

TO: Honors Program Committee
Patricia Hart, Chair
Mary DuPree
Lauren McConnell, Chair, HSAB
Mark Nielsen
Matthew Brookhart, Vice Chair, HSAB
Diane Prorak
Stephan Flores, Director
Sandra Reineke
Alton Campbell, Assoc. Director
David Roon
Eric Aston
Cheryl Wheaton

RE: Minutes of meeting held December 3, 2008

The meeting was called to order at 1:35 p.m. by Chair Hart with the following members present: Eric Aston, Alton Campbell, Mary DuPree, Stephan Flores, Matthew Brookhart, Pat Hart, Mark Nielsen, Diane Prorak, Sandra Reineke, David Roon, and Cheryl Wheaton. Pat Hart asked if there were additions/corrections to the minutes of the previous meeting. Hearing no response she declared the minutes approved.

AGENDA ITEMS

1. **External Reviewer's report regarding strategic planning.** Committee members agreed to proceed with the order of the new agenda. Eric Aston explained the prepared notes he emailed the committee (email enclosed) regarding the External Review Report. He emphasized that all programs, to include the Honors Program, would be remiss if they didn't participate in the RFI in an aggressive manner and that it should be seen as an opportunity for increased participation in the university's transformational process. Mark Nielsen added what he termed a cautionary view by explaining that from his viewpoint as an associate dean he strongly felt that the RFIs should be revenue negative and that although the program might want to present innovative proposals that mirror the recommendations of the external review, he didn't feel the proposals would be acceptable if they were not revenue generating or cost-saving in nature. He suggested that the program might want to present a cost-saving proposal where other units of the university might fit in with the Honors Program. An example might be that if the university determines that the current Core Discovery curriculum cannot be sustained university wide, its distinctive strengths could be preserved in the honors curriculum, or even incorporated into an Honors Liberal Arts College. Stephan Flores remarked that the RFI process provides an opportunity to make a bold move to advocate for the program. He noted, however, that it also is very difficult to know what might be determined differently without being provided some of the basic facts and data sets from the administration, so that one could propose particular cost-savings and reconfigured resources with specific figures. Mark again stated that at this point it isn't known what the final outcome will be and that nothing has been removed from the table. Mary DuPree offered a counter-proposal to the notion of the Honors Liberal Arts College by suggesting that a centralized interdisciplinary program be established. Perhaps event planning could also be part of the consideration, so that different programs could draw upon a centralized system of support for events and programming needs.

Stephan suggested that in the time remaining Eric might want to discuss the points that he

presented in his email. Sandra Reineke remarked that although it might be a good idea, having honors faculty meet three times a semester was perhaps too much. She felt that one or two meetings a semester would be sufficient, with the university committee and the program directors providing the support that faculty might need in their course development. Eric countered that he felt it really wasn't a problem for faculty to meet at least three times a semester and he felt it important that they do meet that often. Others suggested that getting faculty together even once in a semester was a difficult task.

Pat suggested that many of the points could be taken up as curriculum issues. Committee members were reminded that RFIs are due January 12 and Pat asked that any member wishing to propose one should email it to the director as soon as possible.

Before discussing the next agenda item Stephan announced to the committee that there will be an honors section of Stat 251 in the curriculum for fall 2009. Alton Campbell spoke initially with Rick Edgeman about the possibility, and when Alton and Stephan met with Rick, Rick also was willing to teach honors Stat 301 in the spring of 2010. He plans to organize the course around a theme and then by having students work in groups, learn stats through sub-topic case studies related to the overall course theme. Mark Nielsen wondered if both courses need to be or even should be taught since a student is not able to take both. Why not, suggested Mark, offer only honors Stat 301, particularly if students who might otherwise take Stat 251 could substitute Stat 301 for requirements in their majors? Stephan expressed that offering both courses may serve a broader population of students, since some disciplines, such as Engineering, required Stat 301, while others required just Stat 251, and though a good number of honors students may have completed the Math 175 prerequisite for Stat 301, there would still be a fair number of students in the humanities and social sciences who do not meet that prerequisite. In addition, once we see a course description sketched out by Dr. Edgeman, expected in January, the committee can learn more about the "honors" conception and ideals expected from both courses.

2. Curriculum.

a) Revision of Honors Program Certificate requirements (see proposal enclosed). Pat asked that Stephan discuss with the committee the proposed revision. Stephan explained that increasingly students enter the university with college credit and are in some cases also placed on State Board Core. Revising the requirements for the Honors Certificate will allow more straight-forward flexibility with advising students as they work to meet both core requirements in the Social Sciences (SS) and Humanities and to sustain ready progress toward the certificate by enabling them to take more upper division course work and at the same time resolve some of the scheduling issues that students face when trying to incorporate some of the lower division courses into an already full course load. The proposed revision is intended to sustain a sound basis for the overall number of core social science and humanities credits required (down to 9 credits from 12) and also retain breadth in the distribution requirement by requiring at least one course from each category (SS and Humanities), with a third course from either category. The minimum number of regular honors credits would remain at 20, allowing students to use the remaining 7 credits for study abroad, use of the Honors Elective Agreement, or incorporate the points earned from a possible future service-learning component or other form of outside of class activity.

Discussion on the proposal included support from Matthew Brookhart, who liked the possibility of being able to take more upper division courses when transferring into the university. Others felt that the revision definitely would accommodate scheduling conflicts. Mark Nielsen questioned the use of the Core Discovery credits of either or both semesters counting toward two of the disciplines. Stephan countered that because Core Discovery courses are designed to introduce students to several disciplinary perspectives he felt they should be included in the requirements. Pat added that she had taught a Core Discovery course and that it had been very interdisciplinary, however, as David Roon also noted, the range of multi-disciplinary perspectives is very course dependent, and the nature of the course is also influenced by its instructors and their individual disciplines. Sandra Reineke observed that because of the enrollment limits set for the Core Discovery she felt it was more advantageous for a student to take the Core Discovery sequence rather than a discipline-based social science or humanities course with a much larger enrollment, and that therefore the proposed revision helped to support not only flexibility for taking upper division honors courses but also support for the completion of a Core Discovery sequence. She emphasized that the restriction allowing freshman only for the Core Discovery be kept.

Pat asked if there was an urgency in having a motion regarding the revision. Stephan replied that there was time for further discussion and it was determined to make it a future agenda item.

b) Honors Service Subcommittee proposal (see proposal enclosed). Alton Campbell presented the subcommittee's findings, noting that he had researched several Honors Programs and the example that the subcommittee found most useful was from the University of Nevada/Reno. They found that most programs had a service requirement in their programs but that they were not a part of the requirement for certificates or degrees. Alton felt that this component would involve a small number of students and that it wouldn't necessarily have to be a course. If it were designated, it could be an interdisciplinary offering. Diane Prorak wondered if the students who did tutoring in the Moscow schools received credit, to which Stephan replied that they do not. She felt that by receiving credit it would make the experience even more meaningful and could attract more students. Mark emphasized there would be a cost involved, namely supervision of these students and their completed work, including the reflective essay component. Sandra pointed out that there is a Service Learning program on campus and that grants are available to offset funding costs—perhaps this would be a resource to explore to offset the “costs” that might be involved. Stephan mentioned that initially he had hoped that ASUI already tracks the hours spent by students in volunteer work but later learned that this isn't being done. It was noted that service learning is a selling point for the university.

Chair Hart called for a motion to approve the general direction of the proposal. Mary DuPree made the motion, seconded by David Roon. Motion approved. Alton will work on developing a course syllabus. Pat noted that for future course consideration, 40 hours of service learning equal one credit hour.

Meeting adjourned at 2:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Wheaton

cc: Douglas Baker, Provost
Jeanne Christiansen, Vice Provost
Karen Guilfoyle, Chair, Faculty Council
John A. "Jack" Miller, Chair, Committee on Committees
Rod Hill, Faculty Secretary
ASUI President
Special Collections, Library