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The National Collegiate Council (NCHC) is a professional organization composed of administrators, faculty, and students dedicated to undergraduate honors learning. The nation-wide institutional membership in the NCHC includes both public and private, large and small, two-year and four-year colleges and universities.

The NCHC provides professional and institutional members with information about the latest developments in honors education, encourages the institutional use of learning resources, fosters curricular experimentation, and supplies expertise and support for institutions establishing or seeking to maintain, rework, or evaluate honors programs. It also institutes educational programs of its own.

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The National Honors Report seeks material concerning any aspect of honors development, assessment, curriculum, teaching, or learning. Send electronic submissions via email or disk (IBM compatible) if possible. Deadlines are Feb. 10, May 10, July 10, and Nov. 10. Material can be sent to Margaret Brown; email <mcbrown@radford.edu>; or 606 Third Avenue, Radford, VA 24141; or phone (540) 639-3414.

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Beyond the Boundaries

COVER STORY
“Growing More Than Corn” by Daniel Abben, Lynn Cunningham, Shauna Duffy, Julie Kretzmer, Jason McLaughlin, Mary Beth Pistulka, Katy Rose Resnick, Alexa Spencer & Emily Wolf.

Nine honors students from Clarke College, Dubuque, Iowa in required two-semester honors colloquium create their own website about multiculturalism and diversity in Iowa. With Katherine “Katie” Fischer, instructor. The philosophy and process (and its many zigs and zags) behind it. Website based on students’ individual research topics, which include Orthodox Hasidic Jews in Postville, IA; women’s role in Catholic church; militia groups; and minorities in honors programs. Presented at the Upper Midwest Honors Council Conference, Spring 2001, held at North Central College, Naperville, IL.

http://www.clarke.edu/honors

...Reaching Out to Alumni

1. “Honors Fundraising: A Story of Adoption” by Larry Andrews

Fund-raising at Kent State Honors College, from its dean’s brainstorm. Five years now of an honors graduate adopting an honors student working on a thesis. Adoption fee (about $75) goes to student to defray some costs of research for thesis. A way to keep alumni connected to honors, a way for honors students to make connections outside the university—and incentive to keep track of honors graduates. Also, first attempt at raising money for Senior Thesis Fellowships of $1,000. Adoptions and contributions to fellowships brought in $5,500 in Fall 2000. No gift is too small.


The Preceptor/Scholar program. A two-semester position for Scholars, for 15 hours per week. Selected by a faculty member, Preceptor. Good list of diverse projects already completed.

3. “Honors Scholars and Oral History” by Billy Higgins

Seventy years’ of school’s transitions from public to private to public institution of higher education. Documentary sources, but with oral histories collected by honors students from students and faculty representing each decade.

...Reaching Beyond

4. “You Want Me to WHAT?” by Bill McDonald

McDonald (Mac), Professor of Germanic Language and Literatures at the University of Virginia, warns of impending crisis in education. Did you know that in the next five years, half of New York City’s public school teachers will retire? And principals, and college professors, and ...

5. “From the Pages...” by Mari Heltne

Heltne, Assistant Dean of the Honors College at University of Arizona, shares three pieces of advice for honors graduates. Taken from an advice book collected by guests at a graduation party. Feed the animals? Read to find out what it really means.
   Faculty from Biology and Entomology and two senior media specialists from The Biology Project at University of Arizona work to integrate students into scientific climate of a major research university. Two semesters, with a Thursday evening program (an additional credit hour) for overview of biological sciences, honors student collaboration, introduction to successful research labs & creation of websites. Learning for the sake of learning. Grade determined by assignments in biology course, not the Thursday-evening classes.
   (www.Biology.arizona.edu)
   http://www.blc.arizona.edu/courses/181H

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The NCHC National Headquarters is located at Radford University.
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Email: nchc@radford.edu Web: www.radford.edu/~nchc
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   •To join the honors listserv at George Washington University, email <listserv@hermes.circ.gwu.edu> with the following command: <sub honors (put your name here)>.
     The listserv will automatically pick up your email address.

   •To post to the list after subscribing, mail your message to <honors@hermes.circ.gwu.edu>.

   •If you have problems with the listserv itself, contact the webmaster at <uhpmgr@gwu2.circ.gwu.edu>.

   •To remove your name from the listserv, mail the following command: <unsub honors> to <listserv@hermes.circ.gwu.edu>.
“Growing More than Corn”

by Daniel Abben, Lynn Cunningham, Shauna Duffy, Julie Kretzmer, Jason McLaughlin, Mary Beth Pistulka, Katy Rose Resnick, Alexa Spencer & Emily Wolf, Clarke College

In The Beginning, There Was Corn

KATY ROSE AND EMILY:
This is the story of how we came to grow a spirit of collaboration in our Honors Colloquium class over one year’s time. We presented our work at the Upper Midwest Collegiate Honors Conference in Naperville, IL in April. This article is another part of our journey together. We want to show what we did, how others might learn from our mistakes, and ultimately to challenge others to create their own communities for honors studies.

JULIE:
We are nine students from Clarke College, a four-year liberal arts college in Dubuque, Iowa. The school population is 1300 students, both traditional and non-traditional. There is a 17:1 student to faculty ratio, which helps to create a sense of community. Professors at Clarke encourage student-faculty interactions that make the learning environment welcoming. It is common on our campus for everyone—from the president to faculty to staff to students—to call one another by first names. This community is an essential part of our success.

The nine of us created our own community within our Honors Colloquium class (to help keep our sanity at times). Honors Colloquium is a two-semester core requirement of our Honors program. It fulfills the college composition requirement for Critical Thought and Writing; and it takes the place of a second skills requirement in writing, thinking, computing, or oral communications. At the beginning of the semester, we felt we were lost in a cornfield. We not only were new to each other, but we were often times meeting in various places, with various professors coming in to teach new skills that would be useful in our research and writing tasks.

Honors Colloquium met every Tuesday and Thursday morning at 8:00 a.m. with our professor, Katherine Fischer (Katie). As students we would gather before class to chat with one another. We talked about what we had done for class, what we thought we were supposed to have done for class, our feelings towards Katie, and what we hoped to accomplish in class that morning. It was a great time for us all to express our opinions and get to know each other. Of course, we also complained about all the writing and research that was required of us. In addition, we started planning our own events outside of class.

At first, we felt vague about the task. If you are familiar with Iowa’s corn mazes, our research and web task was like walking into a maze with irregular rows of corn. We were given a theme, Multiculturalism and Diversity. We read The Freedom Writers’ Diary by Erin Gruwell and Crossing Borders, an anthology of cultural essays. After weeks of readings, we entered the main part of the corn maze. We were assigned to select a kernel—to choose research topics that dealt with Multiculturalism and Diversity:

Orthodox Hasidic Jews in Postville, IA—Katy Rose Resnick
Minorities in Honors Programs — Mary Beth Pistulka
The Effects of Liberation Using Post-Franco Spain as an Example—Lexy Spencer
The Important Roles of Youth Groups in Communities—Lynn Cunningham
Women’s’ Roles in the Catholic Church—Dan Abben
Interracial Couples on Television—Emily Wolf
Militia Groups—Jason McLaughlin
The Fears that Lead to Hate—Shauna Duffy
International Holidays Bringing People Together—Julie Kretzmer

It was our task, then, to research thoroughly, write individual research papers, and then to combine these topics into one unified web text. This is where we started to drift out of the corn maze into row after row of corn facing the struggles of finding our way out both individually and collectively.
Shucking The Corn

JASON AND KATY ROSE:

It was important for us to set up communication for the entire class. We used a distribution list started in email. This way, we could get an email to everyone in the class by sending our message to just one email address. This constant line of communication was both good and bad. On one hand, we could get ideas out to the class quickly, but on the other, we had simply no way to escape getting information and extra assignments from Katie.

We shifted from the classroom to the Mac Lab. We also started getting instruction from faculty members across the curriculum in addition to Katie. Individual faculty members came into our class for a few days each to help us with specific areas of our work. Sister Lynn Lester, BVM. helped us with computers and the Internet. She pointed us in the right direction for search engines, online libraries, and later the use of software to make our web pages.

We attended discussion panels where members of the Clarke faculty, as well as members of the outside community, came to enlighten us with their personal experiences and opinions on topics of Diversity. The first was on general diversity, with people of different ethnicities, religions, and nationalities coming and answering our questions. Following this was a more specific panel about spirituality with representatives from four common religious affiliations; the same question-and-answer format was used. In addition to these panels, we also got an extra bonus visit; two rabbis from the Hasidic Jewish community in Postville, Iowa and a Tibetan Buddhist came to share their traditions with us. The last panel tied in with a major symposium on spirituality from scientists’ perspective on our campus. We were joined, too, by the Honors Philosophy of Human Nature class.

At the same time, the nine of us also decided to meet outside of class for “additional discussion.” One night after watching the Italian film about life in Auschwitz for Jews, “Life Is Beautiful,” a bunch of us hung around in our Student Activities Center and ended up getting kicked out by security. This was our signal to plan a sleep-over. We grew as a community during this night even though we didn’t get a lot of sleep. We were baggy-eyed by the time Colloquium class came at 8:00 a.m. the following day. This was a completely independent decision—our professor did not know about it until we told her the next day! This was a major bonding experience for us since during earlier months in class, we really didn’t know what to think of each other.

In class during first semester, we also wrote essays and reflections. In our last essay assignment, Katie assigned what she called an “alt.essai” or an “alternative essai”; this was an exercise in disjunctive writing that was supposed to get us thinking “outside the box,” (something she said we would need to do in order to do the thinking behind creating the web text in the second semester). The topic was what had we learned during the past semester—not necessarily in Honors Colloquium (though we could include that), but what we had learned about life and ourselves during the fall of 2000. Each of us wrote our own individual essai. Some of these have several different voices speaking, others broke into poetry or letter-writing, and most did the un-thinkable—they actually had no thesis statements! Then we decided to write an essai together. This was completely our own idea. We just handed it to Katie and said, “Here’s something for you to read.” This was our first attempt at collaborative writing — obviously it wouldn’t be our last.

While we continued to read and discuss multicultural essays in class and to improve our writing skills, each student was researching his or her individual topic, narrowing the research, meeting individually with Katie, and trying to make sense of it all. To aid in this process, we divided into topic groups. There were five groups in all: Religion, Business, Media, Education, and Psychology. In these groups, we could freely discuss our topics, and receive feedback from other group members.

There was also a portfolio due at the end of the semester. This was our semester assessment, and it was a piece o’ work! We were required to include a “factsheet,” Katie’s term for documented lists of facts and statistics of topics in general terms, so that uninformed readers could look at the factsheet and understand a background about the topic. As you can see, with factsheets and required annotated bibliographies, by end of semester we were pretty bogged down in traditional academic work. Katie acknowledged that we had to learn to trudge through the mud before we could fly.

Returning for our second semester, we were finally ready to write our research papers, or so we thought. Dr. Candace Croft, the Chair of Clarke’s Psychology department, came into class to help us...
out with our associative thinking skills. She gave us good practice in “loopy thinking.” Candace brought in exercises for us to do in class. In one, she showed us a painting and challenged us to write a story about what was outside the picture: What was happening above it, to the left of it, behind it, etc.? Another exercise was to cross out six letters from the set of letters below to get a common word in the English language:

**BSAIXNLEATNTERAS**

Can you figure it out? The answer is at the end, just in case.

The main benefit we had from this was to think about more ways to write our papers and to think about our topics. It gave us the chance to explore all the positions presented to us by our research and to formulate our own opinions.

Then it was time for the research paper (cue “Jaws” music). We wrote and wrote, revised and revised and revised and revised, edited, re-thought, revised and revised (again)! We had to throw out the old research that no longer served the purpose in our narrowed topics. We frantically searched for relevance in the new research we found.

It took awhile, but eventually all of us FINALLY found a point! Yea! But, as far as I know, we all put it off the actual drafting until the very last minute; I know I (Katy Rose) drank lots and lots of coffee the night before the paper was due! It turned out all right in the end; we turned in our research papers (and I think we did a pretty good job on them), then braced ourselves for the task ahead. Of course, Katie would read and evaluate these and advise revisions. But we decided, would be our backbone and metaphor for the web text. Ahhh. It felt good to finally make a decision.

At one point we considered a “Wizard of Oz” theme for the web pages, but decided this would be too cheesy given the seriousness of our topics. Another time we were dead set on a “Family Tree” with branches and roots that linked all over. We had so many great ideas. (Imagine nine people with just two good ideas each…that’s eighteen ideas). How do we let everyone’s ideas be heard when deciding the backbone behind the web text? Class time just wasn’t enough. We talked in passing in the halls, met outside of class, called one another on the phone, sent emails. At one point, we had eighteen pages of single-spaced emails. We had to keep up with all the ideas each day in order to continue our goal of allowing an open-forum way of discussion to ensure that everyone’s ideas were “out there.” As time began to run out on our very linear calendars, we finally met outside of class again and made some decisions as to what our web site would look like. After hours and hours of discussions, a family of six, we decided, would be our backbone and metaphor for the web text. Ahhh. It felt good to finally make a decision.

Previously, we had found some underlying ties between our research topics by connecting topics and words that frequently appeared in our papers. Katie assigned us to come up with five to six abstract words that all of our research could link to (quite a surprise since she’d told us to avoid abstracts in our writing in the past). Eventually, the list was narrowed to six underlying themes found throughout the nine research papers: Tradition, Equality/Fair, Faith, Choice, Normal, and Hope. To each of these six terms we assigned a member from the family metaphor: a grandmother, father, mother, college student, teenager, and a child. They would be named according to the themes respectively. Our
research was re-written into “chunks” that represented each of the six themes and then put into the voice of the character. Each of the characters would retain his or her voice, identity, and personality throughout the web page.

Realizing that we all do indeed have lives outside of the Honors Program, we knew that we somehow had to divvy up the workload. Based on Katie’s experiences with past classes, she assigned various people in the class to be Text Managers (responsible for overseeing all of the writing and revision) and Technology Managers (responsible for overseeing web design, links, graphics, and the html software). Two people from class volunteered to create the home page, and two presentation coordinators made sure we were organized and ready to present at the Upper Midwest Honors Conference.

As you can see, the work load was not based on equal amounts of time spent on the project, but on people’s interests, abilities, and gifts. For example, there is no way I (Dan) could have been technology manager. If I were, all of the computers would have been out the window within the first five minutes. The benefits of the way we broke up the workload was that it gave us a greater sense that this was a collaborative project, that it was indeed a group effort instead of nine individual bodies of research being thrown together.

We had the usual problems with technology. Disks formatted for one platform might not work on another and since we were using both Macs in the classroom and out as well as IBMs in some other labs, this was frustrating. We also had viruses transferred from personal computers to school computers. And then there was that pesky scroll bar.

The question of images for the website also came up. We wanted to depict the family we used in our metaphor as some type of unified whole, so we had to be careful that each of the images we selected were somewhat internally consistent (i.e., that they weren’t half photographs of famous celebrities and the rest children’s cartoon characters). We also had to pay attention to copyright laws. Shauna brought in sketches she had done of a couple of the characters and we unanimously decided that her drawings would be perfect. We discussed whether to make family members appear multicultural, how to deal with skin tones and dress. Ultimately, we attempted to make them as universal as possible.

LYNN, SHAUNA, AND MARY BETH:

In order to overcome challenges together, we had to learn to trust each other. It’s much like trusting someone when you fall backwards into his or her arms, as we did in the ropes course. We had to trust that the eight other people were capable of doing their own share of work so that when we fell back on one another, we wouldn’t hit the floor.

Nine people have different views on things. We shared our ideas on the subject at hand by emailing the whole group. We found that ideas could be interpreted incorrectly if we were not specific enough. Discussing our misunderstandings in person at an “out-of-class” meeting easily solved this problem. We continued to share our ideas in email because it gave us the opportunity to read and tinker with ideas on our own.

As a class we decided we wanted a scroll bar on the left with the six character pictures and links to our bibliography, email, and home page. As Tech Managers, Julie and I (Lynn) called upon Sister Lynn and upon the Tech Director from last year’s colloquium class. The six pictures with links were all set up and even opened with the first page. I was ecstatic! I called others to come see it. Then I clicked on the [x] and exited the document. The scroll bar never opened again!

Katie shared the successes and failures from previous colloquium classes. We used that information to expand on our creative problem solving skills. We studied previous class’ web texts as well. We also discovered several differences between writer and reader using web text online as opposed to linear writings:

- The reader doesn’t have to read everything.
- The reader can quit at any time.
- There are many options for color, style, and voice.
- The web text must not have long passages.
- The pages should be easy to use.
- We can’t control the order the reader reads the text.
- The web text must be entertaining.
- The reader is not necessarily doing research.

We had nine different writing styles that not only had to connect but also had to fit into six specific character voices. This was one of our most unexpected successes, pulling all of our research together. We all knew our own research; now our task was to take this research and split it into the six different categories and give the research the voice of the

“Imagine being told, after twelve years of successful schooling, to throw away the thought process to which you’d become accustomed and to start thinking in a different manner.”
character. For example I (Shauna) had a piece of research on children wanting to be accepted and how that leads to hate. I decided that this would fit under the abstract Normal, so I wrote the research as though it was coming from the mouth of a teenage boy.

At this point we all had our individual chunks of voice. How do we get these to connect? This is precisely the point of a web text . . . to take the reader on your own adventure journey through different pieces of research that all interconnect. We decided that we first had to read all of each other’s research. One night we gathered with our individual research chunks, pencils, pizza, and a piece of six by nine-foot paper. We laid the paper out, wrote on it the names of the six family members (Equality-Fair, Normal, Hope, etc.) at six equi-distant points. We glued our chunks on the paper under the family member they seemed to fit most. As we read, we were amazed that without any manipulation of words, we found connections. These connections would become the actual web links.

We needed a tool to help us combine all the chunks on the web. Luckily, there was Web CT, a web-based program for web text design. Students create whole web text projects on the web without outside interference. All students and faculty involved can have access to the web text from any computer by using a user name and password obtained through licensing. Each needs to be registered and approved for a user name. This would have taken the rest of the year. And only a certain number of students were allowed access since the school’s license limit had been reached. We decided on one user name and password for the whole class.

After getting access, we were able to upload all the chunks on to the Web CT, each on a separate page. Depending on the size of the chunk the uploading process could take anywhere from five to thirty minutes. This was a long difficult process. Learning Web CT was difficult and had to be done through email because class time was being used to learn presenting skills from Ellen Gabrielleschi from the Speech and Drama department.

EMILY:

All right. So, you’ve heard about the problems we had, the successes we experienced, and the long process we endured in making this collaborative web text. It’s finally time to talk about what we have accomplished. We have constructed an opening page that introduces us, the 2001 Honors Colloquium Class at Clarke College, and the title of our web text, “Visions of Diversity.” The following poem was submitted from one of our very own collaborators in this project and highlights the homepage:

Who can imagine Tomorrow?
Who can represent Today?
Is Normal only what we know?
Does Tradition lead the way?
Or does the past just hold us back
When Faith should be our guide?
Do the Choices that you make
Reflect the light inside?
Is Equality only a far off dream, Impossible to gain?
Only time can tell for sure,
When love and Hope remain.

This poem was perfect for our first page because it sums up every feeling we have about this project. It also includes the six names of the characters that we use in our project. We linked the names listed in the poem to that character’s page. For example, if I were to click on the name “Faith,” I would link to a page with the full body picture of Faith, and a block of text including someone’s research that is written in Faith’s voice (underlined words indicate hot links):

Hello, my name is Faith. As my name suggests, I have faith in many things. Most importantly, I have faith in a better future for all people. I also have faith in the traditions of the past, yet I understand that tradition needs to be updated. Faith is important to hold onto.

In modern-day Spain, 95% of the population retains the Catholic faith. This tradition has been a part of Spain’s history for hundreds of years. Even after Catholic dictator, Francisco Franco had almost two million people executed for disobeying Catholic-influenced laws, the population refused to denounce their religion. They felt they had no choice.
One of the most choice ironies we learn about militia groups is that they are trying to tear apart the country when, in fact, they are formed to uphold the Constitution as they interpret it to be.

Hyperlinked words and phrases connect to other characters speaking about a similar subject. This way the reader can freely bounce around through our information by continuously reading and not have to rely on the main page for navigation. The first page also includes pictures of the six characters. These pictures link to chunks, similar to the words in the poem. We have also created “About Us,” the place where readers land on a group page with our photos and names which link out to individual pages where we each discuss the project, our interests outside Honors Colloquium (yes, we do have them!). Although Katie said we could put our individual research papers on our individual pages, not one of us has chosen to do that. Although the collaboration has been very inspiring to all of us, we also want people to know who we each are.

During the presentation that we gave at the Upper Midwest Honors Conference, we received a surprising amount of praise, and some valuable criticism. The praise helped create what we call our ego-manic moments. Everyone, no matter what she is doing, needs to feel like she is doing well and that she is praised. But the criticism is the material that caused us to change the project. There are some things within the project that slipped our attention. For example, at the UMHC presentation, it was brought to our attention that the character of “Faith” wears a crucifix. Although we never intended to give “Faith” a religious affiliation (to us, she is synonymous with “Belief” and “Trust”), the crucifix is certainly a symbol of certain sects of religion. We also were thinking of “Faith” as more of a feeling than a religious symbol; faith in dreams and values rather than in religion. But to a first time reader, “Faith” can seem “Christian.” Therefore we changed her necklace from a cross to a circle pendant. It was a great idea that we never thought of. Just goes to show you how valuable criticism can really be. . . and how learning is never really over.

We are interested in hearing from others about the project. We’re too close to this experience to be able to accurately reflect upon how it turned out. We’re hoping, too, to go to the National Collegiate Honors Conference in Chicago in October to present our thinking on this project months from now. So, the next step for you is to visit our website at http://www.clarke.edu/honors. With the power in your hands, visit, point, click, and let us know how you feel about the way we choose to portray our research on Multiculturalism and Diversity. We always welcome more collaborators!

Did you know about.

Honors Colleges

Sixty-two honors colleges hold institutional membership in the NCHC. Of those 62, eleven are private universities or colleges, two are public two-year colleges. Forty have total enrollments of 10,000+; twenty have total enrollments of 20,000+. As for honors college enrollment, the range is from 20 to 4,000, with two colleges having between 0 and 49, three between 50 and 99, twenty-four between 100-499, fifteen between 500-999, ten between 1000-1499 and three between 1500 and 4000 (five did not report their honors college enrollments).

The answer to the puzzle is B-A-N-A-N-A

Because you must literally cross out

S-I-X  L-E-T-T-E-R-S

Of course you got it right.
With that, our “Adopt-a-Thesis-Student” campaign sprang full-blown from the head of Zeus. (How’s that for a power metaphor for an Honors dean?) It was 1996, and that first year when we appealed to thesis alumni from just the past 20 years or so, we successfully found adoptive parents for six of our thesis students. Our fledgling Honors Alumni Council named one of these adoptive parents to be the recipient of our Distinguished Alumnus/Alumni Award and thus started a heartwarming annual tradition for the Council.

Now, having nearly completed our fifth annual appeal to over 650 former thesis students (going back to 1934), we have set new records: alumni sponsors have been matched to 39 of our 42 thesis-makers this year, and I still have my fingers crossed for those last three! Over these years we have built on this foundation another opportunity—to donate to our budding endowment for Senior Thesis Fellowships, which provide students with $1,000 as incentive and support. One generous alumnus has now endowed two of these with a $40,000+ gift, and others have contributed to the fund. Our appeal for both causes this year brought in over $5,500.

We also restored our reimbursement maximum per student to our earlier level of $100 and received gifts in that amount accordingly. Furthermore, our Alumni Council quickly took this on as a pet project to support, so its president co-writes and co-signs the appeal letters and offers advice on timing the steps in the process.

Now, of course, we did not kick off this project just as a way to fill the coffers. We thought that alumni would take genuine pleasure in helping a particular student, one they had chosen personally or one we had matched to their interests. Hearing about the student’s thesis project, getting a thank-you letter from the student, perhaps offering career advice, generally feeling that they had made a connection for this student—all seemed to satisfy a desire by alumni to speak to the next generation of students. Especially in the close-knit academic community of Honors, alumni seem to feel a special loyalty and emotional tie to the program that is often stronger than their link to their major department.

The project has produced some stirring stories. This spring I received a call from an alumnus who said that he had had no intention of sponsoring a student because, after all, he was still in graduate school himself and couldn’t afford it. But then, Tom said, he received a cash prize for excellence in integrating fields of study in his doctoral work in justice studies and wanted to send us $100. I said that I hoped that he had some of the prize left for himself, but no, the prize was exactly $100. He chose to sponsor a student working in his interest area of fourth amendment constitutional issues because he said that his own thesis had been so valuable a learning experience and instrumental in earning him placement in the top doctoral program in his field in the country.
An alumnus from 1939 adopted three students. An alumnus from 1936, who had won our first Distinguished Alumnus Award, asked to sponsor a student because he was friends of the family. Jared was a conservation major who completed a thesis using DNA sequencing to modify the species classification within a plant genus and is now off to the Peace Corps in Panama. The first president of the Alumni Council not only adopted a physics major, but got Ben a high-level summer internship with his company.

Another alumna (’69), a librarian in Maryland, sponsored the author of a young adult novel. Crystal sent some draft chapters to her, she and her colleagues read it and made suggestions (“Everyone wanted to read the rest of the story!”), and the student incorporated some of them into her final work. This sponsor now adopts two students at a time and has written a testimonial for our alumni newsletter about the rewards she finds in the relationship:

I am proud of the finished products of these women, and I am pleased to have played a small part in these accomplishments. I felt a real connection to Kent State, to the Honors College, and to the struggle of today’s students. We enjoyed special advantages during our years at Kent State because of the opportunities the Honors College offered to us. In a small way, we can give back to the current group of students so close to taking their next step.

Because most honors programs offer a thesis opportunity, this quite modest fund-raising project has wide applicability. Whether you “sell” your orphans (ahem, charge an adoption fee, that is), or just try to do the personal matching, or appeal for voluntary donations to support an event or booklet celebrating the thesis work, or create a general fund for support for travel to conferences—such choices depend on your purpose, your mission, your ambition, and your program and institutional culture.

You may not want to limit the participation to thesis alumni or even to your general alumni (if the thesis is not required, as in our case). I’ve had an occasional faculty sponsor, and this year when two university development officers (one of them my own former honors student and former staff member) saw how close to our goal of emptying the orphanage we were, they both sponsored students. I’ve even got the provost hooked on adopting a student every year in his field of English! You could also seek business and industry sponsors, and you might get the local Rotary or Kiwanis clubs to chip in on the promise that the student would come to speak about her or his research or creative work at a meeting.

What does it take to make such a project work? Here are some ingredients. A critical mass of alumni to whom to make the appeal (this suggests a program of a certain age so that the alumni have at least finished paying off their college loans!);

(1) October—Consult Alumni Council on possible changes in the campaign and work with president on appeal letter.

(2) Early November—Send appeal letter (co-signed by Alumni Council president) to previous sponsors, offering them first choice from the accompanying list of thesis students (which includes majors, advisors, and titles).

(3) Send prompt thank-you’s to those who choose to sponsor, enclosing the student’s thesis proposal and a few points of pride about the student.

(4) Send letters to adoptees notifying them of their sponsor, urging them to write a thank-you, and telling them a bit about that sponsor’s career; send a copy to their thesis advisor and department chair.

(5) Early February—Send appeal letter to remaining thesis alumni
who have never sponsored a student, with the list of remaining candidates.

6. Send prompt thank-you’s and student letters as before.

7. Invite sponsors within reasonable driving distance to attend our Senior Honors Brunch and our Senior Thesis Forum in April (provided that their student will be attending).

8. Recognize sponsors and fellowship donors in annual thesis profile booklet.

9. Send thesis profile booklet to all sponsors and fellowship donors.

10. Issue press releases, share adoption successes and stories with president, provost, deans, chairs/directors, development office.

Where do we go from here? One of my staff members asked, “What happens when all the students are adopted and additional would-be sponsors keep pouring in?” For a start, we’ll assign them to the students on the spring-fall thesis cycle, whom we group with the next year’s thesis students. Or we’ll ask them to move their donation to the fellowship fund. And this summer we’ll unveil a new campaign that seeks parallel sponsorships of non-thesis students with a $100 senior book award.

Yes, it’s exhilarating in fund-raising to find that multi-million-dollar donor who wants to endow a scholarship program or name your honors center or program. But there is much joy in the human connections we make in such a modest project as the one described here. In honors fund-raising, no gift is too small. And the more alumni we engage in this kind of support, the stronger is our base for increasing their commitment and contributions over the years to come.

“In honors fund-raising, as in any fund-raising, no gift is too small.”

Letter to the Editor

Maggie, You are doing a wonderful job with NHR. I particularly like the “Classics” issues, and it was the Gabelnick articles that most tempted me to reprint some classics, though I never got around to it.

But the NCHC, like most of us as we age, becomes forgetful. Take the list of Presidents, for example. The first two presidents, the George Washington and John Adams, were omitted from the list, which begins with 1969 when the list of conferences clearly begins, as both lists should, with 1966-67. The first two presidents, as important to NCHC as Washington and Adams were to the nation, were James Robertson, University of Michigan, and Vishnum Bhatia, Washington State University.

Also, the 1973 president was Mike, not Mark, Lunine. I had a phone conversation with him just the other day.

I know, you kids weren’t around then, but the histories you cite at the end of the Table of Contents might serve as a reference, though they were also written by late-comers. Come to think of it, maybe I’m almost the only memory of those early days that NCHC has. I hope not.

Keep up the good work. I know you will.

Grey
http://www.angelfire.com/oh/greymuse
austin.4@osu.edu

Thank you, Grey. As a former president, a former executive secretary/treasurer, and former editor of The National Honors Report for a number of years, you carry with you much experience and a reliable memory, too.

by Henry Q. Rinne, Westark College

Most academics are quite familiar with the concept of the graduate assistant or graduate teaching assistant, a talented graduate student working with a professor on a research project or teaching an undergraduate class. Two-year college instructors are not often afforded the opportunity to work with a student in this one-on-one setting nor do they have the luxury of guiding a student in a project or having a student assist in collecting data or developing course materials. Most student workers at the two-year level are chosen based on financial need and not on their interest or abilities in a particular discipline. What if every instructor could employ a student assistant who was motivated by his or her own interest in the discipline and a pay level higher than the usual minimum-wage student-worker?

This question arose from a discussion between Westark President Joel Stubblefield and Vice President for Advancement, Carolyn Branch. Stubblefield wanted to provide the faculty with the opportunity to work with their most talented and inspired students in order to give those students additional learning experiences in their intended major areas of study. He turned to Branch and the Westark Foundation since the administration of such a program with public funds would pose difficult logistical problems. Since the late eighties, Branch has guided the foundation in raising the college’s endowment to over 20 million dollars. In 1994 she launched a pilot project with seven students and faculty calling it the Westark College Scholar/Preceptor Program.

A preceptor is a teacher and right from the start, teaching and learning were at the heart of the program. Branch asked Mike Hightower, who was the chairperson of the Division of Science, Math, and Engineering, to act as the program’s first coordinator. The first position in the program came through the efforts of a part-time geology instructor, Lynn Snyder, who knew a student who not only was a strong academic performer but also was in desperate need of a good-paying part-time job. The student had no vehicle of his own and was walking five miles from his home to campus each day. Snyder developed the first proposal for a Scholar position and helped Branch raise the funds through her connections in the local oil and gas community.

Since 1994 the program has grown to serve more than 150 students and has 39 positions funded for the 2000-2001 academic year. In its first six years, the program has received over $430,000 from 381 gifts made by 178 different donors. Each Scholar position requires approximately $4,200 in funding to cover wages and fringe benefits (state, federal, FICA, Workman’s Comp and unemployment) for two semesters. Scholars work 15 hours per week for $7.50 an hour, which is a competitive wage in the local market.

A student is usually selected by a faculty member who recognizes the student’s strength and interest in a particular area of study. Together they develop a proposal for a project that will contribute to the student’s learning beyond the classroom. Often these students are part of the Westark Honors Program, but admission to Honors is not a requirement. All faculty and professional staff are invited to submit proposals, which are approved by a committee of past preceptors. Since the program is entirely funded by private donations, the number of appointments is limited, but so far all deserving proposals have been awarded.

The accomplishments of the Scholars are as diverse as their disciplines, which have included nursing, biology, accounting and finance, computer aided drafting and design, history, art, electronics, library, journalism, chemistry, English, engineering, and music. A Scholar created and maintained the college’s first web page and was later hired as a full-time webmaster, who now supervises another Scholar. One of the first Scholars in the electronics program completed his degree and moved into a newly-created position at a local hospital with responsibility for installing and maintaining all electronic equipment in the hospital. An art department Scholar completed his appoint-
ment and transferred to the Pennsylvania Academy of Art in Philadelphia. He received a work scholarship in the academy’s slide library and was later hired as a permanent employee, developing their web page and digital image database. A Scholar in biology, who assisted his preceptor on research that resulted in publication of a paper in a prestigious scientific journal, transferred to the University of Arkansas and became an undergraduate assistant to a professor. His work as a Scholar at Westark was the principal recommendation that allowed him to become that professor’s first undergraduate assistant. The Scholar is now working on his Ph.D. in zoology at the University of Oklahoma.

The following is a partial listing of projects completed by Scholars in the past few years:

- Planned, coordinated, edited, and produced the past five issues of the college’s literary magazine, Applause;
- Maintained and augmented the Art Department’s slide library and inventoried prints and materials in the printmaking studio;
- Participated in seven weeks of field study for the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission;
- Compiled length-frequency and biomass data from over 300,000 fish specimens collected from Arkansas reservoirs;
- Provided reference assistance to students and community patrons for searching electronic databases at the Boreham Library;
- Worked on a CADD map of the infrastructure of the Westark Campus;
- Conducted research and located geological sites of interest in the Fort Smith area;
- Wrote detailed summaries of more than 200 critical analysis essays, books, and chapters pertaining to literature classes at Westark;
- Created recruitment materials for potential Westark music students;
- Assisted with the distant-learning equipment for Calculus I, taught by compressed video to Booneville High School students and on the Westark campus;
- Supervised nursing students practicing skills to be used in clinical laboratories on live patients;
- Organized, edited, and produced the Westark Student Volunteer Connection, a clearinghouse for student volunteers working in the community;
- Organized and implemented programming for the Health Channel, which provides continuing education to area health care professionals;
- Organized and conducted interviews, transcribed interviews, and created and maintained an extensive archive for Westark’s Oral History Project.

As voluntary faculty coordinator of the program for the past four years, I have witnessed a steady growth of the Scholar/Preceptor Program in terms of student/faculty participation and community giving. The positive impact of the program is revealed not only in the accomplishments of the student-Scholars and their faculty preceptors but also in the value added to the college and the community. Many of the projects undertaken by the Scholars would never move past the idea stage without the funds available to support the program. The faculty always contend that these projects would not get done without the assistance of the Scholars.

Furthermore, most of these projects reach far beyond the scholarly interests of the faculty. Research on water quality for the Arkansas Fish and Game Commission or hazardous waste identification and storage are just two projects which extend far beyond the Westark campus and have had a significant impact on the community.

However significant these contributions are to the college, community, and the interests of the individual faculty, the real strength of the program always will be found in the contribution it makes to the students’ education. Whether in a traditional liberal arts discipline or in a technical area, the work Scholars do in collaboration with their preceptors offers opportunities in learning unattainable in the typical two-year college classroom. The program is truly a win for the students—a win for the faculty—a win for the college—and a win for the community. It is also a win for the donors because they can feel secure in the knowledge that their contribution is making a difference in the lives of these special students.
Four years ago, Carolyn Branch met with three Westark College instructors to explain her idea for a book to commemorate the seventieth anniversary of the college’s founding in 1928. Dr. Branch heads the Westark Foundation which deals directly with alumni and other benefactors on endowment fund matters. Many successful Westark alumni have supported the college with gifts so that future students might have access to quality educational opportunities in Fort Smith. Dr. Branch noted that a number of students from the first classes had expressed their appreciation for the part that Westark had played in uplifting their lives and had stayed in touch with the college. She thought that interviews from these students of previous years might provide the basis for the kind of people book that she had in mind.

The instructors, Henry Rinne, Stephen Husarik, and Billy Higgins, aware that Dr. Branch had opened the door, began to discuss the writing of a complete history. The college’s transitions from public to private to public institution of higher education over a seventy–year period seemed to be a unique and significant story well worth telling in detail, which would amount to a major undertaking. The authors would locate and use documentary sources for exactitude and factual basis, but would incorporate anecdotes of students and faculty representing each decade of the college’s existence for the color and detail characteristic of oral histories. Thus the plan called for the makers, the shapers, and the ammunition carriers of the college and its traditions to tell the story from their ground zero vantage point.

No one of the three scholars underestimated the amount of time and effort that writing a creditable history would require, but even with their collective experience in research, collating data, and writing results, the amplitude of their commitment dominated the first meetings when procedural and organizational questions flew about the room: Who would pore through college records to identify students, faculty, administrators, Board of Trustee members, and community members from each decade? What criteria would be used to select interviewees? Should only the successful graduates be included, or should dropouts help tell the story? Who would arrange interviews and who would be dispatched to do the interviews? After each interview, a person competent in word processing would need eight hours to transcribe a one hour taped interview to hard copy. Who would be available do this huge amount of work? Many, many hours of research, organizing, writing, and editing lay ahead. In addition, publication and layout designs had to be decided on. The instructor/authors still had to teach a full load at the community college and their students, as always, were their number one priority. How could the project be completed in the short time before the seventieth anniversary became the towering question?

As it turned out, within two student programs being pioneered by Westark College, the authors found some happy solutions to these pressing problems. The Westark Honors Program had developed a curriculum based on the Alverno College model in which students advance their abilities in communications, social interaction, and problem-solving in each course in addition to mastering discipline content. Honors history students could further these critical abilities by taking part in collecting interviews for the Westark Oral History Project. An Arkansas Humanities Council grant was gained to support the Oral History Project, so with funding and manpower, the interview and transcription phase could now be scheduled.

Westark’s innovative Scholar-Preceptor Program provides stipends for highly motivated students as they work closely with instructors on special academic, administrative, or social projects within their disciplines, the funding for this program coming solely from private donations by local citizens who direct that their monies be used for this purpose. In what proved to be a key move, the director of the Scholar-Preceptor Program approved a Scholar-Preceptor position to work with the Oral History Project, an action that proved immensely helpful in the short
term and in the long run set up a highly successful meshing of the Westark Honors Program, the Scholar-Preceptor program, and the Oral History Program.

The Oral History Scholar assembled a list of one hundred and fifty potential interviewees and mailed each an invitation to participate in the Project. Responses trickled in at first, then turned into a deluge. The Oral History Scholar began to do interviews to gain insight into the methodology, the tools, and importantly, the types of personal skills that might be called upon to make the interview a success for all parties. From this in-the-field operation by the Scholar, a set of guidelines for Westark student interviews was developed.

With January, 1997 came the first section of honors history students who would have an oral history interview as part of their course requirement for abilities advancement. Most of the students were freshmen just out of high school with little knowledge of oral history, its value as a resource, or its methodology. But they were, after all, honors students, and as such, bright, inquisitive, and innovative in their own right. The Arkansas Humanities Council sent their specialist in oral history, Ms. Robin Giles who joined the honors history instructor and Westark librarian Carolyn Filippelli to prepare Westark honors students for their interviews. Students were eagerly attentive to these training sessions and from their remarks it was clear that, though a bit apprehensive, they were well aware of the value of the enterprise. In content seminars, the history class focused on oral histories.

The Oral History Scholar, a peer of the honors students, provided accounts of her own recent interviews with former Westark people, some of whom were quite elderly. After two weeks of involvement in the discipline, students stood primed to complete their own real life oral history interviews. Honors history students went into the field where a learning experience rare for undergraduates awaited them. Instructor, authors, and the Oral History Scholar all knew that since the honors students’ work would be at the core of the project and of the book, useful interviews with relevant information were critical. In all respects, the students came through with flying colors. In post-experience essays, the students commented on the value of their interaction with people of different generations under conditions that were academic and “real world” at the same time. The success and genuine enthusiasm of the initial class of honors students engaged in oral history activities ignited interest in continuing the Oral History Project beyond completion of the History of Westark College (which currently awaits only the writing of an epilogue by the college president to head for print).

The Oral History Project has now turned to another worthy subject and honors history students in the Spring semester will go into the field armed with tape recorders, cameras, release documents, and interview questions to hear the first person stories of people linked with the Chaffee years of 1942-58. The fourth student to hold the position of Oral History Scholar is presently identifying the interviewees for this new purpose of Westark College’s Oral History Project.

After oral history interviews are taped, transcribed, and mined for historical details to support a particular study, the next step is to properly store and index this material. Accordingly, we have set up another Scholar-Preceptor Program position to help design a facility for the oral history archives of Westark and to continue the organization process for past records. In addition to looking over a wealth of printed material about archives and record storage, the present Oral History Archive Scholar has traveled to Hendrix, UCA, UALR, and the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville to examine their archives and get ideas for constructing an appropriate, useful, and accessible oral history facility at Westark College.

With such ideas and enthusiastic participation, the Honors Program, the Scholar-Preceptor Program, and the Oral History Project plan to continue their marvelous interaction that has led to an expanded learning process in and out of the classroom for more than 50 Westark honors students.
hat was it like during the late 1960s? A familiar question from students who know the period only from various media. Memory is a fragile thing. My first recollection is pain: the frustration of a campus activist at a conservative Midwestern university about a war in Asia, of endless meetings, of a sense of outrage at each new revelation that a country called America simply was not living up to its creed, that all were not treated equally. To be in Ohio not far from Kent State, to learn that students had been killed on campus. It is still hard to take.

But the second recollection is Idealism. A passionate belief that we'd really change, not only our society, but the World. That what we did mattered, that we would, whatever it took, bring America into alignment with its beautiful words. That we would make the documents of the Revolution real.

I thought of this Idealism and Passion when I read a recent *Washington Post* and learned that Dr. Ruth Simmons, the youngest of 12 children of a sharecropper family in Texas, had become president of Brown University in the Ivy League. What caught my eye was the new president's comments about education:

“A school ought to be a magical place where you are queen or king, and where what you get to do is to focus on your intellect, and on what you can accomplish as a human being.”

I quickly looked at Dr. Simmons’ age and said “55.” Of course, it fit. She was 22 in 1968, the year I was convinced would bring down the American Empire.

Vietnam, Korea, Lyndon Johnson retires, Dr. King and Bobby Kennedy are assassinated, riots at the Democratic National Convention, George Wallace runs for president, and Richard Nixon is elected president. Same year.

“A school ought to be a magical place...” How many Americans will believe that?

“A school was a refuge from hopelessness,” Ruth Simmons continues. “The turmoil of the day—the civil rights struggle, the inclination to dismiss blacks and their capabilities ... School was a place where you were a human being who had capabilities and potential.”

Three cheers for Idealism. What happened to that Idealism? Of course, we see individuals who are now called Socially-Conscious working in homeless shelters and nursing homes. By the way, has it ever struck you that the court assigns Community Service as punishment?

Judge: You are sentenced to 300 hours helping people.

Now the rest of the time you can do what? Not help people?

1968 wasn’t only a year of pain and Idealism, it was the first year I was aware that students were flocking to law school. I remember the trend distinctly as rather odd. The hot field in the early 1960s was Aerospace engineering. But law school? Didn’t America already have the highest per capita percentage of lawyers in the world? Who needed lawyers?

But I changed my tune fast when my friends were getting arrested for civil disobedience. Hey, I said, we need more lawyers.

Hard to believe, but in 1970, THE cultural icon was William Kunstler, the lawyer of the Chicago Seven. The law became the focus of social change because the Supreme Court was shaping social policy. Law was cool, it was what’s happening. And now, 30 years later, guess what? We still have too many lawyers.

But applications to law school are up this year. At the University of Richmond, there were ten applications for each place in law school. A young Bill Clinton (have you ever seen the picture of him with...
a beard?) went to law school. A campus radical, protestor, marching-against-the-war kind of guy went to law school. And now, I’m inclined to read that as a cultural event of momentous proportions. He went to law school instead of... You fill in the blank. It serves him right for going to law school: he needed other lawyers to defend him in his thousands of law suits. And he lost his law license for perjury. I could have told him to stay away from law school.

But Professor Mac, you say. Be realistic. Not Idealistic. We’re part of the PRE-generation: PRE-commerce, PRE-law, PRE-medicine, if you’re not PRE you’re nobody. Didn’t you leave out something, I say, PRE-education?

You can’t get a Lexus with that, old man, is what they want to say, but politely, they say, “I hate the classroom.”

I want to say, “That’s why you’re spending another few years in the classroom—to get your Lexus, I mean, your professional degree?”

But I don’t. In fact, working with the PREs has made me a better human being. I have learned not to judge PRE-professionals, whose idea of a meeting is not to change dormitory policy but to go to a PRE-professional meeting that teaches Networking. I am now a better person, having learned not to discriminate against PREs on the basis of ethnic origin, religion, or language.

• ITEM: I will interject ITEMS culled from recent issues of The Chronicle of Higher Education.


MCDONALD: Is that what went wrong? Did the idealists become stock brokers, lawyers and doctors, business people. Who forgot that Wall Street isn’t Main Street?

A school ought to be a magical; a place... A refuge for human beings to acknowledge capabilities and to help develop potential (I slightly edit Dr. Simmons’ eloquent words).

• ITEM: Four professors have left the University of Washington to join a former colleague at a new private institute of biotechnology.

MCDONALD: Private? Wait a minute. That reminds me of the superintendent of Alexandria Public Schools who resigned this month to take—and I’m now directly quoting the superintendent “an unbelievably cool job.” He will travel the globe, the article says, from Beijing to Paris to supervise international private schools.

His own school system in Alexandria is one of the most diverse in America, with students from over 75 countries. Almost 90% of its population is students of color. AN UNBELIEVABLY COOL JOB? MISTER, YOU HAD ONE.

• ITEM: An entrepreneurial professor invented an environmentally-correct process (I am not making up this term) that dry-cleans clothing with liquid carbon dioxide.

MCDONALD: Just asking here. But when did the entrepreneur achieve more status than the professor? When did your first advisee tell you he/she wanted to go to commerce school?

It was in 1979, I recall, that I had just counseled a student for a full year who was torn between medical school and a major in foreign languages. You see, he had a problem: he could do equally well in chemistry and German. In the old days we would have said, “No problem. Study scientific German.”

But in the curricular changes that your very own radical generation brought about, PRE-medical students didn’t need scientific German anymore. The whole field was abolished. Why do doctors need a foreign language? Their patients all speak English, right? (Oh, by the way, a new career field has just opened up within the last five years: a Spanish-speaking medical escort. If you can combine language with medicine, you are very much in demand.) But my student chose medicine. Thus joining the wave of lawyers and doctors in the 1970s. The 1980s belonged to commerce, as we all know.

“I don’t want to teach,” I hear. What does that simple statement really mean, I ask. I don’t want to deal with human beings, their problems and aspirations. That I fear I can’t INSPIRE THEM (that’s a word I haven’t heard in a long time). Inspiration. Idealism. Love (how did that get in there). Because you need love if you’re a teacher.

No, this is not some pathetic attempt to get you to watch the TV show, “Boston Public.” I know that you are too grand to want to teach elementary,
middle, or high school, and in any event, for you students, it’s probably too late. You picked the wrong PRE-program.

But have you every thought of a Ph.D.? Imagine, no Lexus, but a title: Doctor. Just don’t ask me if I can perform CPR.

• ITEM: In the next five years, half of New York City’s public school teachers will retire. I repeat: by the year 2006, half of New York City’s teachers (that’s 34,000 teachers) will walk out of the classroom forever.
MCDONALD: Who are these teachers? Do the math. Most came into the big city school system post-1968, with–you know the word–Idealism, Passion.

The article continues: “Many have already left. Fairfax County staffed several schools with interim principals this school year, and officials there project that half of the districts may leave by 2005. HALF—say the word slowly—of the principals in Richmond and Henrico County also will be eligible to retire.”
There it is again. The target years are 2005 and 2006. Thank goodness, we have enough time to replace them.

• STUDENT: Have you taken leave of your senses? I’m starting up a dot.com company. There’s more challenge in running a start-up than in managing a school.
MCDONALD: Okay. I’m sure these trends won’t affect you because you won’t have any children in the school system.

A school ought to be a magical place. They believed it.

And the article in The New York Times continues: “There will be extreme difficulty finding talented replacements.”
Why, I ask? You try to suppress a chuckle. Who wants the headaches and low pay of teaching.

Question on Regis’s “Who Wants To Be a Millionaire.”

Teaching is for
A. Suckers
B. Idiots
C. Losers
D. Those who can’t become doctors, lawyers or business people.

• STUDENT: Wait a minute, would you repeat that?
MCDONALD: Question: shortage of principals, shortage of electricity, shortage of gasoline. Which is more vital to your nation’s future? (Unless you want to get depressed, I suggest you don’t conduct that little poll.)
To use a current phrase: ROLLING BLACKOUTS. We have already entered the era of Rolling Blackouts in education. Dedicated, talented professionals are packing their bags and leaving empty classrooms.

• STUDENT: There you go again, Professor Mac. You 1960s types love extremist rhetoric.
MCDONALD: Answer: Sometimes the numbers don’t lie.
Everywhere I look, it’s the same. The president of James Madison University, Linwood Rose, writes a column in the Richmond newspaper. “Our society unfortunately never has given the teaching profession the financial and societal recognition it deserves. As a consequence, we are facing the largest teaching shortage in history. Nation-wide some 2.4 million new teachers will be needed in the next decade because of teacher attrition, retirement, and increased student enrollment. More than a million veteran teachers are nearing retirement.”

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• STUDENT: But McDonald, you’re exaggerating that the problem doesn’t exist in Virginia.
• DATELINE RICHMOND, JANUARY 3: About 40% (as in forty percent) of the nation’s 93,200 principals are at or near retirement age and will be leaving schools in droves. In the next five years, according to the U.S. Department of Labor.
MCDONALD: I’m not surprised. School principals belong to the 1960’s, too. But almost 47,000 vacancies. How about Virginia?

Everywhere I look, it’s the same. The president of James Madison University, Linwood Rose, writes a column in the Richmond newspaper. “Our society unfortunately never has given the teaching profession the financial and societal recognition it deserves. As a consequence, we are facing the largest teaching shortage in history. Nation-wide some 2.4 million new teachers will be needed in the next decade because of teacher attrition, retirement, and increased student enrollment. More that a million veteran teachers are nearing retirement. By 2008,
public school enrollment will exceed 54 million, an increase of nearly 2 million children over today."

I wonder what would happen if we made every university student memorize that paragraph I just read. It is profound, eloquent, and frightening.

But I’m not worried. By 2008, I will almost be ready to retire. And I know you all are eager to replace me.

Consider yourself warned. Your children will be facing frightening consequences unless we resolve, tonight, to do something. There are people in this room who should make education a career. Administration, counseling, teaching, research.

But you say you’ve go better things to do.

A national teacher shortage? I hear nothing about this on CNN or the networks. Is this another one of those National Enquirer scares for paranoids?

No, just call it the silent killer. A nation that cares not for its children has no soul. Dr. Rose continues: “Henry Brooks Adams once wrote that a teacher affects eternity because the teacher’s influence on other lives goes on forever. Those words are as true today as when the noted historian wrote them nearly a century ago. If asked who, other than their parents, had the greatest effect on their life, most people probably would answer the name of a particularly inspiring or challenging teacher, someone whose guidance and wisdom make a profound and lasting impression.”

Could I ask those in this audience to raise hands if you had a particularly inspiring or challenging teacher? Someone whose guidance and wisdom has made a profound and lasting impression on you?

- ITEM: A century ago, a poll was taken in America among 12-14 year olds. The question: Whom do you most want to resemble?

 Seventy-eight percent chose a moral leader, general or politician. Only two athletes were on the list (a boxer and a bicyclist) and there wasn’t a single entertainer. In 1986, nine of the ten names on the World Almanac’s list of people most admired by American teenagers were entertainers.

MCDONALD: Clearly, the achievement (if we can call it that) of the 20th century was to make the celebrity the foremost citizen in America.

How do we change this? Simply put: We must be in positions to influence young people positively.

Professor Mac, Professor Mac, the statistics you have been citing. They seem to apply only to public schools, don’t they? What about universities?

Lead article in The Chronicle of Higher Education, March 2000. “The Imminent Surge of Retirements: Colleges Face a Generation Shift as Professors Hired For The Baby Boom Enter Their Sixties.” The article by Denise Magner begins: “It’s hard to find a better example of the aging of the American faculty than the history department of California State University at North Ridge. Only three of its 23 members are under 55.”

The article continues. By now you know what phrase to expect. “Within five years, the department expects to have an almost entirely different appearance—one with a lot less gray hair. By 2003 the number of professors at Michigan State who will turn 65 will be over 90 and that number will remain for much of the decade.”

The article tells us that a huge generation of professors were hired back in the early 60s. Some institutions, mainly state universities and community colleges are either experiencing or anticipating a surge in faculty retirements. The very schools that experienced the greatest expansion in the 1960s and 1970s—state universities and community colleges—are thus those at risk.

State universities and community colleges? Who will replace this generation, I ask? To interject a personal note: I began my education at a community college. It was the only one that would take me since I had been branded Non-College Material. I was at risk, with little hope for success. But wonderful, caring individuals taught me at a community college that began its instructional day at 3:30 p.m. So now that I think back on it, these professors must have had erratic supper schedules and family schedules, but they met every class (instruction lasted until 11 p.m.), even during the snows in Detroit. And provided serious role-models of what education could be like.

I can see them yet, standing in front of students with little hope for higher education: part-time workers, full-time workers, parents, seniors. Humiliation of all humiliations: my own cub scout leader was in a class with me.

In short, these two years in a converted high school building built my character and made me want to emulate my teachers, teachers who (now
what was that phrase?) created a magical place and
space that focused on the intellect and (in Professor
Simmons’ words) what I could accomplish as a
human being.

Is there anything greater? No, I would argue,
idealist that I am—and remain.

Teaching affects eternity, it is forever.

I return to The Chronicle article on graying
professors: “There are dangers in so many senior
scholars retiring at once. These are professors who
know the ropes, how to handle a promotion case,
how to approach the administration with a proposal.
What you lose is a generation deeply embedded in
the culture of academic freedom and tenure. The
loss of that generation is the loss of institutional
memory that many younger faculty have not had
time to learn. It’s a little like fighting the Battle of
Britain. People are constantly disappearing from
your squadron.”

And, I remind this audience that this article on
the imminent surge of retirements was written ONE
YEAR AGO THIS MONTH. We have lost another
year. The clock is ticking.

I hear protests already.

Mac, don’t you read the newspapers? College
professors have to deal with academic freedom,
affirmative action, gender discrimination, gay and
lesbian issues, lawsuits, state proposals to reform
higher education, sexual harassment, curriculum
disputes, the pressure to produce research—and on
top of that—a poor salary.

Mac, that person you just taught in computer
science courses can get any entry-level job paying
more than that of a full professor.

Still, the danger is that we focus on problems,
problems that we didn’t even think about in the
1960s. Yes, you say, it is good that we are more
aware. What did we used to say? That our con-
sciousness has been raised?

I fear that the awareness of problems has
overwhelmed us, however, so that we literally can’t
see the forest for the trees. All education is about the
students, not us. As long as we focus on the true
subject, the student, we have no danger of losing our
bearing.

A school ought to be a magical place....

Optimist that I am, I believe that one person
among this group, someone who has not yet
committed to education in any of its forms, will
tonight resolve to step forward into that magical
place.

I accept the challenge.

This is my pact with the good spirits of the
universe.

I shall never grow financially rich.
I shall never own a Mercedes Benz.
I shall never wear European clothes.
I may own only one computer.
I won’t have a swimming pool or a tennis court
in my backyard.
I will work too hard.
I will be stressed.
I will feel unloved and underappreciated.

But someday, I guarantee, if you stay at it long
enough, you will receive that special knock on the
doors that seems reserved for the world of education.

“Do you remember me? I was that person in the
back row of your class. You’ll be happy to hear that
I did listen to what you said after all. I’ve decided to
become a teacher because I hope to have the kind of
positive influence on students that you had on me.”

I close by saying, “There is no higher calling.” I
only hope you learn this from your own life.

This is the logo from the
Texas Tech University Honors College
When my older son graduated from high school in 1992, we invited each guest at his party to fill out a page for an “advice book” — “The best advice I ever got was from _______ who said __________.”

Let me share three pieces of advice with you.

1. **People are more important than cars.**
   
   As a young bride, I was driving our brand-new two-week-old 1968 Chevy Malibu down the streets of St. Paul when I was rear-ended by a car whose driver didn’t break in time for the red light. I was devastated. When I called my husband to tell him of the accident, he never asked me about the car. He never asked me if it was my fault.
   
   “Are you hurt?”
   
   NO, BUT YOU SHOULDN'T SEE THE CAR!
   
   “Is the other driver hurt?”
   
   NO, BUT HE’S REALLY MAD.
   
   “Cars can be fixed. If you’re all right, that’s all that matters.”
   
   People are more important than cars.
   
   Take that line, and store it in memory: “People are more important than cars.” Then change the last word. “People are more important than money. People are more important than things. People are more important than things money can buy.”
   
   PEOPLE ARE IMPORTANT!

2. **The second piece of advice—it comes from Mike’s grandfather, my dad.**

   He was 80 at the time, and wrote with a shaky and barely legible hand. He wrote, “The most important advice I ever got was from my dad, your great grandfather, who said, ‘Feed the animals.’ He was an Iowa farmer, with cows and pigs and horses and cats and dogs. For celebrations like this one, or holidays, like Christmas Eve, he’d go out and give the cows an extra spread of straw under foot and throw down a little more hay from the mow. “They need to celebrate, too,” he’d say with a smile.

   I look back and realize that my views of land use and ecology were formed when, as a child, I lived with a dad who attended to his cows and horses with affection and concern. Now, fill in that sentence with a different ending. “Feed the animals. Feed the hungry. Feed your soul. Feed your curiosities.” You can go on and fill in your own words.

3. **Perhaps the best page in the book was from Iowa state representative Paul Johnson, who went on to work in Washington DC for four years on ground water legislation.**

   His advice was one word long. His page read, “The best advice I ever got was from my daughter, who said, ‘LISTEN.’”

   It would be hard to find a more intelligent, trustworthy, and committed man than Paul Johnson. And yet he felt the best advice he ever got was to use his ears instead of his tongue.

   Thank you for letting me share with you these few words advice with you, who are also graduates today—not from high school, but WITH HONORS from a very fine Research I university. One more voice is in my head today: “To whom much is given, much is expected.” My mother’s voice. Much has been given to you: intelligence, a work ethic that allowed maximal use of that gift, the financial means to finish a college degree. Now, as you move on to new beginnings, much is expected of you.
“Honors Biology on Thursday Evenings”

by William J. Grimes, Elizabeth Willott, Madeline Lapointe & Jennifer Katcher
University of Arizona

Introductory Biology is taught to nearly 1000 students at the University of Arizona. The first semester covers concepts of chemistry, molecules, genetics, cell biology, immunology, and the use of biotechnology to study biology and disease. The second semester covers evolution, the physiology of plants and animals, bio-diversity, and ecology. The course is considered rigorous, so freshmen are encouraged to take college chemistry first, delaying biology until their sophomore year. The course serves interested non-majors as well as majors in the biological sciences. Students make heavy use of web-based exercises accessed through The Biology Project (www.Biology.arizona.edu), an online resource for learning biology developed at the University of Arizona. Approximately 140 students elect to take introductory biology as an honors course during the first semester.

The honors course we designed has as a primary goal the integration of students into the scientific climate of a research university. We want new students to understand the process of science and scientific communication, the structure and organization of research laboratories, and to connect with faculty that can mentor them as part of a team conducting mainstream scientific research. As a secondary goal, we want them to experience a working group environment with other top students, most of whom are new to our university. We have organized our undergraduate honors course with these goals in mind.

Course Structure

The honors course is co-taught by Drs. Grimes and Willott, both teaching introductory biology. Students in honors do not enroll in a separate section, but take the standard biology lecture and laboratory course. Honors sections meet an additional one evening per week and students earn four units of honors credit instead of the three units of credit offered in the standard biology lecture course. New students who have previously earned college credit for biology either through community colleges or the AP exam often choose to skip the introductory biology course but take the honors evening section as a special topics course.

Our objectives for the evening honors program are as follows:

Provide a broad overview of the biological sciences by presenting diverse topics that are part of the research programs at the University of Arizona.

Encourage collaboration among highly intelligent, creative, and motivated students.

Promote contacts between beginning students and faculty with successful research programs.

Provide an opportunity to communicate the results and the implications of scientific research to the general public.

The course is built around four parts:

Faculty Speakers

Faculty speakers provide an overview of their research in a series of weekly seminars.

Collaboration with Mentors

Students, randomly assigned to a group, work with a faculty mentor to develop an understanding of the experiments, results, and implications of a scientific research paper.

Website Creation

Each group produces a website so others can learn about the importance of the science studied by the group.

Essay

Each student writes an essay about some aspect of his or her experiences in the honors course.

(1) Faculty Speakers

We select speakers from a diverse group of scientists based on our knowledge of their
ability to communicate with introductory students. Our students come in contact with these experts in plants, insects, biochemistry, molecular biology, bioinformatics, immunology, ecology, evolutionary biology, and human genetic diseases. The topics are not limited to the subjects covered during the first semester course but reflect a wide variety of activities in the biological sciences.

Talks are limited to 45 minutes, leaving time for group and individual discussions. For Fall 2000, the talks included “Insects Crossing the Atlantic”; “Venomous Bites, Stings, and Anti-venins”; “Y Chromosomes and Human Evolution”; “Gene Splicing in Plants”; “Pediatric Genetics and Cardiology”; and “Female Attraction by Male Jumping Spiders.”

(2) Collaboration with Mentors

Fifteen to eighteen faculty with interesting and successful research programs serve as mentors and supply us with current scientific publications that have particular importance in their fields of interest. During the first month of the semester, each group of students receives one of the scientific papers and discusses the experiments from the research reported. Each group’s goal is to discover what they do and do not understand about the research.

During the second month, students meet with their assigned faculty mentor. Their goal is to understand the research. Typically, a mentor will bring students into his or her laboratory and introduce group members to other faculty, post-docs, graduate students, and more senior undergraduates. Mentors frequently demonstrate some of the unique methods used in the experiments. Usually, three or four meetings are sufficient to give students a real understanding of the experiments which led to the results described in the paper. During this time, the lecture part of our biology course frequently provides the necessary background information.

This year, assigned papers included the following topics: “Cancer Genetics and New Therapeutic Strategies”; “Hepatitis C Virus”; “Stem Cells and Myelinating Transplants for Treating Neurodegenerative Disorders”; “Glycogen Accumulation in Trained and Untrained Individuals as a Measure of Athletic Conditioning”; and “The Evolution of Female Mating Preferences in Stalk-eyed Flies.”

“We make the point to students (verbally and also by the overall structure of this course) that successfully working in a group and communicating to the general public will likely be a significant part of their post-graduate experience.”

(3) Website Creation

Each group designs a website that communicates to the general public the significance of the science students learned from their research papers. Each group also creates an annotated list of web resources for additional information on the assigned topic. In preparing text and graphics to communicate their ideas to others, students solidify their own understanding of their research papers’ results and implications.

Ms. Katcher and Ms. Lapointe, senior media specialists with The Biology Project (www.Biology.arizona.edu) along with the faculty, provide students with support in developing their websites. Students have access to a computer laboratory equipped with the hardware, software, scanners and what else is needed for web authoring. Students are required to respect copyrights and obtain permission for the use of photographs and figures. The completed sites are published on the web. Students are free to develop their own approach to education on the web, and their results have frequently exceeded our expectations. The two groups judged to have produced the best quality website are rewarded with a free pizza party at the home of one of the faculty.

(4) Essay

The last requirement is for all students to write an essay that describes their experiences in some aspect of the honors section. We request that the essay (two to five pages) demonstrates their writing skills and evaluates what they have learned. Students frequently choose to write about the unique experience of working on a project in a group.

Results

The format of guest lecturers and research paper assignments has been used for five years. The grades students earn for honors biology are derived from the score earned in the standard lecture course. Participation in the honors activities is required but does not affect a student’s
grade. Lack of participation in the group project, however, or poor attendance at lectures, or failure to submit an essay can result in forfeit of ten percent of the standard course grade.

We believe that this format leaves the students with more scope for learning what they wish to learn and gives them the responsibility to get as much as they can from the course. This particularly shows in the group activities, which are well-received and are a unique part of our program. We make the point to students (verbally and also by the overall structure of this course) that successfully working in a group and communicating to the general public will likely be a significant part of their postgraduate experience.

These students in the honors section who have been assigned randomly into groups must solve for themselves any internal problems that may arise. Even those groups that either lack a natural leader or have more than one leader (either can cause delays in creating an effective group) solve their problems and create a web site by the end of the semester. Their essays often discuss the personal achievements in this area when students have taken on a leadership role they have never done before or have refrained from assuming that role to let others take suitable responsibility.

The open-ended assignment allows for innovative approaches to communicating on the web. For example, one group assigned a paper on cystic fibrosis interviewed patients with the condition and described how someone copes with the therapies and yet can still be successful with family and career. Also, a number of groups have included in their site a “kids’ page” which explains some of the science at a level suitable for children.

The group project provides a great opportunity for students to meet other intelligent, motivated students. Friendships emerge and persist. We have found that many of the groups continue to stay together after our course is completed, and sign up to take the same sections of chemistry, biochemistry, and math courses. These connections are very important for students coming to a large research university.

Part of what makes this program a success is the highly enthusiastic researchers who share their time, labs, and energy with the students. Those who serve as speakers or mentors repeatedly emphasize the joy of working with our brightest students and have volunteered for a number of years. They do a great job of introducing students to laboratory research leading to a thesis. Many of the students make their initial contacts with a research scientist in our course, either by following contacting a speaker or through their mentor.

The success of our program is probably best described by the students themselves.

**Conclusions**

The honors section of Introductory Biology successfully facilitates students’ first-hand understanding of the scientific process. Although we have not conducted any formal studies, students cite that they have gained both valuable experience in group activities, and real learning about the process of scientific inquiry. Many students begin working in the research laboratories during or soon after completing this course. Faculty speakers and/or mentors hire a substantial number of students and frequently refer others to colleagues. The faculty find these students to be well-prepared for scientific research. In addition, students use communication skills practiced in this course in many areas. The success of our program is probably best described by the students themselves.

**Students’ Reactions to the Course**

“There were so many areas where we learned to cooperate and compromise. As a group, we learned to communicate our ideas and make valuable contributions. Each of us gained a basic understanding of the paper as a whole, but we also became experts in our own part. When everybody combined their sections as a whole, we found that the content of our page was more detailed and elaborate than if we had tried to write the whole thing together. We bonded as a group toward the end of the semester, making me feel for the first time that I had really become a part of this university.”
"I would have never guessed that a biology course was where I would learn to write a webpage in this age of computers. I think it is essential to be able to use available tools to convey one’s knowledge or any information that helps to make another person’s life a little bit better.

I was so impressed by the research on Y chromosomes studies of human population that I began volunteering in Dr. Hammer’s laboratory."

"Some of the students were so intelligent that it made me intimidated for fear that I might sound dumb. I found out that all of us in the group were intelligent, just in different ways. Some were better with information and others were more creative. We all discovered together what our talents were. Once we were over the fear of what the others thought of us, we were all creating and suggesting the solutions that made our Web project win first prize."

"It was in this biology class that I rediscovered my joy of learning for the sake of learning. Without any real pressures of grades, I was able to come to each Biology lecture looking forward to the speakers, their presentations, and simply expanding my knowledge in different areas of biology."

"Another advantage that made this class effective was the laid-back structure. It included no tests or note-taking. By not having to worry about taking notes, I was able to sit back and learn simply for the enjoyment of learning. This allowed me to appreciate the overall class more. We were able to learn for our own benefit rather than for a test."

"We emailed and called and went places with each other and really made some good friendships. A few of us are planning on taking some future science courses together."

"I enjoyed being assigned to a group to work on the scientific paper we had and become a team who would produce a website for this paper. I have been able to make friends with these wonderful people and I know that I will go through the rest of college years being able to count on them for help in my classes. I came to a point that we were such good friends that we would contact each other not so much about the webpage but for quizzes or tests that were coming up in class. Because we were assigned to this project we were able to create bonds of friendship and be able to rely on each other for help that I know I will always cherish."

"Many students begin working in the research laboratories during or soon after completing this course. Faculty speakers and/or mentors hire a substantial number of students and frequently refer others to colleagues."

"After [the pediatric cardiologist’s] presentation, I talked to him and he invited me to go and shadow him."

"Our mentor showed us his lab. We were able to see samples and machinery that we, too, may work with some day. For risk of sounding like a complete nerd, that was one of the best spent Friday nights of this semester."

"The most surprising thing about honors biology came in the form of the soft-spoken entomologist. I’ll admit, when I first saw this quiet man in his jeans and loose T-shirt state his lecture, I thought I was in for a long hour. ‘Today we will discuss the mating ritual of spiders.’ ‘Oh, no’ I thought. ‘I don’t even like spiders.’

As I sat and watched yet another male spider performing an intricate array of tricks to catch a female’s eye, I was reminded that certain behaviors persist beyond species lines. I can only laugh when I go out and see men in their flashy cars, gelled hair doing their dances just to get some attention. I’ve broken down laughing more than once. I am grateful for everything I’ve gotten out of honors biology, but I leave you with a problem: How do you tell your date you’re laughing because he reminds you of a spider."

"The best part of honors Biology, though, were the guest speakers....I believe the most valuable product of my honors Biology 181 experience was listening to faculty who were excited about what they were researching and/or teaching. This was the encouragement I needed to convince me to include science in my college undergraduate education."
“Though the web project was educational and fascinating, the most rewarding aspect of this class would have to be the guest lecturers. This aspect of the course offered a large amount of information on the possible career paths for a science major, and cemented my belief that I would indeed pursue a future rooted in the biological sciences.”

“I actually couldn’t sleep one night because I was excited about creating images and setting up anchors for the page. I haven’t been this enthusiastic about something like this for a long time. It was very therapeutic.”

“YES!! Hallelujah!! The links work. This is an incredible moment for me. As silly and trivial as it may be to some, to me it is great.”

“One of my greatest phobias, until last year, was working in a group. Every time I would hear the words ‘group project,’ I would sink down in my chair, dreading the burden of such an undertaking. Almost without exception, my experiences working with more than one person to create a final product ended up being a great deal of work for me. In addition, I always felt that I had to do more than just was required to complete the assignment, for I also had to ensure that each member of the group was working on a piece of the project, that they understood the assignment, and that they were staying on-task. In most cases, I would rather have done the entire assignment on my own....As our individual tasks became more clearly defined, and we all had a fairly good idea of our ultimate goal, I was reminded of the awesome feeling of working in a group. As an unofficial leader of the group, I had the privilege of working with every member and keeping the project on-task. Once again, I loved sorting out ideas with my peers, while simultaneously making lasting friendships. I also loved sharing my ideas with receptive, enthusiastic ears, and receiving ideas with equal interest and appreciation. Having now completed the website (and a commendable site it is), I am very thankful to have had the challenge and opportunity of working in this group...I am now a firm believer in the benefits and joys of being able to lead and function in a group, as well as to accept individual differences and befriend my partners.”

“Initially, our group suffered from an extreme lack of communication. Nobody was willing to take the initiative to contact all group members for meetings, consequently we very rarely had every member of the group attend the meetings. Finally, one member created a listerv to increase communication. Our group transformed from the incredibly unfriendly, hostile group that it was at the beginning of the semester, to a laughing, caring group of people. What was once a group of people who let the responsibility of the project lay in the hands of two or three members had transformed into a group of individuals who took great pleasure in helping others and participating in group activities.”

Complete details of our Fall 2000 Honors Biology course as well as examples of many past years’ web projects are available at

http://www.blc.arizona.edu/courses/181H.

We are very willing to provide more details to anyone interested through email.

Contact any of us.

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Madeleine Lapointe (lapointe@u.arizona.edu) and Jennifer Katcher (jkatcher@u.arizona.edu) are senior media specialists, Department of Biochemistry and The Biology Project.

NCHC provides a list of members who are experienced and willing to serve as consultants for any college or university starting an honors program or conducting a program evaluation. Consultants may be contacted at the annual meeting during Beginning in Honors® or Developing in Honors workshops or in the Consultants Lounge, or by contacting the national office. Expenses and honoraria are negotiated between the institution and the consultant.
"Learning to Learn"

by Ruth Fox
Johnson County Community College

As I was presenting a workshop at a recent Great Plains Honors Council Conference at Wichita State University, Spring 2001, I was struck by what my four students said about learning.

The workshop centered around an honors courses called, “Honors Forum: In Search of Solutions.” Each semester, the course examines an issue of local, national, or global concern. The topic is selected by the co-facilitators, with one small, unique feature: the topic is outside of either professor’s expertise and discipline. A rather frightening thought for many!

If you believe what Palmer Parker says in The Courage to Teach about good teachers being those who are passionate about a subject, such a course gives you the option to learn more about a topic that excites you. Students are expected to contribute to the reading material through research, making them the experts for a particular sub-topic. Halfway through the semester, students choose a new topic through a democratic process, and the entire “learning” process begins again.

Last fall, my co-facilitator and I chose the topic of “Political Rhetoric: Implications and Applications.” Before the semester began, we drew straws to determine our political “affiliation.” For the entire semester, we took these parts, even using derogatory political rhetoric to describe the opposite viewpoints. It was interesting to see students who were Republicans look at my co-facilitator for approval, and the Democrats would turn to me for support.

The first assignment was to research the two political parties and their histories. We next studied the Electoral College system, not knowing how important our history lesson would be in November. An especially interesting activity involved giving each small group of students the electoral votes for one specific state. We told the students that they had to cast their electoral votes for one candidate. I don’t know if it was fate, but Florida had a very difficult time agreeing on their vote. They wanted to split the vote, but we would not allow it. They were told that they had to come to a decision somehow. They worked it out; they decided to let money talk. The member with the most money was allowed to make the final decision. Assignments ranged from writing campaign speeches for both Al Gore and George W. Bush, to presenting a political satirical skit at the end of the semester. (I might add that the students voted not to change the topic during this semester.)

After explaining in my workshop what the course was all about, I asked my four students to share their perspective of the course. When it was time for the audience to ask questions, Earl Brown, NCHC Secretary/Treasurer, asked the students what was the most valuable thing they had learned from the course. Each of the four students answered with a similar response, “I learned to learn in a new way.”

“This class was beneficial in many ways,” said RYAN KREIGSHAUSER, “But I discovered something important about the act of learning itself. I found that I learned best from a discussion-formatted class. Not only did I have to defend my position and examine why I believed what I did, but I also had the opportunity to ask others their opinions. Nine times out of ten I found my opinions change after new information had been provided. Overall, this was a fantastic class and I would recommend it highly.”

GENEE FIGUIERAS said, “In taking the Honors Forum class, not only did I learn about topics that affect our culture, I learned many things about myself. Most of my learning took place during class discussions. There were many heated debates as well as a lot of listening. It was refreshing to be exposed to different opinions besides my own. It stimulated my thirst for knowledge as well as challenged me to be open to other’s opinions.

“Needless to say, most of my learning took place within me. This class took me out of my comfort zone, which was wonderful and frightening. Being an honors student, I like having class and grading requirements spelled out. This was not the case. The facilitators involved us in both the teaching and
learning process. And lastly, this class opened my eyes to topics that I probably would not have chosen to seek out on my own. Overall, this class has helped me to respect others more and has helped me to be a more well-rounded human being.”

Another student, HEATHER FAIER, said that because of the format of the class, she was intimidated by the structure, with students given the latitude for opinions and ideas. She said, however, she gained self-confidence in voicing her opinions. “If I hadn’t needed the class to graduate from the Honors Program, I would have dropped the class the first night. Did students change their opinions based on this course? No, but they did become more educated and capable in defending their own positions. I think a few of us might have even learned how to listen.”

“When I enrolled in the honors forum class at JCCC in the fall of 2000,” said JOHN HARPER “I knew only that we would focus on political rhetoric. Honor students usually like to prepare for their classes, but this class was different. We did not even have to buy a textbook. An honors class with nothing to read ahead of time and no way to prepare gave me a bit of anxiety. However, after the first class I was reassured that this class would be different and that would be a good thing!”

“Every day we would form a roundtable guided discussion on the topic at hand. Throughout the discussions, we learned from each other, as opposed to an instructor giving a lecture. I believe that it was a learning experience for everybody. I believe, most of all, we learned that there is wide spectrum of approaches to an issue and there is often more than one right answer.”

“We told the students that they had to cast their electoral votes for one candidate. I don’t know if it was fate, but Florida had a very difficult time agreeing on their vote.”

**Conclusion**

As instructors, we believe that the ultimate goal in teaching is to instill a body of knowledge, but how often do we address the students’ confidence level, or the method in which our students learn? What my students said was profound and had an obvious effect on the audience. Twenty years from now, these students may not remember the content of the course, but they are who they are based on the experiences they had in this course.

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**REGIONAL COUNCILS**

The six regional councils generally meet twice a year, once at the NCHC national conference in the fall, and again at a centrally-located site within a region in the spring. Regional meetings in the spring provide an opportunity for honors students and administrators to learn about and share mutual concerns. These spring meetings are held at an accessible location, and are shorter and less-expensive than the national conference. Any school can join any regional honors council and may attend any or all regional meetings.


*Southern*: Virginia, southern Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, and North Carolina

*Mideast*: southern Michigan, eastern Illinois, Indiana, northern Kentucky, West Virginia, western Pennsylvania, and Ohio

*Upper Midwest*: western Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, northern Michigan, North Dakota, and South Dakota


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**SEMESTER-LONG STUDY IN ASIA**

**ASIAN HERITAGE**

**GLOBAL THINKING**

Sixteen credit-hours. Two ten-week interdisciplinary seminars: City as Text®,
Korean History, Culture and People, plus a directed study (research or studio
courses). Two five-week electives: Comparative Politics and Economics,
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four hours the first seven days, plus a Korean partner for conversational practice
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**FEBRUARY 14 - JUNE 1, 2002**

early decision September 30, 2001
all applications must be received by November 1, 2001

**TUITION & MID-SEMESTER STUDY/TRAVEL IN CHINA OR JAPAN**

$4,450
travel not included

This Honors Semester is the 28th sponsored by the National Collegiate
Honors Council and Long Island University-C.W. Post Campus Honors Program.
Host campus is Keimyung University (Daegu, Korea).
In an attempt to reconceptualize the perception that American colleges and universities were providing their students a mediocre education, Aydelotte, in his role as president of Swarthmore College, introduced a system of honors that was predicated upon the honors school at Oxford University, commonly referred to as Greats. His new development was “…to separate those students who are really interested in the intellectual life from those who are not, and to demand of the former in the course of their four years' work, a standard of attainment for the A.B. degree distinctly higher than we require of them at present and comparable perhaps with that which is now reached for the A.M.” (31).

Over the course of time, honors has undergone a series of permutations. Many of these changes have been positive; however, there are some that have not been particularly advantageous to students of color. The idea of separating students according to intellectual keenness was a noble idea at first. This notion of separation, however, has extended beyond intellectualism and affected other subject categories such as gender, class, and race and ethnicity. For instance, 18.5% of the 831 members of the University of Connecticut Honors Program are minority students. Further examples of this epidemic can be found by examining the low percentages of students of color in honors programs at majority institutions across the country.

A recent pilot study was conducted among honors students at the University of Connecticut. It was qualitative in its design and reflected a series of structured interviews of a diverse sample of honor students. Some of the major questions students were asked included:

1. Do you feel that there are any barriers in your honors program that may prevent the full participation of persons of color in your honors program? Please explain.

2. In your opinion, are there any reasons why persons of color might feel uncomfortable participating in your honors program? Please explain.

3. Do you feel that your honors program is preparing you to interact with persons whose race(s) may be different from your own? Please explain.

The major findings of this study were clearly divided along racial lines. For instance, non-white students in the honors program at the University of Connecticut perceived barriers that may prevent other students of color from participating in honors: lack of diversity, misperceptions of honors as an elitist organization, and misperceptions of honors as an unnecessary addition to their course loads. One student of color stated:

The only barrier I can think of is the lack of diversity in the program. Some students of color may be disheartened because they don’t find as many people who they think will have anything in common with them in the honors program. They may feel that it is a program “for white people.”

Another student of color claimed that the only perceived barrier she felt prevented more minorities’ participation in honors was the belief among students of color that the honors program is an elitist organization. “It’s not intended to be elitist, but that’s the view among some UCONN students,” she said.
Conversely, according to white students, were the perceived barriers: poor performance on standardized tests and lackluster recruiting efforts. For instance, one student believes:

SES may prevent persons of color from performing as well as whites on tests. But I do not think standards should be lowered for admissions of persons of color. It’s not necessary. I want people to be admitted [into the honors program] because they are high achievers and not because of the color of their skin.

Another white member of the honors program at the University of Connecticut was very critical of the program’s recruiting strategies. She asserted:

They don’t make a special effort to grab certain people. They don’t promote themselves as much as they should. If persons of color come, they’re thrilled, but they don’t go out of their way to get them to join.

Despite her assertion, the student said that the persons of color who are current honor students at the university “shouldn’t feel too much uncomfortable because our honors has a pretty good atmosphere where students have the option to voice their opinions to the Honors Council whether it be about race or other issues.”

The study also revealed that students of color felt that the University of Connecticut Honors Program was not preparing its members to interact with persons whose races may be different from their own. The major reason identified included a lack of diversity in terms of the University of Connecticut Honors Program curriculum. Each white survey participant, however, praised the efforts of the honors program for preparing its members to interact with different races. “I’m getting a worldly education, and I’m becoming more curious and more intrigued about other peoples and other countries,” remarked one student. Other whites felt that the honors program’s implementation of International Night, an annual event held at UCONN that celebrates various students’ nationalities and ethnicities, facilitates their preparation for relating well with persons of color.

Honors program administrators at the University of Connecticut were concerned about the issues that emerged from this pilot study and began a series of initiatives to address issues of diversity within the program. The implementation of Day of Pride Scholarships, colloquia about race and diversity, as well as the exploration of alternative means for selecting students for participation in honors (i.e., Renzulli’s Schoolwide Enrichment Model) are among UCONN’s Honors Program efforts to increase its minority student population.

Although little research has been done to determine why students of color are reluctant to participate in honors, though they may be eligible, honors program administrators may find Donna Ford’s “Multicultural Gifted Education” and Renea-Harrison Cook’s recent doctoral dissertation entitled “An Examination of Issues Affecting African-American Students’ Decisions to Enroll in Honors Programs or Honors Colleges at Predominately White Postsecondary Institutions” to be particularly instructive.

Ford’s text, although targeted towards an audience of educators of the gifted, contains practical suggestions about the various strategies that teachers and honors program directors can employ to maximize “cultural pluralism,” as identified by Ford (27). Four other overarching goals in Ford’s book include: an increase in multicultural knowledge, educational equity, empowerment, and improved social relations.

Cook’s dissertation is predicated upon the theoretical framework of William Cross’ notion of Nigrescence, which “explains the processes African-Americans experience when establishing an ethnic and racial identity” (8). Honors programs directors and/or administrators may find the study particularly useful due to its recommendations for increasing diversity.

The following are some of the key suggestions from the dissertation: (1) “Establish stronger support systems specifically targeting their African-American students to emphasize to these students that they are important to their programs and to address their beliefs that honors education appeals mostly to
Caucasian students and lacks students of color. Such support systems will also present a warmer, more welcoming campus climate and improve recruitment of black students; (2) investigate the feasibility of offering scholarships, grants and paid internships to African-American students who enroll in their programs; (3) disseminate information about their programs more effectively among African-American students to ensure that these students are contacted and informed about honors education. Diverse methods should be used, including direct contact from black students, invitations to recruitment events hosted by black honors students, distribution of recruitment literature, and announcements in various media. Such prevalent information will help African-American students understand what honors education involves, what honors education requires of them, and how honors education can benefit them” (94-95).

Although Cook’s study investigates issues related specifically to African-Americans and honors, honors program administrators may find her suggestions purposeful for the recruitment of other minority groups as well.

Almost every segment of society is engaging in discussions about the most effective and the most efficient manner in which their universities, companies, and the like may become more ethnically and culturally diverse in their membership compositions.

Ostensibly, there appears to be genuine concern about issues of diversity and ensuring that people in general come to understand, to accept, and to celebrate the cultures of persons that are different from mainstream majority culture. However, more work beneath the surface level needs to be done. Honors programs across the United States should not consider themselves exempt from these pursuits and in fact, should be more disturbed since programs of this kind severely lack representation of nonwhite members.

Notwithstanding the delimitation of this study, namely its small sample size, the generalizability of these results should not be ignored. Similar reasons as those previously identified may factor into nonwhite students’ avoidance of honors programs on other majority campuses across the United States. It is hoped that this article will compel all of those associated with honors education to make concentrated efforts to diversify the composition of their honors programs. After all, in this era of multiculturalism and time of celebration of diversity as our strength, the percentages of students of color actively participating in honors programs should not remain weak.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Certificates at Honors Conferences:

Many conference organizers have recently begun handing out certificates for attendance or presentation at their honors conferences. Many of us have observed this nice touch at the Upper Midwest Honors Council Conference and the Virginia Collegiate Honors Council Conference. Certificates are presented at the end of the conference as a record of involvement and as a keepsake.
Get in Touch With State Honors Organizations

For several years now, NCHC has been trying to compile a list of state honors councils without much success. NCHC wanted to keep members apprized of what is going on in their own state and to inform new members of honors opportunities within their state. (See the article by Malcolm Russell and Cheryl Cohn entitled “State and Regional Conferences: Overlooked Assets for Small Colleges” [*NHR* XVII, 4, Winter 1997] for a discussion of such opportunities.)

Through the miracle of the NCHC listserv, NCHC has been able to gather some information on state honors organizations. NCHC is still looking for additional information about when these organizations will meet in 2001/2002 so that the NCHC can include that information in its calendar and *The National Honors Report* can announce the upcoming meetings and contact persons for that meeting. NCHC is also interested in learning if other states for which NCHC has no information have honors organizations.

Another reason NCHC has been trying to gather this information is due to the success of the Virginia Collegiate Honors Council. The VCHC, formed in 1985, has held two meetings a year for the last fifteen years. In the fall, the VCHC hosts a faculty and director’s meeting so that directors can exchange ideas and discuss issues such as articulation and state mandated guidelines. In the spring the students plan a student meeting. At this meeting, students present papers while faculty and directors get to shmooze some more as well as cheer on their students. Sometimes at the spring meeting, students plan a City-as-Text© component or a model UN component. Jay Paul, director of the Honors Program at Christopher Newport, wrote a brief history of the VCHC published in *The National Honors Report* (XV, 2, 1994).

All of this is to say that if your state does not currently have an honors organization, it might wish to consider founding one. The VCHC received a grant from the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities to subsidize its first student meeting. The Alabama state honors organization used an SRHC “Dollars for Scholars” award to subsidize its first meeting. The Texas state organization meets twice a year at the NCHC and GPHC Conferences. Lots of models are out there. NCHC believes that you, too, will find that there are many issues that state institutions need to address as a group.

On the next page is a list of state or intra-state honors organizations. Please let the national office know if your state has such an organization or would be interested in starting one.

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### PLEASE MAKE A NOTE!

**THE EARLY REGISTRATION DEADLINE FOR THE 2001 CONFERENCE IN CHICAGO HAS BEEN CHANGED.**

**THE NEW EARLY REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS SEPTEMBER 18, 2001.**

**THE DEADLINE IS INCORRECT ON THE REGISTRATION PACKET.**

**IF YOU NEED REGISTRATION INFORMATION FOR THE 2001 CONFERENCE, PLEASE CONTACT NCHC HEADQUARTERS AT NCHC@RADFORD.EDU.**
# State Honors Organizations

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<th>Status</th>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Richard Modlin, U A-Huntsville, <a href="mailto:modlin@email.uah.edu">modlin@email.uah.edu</a></td>
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<td>Arkansas</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Carolyn Blakely likely to start one, <a href="mailto:blakely_c@bx4500.uapb.edu">blakely_c@bx4500.uapb.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>California (Cal St U system)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Paul Strom, U Colo-Boulder, <a href="mailto:strom@stripe.colorado.edu">strom@stripe.colorado.edu</a></td>
<td>Apr ?, Boulder</td>
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<tr>
<td>Honors Transfer Council of CA (2Y)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Jean Shankweiler, El Camino C, <a href="mailto:js@elcamino.edu">js@elcamino.edu</a></td>
<td>Mar 17, 2001 UC-Irvine</td>
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<tr>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Jim Lacey, Eastern Conn St U, <a href="mailto:laocy@ecsu.ctstate.edu">laocy@ecsu.ctstate.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Florida (FCHC)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Lydia Daniel, Hillsborough CC, <a href="mailto:daniel@hcc.cc.fl.us">daniel@hcc.cc.fl.us</a></td>
<td>Feb 23-25, 2001 Fla Atlantic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Georgia (GGHC)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>John Salzstrom, GA Coll &amp; St U, <a href="mailto:jsalstr@mail.gsu.edu">jsalstr@mail.gsu.edu</a></td>
<td>Feb 23-24, 2001 Macon St</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Cheryl Fulks, Millikin U, <a href="mailto:choff@millkin.edu">choff@millkin.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Louisiana (LHC)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Jon Schlenker, U-Maine Augusta, <a href="mailto:jons@maine.edu">jons@maine.edu</a></td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Maureen Connelly, Frostburg St, <a href="mailto:m_connelly@frostburg.edu">m_connelly@frostburg.edu</a></td>
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“Intersections and the City”

by Jim Lacey
Eastern Connecticut State University

This presidential address was given at the NE-NCHC conference, Brooklyn, NY, April 26-29, 2001. Jim speaks to the conference theme, “Intersections,” quite appropriate for a region from which City-as-Text© grew. CAT©, as Lacey says here, “focuses attention and sparks curiosity” through its program of planned explorations of the conference’s host city. Participants select an exploration and set off to discover what makes the city special. When participants gather again at the end of the day, they share their observations and together paint a picture of the city’s spirit.

Cities have a bad reputation. Genesis, reflecting a pastoral culture, looks with disdain upon Babylon’s proud Tower and the infamous Cities of the Plain. Some of you, or your parents, may have felt some Angst about this particular NE-NCHC conference because of New York’s undeserved reputation for callousness and crime or Brooklyn’s inappropriate association with vulgarity. The Edenic myth of the American past locates innocence, virtue, and self-reliance in the virgin land, the rural village, or the small town, and identify temptation, danger, and evil in the sinister streets of the Big City.

Despite their bad press, cities have throughout history invented civilization. They are the foundation of intellectual life, government, and trade, and have engendered literary and artistic accomplishment as well as law, medicine, and science. Greek identity was with the polis, and imperial Rome planted models of herself throughout the Mediterranean world and beyond, dating history itself ab urbe condita, from the foundation of the City. Human accomplishment is largely the product of great cities.

Although your attitude may be ambivalent, let me urge you to explore the City, the ultimate of intersections, with a mind open to its vibrant life, manifold resources, and abundant opportunities. Those of you who ventured out this morning in City-as-Text© got a taste of life in the Metropolis. You may have been surprised to discover that Brooklymites and New Yorkers are not cold or indifferent, but helpful, friendly, talkative. Rather than shady characters and mean streets, you may have met energetic denizens of every cast and color and been struck by impressive townhouses, public buildings, historic monuments, and, yes, the natural world itself made vibrant and monumental by this unique urban setting.

Before you leave, you must stroll from our hotel, heading west toward the harbor, preferably along Montague Street, to the Brooklyn Heights Promenade, where you will come upon a breathtaking panorama, best seen at twilight, with its plethora of icons--Lady Liberty with her torch, Ellis Island, the great bridges, the flowing river with its traffic, the incomparable Manhattan skyline, and in the offing to the north, the jewel of skyscrapers, the art-deco Chrysler Building. A professor of mine, a native of Turin, Italy, once remarked that there were two majestic vistas

“Whitman came to believe that time and space were illusions, a rather mystical concept, but common experience indicates that the present is an infinitesimal intersection between the past and the future.”

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“Whitman came to believe that time and space were illusions, a rather mystical concept, but common experience indicates that the present is an infinitesimal intersection between the past and the future.”

That for him defined sublimity—the view of the Berner Oberland, the Swiss Alps--Monch, Eiger, Schreckhorn, and the north face of the Jungfrau—from a terrace in Interlaken, and the view of the New York skyline from the Brooklyn Heights Promenade. Don’t miss it!

I’m getting a quizzical look from some of my students. Maybe they are wondering how I, who have lived in Willimantic, CT, a small New England mill town, for upwards of thirty years now, can so flamboyantly advocate life in a great city. They may not know
that I grew up in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn, and lived for a decade on State Street in the Heights, a ten minute walk from here. So it is fortunate serendipity that brings me here to share with you some notions about intersections and this city, which I still think of as my city.

The intersection of Fulton and Court Streets, just around the corner, is worth observing. If you look about, you will note Borough Hall, the Civic Center, and to the north, modern courthouse buildings and a charming Victorian structure, Brooklyn’s Main Post Office. You might notice the statue of Henry Ward Beecher in the Courthouse Square. Beecher was one of the most famous minis-
ters of the late 19th century who presided over the Plymouth Church on Henry Street and who, incidentally, was involved in a scandalous trial, rivaling the Monica Lewinski affair in notoriety, in which he stood accused of adultery. To the east, now the Fulton Street Mall, is the Downtown Brooklyn strip that housed famous restaurants and department stores, such as Abraham and Straus (and, as you know, leads to the LIU Brooklyn Campus) formerly the famous Brooklyn Paramount, one of the great, pop-luxurious movie palaces, where young people of my parents’ generation danced in the aisles to the music of the big swing bands of the Thirties.

Fulton Street, if you can follow it through recent alter-
ations, meanders down the hill to the base of the Brooklyn Bridge. The Great Bridge was built almost directly over the route of the old Fulton Ferry, the shortest stretch of water from Brooklyn to Manhattan. The gothic-arched pylons of the bridge were for some time by far the tallest structures in the city, towering over both Brooklyn and Manhattan. All about you here is Walt Whitman’s old neighbor-
hood, where he came with his family from Long Island as a child, where he learned the printers’ trade, where he later became editor of The Brooklyn Eagle, a newspaper I delivered as a child, and where he had the first edition of Leaves of Grass printed in 1855. In a remarkable poem, “Crossing Brooklyn Ferry,” Whitman speaks directly to everyone in this audience, “to the others that are to follow me, the ties between me and them”:

Others will watch the run of the flood-tide,
Others will see the shipping of Manhattan north and west,
and the heights of Brooklyn to the south and east,
Others will see the islands large and small;
Fifty years hence, others will see them as they cross, the sun half an hour high,
A hundred years hence, or ever so many hundred years hence, others will see them,
Will enjoy the sunset, the pouring-in of the flood-tide, the falling-back to the sea of the ebb-tide.

I am with you, you men and women of a generation, or ever so many generations hence,
Just as you feel when you look on the river and sky, so I felt,
Just as any of you is one of a living crowd, I was one of a crowd,
Just as you are refresh’d by the gladness of the river and the bright flow, I was refresh’d,
Just as you stand and lean on the rail, yet hurry with the swift current, I stood yet was hurried...

Of course, the Fulton Ferry is gone, but you can see the sights Whitman describes from a more spectacular vantage point by walking over the Brooklyn Bridge, as I did frequently as graduate student at New York University in the 1960s.

From a window overlooking what is now the Brooklyn Heights Promenade, the ailing architect and engineer Washington Roebling watched as work on his great bridge progressed. Two generations later from the same vantage, the poet Hart Crane studied the architecture of the Bridge until it became for him the emblem not only of the City but of the material and spiritual striving of the New World:

O harp and altar, of the fury fused,
(How could mere toil align thy choiring strings!)
Terrific threshold of the prophet’s pledge,
Prayer of pariah, and the lover’s cry.--

Again the traffic lights that skim thy swift
Unfractioned idiom, immaculate sigh of stars,
Beading thy path--condense eternity: And we have seen night lifted in thine arms....

O sleepless as the river under thee,
Vaulting the sea, the prairies’ dreaming sod,
Unto us lowliest sometime sweep, descend
And of thy curvehip lend a myth to God.
- - Hart Crane

As you walk this historic neighborhood, I hope you discover the spirit of Walt Whitman, who was ever alert.
and venturesome, proud to be himself and proud to be one of a crowd. Whitman has been described as a “time-binder,” who identifies himself with both the past and the future. You may have noticed that in the lines from “Crossing Brooklyn Ferry” which I cited, the poet speaks of himself in the past tense—“As you feel when you look on the river and sky, so I felt”—thereby transporting himself, grammatically at least, into the reader’s present and from that vantage looking back on himself. Whitman came to believe that time and space were illusions, a rather mystical concept, but common experience indicates that the present is an infinitesimal intersection between the past and the future. From a whimsical perspective, the difference between the past and the future is that the past is mutable and malleable, subject to our reconstructed memories and the revisions of historians, while the future is fixed and determined.

I ask you now to project yourself into that fixed future, some ten or twenty or thirty years, and from that vantage look back on yourself as you are here and now. If you think of your early childhood, school years, bygone winters as well as summers, most of your experience has already passed into oblivion, but you retain certain fixed moments, whether of joy or grief, that will remain forever etched in your memory. Your goal today and for the rest of our conference might be to create one enduring memory that you will cherish in that distant future, or perhaps just an indelible image or two that will remain in your mind’s eye like an unfaded snapshot. Today, in this great city, let me offer you the wisdom of the Roman poet Horace: carpe diem, take hold of the moment!

Learn to be a time-binder yourself, enjoying all the paradoxes science fiction has played with since H.G. Wells wrote his truly original yarn, The Time Machine. For each of you is a time traveler. Whenever you read Chaucer, contemplate Vermeer or Praxitiles, or confront the original work of Leibnitz or Darwin, you are traveling in your time machine, whether it is literature, art, or science, into the past, and you will travel almost as swiftly into the future you just projected for yourself a moment ago, or so it will seem to you some ten or twenty or thirty years from now.

While I sat at the computer in my office last month drafting remarks for this address, I too often found my mind veering tangentially from the topic—Intersections and the City. I kept thinking of my student days. Although there was no formal honors program at St. Peter’s College, Professor Angelo Danesino, the man whose examples of sublimity I have already shared with you, gathered about himself a coterie of “giants,” as he called us, students he felt had some special potential, and by sheer force of personality he made us compete for just about every fellowship available. Angelo had decided I needed a year in Europe, and he insisted I apply for half a dozen grants.

When I brought him a proposal to study Rousseau in Switzerland, he said, “Rousseau is impossible—everybody will write on Rousseau. And your French hardly exists.” While trying to change his pants—he had some special event that evening—he thumbed through the Encyclopedia Italiana and came up with a plausible topic, Gottfried Keller. “Never heard of him?” he asked? “Good! Get me a proposal by Monday on Gottfried Keller and his Zuericher Novellen. As things worked out, I learned late the following summer as I was working as a counselor at a summer camp for inner-city kids that I had been offered a fellowship by the Swiss Federal Government to study at the University of Bern for the following academic year.

Before I left, Angelo gave me two pieces of advice. “Buy a suit,” he said. “Cheap is okay, but it must be black.” And then, “Learn German. If you do not speak fluent German when you come back, I will cut you!”

My year’s sojourn in the beautiful city of Bern, with excursions--I hitchhiked--to Paris, Munich, Rome, Florence, Grenoble, Barcelona, Valencia, and Copenhagen, was a rich experience that changed my life. For when it became time, after taking a Master’s at Boston College and teaching at St. Francis College, to write a dissertation, I returned to the German-speaking world to do my research at the University of Munich. And since then, I have spent weeks, sometimes months, at conferences and research projects in a variety of different cities which I have come to know--Zuerich, Berlin, Wuertzberg, Tuebingen, Muenster, Hamburg, Freiburg im Breisgau, Mainz, Cologne.

And, of course, when the occasion arose, I made a side trip by train and boat to Interlaken to check out Angelo Danesino’s other example of the sublime. From a terrace cafe, I not only saw the famous Bernese Alps, but through binoculars was able to follow an international team attempting the north face of the Jungfrau.
You may have noticed that you do not realize what is special about your hometown until you live someplace else. Likewise, we remain unaware of the unique characteristics of our language and culture until

“Your goal today and for the rest of the conference might be to create one enduring memory that you will cherish in that distant future, or perhaps just an indelible image or two that will remain in your mind’s eye like an unfaded snapshot.”

we have made another language and culture our own as well. Swiss students, I learned, shake hands when they meet and part, no matter how often in the course of a day. When I found myself shaking hands with a student as we parted one evening--another American, at that--I realized we both had gone native. Shifting from the familiar to the formal in a group depending on whom you are addressing and slipping from so-called high German into dialect--all unconscious--is a landmark in absorbing a language, as is discovering it is more difficult to take notes in English, and, ultimately, that you have begun to think and dream in your adopted language!

The city of Bern, as is the case in most European cities, grew out in concentric circles from its oldest settlement, a fort on a hairpin curve of the Aare River, today the sight of the Baerengraben or bear pits, which house animals emblematic of the city. From there you can stroll along Gerechtigkeitsstrasse under arcades and past the famous fountains in the middle of the main street of the old town. As you proceed from the center of the city to the outskirts you will travel forward in time architecturally, from its Romanesque core to the Gothic, the Renaissance, the Baroque, the Neoclassical, what we think of as Victorian, and finally the Modern. You will have by-passed two towers, remnants of ancient city walls, the Ziegolgge, a structure housing a remarkable astronomical clock, and the Kaefigturm, once a prison, as the name suggests.

Some years ago, when it became clear that Bahnhof Bern, the main railroad station, had to be expanded, a remarkable controversy developed. The citizens of the city did not want the modern station to dwarf a baroque church or to cut into the park-like lawn of the University. The controversy lasted for ten years, with architects and engineers working overtime to accommodate the concerns of the citizenry. When they at last began to dig the foundation of the new station, workmen uncovered the remnants of Roman walls. These walls were preserved and remain on display in situ, properly labeled, for anyone who passes through the modern facility.

Goethe, the great German poet, two centuries ago declared Bern’s Gerechtigkeitsstrasse the most beautiful street in Europe. Were he to return there today, he would find essentially the same buildings, fountains, arcades, and monuments. New York has a radically different genius; it is a city of replaceable parts, with the new constantly displacing the old and historic, where Walt Whitman would not recognize a single structure on Fulton Street and most probably write a poem boasting about the city’s extravagance.

City-as-Text® focuses attention and sparks curiosity. Though you experienced one particular intersection in the Big Apple with heightened awareness, your time was limited this morning. You may have felt like a tourist rushing through a great museum in half an hour, when the works of art on display could easily have taken months or years to absorb. You might be surprised, however, how much a perceptive sojourner can learn and experience in a limited time. Whenever and wherever you travel, undertake your own City-as-Text®. The best way, I believe, is to begin with a map, to get a sense of how the city is arranged and where the interesting locals are, often in the older part of town. Use the map not only to locate museums or famous landmarks, but to understand how the city grew. Your best clues are often departures from the grid patterns of most modern cities. And above all, walk.

One of the first things I learned moving to rural Chaplin

“You may have noticed that you do not realize what is special about your hometown until you live someplace else.”
means take the tour bus, or even better, if you have the time, get the tour-bus map, and walk the designated route in the city center. The last time I did just that was in Hamburg, where I walked from the central station to St. Pauli, the notorious sailor district where anything goes. As I sat drinking pilsner and cathedrals, art galleries, theater, a symphony orchestra, opera, or ballet, and nightlife with a rich variety of cafes, restaurants, taverns, and clubs. You might consider returning here next semester for the NCHC Honors Semester, “Reinventing Urban Culture,” to be held at the Brooklyn Campus of Long Island University, our conference host. Or you might go abroad on a Fulbright or other Fellowship.

The theme of our conference is “Intersections,” and we have covered many of them—from the intersection of specific streets in Brooklyn, to cities themselves, to the intersection of the present with the past and with the future. Let me leave you with some final words of encouragement from our presiding spirit, Walt Whitman:

I tramp a perpetual journey,
My signs are a rain-proof coat and good shoes and a staff cut from the woods;
No friend of mine takes his ease in my chair,
I have no chair, nor church, nor philosophy;
I lead no man to a dinner table...or exchange,

swapping lies with some old tars, the tour bus from the central station pulled up to give passengers the opportunity to take photos of the local color, including me!

Some time in your life, be sure to live in a great city, for a year or so or even just a semester. By a great city I do not necessarily mean a metropolis like New York, London, Paris, Vienna, but an urban center that features world-class libraries and museums, historic churches or

“**You might be surprised, however, how much a perceptive sojourner can learn and experience in a limited time.”**

2002 Regional Meetings

These are the Regional Meetings that have been announced for 2002:

**Great Plains:** Fort Worth, TX - University of Texas at Arlington; Contact: Carolyn Barros

**Upper Midwest:** Brookings, SD - South Dakota State University; Contact: Bob Burns

**Southern:** Columbia, SC - Columbia College; Contact: John Zubizaretta

**Western:** Tempe, AZ - Arizona State University

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**Mission of the Two-Year College Committee**

- Encourage and assist two-year colleges in the development of honors programs
- Develop a network of lower division honors programs
- Identify other organizations of similar concern working within the context of two-year colleges
- Develop a set of sessions for the annual conference
- Contribute to NCHC periodicals and occasional publications material upon two-year college honors programs
- Report regularly in writing to the Executive Committee

Two-Year College Committee Web Page
http://2yr-nchc.nhmccd.edu/index.html
“Go To Regional Honors Conferences, WHY?”

by Nels Granholm
South Dakota State University
From the Upper Midwest Honors Council

I had a wonderful time at the UMHC in Naperville, IL, Spring 2001. I loved the campus at North Central College, the history of NCC, the lovely, ready-to-burst Spring setting just west of Chicago, and the book shops/Quigley’s Pub (quigleysirishpub.net) in downtown Naperville. But most of all, I was impressed, sometimes astonished, and deeply moved by the quality of the student presentations at the conference. Serious academic pursuit is alive and well at North Central College and other institutions represented at the UMHC. I wish I could write about every paper and every honors student I met, because every one of them had something important to contribute. That, in and of itself, is a very affirming statement about the importance of our efforts in honors programs. I selected the following as representative of the conference.

Let me begin with the singular Ms. Megan Sweeney of North Central College who presented a brilliant discussion, “Women in Africa: Connecting Culture and Colonization.” In a simple and elegant manner, Megan brought together and wove a tapestry of understanding from a world of complexity and misunderstanding. As Megan related, we tend to see the plight of women from Senegal and Algeria through our Western lenses. Well-intentioned as we may be, Westerners need to come to a deeper understanding of underlying issues of culture, tradition, religion, history (especially French colonization), and desire for equality. What better medium to understand these themes than the native feminist literature; Megan quoted from works of Assia Djebar, Kourouma, Dussimaine Sembene, Amadou Koumba, and others. To Megan, respect for women in their cultural context is critical—“The women of Africa try to reconcile their history and traditions with their desire for equality, and, as Westerners, we must respect that their solutions may not lead them to a ‘Western’ conception of women’s rights.”

Did you know that 27% of all Americans sue or are sued during their lifetime? And, isn’t it staggering that the average cost to defend a civil law suit is $71,000? Perhaps mediation and/or ADR (Alternative Dispute Resolution) are reasonable alternatives to trial litigation! That’s the contention of NCC students, Dean Frieders, Teri Stasiewicz, Jodi Wederath, and their faculty mentor, Thomas Cavanaugh, who gave an engaging and entirely practical (in the sense that we ought to mediate more often) presentation of their work in mediation. Jodi directed a drama (“A Conflict Resolution Drama” written by Australian David Williamson, whose original production “Face to Face” was based on Maori methods of problem resolution) presented at NCC February 2001. Dean, who operates a farm and who had traveled to England to study the basis of the EU’s concerns regarding US-derived transgenic crops, explained how ADR could be effective in national and global agricultural dispute resolution.

Teri provided an overview of NCC’s Dispute Resolution Center; NCC is the only college in the US that offers a Minor in Conflict Resolution. I thought this overall discussion—“Resolving Disputes Via Mediation: It’s Place on a College Campus” was fascinating and imminently practical.

After Ms. Erica Lehmann’s (Andrews Univ.) superb presentation (“Service as an Alternative to Ayn Rand’s Objectivism”), I now clearly understand why specific individuals are drawn to Rand’s “Objectivist” concepts. Mr. David Lee of Andrews provided a refreshing “hands on” approach to civic involvement in the political process (“Honors Service in Action: Enhancing Civic Involvement”) when he described the establishment of a Civic Action Group which actually went out into the community and did something concrete to help community people (voter registration, transportation to political rallies, local campaigns, and others); Mr. Lee’s final
comment – “What good is a right to vote if it is never used”!

We were also treated to a comprehensive and balanced discussion on reconstruction in Kosovo (“Honors Service in Action: Evaluating Reconstruction in Kosovo”, T. Julian Resla, Andrews University). With over 500 Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) involved in the reconstruction of Kosovo, Mr. Resla probed the consideration - to what extent can these NGOs put humanitarian efforts first before pure political considerations?

Using the International Red Cross’ “Ten Point Code of Conduct” as a benchmark, Mr. Resla defined the process in quantitative terms to allow us to identify alternative approaches to facilitate reconstruction in the future. Having the opportunity to go to Kosovo and experience reconstruction first hand will, I think, be a defining experience in Mr. Resla’s life. I’m pleased I had a chance to see him and learn of his honors project.

Like so many pervasive concepts that seem to permeate and virtually overwhelm our very existence both individually and collectively, globalization (a uniform global economy) is a phenomenon that’s “here to stay” and therefore needs to be addressed. Although not a new concept, the electronic era by virtue of instantaneous communication and movement of currency has drastically changed the picture of global commerce, making globalization more pressing and more immediate than ever before.

Fortunately, honors students are engaged in the debate. Mr. Aaron Struffert of University of Wisconsin, Stout presented a provocative poster (“Adverse Effects of Globalization”) while honors students from South Dakota State University conducted a panel discussion on globalization (“Global Benefits of a Humanities-Science Approach – Our SDSU Honors 303 Odyssey”). We’ll see much more on globalization at future honors conferences.

The UMHC in Naperville was attended by more than 150 people representing 20 institutions. It was great to see Earl and Margaret Brown from Radford University and the National Collegiate Honors Council. Earl is a wonderful spokesperson for the NCHC. On his personal Radford University WEB page Earl states that “his purpose is to provide students the best possible environment to allow them to take risks and develop to their potential.” In addition, Earl and many others share a great love of 19th century English literature, and it’s always fun to talk about Adam Bede and related topics. Earl presented a discussion on the interaction between regional honors councils and the national council. As always, Margaret was upbeat and excited about the work of NCHC and its periodical, The National Honors Report.

Dr. Tom Sawyer, Director of the Honors Program at NCC, told me he was confident the UMHC at NCC would be a success because many of the activities had been planned and executed by students. Dr. Sawyer has great confidence in his students and deservedly so!

We had a terrific time. And then there’s Dr. George “Pinky” Nelson – director of Project 2016 and a member of the senior staff at AAAS. How can you beat a guy from Willmar, MN who went to Harvey Mudd University, goes by the name of “Pinky,” is a former astronaut (411 hours of space time), and thinks it’s critical for all students to have core knowledge in both the sciences and the humanities? One feature of Dr. Nelson’s presentation I found particularly intriguing was the notion that one can never look out the window of the spacecraft and view the earth’s surface without seeing signs of man’s disturbance – even over the oceans. To Dr. Nelson, this is a disturbing phenomenon requiring us to rethink our notions of the earth’s limited resources and incorporate that thinking into our daily lives.

And as an entree for the 2001 NCHC in Chicago where they will perform at the opening session, we were treated at the Friday luncheon to a preview of poetry, music, and humor provided by Richard Guzman and David Starkey, editors of Smokestacks and Skyscrapers, a major anthology of Chicago writing. Spring, as is the MHC, a season of rejuvenation.

To order back issues of The National Honors Report, The Journal of the National Collegiate Honors Council, Forum for Honors, The Superior Student, and any NCHC monograph, contact the NCHC Headquarters office at Radford University. Phone: (540) 831-6100 or email: nchc@radford.edu
“This and That”

by Margaret Brown
Editor, The National Honors Report

The NCHC is working hard on several fronts to engage in conversations with the large university honors programs and colleges, with the Ivy Leagues, and with other higher education organizations. We have lost contact with some important, large universities and Ivy Leagues who used to be members, and we have yet to become one of the major organizations in undergraduate higher education.

We seem to be working steadily towards the latter.

A few years ago, the NCHC and the Kettering Foundation put out a National Issues Forum’s guide, “Education after High School,” for Kettering-sponsored public forums debates. A number of our NCHC-member institutions tested the three choices that framed the issue of education after high school, and thanks to our work, those choices were refined and shaped. The collaboration was useful for us, too. We met with some other higher education organizations, and we got our name out there.

When Joan Digby was president, her major goal was to increase our visibility. She sold the idea of an NCHC guide to honors programs and colleges to Peterson’s. Through her remarkable energy and perseverence, she devised a template for our institutional members, contacted all the members, collected nearly 1200 responses, and then edited the material. The book, A Guide to Honors Programs (NCHC institutional members only, 300-plus pages with some 1200 colleges and universities) is now in its second edition. Have you bought one to give to your dean or president, one for your Admissions office, one to take to professional organizations you attend, and, of course, one for your own program?

The Long Range Planning Committee is currently studying the feasibility of creating the position of Executive Director, of moving the national headquarters to Washington, D.C. Perhaps if the NCHC could move -- literally-- we could have constant access to the many other organizations representing undergraduate education. NATIONAL, we could be, indeed. (By the time you read this, the committee will have shared its preliminary results at an Executive Board meeting. Look for a report on this committee’s work in a later issue.)

The NCHC has also hired a PR firm, Edward Howard and Co., to guide us towards presenting a professional public face. Our brochure, for example, is sadly out-of-date and anything but eye-catching. You haven’t seen it recently for those very reasons. We also lack consistency in our presentation of material, and I’m one of the culprits. A few years ago, a graphics designer I asked to evaluate the look of The National Honors Report pronounced NCHC’s usual color choice, the burgundy/brown “dull.” The NHR’s second color (we don’t have enough money for any but two) suddenly became blue. My choice, that blue, was my choice only. Conference booklets have also abandoned the burgundy/brown we associate with the NCHC, and if you lay out a copy or two of each of our periodicals and monographs, you can’t tell they all come from the same organization. Consistent?

The graphics designer also said that our logo, that curvy, lower case nchc was “retro.” We are lucky, I think, to have any logo at all. It’s the work of one of Herbert Lasky’s honors students at Eastern Illinois, recruited for the job years ago, when Herbert saw the need for it. A new logo, perhaps? Something else for the PR firm to consider. It’s also working on a tag line for consideration by the Executive Committee.

Our goal - with the expertise of Edward Howard and Co. - is to announce our NATIONAL presence in everything sent out with the NCHC imprint. We need a professional look, a public face for a NATIONAL audience.

That audience is growing. Recently the national office received an email from John Schwartz, a reporter at The New York Times. He is working on a freelance story for Newsweek’s annual special issue about colleges. He saw Joan’s letter to the editor of The Wall Street Journal and asked who in the NCHC he could speak with. One idea he’d like to investigate, he said, is the quality of undergraduate education available in some excellent, but lesser-known colleges and universities. The NCHC has much to offer him in the way of sources.

Also upcoming is a summit on undergraduate education, organized by long-time NCHC’ers, Anne Ponder, President of Colby-Sawyer, and Sam Schuman, Chancellor, University of Minnesota, Morris Campus. The summit is scheduled for October 31, 2001, in Chicago at the Palmer House. A number of major organizations in American undergraduate higher education have been invited. Participants so far:
Richard Ekman, Council of Independent Colleges  
Michelle Guillard, Consortium for the Advancement of Private Higher Education  
Douglas Orr, Council of Independent Colleges  
John Nichols, Association for General and Liberal Studies  
Jim Herbert, National Endowment for the Humanities  
David Warren, National Association of Independent Colleges & Universities  
Michael Baer, American Council on Education  
Yolanda Moses, American Association for Higher Education  
Susan Whealler, Association of Governing Boards of Universities & Colleges  
C. Peter McGrath, National Association of State Universities & Land-Grant Colleges  
Jerry Berberet, Association New American Colleges  
Jamie Merisotis, Institute for Higher Education Policy  
Brooke Beard, Campus Compact  
Andrea Leskes, Association of American Colleges & Universities  
Robert Orrill, National Council on Education & the Disciplines  
Mary Tolar, Truman Scholarship Foundation

Other NCHC’ers will attend: Joan Digby, Rosalie Otero, Earl Brown, and Hew Joiner. (Me, too. Look for a report of this meeting in a later issue.)

What are we doing about reclaiming and recruiting large universities and the Ivies? Several things. From Joan Digby, via the honors listserv (HONORS@hermes.gwu.edu):

“I believe that something is to be gained by engaging the Ivy League schools (as well as other “outsider” institutions from small liberal arts colleges to major research universities) in conversations about honors education. Getting to them can only happen through personal contacts.

“If you or members of your honors faculty are Ivy League alumni and would be willing to help us open up these conversations, please be in touch with me at your convenience. Ditto with respect to graduates of the Big Ten or other research universities that are not currently members of NCHC.

“I will need help in this project, so I am also asking for volunteers to build this community. It is my best belief that we can learn a lot from these institutions and that they may have much to learn from our models as well. Thanks for any assistance or leads that you might have.”

Another effort comes from Hew Joiner, who as president, gave a special charge to Mary Ann Raatz (Texas A&M University) and Billy Seay (Louisiana State University), Co-Chairs of Large University Honors Programs (LUHP), to “seek effective ways to try to bring those large universities - - in particular a number of the Research I institutions who were in at the foundation of NCHC - - who have drifted away from membership and involvement in NCHC in recent years back, into the fold.”

Mary recently asked for this constituency to do what she called “great things, if we all work together.” She also announced that Keith Garbutt (University of West Virginia) has helped set up a new listserv for the LUHP: nchc-luhp@wvnvm.wvnet.edu.

**Recent Responses**

...from Jack White (Mississippi State University)

“My suggestion for an activity is pragmatic and consequently could ensure the achievement of the goal of sharing information. Conversely, I do not envision a complicated or detailed explanation of efforts. Instead, I advocate only a simple collection of a resource list by the LUHP.

“As chair of the International Education Committee, I see the LUHP group as a major resource for gathering information about study abroad opportunities for honors credit. The IEC will be sending more formal inquiries to the general membership, but the LUHP might address categories of programming in addition to traditional on-site courses for honors
Credit. For example, I would find value in a list of institutions/honors programs offering internships, separately-structured research programs, etc. That mere listing would allow anyone to direct an inquiry to a given program or programs. LUHP Committee members might accept a topic/subject/area responsibility that is a particular interest or area of expertise/success; so that collection would be a group effort. Earl and Gayle [at the national office] could advise about the current availability of such information; Maggie and Ada could address the possibilities for sharing such information selectively via NCHC publications.”

...from Julia Bondanella (Indiana University)

Julia worked with Lothar Tresp (University of Georgia retired, former EST) to begin the LUHP Committee all those years ago. Julia is a past president of the NCHC.

“I have always thought that the LUHP committee should be in charge of organizing LUHP programs at the national meeting (among other things)....I think it would be very helpful to have the committee place a request with the newly elected VP each year that the committee chair(s) or someone suggested by the committee be given responsibility for the LUHP strand or programs at the national conference.

“Next, given the Boyer Commission’s Report entitled “Reinventing Undergraduate Education: A Blueprint for America’s Research Universities” with its ten-point plan for improving education, it would be useful, I think, to have some kind of discussion of how honors programs might develop initiatives to insure that their students are taking advantage of all that research universities offer as well as of how honors programs might lead the way towards improvements for all undergraduates.

“The Reinvention Center at SUNY Stony Brook is attempting to create a dialogue on these matters, and we might even consider inviting Wendy Katkin, the Center Director, to be a speaker (if the Program Planning VP would agree). She will be someone with an enormous knowledge of recent initiatives at research universities to improve undergraduate education.

“Below are some URLs to take you to the text of the Boyer report, two comments on the report, and the URL for the Reinvention Center.

http://huxley.phys.cwru.edu/pcuel/boyer.html
http://www.math.sunysb.edu/~preston/boyer.html
http://www.hardwickday.com/reading/profsnl/boyer1.htm
http://www.sunysb.edu/Reinventioncenter/

“One of the questions that comes to mind, of course, is how we should define what is special about going to a large university. We don’t, I think, do a terrific job of defining the benefits for undergraduate students at our institutions, even though we teach most of the undergraduate students in the country. Is there something special and different about our honors courses?

“Finally, is there research that we should be doing on our students and the ‘outcomes’ of the kind of education we try to give them? What kind of assessment tools are being developed out there?”

You can see where the NCHC headed. All roads lead to a real NATIONAL Collegiate Honors Council. You do your part, however. Recruit. Participate. Share. Stay in the NCHC yourself. We will be NATIONAL one of these days. Stay around to see it happen.

Food for Thought...

Recently Rosalie Otero, President-Elect and 2001 Conference Chair, conducted a survey to learn the effect that conference participation has on attendance. Approximately 97% of those responding stated that they did not need to be on the program in order to attend; 57.5% stated that their students did not need to be on the program in order to attend.
“The First Three Years”

by William L. Knox
Northern Michigan University

[Note: This article was first presented in a slightly different form at the 2001 Upper Midwest Honors Council Conference. At the end of the article is a copy of the questionnaire used for discussion at the conference. The questionnaire can be useful to individual honors directors as well.]

Introduction

When I first started the paper on which this article is based, I considered an approach that could only be described as subjective—something in the cinematographic vein of Captain Willard, the conflicted Green Beret assassin in Francis Ford Coppola’s *Apocalypse Now*. In one of his many voice-overs he explains that he cannot tell his story without telling that of his target, the renegade Colonel Kurtz, and of the resulting misadventures along the way to their shared destiny. Perhaps like Willard (and Conrad’s earlier literary model, Charlie Marlowe, in *Heart of Darkness*), I have felt as though I was pushing up an exotic river into the heart of academic program mystery since assuming the role as the first director of a new honors program three years ago. As much as I find such an expressive approach personally therapeutic, it will probably resonate less for others. So instead this short article will be grounded not in textual allusions but in objective experience that will highlight the need for flexibility—and gratitude—in new honors programs.

I. Flexibility and Progress of the Program

Addressing progress of new academic programs is usually a happy affair since the quantitative indicators—as in the recent television commercial depicting eager dot.com entrepreneurs staring closely at a computer screen for their first order—begin at zero and thereafter the numbers of students, teachers, and courses move upward—although in reasonable numbers not reaching the stratospheric heights seen by the dot.com hopefuls! On my campus, the Honors Program has grown steadily, modified its shape, and promoted flexibility to reflect the stresses and joys of the campus and higher education as a whole.

To begin, new student participation has grown from twelve new-admits three years ago to 45 and then to 53 in the next two years; retention has been at about 60%. We hope the retention outlook will continue to improve since the program, from the start, has learned to adjust to the realities of student life and institutional limits.

The original program vision assumed students would complete program requirements in orderly fashion: Students would complete the first-year core courses in humanities and arts, second-year core courses in natural and social sciences, third-year courses in students’ majors, and senior capstone experience in a neat four-year package. The plan, however, could have taken into account that student and institutional life can be messier than that for both teachers and students.

Since the Honors Program depends on the schedules of faculty borrowed from academic departments who must meet the scheduling needs of their major courses first, the times and days for our second-year courses sometimes conflict with those for courses essential for students’ majors. Because of this experience, the Honors Program now permits students to complete their second- and third-year courses in their third and fourth years. Nevertheless, scheduling conflicts persist, sometimes in combination with changes in requirements for academic majors and students changing majors, yet retention in the program should continue to be enhanced by acknowledging students’ necessary academic schedules.

The building of Honors Program faculty to teach courses has developed by plan and sometimes happy circumstance, principally because of the pushes and pulls caused by modestly increasing enrollment and university instructional budget. In the first two years, several faculty and departments stepped forward at once, partly on faith and on adjunct replacement monies, to teach in the new Honors Program. In the last year, several other individual faculty and one department in particular have taken ownership for courses. Moreover, I am happy to report that we now have several faculty “seasoned” by almost three
years in the program, two departments that have built in Honors Program teaching to their staffing plans (one of them on-load), and several faculty have made several-year commitments to Honors teaching. For the first time, we have the core of an “Honors Faculty” that we hope will be formalized in the coming few years.

For the first time this next academic year, we have a complete and approved four-year course plan. Although this curriculum will probably be tweaked, it is good to feel we have in some sense arrived—and so far have been able to keep the program vital by evolution.

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II. Practice versus Original Vision

As already implied, current practice needs to be understood compared to the original program vision in terms of the definition of Honors Program students, Honors Courses, and Honors Funding.

The original idea of an Honors Program—several years before I was asked to assume the responsibility of implementation—included recruiting and retaining, in greater numbers, students of high academic ability, defined by a recalculated high school GPA of 3.5/4.0 and a 27 ACT Composite, a letter of introduction from the student, and two letters of recommendation. These remain the normal criteria, but we have found that some of our most committed students are those who come from our wider pool—those who have a slightly lower academic score in either GPA or ACT. The program is also building by admitting students already in college—either as students already on campus or coming as transfers—with a 3.3 GPA as the academic guideline. Another original requirement of the program was that students must maintain a 3.0 GPA, but I have exercised director’s discretion in retaining a few students whose GPAs fall somewhat short but show a pattern of improvement toward the 3.0 level in the next year. Overall, admission and retention practices have created a richer mix of students and provided talented students with incentive to excel in their courses after a less successful first semester or two.

Honors Program courses have evolved—and will probably continue to do so. The original scheme of four first-year interdisciplinary courses in origins of western values and modern art remain intact as do the second-year social and natural science courses. However, the third-year courses, originally major-based, have been reshaped into 12 credits of contract courses numbered 300 and above that may be taken to meet one’s major, minor, or liberal studies. This requirement may be reduced by 4 credits if students complete one of the departmental honors courses in sociology or psychology. The senior capstone requirement has been modified from an Honors Program thesis to a department-based, senior-level directed study course with co-enrollment in HON 001—the zero-credit option to indicate fulfillment of the program requirement. Although not providing a shared Honors Program in the last year, this senior requirement has proven to be a popular prospect for students who desire more credits within their major fields—as well as another Honors Program course designation.

As with other features of the program, perception about support for the Honors Program has evolved from the original concept. As a student recruitment initiative in part, the Honors Program was planned to pay for itself with the additional students attracted to the university because of it. Although enrollments are growing steadily across campus as well as in the program, the ledger is still unclear about the direct impact of the program: Enrollments in the Honors Program lower-division interdisciplinary courses that meet liberal studies requirements do not neatly translate into a clearly perceived effect on lower division recruitment and retention. Nevertheless, with the improved enrollment picture for the university as a whole, the role of the Honors Program is viewed as positive.

Overall, the original program vision has not so much had pieces added or subtracted but has changed the shape of a number of its pieces in terms of student profile, course offerings, and model of funding. The outline of the original program remains, but, modified by experience, advice, and circumstances, it has undergone reasonable evolution that will probably continue.

III. The Future

One of three scenarios is always possible for new academic programs: fade away, stay the same, or grow as they must, if the need for them is present and recognized. The program that I have nurtured for three years will probably not fade away. Because of the current fiscal variables, the program will continue to admit its annual fifty new first-year students and some transfers for the meantime. However, the program will not stay the same but grow by solidifying faculty commitment and seeking
closer association with the variety of academic honors existing on our campus.

In the short term, I believe that an Honors Faculty will become a reality, as some of us have already made and others are making a commitment not just to a particular shape of program but a deeper one to an honors identity developing on our campus. Honors Program students and others will be served as the program associates itself more closely with academic recognition events, scholarship opportunities, and student organizations devoted to academic excellence.

In the long term, the Honors Program can expect a new, if modest, center that includes both offices and meeting areas for classes and seminars. The senior capstone perhaps will morph into an on-line seminar, a travel experience, or a forum for presentation of significant research. The Honors Program will grow in numbers of students and faculty, committed to one another, who will contribute to a more well-defined identity of scholastic and artistic excellence on our campus. And our Honors Program students will become a presence at state, regional, and national honors program events.

IV. Cooperation of Faculty and Administration

Of course, none of this—or any happy future—will happen automatically but the seeds of cooperation between administration, faculty, and students have been sown and the ground enriched in these first several years. At the 2000 NCHC Conference in Washington, one of the many buzzes in the hallways was the notion that honors programs, in a very real sense, resolve themselves often to just one person—the director. However, I have been aided in the last three years by faculty and administrators on my campus who have taken on the cause of the Honors Program, providing this inexperienced director with ideas and resources. It is the students, moreover, who are the best evidence of the vitality of the program.

It is their presence that, I believe, has encouraged faculty and administration to share responsibility for developing courses and staffing them. Last year at the Upper Midwest Honors Conference, I spoke of the essential difference between “support” and “commitment,” the former expressing itself as encouragement and the latter translating itself into courses and cash. On my campus, commitment is growing as departments see the advantages of Honors Program ownership.

This message is being heard above as well. Although the program was initiated during the tenure of the past academic vice president, the new provost has addressed every reasonable request for the necessities and even some extras for the program. Moreover, the president sees the Honors Program as an important element in the overall concept of a growing four-year university of student choice.

V. The Honors Program as a Divining Rod and as a Lightning Rod

All of us share a vision, but all of us work in a real world as well. The real world on our campus is one in which just as much is possible for the Honors Program as the campus as a whole. It is very difficult to find significant sponsorship for the program, but we are thankful for a substantial endowment that has created a scholarship program, giving preference to new Honors Program students with financial need. We can continue with current budget arrangements and program office space in the next several years, but the Honors Program remains at once a divining rod and a lightning rod. The contrasting images are intentional: The first is a device attracted to potential springs of sustenance while the second is designed to attract and then shunt away the source of catastrophe.

Yes, the Honors Program, as a bent divining rod, is finding that the university administration and departments are willing to find make much-appreciated resources available. By the same token, the Honors Program must also wait its turn. Recently when I was attempting to staff an Honors Program course, the answer I received from departments was largely identical: They did not have the staff to meet every requirement for their own programs. The director thus sometimes finds himself “riding the lightning,” his program in danger of falling short because of needs shared by more than one department on campus.

If I could return to my opening literary and cinematographic allusions of the story of a journey up an unknown river: I do not believe that the story of honors programs end in a heart of darkness—the
Measuring Your Program

Simply jot a short answer for each item below. These will not be collected but please feel free to share your responses during our short discussion period.

1. What is one measure of progress in your program?

_______________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________

2. How well does your current program resemble the original vision of it?

_______________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________
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3. In three years will your program look very much the same or different?

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_______________________________________________________________________
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4. What kind of cooperation by whom has caused your program to evolve?

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_______________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________

5. How well does your program reflect what is true of the institution at large?

_______________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________

from William L. Knox—Northern Michigan University
“The First Three Years: Retrospective on a New Honors Program”
Upper Midwest Honors Council—2001 Conference
North Central College—April 5-7, 2001
An honors student...

defines an honors program, but an honors program does not define an honors student. A poor student doesn’t care about being smart. An average student cares about knowledge for the moment. An honors student cares about both and carries around that wisdom for a lifetime.

An honors student also....

- respects the thoughts, opinions, and voices of everyone
- takes the initiative to help others in need
- researches facts but puts them together with principles and theories
- takes the lead but only after asking for the help of others
- investigates the root of the problem before finding a solution
- makes an excellent leader and an equally-excellent follower
- works to be well-rounded and to keep an open mind to succeed in a diverse society
- networks, networks, and networks, because closed mouths do not get fed
Level Differentiation in the United States

by Earl B. Brown, Jr.
Radford University

Part I: A Brief History of Honors

Discussing level differentiation is not as easy as it might sound. Wouldn’t it make sense to differentiate according to ability so that students actually competed against their peers, so that instructors could teach to a more homogeneous group of students, and so that students would have a greater opportunity to reach their potential. Yes, Yes, and Yes. So what makes this so difficult? That difficulty can be found in the controversy which any talk of differentiating brings. Key to the controversial nature of level differentiation is its social and political implications.

To understand level differentiation in the United States, we must briefly review those political and social forces that have created and influenced education. Honors as a concept has existed in the United States since the 1870’s. Because of the various social and intellectual movements in the United States, the idea of honors and level differentiation has gone in and out of favor over the past 130 years.

endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights, among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.” With democracy itself: “government by the people, for the people and of the people.” This has come to mean that all are entitled to the same: the same education, the same opportunity to be happy and successful—both of which have become defined increasingly as material wealth and as living in the same neighborhood in the same exact house. The development of Levittown in the early 1950’s on Long Island is just one manifestation of that desire for sameness—for what has been called in America, keeping up with the Joneses. But the founding of the United States on democratic principles does not explain many of the characteristics that have come to symbolize America and Americans.

The growth of the nation, its westward movement, were accomplished by those independent, self-made men who settled and tamed the west—such men as Davy Crockett, Daniel Boone, and especially those men and women who came to the new world on ships, not knowing what to expect or what they would find. Emulating them were all those who took

“Level differentiation refers to the distinction between honors and non-honors courses and how honors creates such distinctions (differentiations) according to the ability (level) of the students.”
their life in their hands and traveled westward to start life anew in hostile territory. So, if Daniel Boone can do it, why can’t you? If someone from the ghetto can pull himself up by his bootstraps (Clarence Thomas, for example, a current Supreme Court justice), then why can’t anyone from the ghetto?

This combining of democratic principles and rugged individualism led not surprisingly to leveling rather than differentiation and a disdain for the theorist, the intellectual. Or, in the words of my rugged, individualist father-in-law, “Those who can, do. Those who can’t, teach.” This disdain surfaced as anti-intellectualism.

The United States has a long history of anti-intellectualism set forth perhaps most effectively in Richard Hofstadter’s *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life*. These forces dominated the education, religion, politics, and social programs of the United States throughout much of our history: examples include (a) the Know-Nothing Party of the early 1850’s, (b) the belief in self-help and the myth of the self-made man, (c) the increasing materialism revealed in the dominance of business, (d) more recently in Political Action Committee (PACs) lobbyists whose persuasive influence has changed the nature of our democracy, (e) the life adjustment theory of education which dominated the education landscape from the end of the nineteenth century until the late 1950’s and still dominates in many places today, and (f) the increasing fundamentalism of American religion which has seen many parents demand changes in curriculum, removal of books from library shelves, and attempts to ban Halloween from primary schools on the grounds that it celebrates witches and witchcraft.

None of this is surprising given our early history: (a) the Salem witch trials, (b) the Puritan discrimination against other religious persuasions—banning Roger Williams and others from the Massachusetts Bay Colony, and (c) the enslavement of African blacks which became the basis of the social, economic, and political structure of the South from the late seventeenth century until the end of the Civil War (1865) and still has great influence over our political and social attitudes.

Anti-intellectualism has had such an enormous impact on American education that the brief overview provided above does not do justice to its pervasive influence. The United States has had two competing views of what education ought to be since the turn of the twentieth century: one view sees education as a preparation for life and includes the traditional liberal arts subjects while the other sees education as training, a preparation for one’s job, “Education as a conduit to rationality vs. education as a conduit to practicality” (Batson 33). The “conduit to practicality” can be clearly seen in the creation of technical and vocational colleges whose mission was to “quickly [turn] out skilled students ready to assume their economic position in the burgeoning free-enterprise economy. Specialization was emphasized, and general education was reduced in importance. The pursuit of classical learning was considered extraneous and superfluous to prepare one for productive membership in society” (Batson 33). Richard Hofstadter echoes much the same theme when he states:

> Life adjustment educators soon became convinced that their high educational ideals should be applied not merely to the neglected sixty per cent: What was good for them was good for all American youth, however gifted. . . . These crusaders had thus succeeded in standing on its head the assumption of universality once made by exponents of the classical curriculum. Formerly, it had been held that a liberal academic education was good for all pupils. Now it was argued that all pupils should in large measure get the kind of training originally conceived for the slow learner. American utility and American democracy would now be realized in the education of all youths. (352-353)

By 1952, the life adjustment educators’ philosophy dominated our schools:

> In the name of utility, democracy, and science, many educators had come to embrace the supposedly uneducable or less educable child as the center of the
secondary-school universe, relegating the talented child to the sidelines. One group of educationists, looking forward to the day when ‘the aristocratic, cultural traditions of education (will be) completely and finally abandoned,’ had this to say of pupils who showed unusual intellectual curiosity: ‘Any help we can give them should be theirs, but such favored people learn directly from their surroundings. Our efforts to teach them are quite incidental in their development. It is therefore unnecessary and futile for the schools to gear their programs to the needs of unusual people.’ (Hofstadter 352-353)

To understand how pervasive this pragmatic approach to life had become, we need only look at the victory of Eisenhower over Stevenson in the 1952 presidential election. This victory seemed to herald the triumph of big business and vulgarity over intellectualism, and McCarthyism over the first amendment. Or, look at the disdain in the United States for the critic: “Don’t knock, boost!” was the cry of Warren Harding. To which the corollary was plain: anyone who knocks is a bad person with a grudge. As a result, the American has always reacted to the setting of standards rather the way Count Dracula responds to a clove of garlic or a crucifix”(Vidal 27). Vidal extends this dislike of standards to the English sentence: “Worse, to say that one English sentence might be better made than another is to be a snob, a subverter of the democracy, a Know Nothing [American political party (1853-56) aimed at excluding foreign born from the government and making it difficult for them to become citizens] enemy of the late arrivals to our shores and its difficult language” (28). Or, Tony Whall’s defense of the substance of Allan Bloom’s Closing of the American Mind, “The easy assaults on ‘Western Culture’ have nothing to do with a learned comparative examination of cultures and everything to do with this mistaken belief amounting almost to a modern faith that it is wrong to assert that one belief or idea or culture is better than another—that it is (the dreaded E word!) Elitist to do so” (14).

Tony Whall’s reference to elitism as that “dreaded ‘E’ word” reveals another component of our anti-intellectualism. One of our nation’s greatest fears is the return to an aristocratic-like system, exemplified by the political structure of our mother country. Richard Nixon was accused, for instance, of trying to invest the presidency with a sense of monarchy. But this attack on elitism has done much more damage to college and university honors education than it has done to the trappings associated with the presidency. To quote Rew Godow in his article on selectivity in honors, “Even if elitism is pernicious, evil, undemocratic and downright un-American, selectivity need not be any of those things” (8).

That the life adjustment philosophy continues to have its anti-intellectual influence on education is evident. Look, for example, in the growth of community college programs in vocational technology, or even here in Radford, where my daughter’s middle school focused on socialization and adjustment rather than on reading, writing and arithmetic. My daughter’s middle school, however, is not the only school district that follows this approach. According to the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) of 41 nations done in 1995, American fourth graders scored above the international average in both science and math; by the eighth grade, however, while scores in science were still above the international average, math scores had fallen below. By the twelfth grade, both scores were below international average even for advanced students (National Center for Education Statistics). These statistics would seem to support Hofstadter’s statement that American education “is more universal, more democratic, more leisurely in pace and less rigorous than its European counterparts and also more wasteful” (324).

A brief hiatus to this dominance occurred immediately after the Soviet launching of Sputnik in 1957. Suddenly the United States was losing the cold war. It was time to rethink our approach to education. Schools began to track students, seeing in these gifted students resources with which to fight the cold war (Hofstadter 5). The United States had a brief love affair with the intellectual and with level differentiation in primary and secondary schools and the creation of college
honors programs nationwide after Sputnik. My own experience in the late fifties was probably not atypical of the level differentiation occurring in school systems at this time. I was continually placed into classes differentiated by the level of ability of the students. So, even though I was not in an Advanced Placement section of English, nor in a section of honors English, my classmates in my particular section of tenth-grade English were still students in the top 15% of our class.

Because of Sputnik, foundations decided to fund proposals that offered opportunities for gifted and talented high school and college students. In 1958 the Carnegie Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation provided the Inter-university Committee on the Superior Student (ICSS), the forerunner to the National Collegiate Honors Council, with grants to encourage the development of honors programs especially in four-year public universities but also to a lesser degree in four-year privates.

Gifted and talented programs in primary and secondary schools and honors programs in colleges and universities sprang up all over the country. Level differentiation became the norm. Honors Programs relied on scientific, quantitative testing for placement. The rationale for such level differentiation was usually formulated in this manner:

Children are born with various abilities and talents. Education and experience help transform potential into giftedness and students of the world into world leaders in science, technology, art and ethics. The particular role of gifted education is to push the edge of the envelope by inspiring and challenging our students to engage in the hard work required to realize the gifts and talents with which they were born. (Statement of the Pulaski, VA County School Board)

Joseph Renzulli, a leader in the study of gifted and talented programs, describes the purposes of such programs:

The literature on the gifted and talented indicated that there are two generally accepted purposes for providing special education for high potential youth. The first purpose is to provide young people with opportunities for maximum cognitive growth and self-fulfillment. . . .The second purpose is to increase society’s reservoir of persons who will help to solve the problems of contemporary civilization by becoming producers of knowledge and art rather than mere consumers of existing information (Renzulli).

These two purposes led to a different approach to instruction, from a focus on education as life adjustment to education as preparation for life—from teaching content-based knowledge (product) to skill-based knowledge (process and application). Just as the life-adjustment educators argued that what was good for the lower 60% of the students was good for all, so, too, Joseph Renzulli argued that “[T]he gifted community was the first group of educators to ‘discover’ the process models and implement practical applications of them into special program experiences. . . . These experiences were appropriate for all students” (Renzulli).

This flirtation with level differentiation was short-lived because of the growing awareness that level differentiation seemed to justify a separate but equal approach to education that was unfair, undemocratic and, as the Civil Rights Movement revealed, a rationale for segregation. The impetus for the Civil Rights Movement can be found in the Supreme Court decision known as Brown vs. Board of Education (1954) outlawed separate but equal—an idea espoused as early in the nineteenth century by Andrew Jackson who modified the idea that all men are created equal into all men are entitled to equality of opportunity. The Supreme Court ordered the integration of all school systems and required busing of children to create truly integrated schools.

“The United States has had two competing views of what education ought to be since the turn of the twentieth century: one view sees education as a preparation for life and includes the traditional liberal arts subjects while the other sees education as training, a preparation for one’s job...
The Civil Rights Movement thus changed our attitude towards education once again. Level differentiation, the new trend in education, seem to justify what had held sway in the South for the first fifty years of the twentieth century—school segregation. Whites and blacks attended what Southern politicians referred to as “separate but equal education,” a form of differentiation based on race. In the struggle for integration that followed, the notion of separate but equal came to represent all that was unfair about American democracy. Affirmative Action became the law of the land. School districts and employers had to take positive steps to insure that no one was being discriminated against because of race, and then later because of sex and religion, and, even later, sexual orientation. No longer could school systems discriminate on any basis, not race, not sex, not religion, not sexual orientation and, to extend that, not on the basis of achievement or abilities, not for any reason.

Level differentiation’s unfairness became manifest to a nation seeking to redress the wrongs of two hundred years of prejudice and discrimination. The idea that those not labeled gifted do not get the same education, much less the same opportunity for education as do their more talented peers was seen as just another manifestation of our discriminatory practices. Jonathan Kozol remarks,

If there were a multitude of schools almost as good as these [selective schools, governor schools, etc.] in every city, so that applicants for high school could select from dozens of good options—so that even parents who did not have the sophistication or connection to assist their children in obtaining entrance to selective schools would not see their kids attending truly bad schools, since there would be none—then it would do little harm if certain of these schools were even better than the rest. (109)

Kozol goes on to link level differentiation directly to discrimination: “The slotting of black children into lower tracks, according to the Public Education Association of New York, is a familiar practice in the city. Nationwide, black children are three times as likely as white children to be placed in classes for the mentally retarded but only half as likely to be placed in classes for the gifted” (119).

In a nation founded on fairness, level differentiation, whether it occurred within a school (often called tracking) or within a school district (magnet or governor’s schools), came increasingly to be seen as unfair as did the level of funding different school districts received per pupil:

The difference in spending between very wealthy suburbs and poor cities is not always as extreme as [it] is in Illinois. When relative student needs, however, have been factored into the discussion, the disparities in funding are enormous. Equity, after all, does not mean simply equal funding. Equal funding for unequal needs is not equality. The need is greater in Chicago, and its children, if they are to have approximately equal opportunities, need more than the children who attend [suburban schools]” (Kozol 55). As this fairness doctrine took hold, studies done on the once-sacrosanct scientific testing measures revealed their inadequacy. Part of the argument advanced by the life adjustment educators was the accuracy of science and scientific findings. “Nothing could be more certain than that science has proven false the doctrine of general education and its fundamental theory that memory or the imagination or the reason or the will can be trained as a power” (Hofstadter 345). Hofstadter reveals the anti-intellectual undercurrent in this reliance on science, “Contrary, then, to what had been believed by exponents of the older concept of education as the development of intellectual discipline, there are no general mental qualities to be developed; there are only specific things to be known” (345-346).

Scientific testing was found wanting. Too many students developed test-anxiety. Too many qualities were overlooked by scientific testing. How can scientific tests measure motivation, desire, persistence, and curiosity? It can only measure potential and achievement, and even here as Kozol and others have pointed out, potential and achievement depend on equality of opportunity. If we are going to fund gifted and talented programs, we need to find some way to assess qualitative as well as quantitative measures in order to assure fairness.

Much the same problem faced college admission officers with regard to the Scholastic
Aptitude Tests, one of the main determiners of college and university admissions throughout the United States. Studies revealed that these tests were also biased, biased against those who inhabited the inner cities and attended inner city schools. Increasingly those came to be minorities as whites fled to the suburbs. These studies forced some college and university admission officers to look at other factors, but as we will see later, many honors programs and many admission officers still rely heavily on the SAT as a major factor in admission. One of these other factors was high school grades. But here again, other forces contributed to their inadequacy. Many high schools had been influenced by peer pressure and the increasing violence in our high schools to opt for grade inflation as a way to “pass children along” and as a way to avoid the violence and disruption that might occur in the classroom. So, when admissions officers read a student’s file and learn that the student with a grade point average of 3.8 out of 4.0 is only in the top half of his class, what can they conclude but that students grades are not a true indicator of potential success in college. Grade inflation has infiltrated college ranks, too, leading many state governments to demand that higher education find other means of assessing student abilities beyond grades (but that’s a different essay).

It is not difficult to see how all of these forces have created a distrust of our educational system, especially of level differentiation. This distrust has fueled our inherent anti-intellectualism and our inherent self-interest for tax cuts at the expense of education. Wealthier suburban school districts still put a premium on education, although the percentage that is paid in taxes to support education is often less than the percentage paid by those whose children attend inner city schools (Kozol 55). At some point during these past 50 years, however, level differentiation and enrichment programs became a matter of funding, became a matter of the wealthier school districts in suburbia being able to hire administrators of gifted and talented programs or faculty to teach enrichment, instead of a matter of offering such programs nationally in all school districts. I can recall that my suburban elementary school experience included enrichment classes in art and music; not so for my daughter, even though she lives in a college town where we supposedly place a higher value on education.²

In attempting to meet the growing inequality in school districts, some states have provided equal funding for all school districts in the state. The effect of that has often led to a taxpayer revolt, a cry for lower taxes, and ultimately, mediocre schooling for all. California, for instance, after such a taxpayer revolt, ranked forty-sixth out of 50 states in funding for education, although “the state ranks eighth in per capita income. Its average class size is the largest in the nation” (Kozol 221).

With dwindling resources, school boards and university academic officers must determine how to allocate these resources to maximize educational opportunities. It takes three times as much money to provide for the educational needs of the mentally, emotionally or physically challenged (Waggaman). Yet, a 1975 federal law mandates that school systems must provide for them in the least restrictive environment possible. Obviously, then, in the allocation of resources, the average and the gifted and talented get a smaller percentage of what’s available. But the same dwindling of resources which has affected primary and secondary schools has also taken its toll on public institutions of higher learning.

The cost for honors programs is similar to the costs for the challenged in primary and secondary school. Both are more labor intensive: the challenged often require on-one instruction; the college honors course is limited to a ratio at most of 20 to 1 while its non-honors equivalent can run as high as 200 to 1. If instead, the honors program offers team-taught interdisciplinary seminars, that ratio can be as few as 10 to 1. That, of course, excludes such other cost-factors as more intensive advising and post-university scholarship preparation (Rhodes, Marshall, Fulbright, etc.), extra-curricular cultural activities, greater space allocation and the administrative costs of running such a program. The doctrine of fairness, especially in the publicly-funded institutions of higher learning, is always a shadow looming over a program’s head.

Our brief, if not simplistic history of the controversy surrounding level differentiation in the United States ends where

"Equal funding for unequal needs is not equality."
Jonathan Kozol
it began, with “a crucial tug of war between equality and excellence” (“The Primacy of the Intellectual Purpose” 2). Quoting from the Rockefeller Brothers Report on Education, “The Pursuit of Excellence,” the editor of The Superior Student underscores this “tug of war”:

It has not always been easy for Americans to think clearly about excellence. At the heart of the matter is a seeming paradox in democracy as we know it. On the one hand, ours is the form of society which says most convincingly, ‘Let the best man win,’ and rewards winners regardless of origin. On the other, it is the form of society that gives those who do not come out on top the widest latitude in rewriting the rules of the contest. It is crucial to understand this tug of war between equality and excellence in a democracy. When the rewriting of rules is prompted by the standards of fair play, by elementary considerations of justice, by basic value judgments as to what sort of ‘best man’ society wants, democracy can have no quarrel with it. Indeed, it is the core process of a democracy. But when the rewriting of the rules is designed to banish excellence, to rule out distinguished attainment, to inhibit spirited individuals, then all who have a stake in the continued vitality of democracy must protest.” (“The Primacy of the Intellectual Purpose” 2)

Or, as Joseph Cohen, the first president of ICSS, said, “the pursuit of excellence and a democratic education are two sides of the same coin” (3).

Yet, using the same idea of fair play as found in the Rockefeller Brothers Report, Jonathan Kozol disagrees with their conclusions, “There is a deep-seated reverence for fair play, and in many areas of life we see the consequences in a genuine distaste for loaded dice; but this is not the case in education, health care, or inherited wealth. In these elemental areas we want the game to be unfair and we have made it so” (223).

But how can the game ever be fair when findings suggest that both high achievers and low-achievers benefit from working with the same group: “High achievers, when working on complex material, should have opportunities to work with fellow high achievers. Low-achievers, however, learn better when paired with higher-achieving students” (“‘Differential Effects of Grouping’”).

1 For your information, Netherlands’ students scored above the international average for all three grade levels in both and their twelfth graders scored the highest in math and second highest in science.

2 For more information on urban vs. suburban schools and the effect of wealth on primary and secondary education, see Jonathan Kozol’s scathing indictment of the American educational system in Savage Inequalities.

[PartII: Level Differentiation and Honors Programs, in Fall 2001 issue.]

Works Consulted

Waggaman, Linda. Interview with Ms. Waggaman, Director of Instruction for Pulaski County Schools, formerly Director of the Gifted and Learning Program. November 21, 2000.
"Honors Advising at NCHC Institutions"

by Bob Spurrier
Oklahoma State University
Co-Chair, NCHC Ad Hoc Committee on Honors Advising and Major Scholarship Preparation

One of NCHC’s “Basic Characteristics of a Fully-Developed Honors Program” suggests “There should be provisions for special academic counseling of honors students by uniquely qualified faculty and/or staff personnel.” A review of NCHC publications over the last decade produces numerous articles on honors pedagogy and honors courses in *The National Honors Report* as well as several articles on recruiting and peer mentoring, but very little on honors advising by faculty and professional staff is to be found. Sam Schuman’s *Beginning in Honors* monograph (third edition, 1995): 25-26 considers two administrative approaches to honors advising, and Ada Long’s *A Handbook for Honors Administrators* (1995): 15 lists honors advising in its checklist of honors responsibilities. Two *National Honors Report* articles have dealt with the issue. See Bob Spurrier and Natalie Bruner, “Developing a Parallel Honors Advising System,” *The National Honors Report* XV No. 1 (Spring 1994): 5-8, and Andrea Labinger, Monica Schwartz, George Emerson, Ann Minnick, Matt Campbell, Bob Spurrier, and Alaina Harrington, “The Nuts and Bolts of Honors Advising,” *The National Honors Report* XVII No. 3 (Fall 1996): 13-16.

In August, 2000, a questionnaire was mailed to institutional members of NCHC in an effort to obtain information on honors advising. Responses were received from 164 institutions, and these responses provide the data for this article.

(1) The first question dealt with the question of who provides honors advising, with the following results; more than one answer was possible N = 162:

- Administrators = 117 (72%)
- Faculty = 67 (41%)
- Professional Staff = 58 (36%)*
- Student Peers = 21 (13%)

*In the case of institutions using professional advising staff, an optional item requested information about average salary and produced the following data (N = 37):

- Low = $18,000
- Average = $31,250
- High = $50,000

(2) The next question dealt with the purpose(s) of honors advising (N = 163):

- Course Selection = 156 (96%)
- Career Counseling = 79 (48%)
- Graduate School = 83 (51%)
- Honors Requirements = 159 (98%)
- Financial Aid Advice = 31 (19%)
- Other = 37 (23%)

These responses indicate that curricular matters (honors requirements and course selection) are almost universally included in honors advising, while graduate and career counseling take place at only about half of the institutions responding to the survey. Financial aid advice is even less frequently a part of the honors advising process.

(3) The frequency of contact between the honors advisor and the honors student was another issue addressed by the questionnaire (N = 137):

- Once = 77 (56%)
- More Than Once = 60 (44%)

While a slight majority of respondents indicated that once-an-academic-term contact was the norm, a very large portion (44%) indicated multiple student contacts with honors advisors.
(4) Another dimension is whether honors advising is required or voluntary. Here we see a nearly even split in the practices of the respondents (N = 158):

Required [for at least some students] = 78 (49%)  
Voluntary = 80 (51%)

(5) At a time in which evaluation and assessment seems to be a crucial factor in almost every aspect of higher education, the questionnaire responses produced one very surprising result. This question asked whether there is a formal evaluation of honors advisors at least once a year (N = 163):

Yes = 33 (20%)  
No = 130 (80%)

This response pattern raises at least the possibility that honors advising is not taken as seriously as one might hope since 80% of the respondent institutions do not have any form of annual evaluation. (It would be interesting to know the response pattern if we had asked whether there is a formal evaluation of honors teaching at least once a year.)

“In August 2000, a questionnaire was mailed to institutional members of NCHC in an effort to obtain information on honors advising. Responses were received from 164 institutions, and these responses provide the data for this article.”

One item that might readily be included in the evaluation of honors advising is a survey of honors students. By way of information, the honors advising questionnaire that we use at Oklahoma State University is provided at the end of this article. The questionnaire is mailed to honors students along with information about enrollment for the following semester. Students are asked to place their completed questionnaires in a box in the Honors Study Lounge (typically when they come for their honors advising appointments, which are mandatory if they wish to enroll in honors courses).

The NCHC Ad Hoc Committee on Honors Advising and Major Scholarship Preparation wishes to encourage increased communication about honors advising in all its dimensions. Sessions on honors advising at national and regional honors conferences can play an important role in this regard, and we hope that at least some of these sessions will result in articles in The National Honors Report and the Journal of the National Collegiate Honors Council. Perhaps more details on honors advising can be included in future revisions of NCHC monographs. In addition, information about honors advising might be a useful item in the next edition of Peterson’s Guide to Honors Programs. If we take the “Basic Characteristics” as seriously as we should, greater dialog about honors advising certainly is in order.

WEB SITES FOR MAJOR SCHOLARSHIPS
from the NCHC Ad Hoc Committee on Honors Advising & Major Scholarship Preparation, Bob Spurrier, Co-Chair

- British Marshall Scholarships  
  http://www.britishcouncil.org/usa/usabms
- Churchill Scholarships  
  http://members.aol.com/churchill
- Fulbright Scholarships  
  http://exchanges.state.gov/education/bfs
- Goldwater Scholarships  
  http://www.act.org/goldwater/
- Mellon Fellowships  
  http://www.woodrow.org/mellon/
- Mitchell Scholarships  
  http://www.usirelandalliance.org/mitchell/
- Rhodes Scholarships  
  http://www.rhodesscholar.org/
- Thurgood Marshall Scholarships  
  http://www.thurgoodmarshallfund.org/
- Truman Scholarships  
- Udall Scholarships  
  http://www.udall.gov/p_scholarship.htm
Honors Advising Questionnaire, 2000-2001
from The Honors College, Oklahoma State University

Please take a few minutes to complete this questionnaire and bring it with you to your honors advising appointment so that you can drop it in the box in The Honors College Office. Thank you.

1. Your honors advisor (please circle): Campbell  Phelps  Spurrier  Watkins

2. How long has this person been your honors advisor? _______________________

3. Your college (please circle): AG  AS  BU  ED  EN  HE  UA

4. Your classification (please circle): Freshman  Sophomore  Junior  Senior

5. Approximately how many times have you seen your honors advisor this school year? ________

   Was this a sufficient number of times? (please circle)  Yes  No

   If “no,” please explain briefly.

6. At this point, do you plan to complete your Honors College Degree?  Yes  No  Unsure

7. How would you describe your experience with your honors advisor?

Please indicate your responses on items 8-12 dealing with your honors advisor, using “4” as the best score and “0” as the worst score. “N/A” means that this item is not applicable to you.

8. Knowledge and explanation of Honors College policies
   4  3  2  1  0  N/A

9. Assistance in planning your honors class schedule to meet Honors College award requirements
   4  3  2  1  0  N/A

10. Ability to refer you to other services on campus (if requested)
    4  3  2  1  0  N/A

11. Availability to answer your questions
    4  3  2  1  0  N/A

12. Cares about you as a person
    4  3  2  1  0  N/A

Please feel free to comment on any of these items.

13. What advice would you give your honors advisor?

14. How would you describe your regular academic advisor’s attitude toward your participation in The Honors College? (please circle)  Supportive  Neutral  Not Supportive
Executive Secretary/Treasurer’s Report - June 2001
by Earl B. Brown, Jr.

FINANCIAL REPORT

The books for the year ended 2000 have been closed. The NCHC received an unqualified opinion as a result of the financial review. (The Finance Committee mandated an audit every six years or whenever a new Executive Secretary/Treasurer is elected and a financial review in the other years; our last audit occurred for the year ended 1997.)

For the year ended 2000 the NCHC had a surplus of approximately $6,500 [General Fund surplus of $43,177; Reserve and Endowment Fund deficit of $68,961; Conference Fund surplus $32,361]. All outstanding bills have been paid and Reserve Fund requirements have been met—[1/2 conference 2001 budget $315,000 + 1/2 headquarters 2001 budget $124,600 = $219,800]. The total in Reserve Fund as of 12/31/00 was $290,596; therefore, the excess of $6,500 will fund scholarships (see Standing Orders under Scholarship, Prizes and Grants).

Let me quickly review the procedure for handling excess. According to the principles established by the Investment Committee and approved by the Executive Committee, Conference and General Fund surpluses are to be used in the following manner: (1) pay outstanding bills; (2) add funds to the Reserve Fund, if necessary, so that it is, at least, at the minimum mandated level; (3) provide scholarship funds according to the NCHC Standing Orders; and then (4) any remaining funds are invested in the Endowment Fund.

In my Spring 2000 report I stated that then-President Joan Digby proposed a different use for some of the monies ear-marked for the Endowment Fund. The Executive Committee authorized the 1999 Conference surplus be used to fund honoraria for those who led the Evaluation Workshop in Brooklyn, a student writing a dissertation on honors, and the work of the Edward Howard and Co., public relations firm for the year 2001. It is my hope that you will provide information to the External Relations Committee and to Nora Jacobs of Edward Howard and Co. to facilitate their efforts on our behalf. Nora and other members of the firm spent some time at the MidEast Conference and have spoken with many of the officers of the NCHC.

(A) Report on the 2000 Conference

The conference realized a surplus of $32,361 thanks in no small part to the efforts of Hew Joiner, the Conference Planning Committee and Gayle Barksdale. Gayle’s work to line up overflow hotels was instrumental in allowing the record number of participants to rest their heads. Hew showed incredible patience in working with a hotel that forgot or ignored its promises to us. I have attached a spreadsheet to this report that lists income and expenses for the 2000 conference as well as an estimated budget for the 2001 conference. This spreadsheet is the final report on the 2000 conference. It shows revenues of $440,233 and expenses of $407,872.

(B) Quarterly Reports

The first quarter 2001 financial report was mailed to members of the Executive Committee on May 15. The revenues were 28% of the projected year’s total and expenses were 24% of the budgeted year’s total.

In comparison to first quarter 2000: revenues are 39% higher and expenses are 38% higher. For the first quarter 2000 revenues were 18% of projected revenues and expenses were 22% of budgeted expenses. Please feel free to ask questions about this report. Copies are available upon request.

(C) Financial Concerns

1. Non-Profits. I would like first to clear up what may be a misunderstanding regarding the nature of non-profit corporations, such as the NCHC. According to the IRS, non-profits are organizations in which no part of their income is distributable to its members, directors, officers, stockholders, etc. Non-profits are not prohibited from making an excess of profit over revenue, just prohibited from distributing that income. For the well-being of our organization and its continued financial solvency, it is imperative that the NCHC have a Reserve Fund to cover financial emergencies and also have an Endowment Fund whose dividend income may be used to fund projects, approved by the Executive Committee, which will further the NCHC mission. The Endowment Fund currently generates very little in dividend income. In order for it to generate enough dividend income to fund projects, it needs to grow.

2. Revenues and Expenses. At some point and that point is quickly approaching, revenues will level off. Membership has already begun to level off (see table below). We must start thinking about the future now. With revenues leveling off and expenses increasing, we must find a way to continue to fund the activities that are essential to the day-to-day operations of the NCHC—Headquarters, the Portz Fund, the publications, and providing Scholarships to support the
work of the Honors Semesters Committee. The Portz Fund has lost the yearly support from the Portzes who are no longer mentally and physically able to contribute. That means the Portz Fund has lost 50% of its funding. The Portzes also provided scholarship monies for students participating in Honors Semesters. We need to decide first what are the essential elements and activities that we wish to continue to fund—a task begun by the Finance Committee at its Spring 2001 meeting. We then need to decide how to fund these activities within our budget.

The two most effective ways to fund the activities of the NCHC are (a) to increase revenues (since revenue is derived solely from membership dues, this would mean an increase in dues) and/or (b) decrease expenses (this would mean no expansion in the services the NCHC currently provides to its members).

(a) Increase Revenues. Some history may be useful. The membership last voted to increase dues at the annual business meeting held in San Francisco November 2, 1996. Institutional membership dues increased from $200 to $250 (with the proviso that this increase would allow the director and four faculty members to attend the conference at the member rate—all students could already attend at the member rate. In 1997 the Bylaws were amended to permit all faculty from a member institution to attend at the member rate.) Professional membership dues increased from $35 to $50 for professionals whose institutions held active membership. Student dues were not increased at this time. A new dues-paying category was established for professionals whose institutions did not hold active membership. This fee was set at $125. Below is a visual representation of dues increases since 1980:

(b) Decrease Expenditures. This will affect services the NCHC provides and projects the NCHC would like to develop to support honors education. It may reduce committee allocations, reduce the amount that the Portz Fund and Grants Committee will be able to distribute as grants, and may reduce the number of monographs the NCHC can publish.

3. Other Financial Information. The NCHC Financial Statements include an amount for “in-kind contributions.” This is the amount that officers’ institutions contribute to the NCHC. For headquarters at Radford University, this includes the Executive Secretary/Treasurer’s salary and other expenses borne by Radford, such as the allocation of office space (five offices and access to a conference room), computers (RU has purchased several computers for the NCHC), work study students (RU has provided 2 students for nine months and 1 student for the summer), access to phone lines, e-mail, websites and listservs, fax machines, and the time and work of the Grants and Sponsored Program office, the Accounting office that handles payments to NCHC staff, and the Purchasing department. For the other officers, their individual institutions provide in-kind contributions relative to the amount of time the officer devotes to the NCHC.

This excludes the in-kind contributions made by committee chairs (phone calls, faxes, mailings) and committee members who attend committee meetings during the spring or summer. All of these expenses are borne by the home institution, sometimes by the honors program, and sometimes by individuals who must pay for their own travel.

This is just to remind the membership of how dependent the NCHC is on the goodwill of individuals and institutions. The NCHC is, in every sense of the word, a volunteer organization.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

As of 12/31/00, the NCHC had 1142 members (752 I, 292 P, 69 S, 29 C). This is four more than at 12/31/99. But, and more importantly, we have 75 more institutional members. The decrease in professional and student members is understandable; since these two categories produce less revenue than does institutional membership, the decrease was not as costly. The total membership is in the mid 1100’s, a range that we have maintained since 1996.

In 2000 we mailed out 86 starter packs. Of those, approximately 70% now hold memberships (59 institutions and 1 non-member professional), a decrease of 10% over last year’s rate. Of the 59 institutions that joined, 7 were previously profes-
sional memberships from non-member institutions; 3 were lapsed members that rejoined; 10 joined with an application from the NCHC website; 1 joined with an application from the NHR; and 3 joined because of information on the NCHC provided on Stamats QuickTakes (which provides insights into research, planning, and integrated marketing for colleges and universities published as an e-mail to subscribers).

Here is the text of the e-mail on the NCHC published by Stamats, Nov 20, 2000:

“National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC)

One of the best ways to increase the academic quality (and reputation for academic quality) is through the creation of an effective honors program. Institutions who are interested in creating an honors program, or refurbishing an existing program, should consider the resources provided by the National Collegiate Honors Council. In addition to program materials, the NCHC also offers seasoned consultants who can help you get your program off the ground. For more information, contact Earl B. Brown, executive secretary, at ebrown@runet.edu.”

The NHR in its Spring 2001 issue published some statistics compiled by Stamats Communications, Inc. on how high school students select a college or university. To subscribe to this on-line newsletter, send a message with the word “subscribe” in the subject field to: stamats quicktakes@stamats.com

The NCHC also provided 31 Native American colleges with complementary memberships for the year 2000 under then-President Joan Digby’s initiative.

OTHER INFORMATION

1. Conference Attendance: I once again have reviewed conference attendance data. What I have noticed was how similar the percentages were to those who attended in 1996, 1997 and 1998. For example, 44% of the attendees in 1996 were students, 46% in 1997, 47.5% in 1998, 46% in 1999 and 48% in 2000. What had changed is the number of non-members attending and the percentage of student presenters: in 1996 approximately 10% of our attendees were non-members, but because of the Bylaws change in 1997, we had no non-members attend the conference in 1997, 1998 and 1999—all attendees were from member institutions. In 2000, however, we had 17 non-members in attendance. Although in 2000 we once again had a change in conference format, still some 60% of presenters were students as compared to 61% in 1996, 64% in 1997, 51% in 1998 and 64% in 1999. See the attachment on conference attendance.

On the spreadsheet, for the first time, is information on the number of institutions that return to the conference from one year to the next. In 1996, 65.68% of the institutions that attended the 1995 conference in Pittsburgh also attended the 1996 conference in San Francisco. In 1997, 71.73% of the institutions that attended the 1996 conference in San Francisco also attended the 1997 conference in Atlanta. For the years 1998 and 1999 the percentages remain fairly constant. For the 2000 conference 77.87% of those institutions that attended the 1999 conference in Orlando attended the 2000 conference in Washington, DC.

I don’t want to make more of these numbers than the fact that they give us some idea on how many institutions are returning year after year. As to whether we make changes dependent on that information is up to future program planning committees. What struck me was that given the number of returning institutions we must be doing something right. I also have broken down participation by region, based on a sample of 200 attendees from each conference. For those really curious, I can tell you which institutions have attended in which years, beginning with 1995.

2. CMS’s Income and Expenses. We need to keep in mind that all services performed for us by CMS that are not part of the contract must be negotiated with CMS. For instance, we agreed to pay CMS out of the General Fund, beginning with the 1997 conference, 10% of the dues that CMS collects as part of registration. This came to $2,831 in 1997, $2,726 in 1998, and $2,325 in 1999. The Executive Committee voted at its Spring 1999 meeting to no longer have CMS collect dues in conjunction with registration beginning with the 2000 conference. The NCHC also agreed per contract to pay CMS 60% of late fees collected. When, therefore, the Interim Operations Board chooses to refund late fees, the NCHC is not just refunding the $40 but is taking $25 (the $25 paid to CMS) out of its own pocket. When we ask Mary Bradford to help select sites for the Retreat/Executive Committee meetings, her fee is $500 a day plus expenses. Our current contract with CMS expires after the 2003 conference in Chicago.

3. Conference Sites. Conferences 2001 and 2003 will be in Chicago. Mary Bradford has successfully negotiated with the Hilton Corporation to change our site for 2001 because we have outgrown the Minneapolis Hilton. The Palmer House has agreed to take
us in 2001 and rebate some of the profits to Minneapolis (so that we do not have to pay contract stipulated damages) if we agree to return in 2003 to the Palmer House. Dates: Conference 2001: October 31-November 4 in Chicago, Palmer House Hilton. Conference 2003: November 5-9 in Chicago, Palmer House Hilton.

Conference 2002. Thanks to the efforts of Esther Radinger, we will hold our 2002 conference at the Little America Hotel and Towers in Salt Lake City, October 30-November 3.

4. Interim Operations Board Meeting—The IOB did not meet formally this year. Instead, we have been conferring by phone approximately every two weeks. I sent all members of the IOB end of the year 2000 information concerning the conference, the budget and other financial information as well as draft copies of minutes of the Executive Committee and Business meetings.

5. Regional Conferences—At the fall 1999 Conference, then President Bob Spurrier and other officers met with officers from the regions to discuss NCHC representation at the regional conference. All regions were eager to have such representation. Each of the officers attended a different regional conference with Earl Brown attending two. I know that all officers have discussed the relationship between NCHC and the regions at sessions during the regional meeting. If we are to reap the benefits of attending these meetings, these issues need to be addressed.

CHECK IT OUT

Many of us have been talking about how important it is for honors to begin having a voice in major publications of higher education. You might want to take a look at Elissa Guralnick’s “Breaking with Tradition: Honors Composition for Gifted Seniors,” Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning 33.3 (May/June 2001): 59-64. In her piece for this national publication of the American Association for Higher Education (AAHE), Guralnick argues: “It is time for universities to break with tradition and offer honors composition indeed, actually require it of students who are academically gifted” (61). Although the essay is not about honors education per se, and although restricted to the issue of developing writing skills among honors level students, it’s a good read. Check it out.

— John Zubizarreta, Columbia College SC

from

WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO SAY?

Let your colleagues hear it. Send your ideas about teaching and learning, the role of honors at your institution, advice to newcomers in honors (directors, students & faculty), problems you face in honors (and their solutions), and anything else you want others to know about honors. The high turnover of honors directors and the four-year cycle of students mean your ideas will be new to many others. Please share your wisdom.


Send your articles to mcbrown@radford.edu or to 606 Third Avenue, Radford VA 24141. Clear black and white photos can accompany your articles if you send them.
### CONFERENCE PROJECTION WORKSHEET

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<td>59</td>
<td>1500 x 210</td>
<td>1951 attended</td>
<td>1400@210</td>
<td>1522 attended</td>
<td>1400@210</td>
<td>1621 attended</td>
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<td>Misc Income</td>
<td>60</td>
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<td>Refund Expense</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>(5,270)</td>
<td>(4,823)</td>
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<td>Interest Income</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>2,203</td>
<td>1,796</td>
<td>3,367</td>
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<td>TOTAL INCOME</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>315,000</td>
<td>440,233</td>
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<td>Luncheon</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>16,780</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>11,377</td>
<td>11,500</td>
<td>11,634</td>
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<td>Breakfasts (includes Tea Market)</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>2,900</td>
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<td>Sunday Rolls &amp; Coffee</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>6,347</td>
<td>8,000</td>
<td>8,375</td>
<td>8,375</td>
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<td>Student Caucus (snack)</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>16,780</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Contingency/Adjustments (C)</td>
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<td>TOTAL EXPENSES</td>
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</table>

**NET INCOME (LOSS):**

| 2001 | 700 | 32,361 | 1,000 | 60,230 | 1,275 | 2,910 | 29,230 |

**LEGEND**

- B - $500 AA Lib Edn; $500 Creighton, $1,000 NY Times, $1,000 OP/K, $1,000 PKP, $7,500 Self; $300 Utah, $1,000 Wash Cr, $1,000 shirt, $730 Book Sales.
- F - Fixed Expenses
- V - Variable Expenses
- C - Beginning 1998, Misc eliminated; for budgeting. Contingency has no FN acct no.; actual expenses will be allocated to FN accounts.

**THIS IS A WORKING DOCUMENT USED FOR CONFERENCE PLANNING ONLY**
## Summary of Conference Attendees 1996-2000

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</thead>
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<td>members attending</td>
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<td>institution()</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>375</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>383</td>
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<td>committee chairs [(I) not in their name]</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>executive cmte members [not (I)]</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>officers [not (I)]</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>honorary lifetime members</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>former officers [not (I)]</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>professional/affiliate</td>
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<td>160</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>155</td>
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<td>student</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>50</td>
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<td>total members attending</td>
<td>437</td>
<td>570</td>
<td>603</td>
<td>559</td>
<td>617</td>
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<td>non-members whose (I) is member</td>
<td>659</td>
<td>807</td>
<td>981</td>
<td>945</td>
<td>1264</td>
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<tr>
<td>guests</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>complimentary/other</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>one day attendees</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>total attendees</td>
<td>1246</td>
<td>1479</td>
<td>1621</td>
<td>1522</td>
<td>1949</td>
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<tr>
<td>presenters not listed as CMS' registrant</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>249</td>
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<tr>
<td>(did not attend conference)</td>
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<tr>
<td>number of institutions attending</td>
<td>375</td>
<td>403</td>
<td>457</td>
<td>452</td>
<td>497</td>
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<tr>
<td>number of institutions attending (which attended previous year)</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>352</td>
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<tr>
<td>percentage of institutions returning</td>
<td>65.68%</td>
<td>71.73%</td>
<td>70.47%</td>
<td>68.70%</td>
<td>77.87%</td>
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<tr>
<td>student attendees, (%)</td>
<td>553 (44%)</td>
<td>687 (46%)</td>
<td>770 (47.5%)</td>
<td>700 (46%)</td>
<td>950 (48%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>number of presenters</td>
<td>585</td>
<td>655</td>
<td>648</td>
<td>719</td>
<td>1146</td>
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<tr>
<td>student presenters, (%)</td>
<td>358 (61%)</td>
<td>419 (64%)</td>
<td>331 (51%)</td>
<td>450 (64%)</td>
<td>693 (60%)</td>
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<td>Institution Attendance by Region</td>
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<td>96</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>110</td>
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<td>Southern</td>
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<td>115</td>
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<td>120</td>
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<td>Others</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>375</td>
<td>403</td>
<td>457</td>
<td>452</td>
<td>497</td>
</tr>
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</table>

* approx 50 attended Honors Semesters reunion

** CMS gives official figure as 1205 but list of registrants totals 1246

*** CMS gives official figure as 1484 but list of registrants total 1479

**** CMS attendance list for 1999 did not designate student attendees. So, the numbers are an estimate.

***** CMS gives official figure as 1951 but list of registrants totals 1949

### Individuals attending the national conference by region (based on a sample of 200 individuals)

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<thead>
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<th>Location</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>NE</th>
<th>SR</th>
<th>ME</th>
<th>LUM</th>
<th>GP</th>
<th>WR</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>San Fran</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>26 (13%)</td>
<td>55 (27.5%)</td>
<td>32 (16%)</td>
<td>28 (14%)</td>
<td>29 (14.5%)</td>
<td>30 (15%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>200 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>30 (15%)</td>
<td>59 (29.5%)</td>
<td>24 (12%)</td>
<td>28 (14%)</td>
<td>32 (16%)</td>
<td>26 (13%)</td>
<td>1 (0.5%)</td>
<td>200 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wash DC</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>42 (21%)</td>
<td>56 (28%)</td>
<td>26 (13%)</td>
<td>18 (9%)</td>
<td>28 (14%)</td>
<td>30 (15%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>200 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

THIS IS A WORKING DOCUMENT USED FOR CONFERENCE PLANNING ONLY
What is the NCHC?

The National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC) was established in 1966 as an organization of American colleges and universities, students, faculty, administrators, and those interested in supporting honors education. Historically, the honors movement has been a catalyst for positive change in American higher education. Many of its innovations—undergraduate research, study abroad, experiential learning—have become standard features of mainstream post-secondary curriculum. NCHC members, both individually and together, continue to respond to the special needs of exceptionally talented and motivated students through a wide variety of programs and activities.

• NCHC encourages the creation of and renewal of honors programs by offering popular annual workshops: Beginning in Honors®, Developing in Honors, and Students in Honors.
• NCHC supports existing honors programs with a full slate of national, regional, and statewide conferences, forums, and workshops.
• NCHC promotes a better understanding of current issues and developments in honors education through its two publications, The Journal of the National Collegiate Honors Council, a scholarly journal, and The National Honors Report, a professional quarterly.
• NCHC creates new learning opportunities for students: theme-based Honors Semesters, in places like Appalachia, the Grand Canyon, and Greece; and Sleeping Bag Seminars, where students from several institutions get together for a weekend of theme-based learning and socializing.
• NCHC sponsors a wide range of committees and programs that support specific constituencies, such as Large Universities, Small Colleges, Science & Math, Two-Year Schools, as well as committees and programs that address specific concerns of honors education, such as Teaching and Learning, Evaluation, and Research.
• NCHC provides grants through its endowed Portz funds to support innovations in honors programs.

NCHC Publications


Honors Programs at Smaller Colleges (2nd ed., 1999) by Samuel Schuman. For colleges with fewer than 3000 students.

Place as Text: Approaches to Active Learning (2000) edited by Bernice Braid and Ada Long. Information and advice on experiential pedagogies, using City as Text® as a model, as well as suggestions for adapting these models to a variety of educational contexts.

Teaching and Learning in Honors (2000) edited by Cheryl L. Fuiks and Larry Clark. A variety of perspectives on teaching and learning which are useful to anyone developing or renovating honor curricula.

To order any of these monographs, contact the national headquarters office.
Monographs are $2.50 each for NCHC members and $5.00 each for non-members.
Interested in joining the NCHC?

Please use the application below to apply for membership.
Mail your payment with the application to:

Earl B. Brown, Jr., Executive Secretary/Treasurer
National Collegiate Honors Council
Radford University
Box 7017
Radford, VA 24142-7017

Questions? Please call us at (540) 831-6100 or fax us at (540) 831-5004.
You can also email us at nchc@radford.edu

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

I wish to apply for the following membership (check one):

_____ Student ($35)
_____ Institutional ($250)
_____ Faculty from member institution ($50)
_____ Faculty from non-member institution ($125)
_____ Affiliate Member ($50)

I enclose $__________________ in payment of a one-year membership.

Name (print or type)__________________________________________

Title______________________________________________________

Institution__________________________________________________

Mailing Address______________________________________________

City, State, Zip______________________________________________

Telephone_________________________ Fax______________________

Email______________________________