UNM and its field sites in Spain: Trujillo (Extremadura) and Salamanca (Castilla-León). There are now 1.5 floors in Hokona Hall that comprise the Scholars' Wing, representing a 30% increase in student participation in this housing option. This housing option includes students in the Honors College and other students on major university scholarships. There is a faculty representative for the floor, a weekly newsletter and an RA from Honors. The Honors College hosts a faculty lecture series, coffees and conversations, seminars, barbeques and other activities and events.

2D. To introduce incoming students to the Honors College, all entering Honors students are required to enroll in a Legacy class in the first semester. Occasionally, students cannot find a seat in a course in the first semester. All Legacy instructors meet on a regular basis, and there is a Legacy coordinator. Many of the term faculty perform this teaching. At this meeting all

instructors work together on assessment and faculty development. This year, the faculty are working on including the Lobo reading experience book in their courses. Because of personal schedules, part-time instructors are not always able to participate in the discussions that integrate the Legacy meetings. At this point, faculty who cannot come to the meetings are no longer allowed to teach Legacy courses. Term faculty teach three courses for the Honors College. They complete classroom evaluations and are peer evaluated in the classroom twice a semester by other Honors faculty.

Course delivery is primarily small seminar-style classes, many of which include experiential components. All include considerable writing. As yet, attempts to use online instruction have not been found to meet program expectations.

Criterion 3: Teaching and Learning: Continuous Improvement

3A. Since the Honors College has just started offering a bachelor's degree, its assessment program is in the developmental stage. A strong plan that has clear goals and integrates those goals with the curriculum is in place. An Honors faculty member has been named as assessment coordinator. Rubrics are being developed in consultation with groups of faculty who teach the curriculum at each level. The plan to date includes a calendar of assessment and reporting for both the degree program and the courses that are in the university core curriculum. Two faculty meetings per year will be devoted to the interpretation and use of the assessment data.

The Honors College has worked for the last two years to put in place a scaffolded curriculum. The goals for courses at the various levels are designed to provide this scaffolding. There are mixed opinions about whether scaffolding is an effective approach. A Legacy course is a prerequisite to all higher level courses, but a more effective prerequisite structure is under discussion.

Evaluation of Honors faculty instructors includes several modes. First, an outside evaluator provides mid-term evaluations for a large number of classes. This practice exceeds university expectations for evaluation of teaching. Second, regular peer observations of teaching are used in the evaluation of faculty. Third, the Honors College uses standard university-level evaluation forms for student input on teaching. The university is in the process of switching to a new evaluation system that will allow the Honors College to add program specific questions that may make this tool more useful.

The Honors College has in place a number of ways to discuss the results of evaluation and assessment. At coffee and conversation meetings overall weaknesses found by the outside teaching evaluator or through the assessment program are discussed among the Honors faculty. Particular weaknesses in student writing, for example, are discussed. Weaknesses in Legacy courses are discussed at the Legacy faculty meetings. Overall issues are discussed at the annual Honors retreat. Individual annual reviews include a review of the teaching evaluations.

Criterion 4: Students

Students are accepted into the Honors College in several ways. The largest group of incoming students enter as first-year students who are admitted based on entry characteristics and an essay. If students do not meet the criteria, they may be admitted provisionally or asked to wait a semester or two before they are offered membership to the Honors College. Continuing UNM students are encouraged to apply to the Honors College when their GPA meets standards. Recruiting continuing students is seen as a valuable mechanism to improve diversity. Finally, transfer students are accepted into the program with a 3.2 GPA. Because the UNM Honors College accepts Honors credits from the local community college, discussion is under way to

align the two curricula more closely and establish procedures for evaluating courses from other universities.

Monitoring of student progress is handled in a variety of ways. Students in the Honors College rarely get alerts for academic problems, but Honors students are required to see a peer Honors advisor every year. Peer advisors receive adequate training. An advising checklist is used in the peer advising system. The checklist is filled out at each advising session and copies are retained in student files. After peer Honors advising, students with academic problems are directed to see the Associate Dean of the Honors College. Lobotrax is used to monitor student progress, and grade reports are run regularly. Honors faculty are in close contact with students, but students are not required to have a faculty mentor. Honors students receive a variety of other advising and related service from their degree granting college for academic advisement, SHAC, Dean of Students, etc. When queried, the peer Honors advisors we met were aware of and comfortable referring students to needed services.

The Honors College works to make students aware of nationally competitive scholarship and post-graduate opportunities. The scholarship coordinator holds regular open meetings in the Honors forum and is mentioned as a resource person in the weekly newsletter. The coordinator works with students on developing portfolios for national scholarships. Scholarship advising has resulted in increasing success for students in these competitions. Honors faculty, too, engage in continuous mentoring of students with respect to applying to graduate and professional schools. Occasionally seminars specific to these issues are held. The vast majority of Honors students go on to graduate and professional schools.

Monitoring progress and retaining students in the Honors Program/College has always been difficult because students do not regularly continuously enroll in Honors courses. The

Honors College did not provide adequate data on retention of its students. Offering the Honors designation and the Honors minor is meant to improve retention. Offering more Honors courses in the university core and getting other colleges to accept the Honors minor to fulfill their academic majors should help increase the retention of students in the Honors College.

Monitoring of student success includes exit surveys that indicate more than 90% of Honors graduates intend to apply to graduate and professional schools. Follow up with alumni show that the true numbers of students who enroll in these kinds of programs are nearly as high as the initial self reports.

Criterion 5. Faculty.

Faculty teaching in the Honors College included tenure-track faculty, term teaching faculty, and adjunct faculty (i.e., part time instructors (PTI)) The hiring of additional tenure-track faculty in the last few years allows the Honors College to cover courses at the 100 through 400 levels. However, term faculty and adjuncts are necessary in order for the Honors College to meet the demands of the increasing numbers of Honors students.

The tenured and tenure-track faculty are impressive and have strong qualifications.

The research and creative activities of these faculty are significant, especially given their extensive teaching and service activities. The quality of their scholarship is excellent and reflects the interdisciplinary focus of the college. Publication with undergraduates is encouraged and frequent. Faculty in the Honors College do not teach graduate students but do serve on graduate student committees; however, opportunities for Honors faculty to serve on graduate committees will not develop at the expense of their interactions with undergraduates in the Honors Program.

Interactions between Honors students and Honors faculty are frequent and excellent. The small class sizes, engagement in scholarship, and extracurricular activities promote a great deal

of interaction in the Honors College. The level of service to the unit, the college, and the community is high. Honors faculty direct extracurricular activities, participate in university committees, and are active nationally in both professional organizations and Honors organizations.

The Honors College provides a reasonable amount of financial support for faculty professional development given the overall budget of the college. There is an annual budget for travel of \$2000 per year for junior faculty and \$1000 per year for senior faculty. For example, the recently hired Honors science faculty members received a reasonably large startup package, but they must rely on departments in their disciplines for adequate laboratory space. Other new Honors faculty have had startup packages appropriate to their disciplines.

Criterion 6. Resources and Planning

The Honors College is just beginning to reassemble an advisory board. We strongly encourage the college to continue this process as a well-chosen advisory board can be very helpful in improving development activities.

Honors College faculty and staff engage in curricular and extracurricular planning through annual faculty retreats and frequent consultation with the Honors Dean and Associate Dean. The unit is small enough that elaborate planning structures are probably not necessary.

The budget for the Honors College appears to be minimal given its responsibilities. The change from an Honors Program to a Honors College came with little increase in the budget. The unit is managing to complete its activities at its current size, but does not have adequate resources for growth. The current budget allows for only three full-time staff, two of whom are currently temporary appointments. Because the Honors College is small, each staff member

takes on multiple duties. If the Honors College is to grow, the number of administrative staff is not adequate.

Faculty in the Honors College receive some external funding and grants to support student research initiatives. There is some worry that the change in structure of FRSO support from the research office will make it more difficult for Honors faculty to find external funding.

Criterion 7. Facilities

The Honors College has insufficient resources to meet the needs of current students. The faculty are active and productive and the space is nicely designed, but the Honors College cannot accommodate further increases in student numbers, Honors classes, and administrative staff.

Criterion 8. Program Comparisons

The Honors Program/College has a long history of participation in NCHC and the regional WRHC. The Honors College should consider more involvement in other honors-oriented organization and conferences such as the National Association of Fellowship Advisors and Honors Education for Research Universities.

Criterion 9. Future Directions

The Honors College played a role in the UNM 2020 strategic planning effort, and goals developed through this *Vision* have been met through 2015. An annual faculty retreat is scheduled to discuss future plans for the college. The Honors Dean and Associate Dean meet weekly to discuss enrollment, planning and other issues.

Based upon the Academic Program Review team's assessment, the following items should be the top priorities for the UNM Honors College:

1. The assignment of a designated **Senior Development Officer**, whether part-time or full-time, to the UNM Honors College. This officer would assist the Honors Dean in targeted

fundraising to support the Honors College and its commitment to providing opportunities to its students. Additional funds raised could support the Honors Research Institute that sponsors faculty-mentored student research to help prepare students for admission to and success in graduate or professional schools, international travel, and the growing UNM Honors Alumni chapter. There are excellent opportunities to raise funds for the UNM Honors College. Until the university provides support and help to overcome the current "discipline-centric" approach to fundraising, the Honors College will continue to be shut off from opportunities to raise funds for the Honors College and its students.

2. An additional **staff line** to support the Honors Dean and the activities of the UNM Honors College is needed to support marketing efforts, innovative teaching, publications, and events. Getting out the message for the UNM Honors College, which is essential, is limited currently by lack of staff support for marketing.
3. The **re-evaluation of the success of the unusual "one dean for two colleges"** model is critical. It is important to consider whether this is a reasonable and sustainable model.