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HONORS PROGRAM HANDBOOK

Mission

The Honors Program is designed to provide an enhanced and supportive learning environment for academically gifted undergraduate students. The mission will be accomplished through active involvement of faculty recognized for their excellence in teaching small seminar Honors seminars, and opportunities for research. The Honors Program shall be a unit with its own budget and a Director who is administratively responsible to the Vice Chancellor/Provost through the Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. The Director shall work in close cooperation with the Honors Council to establish and review policies and procedures for the Honors Program.

Objectives

The Honors Program is designed to challenge students with high academic potential at an accelerated rate and to provide them with exposure to a wide variety of in-depth academic, social, cultural, and international experiences. The Honors Program is committed to fostering achievement at superior levels so that by graduation students will:

1. Display exceptional proficiency in the command of both oral and written communication skills;

2. Acquire a knowledge base which exceeds that of the average student by exploring diverse and tangential domains;

3. Develop self-discipline and self-restraint both in character and in academic endeavors to the extent that counter-productive distractions will not be allowed to impede progress;

4. Demonstrate motivation which is intrinsically induced to the extent that the student is stimulated to investigate, pursue, and continue to unravel various bodies of knowledge beyond average expectations;

5. Obtain a psychological disposition that displays an independent and personal approach to the search for exceptional scholarship as opposed to a dependence on established patterns;

6. Develop high levels of research, creative writing, technical writing, computational, and non-verbal skills so that a substantial level of proficiency will have been achieved by graduation.
Strategies

In addition to the high quality of instruction that students gain in their regular course work, Honors sections of many core courses will be developed in addition to those already being taught in the General Education area. Honors sections of courses imply that course work is not only more advanced, but more in depth.

The heart of the Honors Program is the colloquium concept which will be designed to improve the students' communication skills, both oral and written. This concept will assist the University in meeting the needs of its academically talented students.

Realizing that incentives are necessary for Honors students since more is expected from them; a program of cultural and social activities will be provided. These activities include field trips, plays, and workshops and are intended to increase student interest, and to improve the retention rate among Honors students. Although it is true that motivation to excel must come from within, the University has an obligation not only to provide means for the students to receive sufficient incentives in order that they might fulfill their potential, but also to provide adequate recognition of the outstanding students' accomplishments among his peers.

Through the community concept, significant contributions will be made through the Honors Program by sponsoring non-credit instruction to pre-college students who have high academic potential. The students who will participate in this phase of the Program would become prime candidates for future enrollment at Elizabeth City State University, possibly before they complete their high school studies.

A part of the University's mission is to render service to the community by making available those educational, cultural, and developmental resources required for its diverse needs. Thus, the proposed pre-college program for students is a diverse need. The Honors Program should plan to sponsor a lecture series that will focus on inviting outstanding educators of national acclaim to the campus. Their presence will not only enhance the image of the University, but also educate and inspire the student body, faculty, and members of the community.

A peer tutoring program in which upper division Honors students would assist lower division students will be sponsored by the Honors Program. Furthermore, members of the University Honors Council will continue to work closely with the Director of Admissions to seek a higher freshman enrollment which will include a large number of students with high academic potential. A first-class brochure regarding the Honors Program will be developed with input from the Honors Council and the Office of Admissions. These endeavors are of extreme importance since competition for good students will be tougher than ever.

Long Range Goals
1. To select an on-campus facility to serve as the Honors Center for Honors classes, study, seminars, a reference library, and a meeting place for conversation with fellow students and the Honors Director;

2. To facilitate on-campus University housing for Honors students, not necessarily exclusively with one another, but in proximate housing to encourage association, communication, and an intellectual atmosphere.

**Objectives**

1. To provide a program of cultural activities including plays, concerts, tours and trips to historical and industrial sites;

2. To record AHonors Program Graduate® on the diplomas and on the transcripts of students who successfully complete Honors requirements;

3. To award a certificate of participation as students successfully complete each year in the Honors Program;

4. To institute a structured series of outstanding speakers, performers, and other notables under the aegis of the Honors Program;

5. To seek funding for the establishment of a sufficient working budget to allow for travel, honorariums, and basic operational expenses;

6. To develop a unified program of rational and creative thinking, writing, verbal and reading skills through the colloquial concept in an effort to improve students' skills;

7. To initiate an Honors Newsletter which contains information on upcoming events, scholarships, fellowships, and job opportunities and includes creative writings of Honors students;

8. To hold special career workshops in a variety of fields for Honors students;

9. To arrange internships in cooperation with the Cooperative Education Program and the academic departments;

10. To promote honors seminars designed to facilitate dialogue between Honors students and faculty without the pressure of grades;

11. To identify Honors students at graduation by a specific visual symbol such as a braid.
**Admission Requirements**

Admission for first semester freshmen into the University Honors Program will be determined as follows:

1. Students who are National Merit Scholarship finalists will automatically be admitted to the Program.

2. Students with B averages for their four years of high school will be considered for admission to the Program if they have satisfactory SAT scores and they have followed the academic track in high school. Furthermore, students will become eligible for admission to the Program only after satisfying additional criteria. These criteria include the successful completion of an interview with the Director and members of the University Honors Council, teachers' recommendations, and departmental placement tests.

Admission for other students into the University Honors Program will be determined as follows:

1. Second semester freshmen or sophomores will be considered for admission to the program if they meet the above criteria in addition to having demonstrated outstanding performance in individual university-level courses. These students must obtain letters of recommendation from the Division of General Studies, approval from the Director of the Honors Program and the Honors Council. The students must also:
   A. have cumulative grade-point average of 3.25.
   B. present well-written essays of interest, intent, and commitment to participate in the program.

2. Transfer students who enrolled in an honors program prior to matriculation at Elizabeth City State University will be invited to join the Honors Program. However, these students must present proper credentials and a letter of recommendation from the Director of the Honors Program in which they participated.

**Retention Requirements**

To remain in the University Honors Program, the students must maintain overall 3.25 grade-point averages after the freshman year. Moreover, students must maintain overall 3.25 grade-point averages in the Departmental Honors sections and satisfy additional departmental requirements. Furthermore, the students are expected to attend regular meetings once a month, or as called by the Director. Failure to attend these meetings or adhere to any of the requirements documented by the University Honors Council may result in expulsion from the Program. You must attend the Honors Colloquia Class at least three times a month along with turning in all of your assignments.
Honors Program Probation and Reinstatement

Students will be placed on probation if their overall grade-point averages drop below 3.25 in University Honors or their grade-point averages in major course areas in Departmental Honors drop below 3.25. If the students' grades improve to the acceptable level by the end of the semester, they may apply for reinstatement. Student requests will be considered by the Director and the Honors Council. However, students who are on probation more than twice will not be eligible for reinstatement. Moreover, students who make D's while maintaining the appropriate average must repeat the courses, but they will not be put on probation.

Graduation Requirements

Students who graduate from the Honors Program must meet the following requirements:

1. A minimum of 30 semester hours earned in Honors courses to include:

<table>
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<th>Semester Hours</th>
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<tr>
<td>General Studies Honors Courses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two courses per semester in Honors Composition &amp; Literature;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two in World Literature; one or two in Humanities (Art and Music)</td>
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<td>Two in World Civilization preferably in the freshman year</td>
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<tr>
<td>Freshman Colloquia</td>
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<tr>
<td>One each semester in lieu of Freshman Orientation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sophomore Colloquia</td>
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<tr>
<td>One each semester</td>
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<tr>
<td>Junior Colloquia</td>
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<tr>
<td>One each semester</td>
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<tr>
<td>Senior Colloquium*</td>
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<tr>
<td>This is a Senior Honors Thesis/Research Project,</td>
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<tr>
<td>This has to be approved by the major department with the assent of the Honors Program Director and the Honors Council.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Major Discipline**</td>
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Students must take at least 12 semester hours by Contract or Honors option.

2. A grade-point average of 3.25 for Honors courses

3. A grade-point average of B earned in Senior Colloquium

* Student may take 2 semesters to complete the Senior Colloquium project with an IP (In Progress) grade for first semester.

**Honors Option or Contract may be used if all courses in GE are not completed and/or if the student wishes to conduct a special project for Honors credit in the major course.

**Honors Colloquia**

The heart of the Honors Program is the Colloquium concept which is designed to improve the student’s communication skills (both oral and written) and to expand the student’s horizons. Even though the Honors Colloquia are rather flexible, the basic format will:

1. Incorporate field trips and guest lectures;
2. Include writing and class discussion as a regular part of class activities;
3. Demonstrate an integration of classroom knowledge with everyday events;
4. Include the reading of 100 Plus Great Books.
5. Include research, beginning in the freshman year, and preparation and presentation of research findings at local, state regional and national conferences.

The colloquia will be divided according to classes as follows:

1. **Freshman Class**
   
   In lieu of the freshman orientation program which is now offered by the Division of General Studies with additional opportunities for involvement in the areas of communications, literature, world problems and social interaction.

2. **Sophomore Class**
   
   An interdisciplinary approach used in presenting themes and ideas which are related to and integrated with everyday events, world concerns, etc.

3. **Junior Class**
   
   A thematic approach involving the "Great Ideas" (Justice, Love, Death, etc.) as a frame of reference.

4. **Senior Class**
   
   A demonstration of the student's research by involvement in a project in his major
discipline (thesis, literary or artistic production, etc.).

**Honors Credit by Contract**

Honors credit by contract will enable students to receive honors credit in regularly scheduled courses which have been approved for that purpose by the departments. Without such an arrangement, students would be unable to complete the required number of hours for honors program graduation.

**H-option courses will likely include one or more of the following criteria:**

___ Reading in addition to that normally required for the course, and attested to either by oral Presentation or written work.

___ Class or peer presentations which are prepared, designed and delivered to a standard that Will qualify for honors credit.

Regardless of the individual structure of H-option contracts, they are all likely to share one or more of the following characteristics:

___ Provision for additional consultation between student and instructor.

___ Inclusion of data sources or a laboratory investigation beyond that routinely required in a course.

___ Evaluation methods, which should be specific and rigorous.

___ Choice of subject matter, project or laboratory problem within the sphere of interest of the student and instructor.

Students pursuing H-option credit are responsible for all regularly scheduled work in a course in addition to any special H-option requirements.

**Senior Thesis**

Guided research involving either data from primary sources, a laboratory investigation, or field research resulting in a creative presentation or an individual report with annotated bibliography and other features normally incorporated into an advanced level report. Final reports or presentations are to be evaluated by an honors committee of not less than three persons appointed for each Department by the appropriate departmental chairperson.
The Oral Defense of the Senior Thesis is to be presented by the student researcher upon satisfactory completion of the research. All committee members must agree on the date and time of the defense. The document is submitted to all committee members 1 week before the scheduled defense.

Final CORRECTED copies of the document must be presented to the Director by the date decided by the committee—before grades are submitted.

Specific guidelines for preparation of the Senior Thesis will be presented to each member of the Senior Class during the fall semester of each year. All other Honors Program students may receive copies of the Thesis Guidelines upon request.

Beginning in the spring semester of 2007, the top senior Honors’ Theses will be bound with copies to the Honors Program, the student, the library, department, and the Thesis Advisor.

University Honors Program Governance

The Program is headed by the Honors Program Director, who works in conjunction with the University Honors Council. The Program is a member of the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC), The Southern Regional Honors Council (SRHC), the National Association of African American Honors Programs and the North Carolina the Program also has a Student Honors Council, one member of which serves on the University Honors Council.

The Honors Student Council: The Student Honors Council shall be composed of nine undergraduate students active in the Honors Program, appointed by the Director of the Honors Program, upon recommendation by the Deans of the Schools: Arts and Humanities (2); Business and Economics (2); Education and Psychology (2); Mathematics, Science and Technology (3). Members shall serve one calendar year term, beginning in the fall semester, and they may be reappointed. The Student Honors Council shall elect its own chairperson at the first meeting of the fall semester. To serve on the Student Honors Council, a student must have completed a minimum of 15 Honors credit hours prior to appointment, and have a grade point average of at least 3.25 and continue to be active in the Honors Program. The Student Honors Council shall: (1) represent the interests and concerns of Honors Program students in the member’s respective Schools; (2) serve as a contact point for student concerns with regard to the Honors Program; (3) meet, as appropriate, in joint session with the University Honors Council; (4) provide two of its members to serve with the Honors Council as a committee to which students may appeal; (5) recommend and plan special events for Honors Program students; and (6) make recommendations to the Director on any other matters concerning the Honors Program.

UNIVERSITY HONORS COUNCIL: The University Honors Council shall be composed of
the Director of the Honors Program (ex officio chair of the Council) and faculty and staff members who have a demonstrated interest in the Honors Program, and be appointed by the Vice Chancellor/Provost. The University Honors Council shall be chaired by the Director of the Honors Program and shall: 1) recommend to the Vice Chancellor/Provost policy concerning course requirements and other criteria for Honors Program students; 2) represent the interests and concerns of faculty in the members respective areas concerning the Honors Program; 3) represent the Honors Program to the faculty and staff of the member’s respective areas and serve as points of contact for faculty and staff; 4) serve, along with two members of the student Honors Council, as a committee to which students may appeal, in extraordinary circumstances, to be permitted to continue enrollment in Honors courses even, though their cumulative grade point averages do not meet normal requirements under Honors Program policies; 5) provide recommendations to the Director on any special situations concerning admission, status, etc., which may be referred to it by the Director; 6) review faculty proposals for Honors Seminars and other special Honors courses that are to be supported through the Honors Program; 7) encourage and support faculty members seeking external funding through grants and contracts related to Honors Program development.

Policies:

All Honors Program students are expected to maintain a cumulative grade point average of 3.25. Any student who fails to maintain the cumulative GPA of 3.25 will be sent a warning letter. At the end of the following semester, the student will be sent a probation letter. At the end of the probation period—one semester—the student must have regained the 3.25 GPA. If the requisite GPA is not regained, the student will be sent a dismissal letter, with copies to the Registrar’s Office, the Department Chair and to the Dean of his/her School. Any grade below a C must be repeated in order to remain in the Honors Program.

All Honors Program students are expected to perform 25 hours of service learning projects per semester. These projects can be in the form of tutoring, reading to pre-school or elementary school children, working in a homeless shelter, assisting the Red Cross, mentoring, or any other activity that provides service to those less fortunate.

All Honors Program students are expected to attend cultural event—both on and off-campus. The events should be culturally up-lifting and enriching for the mind and spirit of the attendees. All Honors Program students are expected to attend meetings, debates and receptions sponsored by or supported by the Honors Program.

Procedures:

If a student in the Honors Program feels he/she has received a grade in error, his/her first step must be to speak with the instructor who gave the grade. Failing that, the student should address the matter to the Honors Program Director. If the matter is not resolved at the level of the Honors Program Director, the student will be sent to the Department Chair, from there to
the Dean, to the Associate Vice Chancellor to the Provost to the Chancellor.

Each student will be given a copy of the GREAT BOOKS list upon entering the Program. During each semester, a pre-determined number of books are expected to be read and reviewed for credit in each Honors Colloquium course.

**Student Conduct:** All Honors Program students are governed by the *Elizabeth City State University Student Handbook*, published each academic year, which contains the guidelines for student behavior. Further, it is expected that Honors Program students will conduct themselves in an honest, respectful manner both inside and outside the classroom. Each student is expected to attend class regularly; provide advance notice of expected absences, assist other Honors Program students; perform and present research at local, regional, national and international conferences; attend and participate in Honors Program-sponsored events and meetings; cultural events; debates, forums, workshops, and all other academically challenging activities. Honors Program students are expected to behave in a collegial manner towards each other, faculty members and administrators. Proper procedures and policies should be followed when addressing academic or student affairs concerns.