

Assessment of Non-Academic Outcomes (Fall 2003 and Spring 2004)

Please provide the information below about how your unit assesses the extent to which it meets its expected outcomes. If you need assistance, please contact Dr. Virginia Wheelless at 565-2085 or on Groupwise email. This information is due in the Planning Office no later than February 2, 2004 and will be updated annually.

Unit: _____ University Honors Program _____ Date 2/04/04

Gloria Cox gcox@unt.edu

Person Completing the Information Susan Eve Email eve@unt.edu

Head of the Unit: Dr. Gloria Coz, Director Email gcox@unt.edu

I. Mission: Provide the mission of the unit and a statement about how it relates to the university's mission.

II. Previous Evaluations of the Unit: Provide a description of the evaluations/assessments conducted in your unit over the last 5 years and changes that have been made based on the results of these assessments.

III. Statement of Expected Outcomes: Provide a brief list of the expected outcomes for your unit for 2002-03 or 2003-04 as of this date. Each outcome listed must be capable of being measured by the means noted in IV below. Please number the outcomes (1 to x). After each outcome, describe how the outcome supports student learning and student development.

IV. Measuring Expected Outcomes: Describe how the unit measures how the outcomes have been achieved and provide a list of methods and/or tools with the following information:

1. Name of assessment method or tool
2. If the method/tool is copyrighted, provide the name of the company who "owns" the tool.
3. Frequency of use - how often is this tool/method used, e.g., every spring semester students, staff, and faculty are surveyed about parking at UNT; customers are asked to complete evaluation forms when services are rendered; or each fall, the Enrollment Management Committee reviews the results of the Graduating Student Survey produced by the IR&A Office.

V. Use of Assessment Results: Describe how the results of the assessments described in IV above are shared with staff in the unit? How are the results used to improve the unit? Help improve student learning? Enhance student development? Meet the university's vision?

VI. Changes Made Based on Assessment Results: Describe how the unit has changed (or why it has not changed) based on the results of the assessment of outcomes. Indicate the year the change was implemented. Please indicate how the expected outcomes have changed if applicable.

Signature of Person Completing the Form:

_____ Date _____

Signature of Unit Head after Reviewing the Form:

4. _____ Date _____

- I. **Mission:** Provide mission of the unit and a statement about how it relates to the university's mission.

Established in 1994, the University Honors Program serves highly talented and motivated students who are seeking an opportunity to build an intellectual and academic framework sufficient for graduate school, a successful career, and life-long learning. Through its support of University Honors, the University of North Texas assists students in the pursuit of excellence. In turn, University Honors enhances the academic reputation of the University of North Texas, helping the institution attract and retain excellent students. Through this process, the stature of the university is enhanced and the value of all UNT degrees is increased.

The goals of the program are as follows:

- The University Honors Program will be a means of enriching the academic and intellectual experience of UNT's brightest, most talented, and most highly motivated undergraduate students. Opportunities provided by University Honors will enable students to build an intellectual and academic framework that is second to none.
- The University Honors Program will be a primary means of enhancing the academic reputation of the institution. University Honors will promote the reputation of UNT, thereby assisting the university in attracting and retaining excellent students.
- The University Honors Program will promote research and the development of research skills among undergraduate students at UNT.
- The University Honors Program will enrich the intellectual life available to all members of the university community.
- The University Honors Program will serve as a laboratory for innovative courses and teaching methods that may then be extended beyond honors to the general student population.
- The University Honors Program will provide faculty members with opportunities to develop and teach exciting courses in their areas of expertise and special interest.
- The University Honors Program will help to build a sense of community among students, making them more likely to stay at the institution to graduate and become loyal alumni.
- The University Honors Program will assist students in competing for major national and international scholarships, fellowships, and awards.

The mission of the University of North Texas follows. The material in italics indicate the areas of direct overlap between the University Honors Program and that of the University.

The University of North Texas is the largest and most comprehensive research and doctoral degree-granting institution in the North Texas area and the flagship of the UNT system. The University is committed to excellence in teaching and the discovery and application of knowledge through research and creative activities. As the educational leader in the North Texas region, the University is dedicated to the development of the area as the number one region in the nation.

University Honors Program mission consistent with this University mission:

The mission of the University Honors Program is to promote academic and intellectual excellence at the University of North Texas.

The University:

- Achieves high-quality instruction, scholarship, and service by fostering excellence and innovation in teaching and learning;
 1. *The University Honors Program will be a primary means of enhancing the academic reputation of the institution. University Honors will promote the reputation of UNT, thereby assisting the university in attracting and retaining excellent students.*
 2. *The University Honors Program will serve as a laboratory for innovative courses and teaching methods that may then be extended beyond honors to the general student population.*
 3. *The University Honors Program will assist students in competing for major national and international scholarships, fellowships, and awards.*
- Supporting research and creative activities that expand knowledge, strengthen undergraduate and graduate programs, and promote the application of knowledge for the benefit of society;
 1. *As the only general program of excellence open to students in any undergraduate major, University Honors serves talented and highly motivated students who are seeking an opportunity to build an intellectual and academic framework sufficient for graduate school, a successful career, and life-long learning.*
 2. *The University Honors Program will promote research and the development of research skills among undergraduate students at UNT.*
- Assuming the primary role in addressing community needs of the North Texas region and state;
- Stresses understanding and appreciation of the historical, intellectual, technological, scientific, and cultural nature of the search for knowledge;
 1. *As the only general program of excellence open to students in any undergraduate major, University Honors serves talented and highly motivated students who are seeking an opportunity to build an intellectual and academic framework sufficient for graduate school, a successful career, and life-long learning.*
 2. *The University Honors Program will promote research and the development of research skills among undergraduate students at UNT.*

- Maintains academic integrity through free and open inquiry including the examination of values;
 1. *The University Honors Program will enrich the intellectual life available to all members of the university community.*
- Promotes advancement and preservation of the arts;
- Nurtures development of students by providing continuing opportunities for intellectual, physical, emotional, social and career growth;

1. *The University Honors Program will help to build a sense of community among students, making them more likely to stay at the institution to graduate and become loyal alumni.*
- Supports a culturally diverse environment and advocates mutual respect for all members of the University community as they strive for excellence;
 - Provides a high quality residential environment and opportunities for life-long learning;
 1. *The University Honors Program will be a means of enriching the academic and intellectual experience of UNT's brightest, most talented and most highly motivated undergraduate students. Opportunities provided by University Honors will enable students.*
 2. *The University Honors Program will help to build a sense of community among students, making them more likely to stay at the institution to graduate and become loyal alumni.*
 3. *Honors promotes a high quality residential environment by having an Honors wing in Clark Hall. Students who live on the hall enjoy special opportunities such as midterm study breaks and other programs.*
 - Enhances access to higher education through the use of emerging information and telecommunication technologies.
 1. *The University Honors Program will serve as a laboratory for innovative courses and teaching methods that may then be extended beyond honors to the general student population;*
 2. *The University Honors Program will provide faculty members with opportunities to develop and teach exciting courses in their areas of expertise and special interest.*
 - The University continues to expand its relationship with the University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth; to develop the University of North Texas System Center at Dallas; and to cultivate partnerships with elementary and secondary schools, community colleges, other universities, businesses, government agencies, and nonprofit organization to improve the quality of education and community life.

II. Previous Evaluations of the Unit:

Provide a description of the evaluations/assessments conducted in your unit over the last 5 years and changes that have been made based on the results of these assessments.

From the establishment of the honors program in fall 1994, we have maintained membership in the National Collegiate Honors Council and have attempted to build the program in accord with NCHC's "Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors Program." Rather than create the program in a vacuum or through trial and error, we have maintained ongoing, informal consultation with honors directors around the United States.

Honors Task Force 2000

In Fall 2000, the provost established an Honors Task Force to assess the University Honors Program and develop recommendations for its future. The Task Force was chaired by John Todd, Special Assistant to the Provost. Members of this task force included Warren Burggren (Dean, College of Arts and Sciences); Gloria Cox (Director of University Honors); Thomas Clark (Associate Dean, College of Music); Bertina Combes (Associate Dean, College of Education); Ben Dearman (Office of the Registrar); Thomas Evenson (Associate Dean, School of Community Service); Steven Forde (Department of Political Science); Reid Ferring (Chair, Department of Geography); Jan Hillman (Office of Student Development); Rebecca Lothringer (Office of Admissions); Scott Montgomery (School of Visual Arts); Gerard O'Donovan (Department of Biology); Marcia Staff (College of Business Administration); Mary Thibodeaux (Associate Dean, College of Business Administration); and Elizabeth Warren (Director of Housing).

The following recommendations were made: (Recommendations that have been acted on are bolded.)

- Creation of an Honors College. An honors college would provide
 - Direct representation of Honors at Dean's meetings.
 - Enhanced ability to recruit talented students.
 - A clear target for capital campaign support.
- Additional privileges and support services for students in Honors:
 - Early registration for Honors students.
 - **Library privileges not available to other undergraduates.**
 - Scholarships for Honors students only – academic exchange program, research assistantships with faculty.
 - **Dedicated Honors advisors.**
 - Required senior Honors thesis instead of current optional thesis.
 - **Summer research opportunities.**
 - **Honors Study Abroad every summer with scholarships.**
 - Peer mentoring program.
 - Faculty mentoring program (could use "affiliated" faculty).
 - **Dedicated computer lab and study lounge.**
 - Special privileges to use campus equipment (RTVF, etc.).
 - Creation of a fund to endow the Honors Lecture Program series.

- Creation of an endowment for a distinguished visiting professorship that could be used to attract outstanding scholars to the campus for one-year appointment.

Changes based on Previous Assessments

In response to the two completed assessments above, the University Honors Program has made the following changes.

1. Academic Counselor for the University Honors Program

In August 2000, the administration approved a new position of Academic Counselor for the University Honors Program. The Honors academic advisor works fulltime on behalf of Honors students, and is responsible for several important aspects of the Honors Program, including the following:

- The Honors advisor designs and implements honors advising for freshmen at summer orientation.
- The Honors advisor assists in recruiting students for the program by attending events at which Honors can be promoted.
- The Honors advisor acts as the liaison between the Honors Council (a representative student organization) and the Honors staff.
- The Honors advisor assists the director in developing the honors schedule and informs students about courses to be offered.
- The Honors advisor works with the Honors Council to organize a large number of events each year, including lunches with deans and professors, informative lunchtime meetings, and many other types of enrichment programming.
- The Honors advisor works to maximize program retention by meeting regularly with students, tracking their progress, developing a pathway to Honors graduation for each student, and assisting with individual difficulties such as scheduling conflicts.

2. Assistant Director to Support Honors Research

Assistant Director. In Fall 2002, the Administration at the University of North Texas authorized the creation of the position of Assistant Director of the University Honors Program. The specific purpose of this new position is to enhance the research component for the Honors program so that the students will be more competitive for nationally ranked graduate programs, as well as scholarships and fellowships. The new Assistant Director worked with the Director to create a committee that consisted of 20 faculty members that represented all but one of the schools and colleges at the University, including faculty in arts, humanities, social and behavioral sciences, physical sciences, life sciences, and mathematics. The committee also included four Honors students.

New Research Courses. The committee met during Spring 2003 and developed proposals for two new courses which were approved by the University Curriculum Committee in Summer 2003. The first course, Honors 1500: An Introduction to Research: An Interdisciplinary Perspective, is a multidisciplinary freshman level course in which the students are introduced to different models of research presented by tenured faculty. The

major student project for this course is the production of a prospectus for a potential thesis, and identification of a potential thesis advisor. This course is being taught for the first time in Spring 2004 and has 18 students enrolled. Ten faculty from across the university will participate as lecturers in this course.

The second new course created, Honors 3500: Honors Thesis Development, is a thesis development course where students write a thesis proposal in the Fall semester, and conduct research and write their thesis in the Spring. This course was taught for the first time in Fall 2003. Students work with the Honors faculty and a faculty mentors in their discipline to develop the proposal. We have seven students who successfully completed their thesis proposals and are working toward completing their theses within the next year. Five of the students have submitted abstracts to the Great Plains Honors Council Conference in San Antonio, TX in March 2004 where students will present their initial research findings. Two additional students who completed their thesis under the independent system will also attend the GPHC meetings to present posters. Student expenses for transportation and lodging will be covered by the University Honors Program.

Summer Research Opportunities. The Assistant Director has received a grant of \$3500 from Faculty Research Funds to conduct a research project in collaboration with the Prairie Area Health Education Center (AHEC) on the health care needs of rural north Texans. The grant will be used to fund a junior/senior research assistant and three freshman/sophomore level students. In addition, the Assistant Director has established a clearinghouse for summer research opportunities at the local, state and national levels. A notebook containing opportunities is available in the Honors office. Honors faculty advise Honors student to apply for these opportunities.

3. Scholars Day and Electronic Journal

In April 2004, the University Honors Program will host UNT's first Undergraduate Scholar's Day. The event is designed to showcase undergraduate research and celebrate the accomplishments of all undergraduates who have engaged in scholarly research during the past year. Students who wish to present their papers at the event will submit an application signed by their faculty mentor or director and await acceptance from the Scholar's Day Committee. Honors students who are engaged in the writing of an honors thesis are expected to present their work at Scholar's Day. The best papers presented at Scholar's Day, as assessed by a faculty panel, will be published in a refereed electronic journal of undergraduate research.

Undergraduate Scholar's Day is one means by which the University Honors Program serves the entire UNT community and brings attention to the accomplishments of individual students and the institution. It also illustrates the power of cooperation across units of the institution, as the Office of Student Development is a partner by virtue of a grant of student fees provided to the Honors Program to fund a portion of the event.

4. Council on Undergraduate Research

The University Honors Program and the McNair Program agreed to cooperate to fund institutional membership in the national Council on Undergraduate Research. CUR focuses

on creating research opportunities for undergraduate students. Services for members include an annual meeting, a quarterly journal, a newsletter, e-mails lists on funding opportunities, and an annual competition for student research that can be presented at a special poster session for members of Congress to highlight the need for support for undergraduate research. UNT representatives will attend the annual conference in June 2004 and present a workshop on your experiences with undergraduate research at UNT. In addition, the Honors faculty are working with current thesis students to develop two of the thesis projects for competition for the "Posters on the Hill" event in April 2005.

5. Cooperation with Other DFW Honors Programs

The University Honors Program has a long history of cooperation with Honors programs at other area universities, especially the University of Texas at Arlington and Texas Christian University. In December 2003, The Director and Assistant Director of the UNT Honors Program met with the new Dean and the two Associate Deans of the Honors College at UTA. Areas of mutual interest and possible cooperation were discussed. UTA has two research symposia a year where Honors students can present their research: the Annual Celebration of Excellence by Students in Spring, and the Honors Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity symposium in the Fall. The UTA Dean invited UNT students to participate in these two symposia.

6. Increased Money for Honors Courses Taught by Departments

An increased allocation of \$40,000 in the 2003-04 budget has made it possible for University Honors to increase the stipends paid to departments for offering honors courses. Beginning with the fall 2003 semester, departments now receive \$2,000 rather than \$1,000 per course. Even though UNT's budget was strained by several factors, the Vice President for Academic Affairs requested the increase, which was approved by the Board of Regents. Faculty who teach in Honors continue to receive a \$250 stipend per semester.

Statement of Expected Outcomes 2003-2004

1. Honors students accepted into the program will increase 20% in anticipation of reaching the national goal of 5% of the undergraduate student population in Honors.
2. The number of students enrolled and active in the Honors Program will increase 20%.
3. Number and rates of enrolled and active students participating in the Honors Program who participate in at least one Honors special event (Welcome Back Picnic, Honors Housing, Honors Council, Lunch with the Professor, Brown Bag Lunches, Cultural Events, Special Tours, Honors Adopt-A-Spot, Stress Free Week) will increase by 20%.
4. Number and rates of students graduating from the Honors Program will increase 20%.
5. Number and rates of students in the Honors Program who write a thesis will increase 20%.
6. Number and rates of Honors students presenting papers at regional and national conferences will increase 20%.
7. The number of students publishing professional papers will increase 20%.
8. Number of students maintaining an Honors portfolio will increase 20%.
9. Number of Honors students winning scholarships/fellowships will increase 20%.
10. The number and rate of students attending graduate and professional school following graduation will increase 20%.
11. 80% of students participating in the Honors Program will rate their preparation for graduate school at UNT as good or excellent.
12. 80% of students participating in the Honors Program at UNT will rate themselves as excellent or good on the 24 UNT Impact times in the Graduating student Survey.
13. 80% of students participating in the Honors Program will rate UNT's impact on the 24 UNT Impact times in the Graduating student Survey as a great deal or somewhat.

IV. **Measuring Expected Outcomes 2003-2004**

1. Honors students accepted into the program will increase 20%.
 - i. Assessment method: ACCESS database, number of new freshmen who enroll in the program.
 - ii. Frequency of measure: Every semester
2. The number of students enrolled and active in Honors Program will increase 20%.
 - i. Assessment method: Number of students coded 1 or 2 in the ACCESS database, and number of students who enroll in honors courses.
 - ii. Frequency of measure: Every semester
3. Number and rates of enrolled and active students participating in the Honors Program who participate in at least one Honors special event (Welcome Back Picnic, Honors Housing, Honors Council, Lunch with the Professor, Brown Bag Lunches, Cultural Events, Special Tours, Honors Adopt-A-Spot, Stress Free Week) will increase by 20%.
 - i. Assessment method: Count participants at events
 - ii. Frequency of measure: Every semester
4. Number and rates of students graduating from the Honors Program will increase 20%.
 - i. Assessment method: ACCESS database
 - ii. Frequency of measure: Every semester
5. Number and rates of students in the Honors Program who write a thesis will increase 20%.
 - i. Assessment method: Count theses approved
 - ii. Frequency of measure: Every semester
6. Number and rates of Honors students presenting papers at regional and national conferences will increase by 20%.
 - i. Assessment method: Count papers given for portfolio
 - ii. Frequency of measure: Every semester
7. The number of students publishing professional papers will increase by 20%.
 - i. Assessment method: Count papers presented for portfolio
 - ii. Frequency of measure: Every semester
8. Number of students maintaining an Honors portfolio will increase by 20%.
 - i. Assessment method: Monitor portfolio development
 - ii. Frequency of measure: Every semester
9. Number of Honors students winning scholarships/fellowships will increase by 20%.
 - i. Assessment method: Count scholarships/fellowships awarded
 - ii. Frequency of measure: Every semester
10. The number and rate of students attending graduate and professional school following graduation will increase by 20%.
 - i. Assessment method: UNT Graduating Student Survey and Honors records
 - ii. Frequency of measure: Every semester
11. 80% of students participating in the Honors Program will rate their preparation for graduate school at UNT as good or excellent.
 - i. Assessment method: UNT Graduating Student Survey

- ii. Frequency of measure: Every semester
- 12. 80% of students participating in the Honors Program at UNT will rate themselves as excellent or good on the 24 UNT Impact times in the Graduating student Survey.
 - i. Assessment method: UNT Graduating Student Survey and Honors records
 - ii. Frequency of measure: Every semester
- 13. 80% of students participating in the Honors Program will rate UNT's impact on the 24 UNT Impact times in the Graduating student Survey as a great deal or somewhat.
 - i. Assessment method: UNT Graduating Student Survey and Honors records
 - ii. Frequency of measure: Every semester

V. Use of Assessment Results

Since the inception of the program, it has been our goal to maintain the stability and continuity of the program while also making adjustments to improve the effectiveness of the program for our students. Communication with our constituency of honors students is a vital element of that goal.

- The small size of the Honors staff (two fulltime, two halftime members) make it easy for us to share information. Regular meetings provide opportunities to discuss any problems that we know about and devise ways to meet the needs of our students more effectively.
- We are able to communicate with Honors faculty either directly or through the Honors Executive Committee. The Committee represents all the colleges and schools within UNT that offer undergraduate programs, and members provide information about honors to their colleagues and also provide feedback to the honors staff.
- The Honors Council is representative of the Honors student body and serves as a means of communicating with honors students and communicating ideas from honors students to the honors staff. For example, honors students let us know that one of their main concerns is the limited availability of honors courses.
- The Honors list serv provides access to most of the students in the program, allowing us to communicate a vast array of information ranging from announcements and reminders about upcoming events for which tickets are available to program and scholarship opportunities.
- The Honors Director sits as a member of Dean's Council, which provides a means for Honors to be involved in discussions about the vision of the University.
- We are in the process of forming an association of honors parents, which we believe will help to build the sense of community of students in the program and it will also promote our goals of establishing additional scholarships for students.

VI. Changes Made Based on Assessment of Outcome Results

- To promote retention of students in Honors and to further the vision of the University, we inaugurated a research pathway in Honors in 2003.
- To promote the retention of students in Honors, we have allowed the senior music recital to count as the Capstone thesis.
- To provide a more varied curriculum, we are increasing the number of interdisciplinary seminars. By fall 2004 we expect to be able to offer an honors course in contemporary great ideas and a seminar on leadership theory and practice.