

The Honors College

Mission

The Honors College supports and challenges academically outstanding undergraduates through enhanced engagement in learning and research experiences that culminate in the Honors College Degree.

Vision

The Honors College will be a nationally-recognized leader in providing outstanding undergraduate education to a diverse group of students.

Core Values

Diversity – We respect others and value diversity of opinions, freedom of expression, and other ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

Integrity – We are committed to the principles of truth and honesty, and we will be equitable, ethical, and professional.

Service – We believe that serving others is a noble and worthy endeavor.

Intellectual Freedom – We believe in ethical and scholarly questioning in an environment that respects the rights of all to freely pursue knowledge.

Excellence – We seek excellence in all our endeavors, and we are committed to continuous improvement.

Stewardship of Resources – We are dedicated to the efficient and effective use of resources. We accept the responsibility of the public's trust and are accountable for our actions.

Goals, Critical Success Factors, Objectives, and Strategies

Goal One. Learner Success — Challenge learners to succeed and provide an environment that supports and rewards their best efforts.

Critical Success Factors:

- 90% of students completing honors courses will earn grades of “B” or higher
- 75% of Honors sections will be limited to fewer than 20 students, funding permitting
- 90% of eligible honors students will avail themselves of priority enrollment
- Students will report greater engagement in learning in honors classes than does the general OSU undergraduate student body in comparison of Honors College Survey of Student Engagement (dealing with Honors experience at OSU) with overall OSU student engagement data
- 50% of Honors College Degree recipients will enter graduate or professional school

Objectives:

Objective 1.1: Develop an effective program for communicating the expectations of honors learning.

Strategies:

- Communicate regularly with faculty about Honors College policies and procedures concerning content and grading expectations in honors classes.
- Communicate the nature of Honors College expectations to entering freshmen with written materials and oral presentations during freshman enrollment.
- Invite freshmen to small-group and individual honors sessions.
- Communicate effectively with Honors College students about the priority enrollment privilege they earn each semester as “active participants”.
- Provide timely feedback to faculty from University Student Honors Council course evaluations.

Objective 1.2: Increase the opportunity for active student engagement in learning in Honors classes.

Strategies:

- Work with departments to limit enrollment in honors classes to fewer than 20 students.
- Actively communicate with honors section faculty about the importance of active student engagement.
- Engage in annual assessment of student engagement in honors courses and compare data with overall OSU student engagement data.

Objective 1.3: Develop an “Early Warning” System to identify students whose performance in honors classes is below the level required for success in The Honors College.

Strategies:

- Communicate with faculty early in semester to ask their cooperation in identifying students in their honors courses who may be experiencing difficulties.
- Solicit faculty to provide mid-term grades for students earning below grade of “B” in honors courses.
- Honors academic counselors will contact students identified as performing below the “B” level to encourage them to schedule counseling appointment as soon as possible.
- When appropriate, refer students to other units on campus (University Counseling, for example) that offer additional assistance.

Goal Two. Access and Diversity — Engage a geographically and ethnically diverse student body and provide a curriculum with a wide range of educational experiences.

Critical Success Factors:

- 120 Oklahoma communities represented
- 20 states other than Oklahoma represented
- 10% non-majority students in Honors College
- 40% of matriculating Honors College freshmen who were accepted for Honors College will report this was a “very important” factor in their decision to attend OSU
- 850 students
- 55 Honors College Degrees per academic year
- Average ACT of fully-admissible Honors College freshmen will be 4 points above OSU freshman average
- 30 additional students recruited in spring semester from OSU freshmen earning 3.25 or higher grade point averages in fall semester
- 85% of entering Honors College freshmen will be retained at OSU into the sophomore year
- 2 multicultural honors courses each year

Objectives:

Objective 2.1: Develop a program for effective recruitment of Honors College students.

Strategies:

- Work closely with Enrollment Management so that Honors College opportunities are included in institutional recruiting materials.
- Maintain an effective Honors College web page with information that is current.
- Communicate directly with eligible high school seniors who have indicated an interest in OSU when taking the ACT or SAT.
- Work with High School and College Relations to feature The Honors College at recruiting events.
- Communicate directly with high school Advanced Placement teachers about The Honors College.
- Be available to meet with prospective Honors College students in Honors College Office.
- Utilize student Honors Ambassadors to communicate with prospective students.
- Recruit second-semester freshmen who earned 3.50 grade point averages or higher in their first OSU semester.
- Work with Admissions and Registrar Offices to identify Honors-eligible non-majority students for special recruiting efforts.

Objective 2.2: Increase the number of Honors College students and Honors College degrees.

Strategies:

- Work closely with undergraduate colleges to offer additional honors courses.
- As funding permits, add honors courses on Honors College budget.
- Work closely with college Student Academic Services Offices to retain students in Honors College.
- Develop materials to aid students with planning of senior honors thesis or project.
- Showcase seniors' honors thesis/project success.

Objective 2.3: Consistently offer honors courses with multicultural content.

Strategies:

- Regularly schedule HONR 2063, Ethical Issues Across Cultural Perspectives.
- Work closely with Women's Studies to offer 1 special honors seminar each year.
- Offer honors seminar on a diversity topic each year.

Goal Three. Academic Excellence — Be a model of academic excellence in terms of student engagement, classroom instruction, and undergraduate research and creative activity.

Critical Success Factors:

- Requirements for the Honors College degree will be among the most demanding among comparable National Collegiate Honors Council institutions
- 3.50 satisfaction score (4.00 scale) on University Student Honors Council course evaluations
- 90% of General Honors Award recipients will have engaged in interdisciplinary study
- 30% of total of Wentz Project and Wentz Scholarship awards will be won by Honors College students
- All Honors College degree students will engage in a senior research or creative project, publicly present their research or creative work, pass an oral examination, and file a written thesis or report approved by a faculty committee
- 90% of Honors College degree recipients will report that they would participate in The Honors College if they had it to do over again

Objectives:

Objective 3.1: Honors College requirements will be among the most demanding in the nation among comparable National Collegiate Honors Council institutions in terms of honors credit hours required for Honors College degree and in requiring senior honors thesis or comparable creative component.

Strategies:

- Obtain data from comparable institutions in terms of requirements for Honors Degrees.
- Maintain rigor of Honors College degree requirements in comparison with these institutions.
- Ascertain ways in which other institutions' initiatives might be incorporated into Honors College.

Objective 3.2: Honors students will engage in interdisciplinary learning.

Strategies:

- Offer interdisciplinary HONR-prefix courses.
- Facilitate faculty development and offering of interdisciplinary honors seminars.
- Actively encourage students to enroll in interdisciplinary honors courses.

Objective 3.3: Honors College students will report a high level of satisfaction with their honors courses.

Strategies:

- Administer the University Student Honors Council's voluntary course evaluation instrument each semester.
- Continue to make course evaluation summaries and evaluation sheets available in Honors Study Lounge.
- Provide timely feedback to faculty about results of course evaluations.
- Communicate with faculty about problem areas and offer appropriate assistance in addressing problems.

Objective 3.4: Engage Honors College students in undergraduate research.

Strategies:

- Work closely with Freshman Research Scholars program to involve entering Honors College freshmen in research.
- Work closely with Scholar Development and Recognition to publicize availability of Wentz Project and Wentz Scholarship competition.
- Actively encourage Honors College students to compete for Wentz Project and Wentz Scholarship Awards.
- Require senior honors thesis/project as part of the Departmental/College Honors Award and of the Honors College degree.
- Work with colleges and departments to showcase senior honors theses/projects.
- Require public presentation of research by appropriate methods.
- Retain senior honors theses/reports in Honors College Office as examples and references for Honors College students.

Objective 3.5: Meet characteristics of a fully-developed Honors Program as defined by the National Collegiate Honors Council.

Strategies:

- Remain informed of developments regarding standards.
- Make certain that The Honors College complies with these standards.

Objective 3.6: Honors College degree candidates will report a high level of satisfaction with The Honors College.

Strategies:

- Conduct exit surveys of Honors College degree candidates.
- Take appropriate actions to address shortcomings identified in the exit surveys.
- Utilize student engagement survey data to evaluate level of student engagement.

Objective 3.7: Honors College staff will be provided with development opportunities.

Strategies:

- Work schedules will be adjusted to allow staff to participate in class work and Human Resources training sessions that are related to job responsibilities.
- Provide funding for at least one staff member to attend the regional honors conference and the National Collegiate Honors Council conference each year.

Goal Four. Cooperation & Collaboration — Build an environment in which cooperation and collaboration are both valued and expected as part of the educational endeavor.

Critical Success Factors:

- Occupancy of Stout Hall Honors floors at 95% of capacity
- 5 Honors College students per year will participate in OSU competition for prestigious scholarships
- Participate in 5 University recruiting events per year
- Respond to requests for Honors College assistance within two business days

Objectives:

Objective 4.1: Work closely with other campus units to develop opportunities for Honors College students.

Strategies:

- Work with Residential Life to recruit students for Stout Hall (honors residence hall).
- Work with Scholar Development and Recognition to provide honors seminar opportunities for students who may wish to compete for prestigious scholarships.
- Cooperate with Scholar Development and Recognition in mock interviews.
- Regularly participate in High School and College Relations recruiting events.
- Cooperate closely with Honors College students' academic advisors to assist students in meeting both their regular degree requirements and Honors College requirements.
- Respond promptly to requests for information from other campus units.

Goal Five. Pride & Recognition — We will make known the quality of The Honors College at the local, state, and national levels.

Critical Success Factors:

- 1 National Collegiate Honors Council leadership by chairing a national committee or event each year
- 2 National Honors conference sessions accepted per year
- 2 Honors College office staff will be certified as external reviewer for other institutions' honors programs and honors colleges
- Publicity for Honors College students' success will be distributed to hometown newspapers of all Honors College award recipients

Objectives:

Objective 5.1: Be recognized as a leader in the National Collegiate Honors Council.

Strategies:

- Serve on committees.
- Seek leadership positions.
- Take leading role in conference planning.
- Submit national conference session proposals each year.
- Honors College personnel certified to serve as recommended site visitors.
- Respond promptly to inquiries posted on the listserv.

Objective 5.2: Be recognized as a leader in the Great Plains Honors Council.

Strategies:

- Submit regional honors conference session proposals each year.
- Submit proposal to host conference by 2008.

Objective 5.3: Publicize Honors College Success.

Strategies:

- Inform Communication Services of Honors College success stories.
- Work with Communication Services to develop home-town press releases when students earn Honors College awards.
- Utilize Honors College web page and e-mail, as appropriate, to recognize Honors College successes.
- Communicate with Honors College alumni by electronic newsletter and e-mail.

Goal Six. Outreach & Service - Provide honors academic advising and facilities that are a model for the university.

Critical Success Factors:

- 3.50 satisfaction score (4.00 scale) on Honors Advising Questionnaire
- 100% of Honors advising personnel will hold Honors Program or Honors College degrees
- 12 computers and one laser printer for student use in Honors Study Lounge in Library

Objectives:

Objective 6.1: Provide high-quality Honors advising.

Strategies:

- Recruit and train highly-qualified personnel to serve as Honors Academic Counselors.
- Add a staff position to answer telephone, greet visitors, and monitor use of Honors Study Lounge during regular business hours.
- Meet with new freshmen individually or in small groups in the first four weeks of the semester.
- Meet individually with students for honors advising before their enrollment dates.
- Provide students with information on available honors courses, faculty, and evaluation data in timely manner before priority enrollment.
- Provide students with updated honors records, with comments, twice a year.
- Survey Honors College students each spring concerning their experiences with honors advising, using the instrument approved by the Honors councils.
- Act promptly to remedy any shortcomings revealed in the honors advising questionnaires.

Objective 6.2: Provide access to a high-quality Honors Study Lounge.

Strategies:

- Keep Honors Study Lounge open in evenings Monday-Thursday and Sunday.
- Replace furniture in Honors Study Lounge (purchased in 1988) by 2008.
- Provide laser printer access to students for academic printing.
- Upgrade computers in Honors Study Lounge every four or five years.

Objective 6.3: Encourage student participation in community service.

Strategies:

- Communicate each semester with students eligible for Honors College community service option.
- Waive up to three honors credit hours for verified community service.

Goal Seven. Stewardship of Resources – Make wise use of the resources entrusted to The Honors College.

Critical Success Factors:

- Consistently remain within budget of The Honors College
- Leverage Honors College dollars by seeking commitment from academic departments and by utilizing student advising fees to provide greater one-on-one and small group honors advising
- 85% of Honors-funded courses will be filled within two students of maximum capacity at beginning of each semester

Objectives:

Objective 7.1: Maximize use of University Budgetary Resources.

Strategies:

- Review budget projections and expenditures on a monthly basis.
- Anticipate needs for additional funding later in the fiscal year and communicate such needs to appropriate persons.
- 75% of Honors-funded honors sections of departmental-prefix courses will be leveraged on the basis of departmental funding of another honors section.
- Tactically overfill honors sections so that, based on experience with drop-and-add, courses will be at or near capacity by the end of the free-drop period.
- When appropriate, utilize volunteer university administrators to teach topical honors seminars.
- Provide maintenance funding for special materials for honors courses.
- Obtain student advising fee funds to better utilize time of honors academic counselors by hiring unit assistant to free advisors from some office administrative tasks they currently perform.

Objective 7.2: Assist students in maximizing their resources.

Strategies:

- Encourage use of priority enrollment to make most efficient use of available courses.
- Provide for waiver of up to 6 of the 39 required honors credit hours for students who successfully complete a study-abroad experience.
- Provide for waiver of up to 3 of the 39 required honors credit hours for students who earn AP/CLEP credit that counts toward OSU degree.
- Accept up to 15 transfer honors credit hours toward General Honors Award requirements.
- Accept Oklahoma Scholar-Leadership Enrichment Program credits toward Honors College degree requirements.

- Accept honors credit hours earned by students in Reciprocal Exchange Program toward Honors College degree requirements.
- Allow eligible students attending OSU under the Reciprocal Exchange Program to enroll in honors courses.