

Annual Report to the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee
The College Honors Program
2014-2015

Fifty-six students entered the General Education Honors Program as freshmen or transfers last fall. This was a record enrollment, and required the addition of one honors class to the typical fall schedule. Spring offerings remained at current levels, and were able to support all students in the program. Recruitment for the 2016 freshman class is nearing completion, and with 40 students already matriculated for the fall, we have entered our target enrollment of forty to fifty new students. Overall, the General Education Honors Program stands at one hundred eighty students.

Nineteen students will graduate this May with General Education Honors, two of whom will also receive College Honors. Nineteen students successfully completed departmental honors projects in nine different majors. The number of College Honors students and departmental projects is healthy and continues to be supported by strong faculty mentors who are willing to work with these talented students. The Departmental Honors/Sigma Xi Poster Session was a terrific success this year, with large attendance from the College Community. The Anne and Bob De Stefano Undergraduate Research Program continues to provide support for these students in need of supplies or help with funding to travel to conferences. This year, 10 students were approved for funding using this program.

As you may know, the current honors program has three parts that have had an ‘a la carte’ feel: general education honors, the junior honors colloquium, and the senior honors project. The junior honors colloquium is a seminar course offered to help students discuss their ideas for potential senior projects and guide them through the process of finding a mentor and formulating a viable project. In recent years, participation in the junior colloquium has been low, and the a la carte feel of the program has led to, I believe, inconsistent numbers of students from one year to the next who elect to participate in the senior honors project. In an effort to make the honors program a more cohesive four-year experience, this incoming freshman class was introduced to the honors program with an advertised expectation that all will participate in every aspect of the three parts mentioned above. I have started to advertise the junior colloquium/senior project to sophomores in the program as they come in to discuss registration for honors courses, and I reached out to current juniors in the honors program to invite them personally to participate in the junior honors colloquium. This has resulted in a healthy-sized junior colloquium this year, and it is my hope that this will increase the numbers of students participating in the senior project.

I look forward to another successful year in 2015-2016.

Rebecca Sparks
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