

Annual Report of the Honors Advisory Committee 2005-2006

Co-Chairs: Dr. Remler and Dr. Roberts, Co-Directors of the Honors Program

Members: Dr. Remler and Dr. Roberts, (Co-Directors of the Honors Program), Dr. Brawner, Dr. Cosgrove, Dr. Lynch, Dr. Massey, Dr. Tom Murphy, Dr. Scott, Dr. Winterhalter

Number of Meetings: 2, plus two more that interviewed and evaluated applicants for Presidential Honors Scholarships.

Recommendations from previous year and/or current charges:

-The Committee should specify the criteria for a second Honors award, one to highlight academic achievement, the other to highlight service to the Honors Program.

-The Committee and the co-directors revised the policies that govern the Honors Program. The official document, which was produced in 1997, was out of date in some respects, and has now been brought back up to date.

-The Committee and the co-director revisited the departmental standards for Honors in the Major. These standards were compiled and now compose an electronic document that can be easily distributed and viewed.

-The Committee and the co-directors implemented a policy that now permits students to pursue an Interdisciplinary Honors Project. Under this option, students complete a research project investigating topics in disciplines for which AASU offers a minor or topics in multiple disciplines. We hope that this option will specifically encourage students to engage in projects that incorporate minors such as Gender and Women's Studies and International Studies.

-The Committee and the co-directors reviewed the policy regarding probation and suspension. It was collectively decided to make efforts to tightly enforce the policies that were in place.

Other Accomplishments:

-The Committee and the co-directors implemented a policy that now permits students to pursue Honors in Service and Leadership. Under this option, students complete a project that serves the community and requires demonstration of leadership skills. This project is specifically designed to benefit a wider population than the AASU campus and to enable the student to employ teamwork skills.

-Fulfilling the university's "leadership initiative," honors students were active participants in events associated with the Campus Read, the Student Research and Scholarship Symposium, the Writing Contest, the Student Government Association, the AASU

Ambassadors, several other campus activities and organizations, and several community service projects.

-In their first year as Co-Directors of the Honors Program, Drs. Remler and Roberts became acquainted with the Honors philosophy and goals. They also created several ideas to help retention efforts within the Honors program. Additionally, they worked with the registrar's office and CIS to begin a process of streamlining the way that different databases were being used in parallel.

-The Honors Program awarded several scholarships during 2005-2006: special studies abroad scholarships went to Brittany Holman and Carmela Orsini; the Jill Miller Memorial Scholarship went to Brandon Griffin; Presidential Scholarships were awarded to Joseph Catlett and Ashton Griffin.

Recommendations for next year:

-The Committee should consider ways to help with retention of students. Dr. Roberts would particularly like the committee to look into ways to make Honors requirements more flexible while still maintaining academic rigor.

-The Committee should continue to find ways to recruit new students. Dr. Remler suggested that locating and recruiting home-schooled students as one way to diversify and expand our pool.

-The Committee should specify the criteria for a second Honors award, one to highlight academic achievement, the other to highlight service to the Honors Program.

- The Committee should continue to discuss the future of the Program in the face of expanding enrollment. Should we be more selective in our recruitment and acceptance of students? Should the current policy regarding probation and suspension from the Program be strengthened?

-The Committee should be involved with awarding scholarship monies that may become available.

Date submitted: 3 August 2006