TTU Honors Program

SACSCOC Fifth-Year Interim Report, Institutional Effectiveness, 2012

Submitted by Director, Honors Program

1. **Program Mission:**
   
   To stimulate intellectually gifted students to achieve academic breadth and depth; and to enrich their sense of the world and themselves through substantial and challenging co-curricular activities.

   The Honors Program is a non-degree academic program conferring the designation *in cursu honorum* for students successfully completing its course requirements. Please refer to [http://www.tntech.edu/honors/about/](http://www.tntech.edu/honors/about/) for details.

2011-2012 Honors student population: 808 students currently tracked (includes both active and inactive undergrads who took Honors 1010)

- 521 Actively taking Honors courses
- 284 Inactive (either not taking courses, or not fulfilling requirements consistently)
- 3 Status unknown

The Honors database has tracked a total of 975 students since the database was developed in 2006. Total enrollment by year for 2006-2010 is not available, but improved tracking methods have been put in place during the past year to make such data more easily accessible in the future.

2. **Learning Outcomes and Program Goals**

   a. **Student:** Students will demonstrate growth in critical thinking and creative problem-solving.

   **Program:** Provide small, in-depth course offerings in general education, interdisciplinary colloquia, and other curricular and co-curricular opportunities that will foster critical thinking and creative problem-solving, especially research in and across the disciplines.

   b. **Student:** Students will demonstrate the ability to make connections between intellectual and personal growth through innovation, questioning, and reflection.

   **Program:** Provide programming, advisement, seminars, and other opportunities for mentorship and planning; provide a venue for fostering an intellectual community of undergraduates.

   c. **Student:** Students will gain agency as members of the larger community through exploration of service, greater knowledge of current events, and study abroad, especially in relation to the major field of study.

   **Program:** Integrate service activities into curricular and extracurricular activities; mentor student projects involving the international community and current affairs; promote and provide advisement for students seeking study abroad programs focusing on their academic interests.
d. **Student**: Students will demonstrate an understanding of the varieties of leadership and authority by improving interpersonal communication, team-building, practical experience, and interdisciplinary exchange.

**Program**: Provide opportunities for students to develop and execute projects involving peer mentoring, teaching, learning, organizing conference participation, and management of other events in and out of the classroom.

### 3. Assessment Methods:

a. Students in Honors 1010: Introduction to Honors (required for all Honors students in their first fall semester) are required to research a current issue or cultural practice with which they were previously unfamiliar, resulting in a culminating oral and written project, the World View Project, followed by leading a class discussion on the topic. (Goals a, b, c) (Appendix A)

b. Honors 1010 faculty and students are invited to share their suggestions for improvement, and students evaluate their experience of the Honors Freshman Retreats. (Goals b, d) (Appendices A, B)

c. First-year students have individual meetings with their Honors 1010 instructor (during the first two weeks of class) and with their course peer mentor (between weeks 5 and 7) for support and referral on topics including study abroad, peer tutoring, service opportunities, internship and future fellowship/grad school planning, research mentoring, and honors course plans. (Goals a, b, c, d)

d. The Honors Graduate Assistant tracks number of and reason for meetings with freshmen and sophomores. We use this information to identify topics for workshops, areas to stress in e-mails, class units, advising, and course planning. Through meetings and almost daily discussion with the directors, the GA provides ongoing feedback from a near-peer perspective. (Goals a, b, c, d) (Appendices B, C)

e. The Honors Program student database tracks progress in program requirements, GPA, study abroad and co-op participation, major. The database is used to determine needs for classes, improvement of information flow, preparation for individualized advising, eligibility for early registration and other benefits; and thus addresses retention and student satisfaction. We are working on analysis of factors such as high school GPA, ACT score, 1010 section and course grade, student’s major, and college GPA. (Goals a, c) (Appendix C)

f. Students performing alternative scholarship service through Honors Program Enrichment Options (HPEO) complete commitment forms for monitoring their progress in their selection of service, leadership, extracurricular, and scholarly activities. (Goals a, b, c, d)

g. All students who enroll for Honors Contract credit must 1) negotiate the terms of the contract with a faculty member to design an Honors project for a regular course section and 2) submit a written evaluation of their project or research upon completion, including a summary of their work, methods used, and a reflection on what they learned. (Goals a, b)
h. Honors colloquia (three-credit interdisciplinary seminars on topics not taught at TTU) are subject to approval by the Honors Council, an advisory board comprised of students and faculty in equal number. Honors colloquium proposals are assessed to ensure a combination of intellectual rigor and accessibility to students in all majors; this approval process engages students in critical analysis of pedagogical standards, as well as serving as a concrete method of evaluating potential course content. (Goals a, c, d) (Appendix D)

i. Graduating senior exit essays and interviews: Students graduating in cursu honorum write two essays, one in which they must demonstrate critical thinking as applied to a controversy in their major field of study, and one in which they review their personal and intellectual growth throughout their four years as Honors students. A professor chosen by the student from their major department (preferably one with whom they have performed advanced study) and the Honors director interview the student for one hour, basing discussion on the two essays. (Goals a, b, c, d)

j. Review of student’s individual portfolio during advising, and self-assessment of the portfolio by the student at graduation. The portfolio includes a record of courses taken, copies of recommendations and awards, a four-year plan and autobiography written in the freshman year, Honors Contract summaries (see above), Directed Studies plans, and copies of research papers and other documents the student wishes to include. (Goal b)

k. Review of co-curricular and extracurricular activities supported by the Honors student organization, the Associated Scholars Guild (ASG) is conducted every two weeks by the ASG’s Steering Committee, consisting of seven student leaders, the Honors Associate Director, and the Director. Each Steering Committee student member serves as a liaison to the organization’s 14 student committees and three publications. (Goal d)

l. Assessment of Program space requirements to accommodate administrative, curricular, and co-curricular goals. (Goals a, b, c, d) (Appendix F)

m. Evaluation forms completed by our students when they attend honors state and national conferences, assessing both what they learned from presentations by other universities as well as their own experiences as presenters. (Goals a, b, d)

n. The California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST) taken by all Tech graduating seniors (Goal a) (Appendix G)

o. Recommendations from the 2007 Future of Honors Committee Report at the request of the former Provost for Academic Affairs. (Appendix H)

4. Results of assessment:

a. Need for greater variety and number of Honors courses (Methods c,d,e,g, i) (Appendices E, H)

b. Annual revision of Honors 1010 syllabus with student and faculty input. (Methods a, b, c, d, e) (Appendices A, B)
c. Need for smaller freshman retreats with greater variety of choices (Method b) (Appendix B)

d. Need to increase community service opportunities (Methods a, b, f, i, k) (Appendices A, B, H)

e. Need to improve student involvement in undergraduate research, as well as readiness for internships, knowledge of graduate school options and study abroad funding, and preparation for competitive fellowships. (Methods c,d, f, g, i) (Appendices B, C, H)

f. Need for revision of exit interview critical thinking essay guidelines. (Method i)

g. Need for improved tracking. (Methods c, d, e) (Appendix C)

h. Need for improving student knowledge of Honors Program requirements, Honors Contract procedures, and Directed Study options. (Methods b, c, d, e) (Appendices A, B, C)

i. Need for more space for seminars, meetings, storage, and offices. (Method l) (Appendices F, H)

j. 1) Need to improve method of gathering and reviewing feedback from students following their participation in honors state and national conferences. (Method m)

2) Students giving presentations at honors conferences: Total number reflects all presentations (research, pedagogy, and programming innovations).

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Tenn State Honors Conference (TCHC)</th>
<th>National Collegiate Honors Conference (NCHC)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>11/2</td>
<td>8/Research: 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>16/Research: 4</td>
<td>12/Research: 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>16/Research: 12</td>
<td>4/Research: 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>10/Research: 9</td>
<td>7/Research: 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>8/Research: 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>10/Research: 7</td>
<td>10/Research: 10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

k. Need to educate graduating seniors about the ramifications for both themselves and the institution in completing the critical thinking exam conscientiously. (Method n) (Appendix G)

l. Need to create a student leadership workshop focusing on practical and conceptual skills. (Method k)
5. Summary of key continuous improvement achievements and the impact on the program:

a. **Classes (4a):** Added Honors Introduction to Theater to address need for humanities elective offerings; arranged for a group honors contract in Transportation Engineering for upper-division CE students fulfilling their Honors requirements, added additional sections of Introduction to Honors. The impact of staffing shortages in the disciplines has been partially addressed by improving student familiarity with Honors Contract procedures and opportunities via advising, publicity, and Honors 1010 information.

b. **HON1010 syllabus revision (4b):** Course revisions and re-arrangement of units have increased the integration of units on critical thinking, values, models of personal growth, planning for undergraduate research and study abroad, graduate study, and awareness of international issues. (Appendix A)

c. **Number of freshman retreats (4c)** increased in 2011 from two to four; each retreat offered a different set of experiences. Freshmen could choose which retreat to attend: service, recreation, or a combination.

d. **Community service opportunities (4d)** increased in number and availability: In 2006, the ASG Service Committee constituted the primary venue for community service for the Honors community. Since then, opportunities have included a three-credit Service Learning Colloquium, service-themed sections of Honors 1010, a 20-hour community service option through HPEO in cooperation with the University Service Center, development of ASG’s Ginkgo Grant for innovative community service initiatives by an Honors alum or current student, and community service projects in three of the four freshman retreats.

e. **Undergraduate research, internships, grad school, study abroad, fellowships (4e):** Alumni and current students write first-hand accounts of their experiences with programs such as National Science Foundation’s Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU), Oak Ridge National Laboratories (ORNL), the State Department’s Critical Languages training, the application process for medical school and law school, both short and year-long study abroad trips, graduate school preparation, and the fellowship application process for the *Honors Handbook* (the Honors freshman textbook) and *Honorable Mention* (the Honors newsletter). We plan to add this information to our website. Sophomore and junior advising covers how to find a research mentor, and all students are invited to meet with the director for this purpose. HPEO’s scholarly activity unit has created more rigorous criteria for student research-based workshops, and is now used as an additional opportunity to engage students in exploring mentorships within their departments. Student participation in state and national honors conferences has become increasingly focused on research-based presentations. In 2007, Honors launched a nationally competitive fellowships initiative, and joined the National Association of Fellowships Advisors (NAFA). The Honors director serves on the provost’s undergraduate research committee. A chapter on undergraduate research will appear for the first time in this year’s edition of the *Honors Handbook* (forthcoming August 2012), with contributions by current and past Honors students writing about their own paths as undergraduate researchers. See table below (section e 2) for study abroad data.
e. 2) Number of Honors Program students studying abroad/Total TTU students studying abroad

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13/80</td>
<td>23*/145</td>
<td>8**/53</td>
<td>14**/47</td>
<td>14**/47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Includes an Honors-sponsored course with seven students.

**Totals do not reflect Honors students participating in group trips associated with courses.

f. **Revision of exit interview essay guidelines (4f):** During the past five years, the guidelines for the critical thinking essay completed by graduating Honors seniors (see section 3.i) have changed to focus on critical thinking in the student’s discipline; previously, students responded to a series of prompts about social issues without necessarily drawing on the student’s ability to apply discipline-specific knowledge. Since the revision, students must write about a controversy in their academic field while demonstrating their critical thinking skills.

g. **Improved communication for student tracking (4g):** Employment of a graduate assistant and improvement of protocol for exchanging data between the secretary, grad assistant, associate director, director, and Honors 1010 faculty and peer mentors. (Appendix C)

h. **Increased formal venues for teaching and reviewing Honors Program requirements, Honors Contract procedures, and Directed Study options (4h):** The Honors 1010 unit on making a four-year plan is revised to explicitly include individual plans for meeting Honors requirements; innovative contract examples will be included in the forthcoming edition of the *Honors Handbook*. Applicants for positions as Honors student mentors (Big Sibs and Honors 1010 mentors) must take a quiz until they achieve 100% prior to appointment. (Appendices A, C)

i. **Documentation of need for and nature of additional space (4 i):** An Honors Council committee measured existing space and presented a report based on findings in 2010. A version of this report, to include updated program enrollment statistics and a comparison to other Honors facilities in the state, is planned for the coming year. (Appendix F)

j. **Revision of evaluation form for students returning from state and national honors conferences (4j):** Questions on the form ask for specific ideas gleaned from presentations, rather than open-ended questions about what the student learned and enjoyed.

k. **Promoting better honors student participation in the critical thinking test for graduating seniors (4k):** Honors seniors will be informed during their pre-exit interview appointments and in their graduation packets beginning this year about the implications of performance funding and institutional reputation, and how their personal efforts on this exam impact the future of the university as a whole. (Appendix G)
1. **Creation of a student leadership workshop (4L)**, the Leadership Extravaganza, revised each semester by Honors student leaders to respond to the needs of the student organization (ASG). The workshop focuses on practical and conceptual skills needed to organize events, manage committee members, plan publicity, obtain funding, and troubleshoot problems.

**APPENDIX**

A. Honors 1010 syllabus revisions
B. Advising and interview forms
C. Honors Program tracking categories and summary of data
D. Honors Colloquia
E. Honors courses in the disciplines
F. Space and facilities
G. CCTST data
H. Recommendations from the Future of Honors Committee

**Appendix A. Honors 1010 Syllabus Revisions, 2006-2011**

- Added Fair Use Quiz in accordance with UNIV 1020-equivalent course requirements
- Added Sexual Harassment Quiz in accordance with UNIV 1020-equivalent course requirements
- Added Honors Freshman Retreat in order to encourage a sense of community and exchange with other Honors students who are not in their course section. (Appendix B)
- Reduced routine “business” conducted during class sections (e.g., taking individual photos of freshmen, miscellaneous scheduling, excessive announcements) to maximize time for in-depth discussion and goal-related exercises.
- Revised logical fallacies and defense mechanisms unit reflects more timely examples for critical thinking exercises.
- Before the first class meeting, students must now read “The Nuts and Bolts,” a seven-page overview of the program (previously assigned for the second class), to encourage basic procedural questions and class participation from the first day.
- As part of the course, students perform community service through one or more of the following venues: a) a theme-based service section; b) service projects incorporated into the Honors Freshman Retreats (see Appendix B); c) fulfillment of the Salmon Form assignment (do something new and write about it); d) other projects by arrangement by section.
- A pilot section for extraordinarily driven freshmen focused on research readiness, early preparation for nationally competitive internships and fellowships, and related issues within the context of the standard Honors 1010 syllabus.
- Addition of a new unit on student leadership, including readings by alumni and current student leaders representing a variety of leadership styles, backgrounds, and majors.
- A reading on models of personal development was condensed from 18 pages to 10 pages, including new illustrations, in response to overwhelming requests to make the reading more user-friendly.
- Units on preparing for a career, grad school, and study abroad now include and are annually updated with first-person accounts by current students and recent graduates writing about their own process
(and what they would have done differently) in applying to law school, medical school, veterinary school, and other topics.

- Integration of units to create a more unified approach to course critical thinking goals and practical application of skills and of the students' shared experience of the class. For example, units previously entitled “Values Clarification” and “Privilege and Prejudice” have been reconfigured as “Logic and Ethics,” followed by “Thinking about Values” to encourage students to analyze situations in light of the content of the previous unit, “Improving Critical Thinking Skills.” This change provided exercises and discussions to address students’ lack of experience in articulating issues and opinions about ethnicity, social class, immigration, and other controversial topics in a mature and respectful manner.

- The reading about HPEO has been removed from the syllabus, and is assigned separately to HPEO-eligible students.

- Revision of the four-year plan assignment, moved from class 4 to class 7, has expanded to cover an entire class session entitled “Making the Most of What?” This change places greater emphasis on making first-year plans in the context of long-term academic, career, and personal goals. In order to give the material an immediate application, it is now scheduled for the week before advisement. This allows instructors and their peer mentors to assist students in choosing an Honors course, projecting plans for co-op, internships, study abroad, and developing a realistic set of year-by-year goals.

**Appendix B. Sample Advising/Tracking Forms**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student's name</th>
<th>Major</th>
<th>GPA</th>
<th>Expected graduation date</th>
<th>Current residence</th>
<th>Advisor</th>
<th>Today's date &amp; time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Honors courses (semester/yr taken/planned)</td>
<td>How is sophomore/junior year different than freshman year?</td>
<td>How have things changed?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hon 1010, 15 hrs/3 depts, 2 colloq:</td>
<td>Concerns/questions?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Is the student secure in major?

Does the student have a faculty member who serves as a mentor in major? If not, plans for getting one:

Is the student interested in summer work or going on co-op? (Note plans/advice given)

Is the student interested in study abroad or travel abroad? (Hon 4023 Directed Studies may be available during formal study abroad; see Director of the Honors Program)
What does the student plan to do after TTU? What financial considerations or other concerns do they have concerning these plans?

Has the student thought about grad school? (Do they know that teaching or research assistantships are often available?) Plans/advice for preparation (e.g., looking for schools that specialize in their areas of interest, teaching experience, research w/a professor, volunteer work related to their field, etc.):

Priorities:

Advice/Referrals Summary: __ in cursu honorum planning (see section above) __ mentor in dept. ____________

Planning to be a Big Sib (yes/no) HAM referral(s) ____________ International Office __ Grad school info sources ____________ Career/Co-op Office __ Summer opportunities (REU, internships, etc.) ____________

________________________ Scholarship/financial aid sources ____________

OTHER:

APPENDIX C. Summary of Honors Programming Tracking Data

Honors student population: 808 students currently tracked (includes both active and inactive undergrads who took Honors 1010)

- 521 Actively taking Honors courses
- 284 Inactive (either not taking courses, or not fulfilling requirements consistently)
- 3 Status unknown

Still in tracking system, by year of enrollment:

- 2007: 17
- 2008: 103
- 2009: 180
- 2010: 221
- 2011: 285

College GPA:

- Dec 2011 average college GPA for all tracked students: 3.24 (Range: 0.29-4.0)
- Dec 2011 average college GPA for active students (taking Honors classes): 3.55 (Range: 2.21-4.0)
• 2005 data: 3.05 for all students tracked; highest recorded previously: 3.09 (Source: Honors Program History and Demographics, Feb 2007, Honors Future Committee of the Honors Council)

High School GPA:

• All Honors students tracked: 3.67 (Range: 2.14-4.0)
• Active Honors students: 3.70 (Range: 2.14-4.0)

Other information tracked for individual students: number of Honors courses completed, study abroad, coop.

**Appendix D. Sample Recent Colloquia**

Honors students are required to take two Honors Colloquia, courses designed and proposed by Tech faculty members.

*Latin language*

*Research In and Across the Disciplines*

*Clean Energy, Sustainability, and Climate Change*

*STEM Education*

*Geoscience in the Postmodern World*

*North African Francophone Literature*

*How We Know What We Know in Math and the Sciences*

*Space-time Physics*

*The History of Afghanistan*

*Innovative Green Technologies*

*Service Learning*

*The Supreme Court's Greatest Hits and Misses*

*Irish Literature in a Postcolonial Context*

*Sustainable Economic Development in a Crowded World*

*The Brain: A Modern Perspective*

*The Presidency*
Appendix E. Honors Courses in the Disciplines

Honors students must complete 15 credit hours of Honors courses (or contracts) in the disciplines, distributed over at least three disciplines (in addition to Honors 1010: Introduction to Honors and two Honors Colloquia). These courses are usually General Education sections with the -800 suffix.

Number of Honors Courses Offered:

Spring 2006: 9
Fall 2006: 10
Spring 2007: 10
...
Fall 2009: 13
Spring 2010: 14
Fall 2010: 14
Spring 2011: 13
Spring 2012: 13

Link to Honors courses typically taught in Fall and Spring:
http://www.tntech.edu/files/honors/courses_typical.pdf

Appendix F. Honors Program Space and Facilities

(Source for measurement data: 2001 Honors Council Subcommittee on Facilities Evaluation)

Main Office: TJ Farr 204B 265 sq. ft.

Functions:

- Reception area for visitors (prospective students and parents, current students and others waiting for an appointment or otherwise conducting business in the office)
- Secretarial work area (including copy machine, FAX unit, and reference bookshelves)
- Student clerical work area consists of the reception desk.
- Overflow activity when Lounge is in use for classes, meetings, and workshops
- Storage of current records and frequently used supplies
Honors Seminar Room and Lounge: TJ Farr 204A 637 sq. ft.

Functions:

- Seminar and class space when no official classroom space is available; this requires closing the Lounge and computer access, moving the upholstered furniture, and setting up folding tables. Space limitations on campus have recently required stacking furniture to accommodate classes four days per week.
- Student co-curricular workshops, committee meetings for ~700-member honors student organization with 17 committees, Honors Council meetings, and social functions.
- Study sessions and tutoring, informal meetings and training sessions
- Meeting with visiting prospective Honors students of three students or more due to lack of a meeting room.
- 2010-2011 minimum standard upgrades have rendered the 12 desktop PCs obsolete. Purchase last year of four round tables and chairs, as well as a locked cabinet for laptops, anticipate the conversion to a wireless environment in accordance with campus-wide plans.
- Work area for projects requiring space such as mailings, projects requiring dry-erase board space, etc.

Director’s Office: TJ Farr 204C 110 sq. ft., accessible via the main office

- Work space for director, including built-in desk/cabinets lining two sides of the office.
- Storage space for frequently accessed supplies including paper, folders, and other desk items.
- Small round table for meetings can accommodate up to four people.

Storage closet and GA Office: ~90 sq. ft.

- Meeting space for GA and one student
- Storage of inactive student files, office supplies, recruitment materials, and student organization materials.

Honors Associate Director’s Cubicle: 90 sq. ft. area partitioned by metal panels within the vending machine area

- Work space for associate director, including desk and seating area for students.
- Functions of Associate Director require frequent meetings with students concerning scholarships, housing concerns, and mentoring. There is lack of privacy in this area as well as excessive noise generated by machines and conversations in adjoining areas.

Honors Housing: Murphy Residence Hall

- Major improvements: furnishing of study rooms in unused storage areas on the fifth floor, purchase of a ping-pong table and wide-screen television for common space in the lobby, wireless access.
- Student representatives (the Honors Housing Advisory Board) assist the associate director in identifying and prioritizing areas for improvement focusing on Honors student needs.
- There are approximately 120 beds in Murphy Hall, filled by a roommate matching process based on a two-page questionnaire developed by students.
- While this hall has not yet been converted officially to a Learning Village, this process will potentially alleviate some space concerns reflected in the sections above.
Appendix G. California Critical Thinking Standardized Test Data

Results below suggest that Honors graduates need to be informed about the institutional and personal ramifications of applying themselves when they sit for the CCTST. Beginning this year, graduating seniors will be informed of the implications of this test for performance funding and the reputation of the University.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Honors</th>
<th>TTU</th>
<th>National Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010 (n=20)</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>~16.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011 (n=14)</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>~16.8</td>
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Appendix H. Recommendations to Enhance and Strengthen Tennessee Technological University’s Honors Program (Source: Provost’s Future of Honors Committee Report, May 11, 2007)

Based on the basic criteria cited by NCHC [http://nchchorisk.org/faculty-directors/basic-characteristics-of-a-fully-developed-honors-program/](http://nchchorisk.org/faculty-directors/basic-characteristics-of-a-fully-developed-honors-program/), the Dean of the ETSU Honors College, and responses to the Honors Program survey, the following recommendations are made. These recommendations will build on the solid foundation established historically by the university Honors Program and enable it to meet future challenges. The recommendations, if implemented, will strongly establish the Honors Program as a vital member of the university’s academic programs. Bulleted statements are NCHC criteria.

- The honors director should report to the chief academic officer of the institution.

Recommendation 1 – The Honors Program director should be a full-time, 100% administrative position.

Recommendation 2 – The Honors Program director should report directly to the university provost and academic vice president. Currently the Honors Program director reports to an associate vice president for academic affairs.

Recommendation 3 – The Honors Program director should be assisted by a full-time, 100% administrative associate director. The associate director should be involved in shaping policy and procedures for certain aspects of the program; the level of cooperation and communication with the director needs to be ongoing.

Recommendation 4 – The Honors Program should have two full-time secretaries.

- The director or other administrative officer charged with administering the program should work in close collaboration with a committee or council of faculty members representing the colleges and/or departments served by the program.

- The program should have in place a committee of honors students to serve as liaison with the honors faculty committee or council who must keep the student group fully informed on the program and elicit their cooperation in evaluation and development. This student group should enjoy as much autonomy as possible conducting the business of the committee in representing the needs and concerns of all honors students to the administration, and it should also be included in governance, serving on the advisory/policy committee as well as constituting the group that governs the student association.
Recommendation 5 – Academic departments designate an honors faculty liaison who is knowledgeable of the Honors Program and its requirements and will help honors students within their department. The honors faculty liaisons will be a means of increasing communication and collegiality between the Honors Program and TTU faculty.

- The program should be so formulated that it relates effectively both to all the college work for the degree (e.g., by satisfying general education requirements) and to the area of concentration, departmental specialization, pre-professional or professional training.

Recommendation 6 – Each academic department needs to provide more major-specific honors courses.

Recommendation 7 – The TTU Honors Program should require undergraduate directed studies or research that is similar to Chemical Engineering Distinction in the Major Program (CHE 4990) of which three hours will be counted as directed study for the Honors Program.

The Honors Future Committee submits the following recommendations to enhance recruiting and retention of honor students in the Honors Program:

Recommendation 8 – The Honors Program should enhance service learning in the community and campus as part of its requirements.

Recommendation 9 – The Honors Program should have funds to award scholastic scholarships.

Recommendation 10 – The Honors Program should develop a studies-abroad experience for full-time participants – The Honors studies abroad program could utilize existing resources available through the Magellan Exchange Program, the University’s International Exchange Program or may consist of shorter (i.e. one to four weeks) international experiences developed and managed through the Honors Program. This study-abroad experience will merge well with the university’s initiative on globalization of the campus community.

Recommendation 11 – The university recruitment personnel and the Honors Program director should promote the Honors Program by

- Including the TTU Honors Program in brochures and other media used to recruit high school seniors and transfers to the campus
- Providing easier access through the campus Web page
- Improving the Honors Program Web page
- Ensuring that the Associated Scholars Guild (ASG) includes the word “Honors” to denote the association with the TTU Honors Program

The Honors Future Committee submits the following recommendations regarding infrastructure and financial support for the TTU Honors Program:

Recommendation 12 – The university should provide adequate space and appropriate infrastructure to support program administration and increasing student enrollment.
Recommendation 13 – The university should work to provide an estimated annual operating budget of $250,000 for the Honors Program, which would include the salaries and associated benefits for the director, associate director, and secretaries ($210,000).