I. History

Nature of the Program

The Honors Program (HP) at Northern Illinois University (NIU) was developed in 1968 after a year-long study by the then Council on Instruction and was created in fall 1969. The central purpose of the HP has not fundamentally changed. The rhetoric in the most recent Strategic Plan, is near identical to that used in 1969.

The Honors Program at Northern Illinois University has the goal of providing an enriched education experience for students of high intellectual potential who are committed to the pursuit of knowledge and understanding. In a variety of ways, the Honors Program strives to facilitate the development of creative and challenging educational encounters. Through collaborative interaction with each college and department of the University, these opportunities are provided for students in all academic disciplines.

The founders of the NIU HP considered two major approaches for honors programs: a program based on enriched experiences within regular courses; and a program built on separate classes taught by honors faculty. Rather than select between the two options NIU consciously selected “a combination of both approaches.” NIU honors students were required to complete some classes as separate, honors only classes. These were to include, both “special sections of existing courses and unique courses.” However, honors credit also would be awarded via enriched experiences in regular courses. Finally, honors students would complete an independent project, or capstone experience. In this way the honors students would have challenging and enriching experiences, but regular students would not be deprived of the advantages of having honors students in their classes. Initially the HP required 24 hours of honors credit for graduation “with University Honors.” To encourage Honors students to be more well-rounded, in 1971 the Honors Council required that in order to receive “university honors a student would be required to take twelve of the requisite 24 hours outside of the major.”

In its first year (1969-1970) 98 students were enrolled in the program. By 1971-1972 there were 439 students enrolled. It continued to grow throughout the decade and by 1980 the Director reported approximately 1,000 students were enrolled in the program, and it was said to be the tenth largest in the country. At that time, however, the honors program did not have the resources to offer a sufficient number of stand alone honors seminars for its students. Stand alone honors courses were increasingly rationed and the lack of resources was regularly cited as the major problem facing the program. As of Fall 2009, the HP had 843 students.

In 1980 students were required to complete 27 hours of honors coursework (up from 24), 12 of which were outside the major. At that time, the program underwent a major revision. Emulating programs at other major US universities, NIU’s HP was divided into two phases: lower division honors (for freshmen and sophomores) and upper division honors
(for juniors and seniors). Since the reforms, the completion of lower division honors requires the completion of 15 credit hours of honors courses, including a 3 credit hour cornerstone (a stand alone honors course generally taken in the first semester at NIU). Those students who successfully complete lower division honors are then eligible for upper division honors. Also eligible for admission to upper division honors (phase II) are those students who have maintained at least 3.2 GPA while at NIU or in a prior institution. The completion of upper division honors (Phase II as it is also called) requires the completion of an additional 12 hours of honors credit, at least 3 hours of which are to be accrued as a faculty directed independent study, or capstone project. Students who successfully complete both upper and lower division honors are awarded university honors. The key to the revisions were both the division of honors into two parts, and the focus on three unique experiences: the cornerstone, the upper division seminar, and the capstone.

In response to university initiative, the HP also switched from a graduate student advisor to a team of “peer advisors.” The reform also formalized the three current methods for offering honors courses: stand alone honors courses (cornerstones and seminars); mini-sections (a specially organized sub section of a regular course for honors students), or as part of regular courses (via individual course contracts). However, it is worth noting, that “contract” honors courses were to be used on an exceptional basis when “sufficient honors courses are not available for their needs,” and these were clearly seen as exceptional, not the main avenue for completing honors coursework. This practice has been “generally restricted” to upper division honors students. Although the in-course contracts were considered the least desirable of the three methods, it eventually became the norm for completing most upper division courses.

Honors Student Body:

Admissions standards for honors students have varied over the years. Traditionally the admission standard for to NIU’s HP for freshman has involved the use of some combination of high school class percentile rank and ACT score. At times the standard has been as low as a 22 ACT “or” top 10 percent of high school class. At other times the standard has been as high as a 27 ACT score “and” the top 10 percent of high schools class. When the program was divided into lower and upper division honors it also became practical to invite native students and transfer students who achieved a 3.2 GPA or better into the program.

Presently those students who have a 27 or above ACT “and” are in the top 10 percent of their high school classes are automatically admitted to the HP. Those who have a 27 or above ACT “or” are in the top 10 percent of their high school classes are considered for admission. Individual statements, resumes, and letters of recommendation (when submitted) are considered as part of the admission decision. (Letters of recommendation are no longer required). Students who have not met the standard, but are close to the standard, may be admitted on a provisional basis at the discretion of the director. Typically, students with a 24 ACT or above are granted provisional admission if they have performed well in high school and have other indicators of great potential.

Students whose GPA has fallen below a 3.2, or fail to fulfill honors obligations, are sent a letter placing them on probation. Those who remain on probation for two consecutive semesters are ordinarily dropped from the program.
II. Mission and Goals:

MISSION STATEMENT: Northern Illinois University Honors Program

According to its Mission Statement NIU’s University Honors Program “promotes and supports excellence in undergraduate education by providing honors students from all disciplines with enhanced learning opportunities.” (2008 Strategic Plan, Approved 12/7/07) The following list of goals and objectives are taken directly from the Strategic Plan. While some objectives have been combined to reduce redundancy, this list is intended to otherwise reflect the “goals,” “support goals” and “strategic objectives” listed in the Strategic Plan.

1. The HP will “include small courses taught by outstanding faculty committed to undergraduate education.”

2. The HP will “encourage students to reflect and inquire.”

3. The HP will help students “develop critical thinking skills.”

4. The HP will help students “develop high-level literacy and conversational skills.”

5. The HP will identify “exceptionally talented and highly motivated students and encouraging them to participate in the Honors Program.”

6. The HP will provide “a living and learning environment that promotes academic excellence.”

7. The HP will organize and deliver “extra-curricular programs that help students to cultivate an understanding of excellence in what is thought, written, and created in the human experience.”

Collectively these activities create an environment in which students are challenged to develop their talents and abilities to the maximum potential.

III. Methods

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Person Responsible</th>
<th>Goals Addressed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capstone evaluations</td>
<td>A single page form.</td>
<td>Annually</td>
<td>4 – Director</td>
<td>2, 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(summer)</td>
<td>4 – Asst. Dir.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate survey</td>
<td>Single page form</td>
<td>Annually</td>
<td>Office support Specialist</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus groups</td>
<td>15-30 honors students</td>
<td>Annually (Spring)</td>
<td>Director &amp; Program Coordinator</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In course evaluations</td>
<td>These, may be restricted by</td>
<td>Each semester</td>
<td>Office Support Specialist &amp; Director</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>departments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey of Current students</td>
<td>Existing 6-page survey</td>
<td>Semi-annually</td>
<td>Asst. Director</td>
<td>1, 5, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review honors offerings</td>
<td>Course Listing</td>
<td>Annually</td>
<td>Office manager &amp; Data Base Manager</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1) number of courses offered</td>
<td>(summer)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IV. Goals by Method

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>1. small courses</th>
<th>2. student reflection</th>
<th>3. critical thinking skills</th>
<th>4. literacy &amp; conversational skills</th>
<th>5. recruitment of students</th>
<th>6. living &amp; learning environment</th>
<th>7. extra-curricular</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capstone evaluations</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate survey</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Focus groups</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In course evaluations</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey of current students</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of honors offerings</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External program review</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review freshman admissions</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review continuing admissions</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review extracurricular activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

V. Evidence by Goals (Results, Available Data)

Goal 1: The HP will “include small courses taught by outstanding faculty committed to undergraduate education.”

Five methods may be used to regularly assess whether the honors program is offering a sufficient number of small group courses. Essentially these are stand alone honors courses, which are capped at 20, or 25, students. Historically the HP has usually offered between eight and ten stand alone honors courses. In 2009-2010 we were able to increase the number of stand alone courses to 14.
Table 3: Review of Honors Offerings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Spring 2006</th>
<th>Fall 2006</th>
<th>Spring 2007</th>
<th>Fall 2007</th>
<th>Spring 2008</th>
<th>Fall 2008</th>
<th>Spring 2009</th>
<th>Fall 2009</th>
<th>Spring 2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>seminars</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cornerstones**</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honors only</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7****</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*plus two that were canceled  
**offered only during the fall  
***courses in learning communities counted separately  
****plus one that was canceled

An annual Review of Honors Offerings will be the primary method will be employed to keep a running account of the number of stand alone honors courses. The list will subdivide honors courses by year, and by level. Cornerstones are all 100- and 200- level courses, while 300- and 400- level courses are considered seminars. We will also record the number of students enrolled in each course, to ensure that the average does not go above a 20:1 student-teacher ratio. We will also track the number of instructors who have won university-wide teaching awards. The following awards will be counted toward that number: the Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Award; Presidential Teaching Professorships, Great Professor Award, the Outstanding International Educator Award, and Board of Regents Professorships. Each year we will calculate the percentage of courses taught by award winning faculty. The following questions will be included in the Honors Course Evaluation. More generalized versions of the questions, will be used on the Graduate Survey. The questions on the Graduate Survey will ask students to compare all honors courses to all non-honors courses.

Please use the following scale to respond to each statement. Consider each question as a comparison to non-honors courses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. The instructor was prepared for class.  
2. The instructor was enthusiastic.  
3. The instructor was patient when answering questions in class.  
4. The instructor made students feel free to ask questions or express opinions in class.  
5. The material presented was interesting.  
6. The material presented was appropriately challenging.  
7. The material presented was important to my life or career.  
8. Students in the course learned a significant amount.  
9. The difficulty of this course, including readings, tests and assignments, was appropriate.  
10. Overall I would assess this course to be worthwhile.
During the annual focus group, students will also be asked what they liked and did not like about their stand alone honors courses. We will also ask them what courses that they would like to have offered as a stand alone honors courses in the future.

The existing Survey of Current Honors Students at NIU (see Appendix 3) also includes some questions relevant to assessing the quality of stand alone honors courses. (This was last employed in 2001). For example, question 52, asks whether “the size of the seminar added to my learning experience.” Similarly, questions 53 and 58 offer an indirect assessment of the quality of the professors teaching honors courses.

If we are awarded money to bring in an HP director from a neighboring program, we will also ask her or him to review the quantity and quality our offerings.

**Goal 2: The HP will “encourage students to reflect and inquire.”**

Five methods will be used to assess the extent to which honors students have been encouraged to reflect about and inquire into the subject matter of their courses. The first method utilized will be the Capstone Review Forms (see Appendix 4), that are to be conducted annually by the Director and Assistant Director of the HP. With regard to each capstone reviewed, the reviewer will be asked to assess: the extent to which the capstone entailed thoughtful reflection; and the extent to which each capstone demonstrates a significant and open inquiry into the subject. Second, on the Course Evaluation Form, honors students will be asked the following questions.

Please use the following scale to respond to each statement. Consider each question as a comparison to non-honors courses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. This course encouraged me to reflect on important issues.
12. This course encouraged my interest for further inquiry into the subject of the course.

Third, versions of the same two questions will be asked on the Graduate Survey.

Fourth, during the annual focus group students will be asked the same questions that appear on the Course Evaluation Form and on the Graduate Survey. Finally, an external reviewer, if funded could also address the question.

**Goal 3. The HP will help students “develop critical thinking skills.”**

Progress toward the third goal will be analyzed in much the same manner and by the same methods as was the second goal. The first method utilized will be the Capstone Review Forms, which are completed annually by the Director and Assistant Director of the HP. With regard to each capstone reviewed, the reviewer will be asked to assess the extent to which the capstone provides evidence of the development of critical thinking skills. Second, on the Course Evaluation Form, honors students will be asked the following questions.
Please use the following scale to respond to each statement. Consider each question as a comparison to non-honors courses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13. This course helped me develop critical thinking skills.

Third, a more general version of the same question will be asked on the Graduate Survey. Fourth, during the annual focus group students will be asked the same question as on the Course Evaluation Form and on the Graduate Survey. Finally, an external reviewer, if funded could also address the question.

Goal 4. The HP will help students “develop high-level literacy and conversational skills.”

Progress toward the fourth goal will be analyzed in much the same manner and by the same methods as was the previous two goals. The first method utilized will be the Capstone Review Forms, which are completed annually by the Director and Assistant Director of the HP. With regard to each capstone reviewed, the reviewer will be asked to assess the extent to which the capstone provides evidence the student has a good grasp of the relevant academic literature. However, the Capstone Review Form will not be useful for assessing conversational skills.

Second, on the Course Evaluation Form, honors students will be asked the following questions.

Please use the following scale to respond to each statement. Consider each question as a comparison to non-honors courses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14. This course helped me develop a high level of literacy.
15. This course helped me develop appropriate conversational skills.

Third, more general versions of the same questions will be asked on the Graduate Survey. Fourth, during the annual focus group students will be asked the same question. Finally, an external reviewer, if funded could also address the question.

Goal 5. The HP will identify “exceptionally talented and highly motivated students and encourage them to participate in the Honors Program.” Four methods will be used to assess the ability of the HP to identify potential students and recruit them to the program. First, we will collect data annually as to the number of incoming freshman who are eligible for admission to the HP. We will then look at the number of students who actually joined the program to determine the percent of eligible students who joined the program by December of their freshman year.
Twice a year the Office Support Specialist also sends out a letter from the HP director to all native students with a 3.2 GPA or higher. (In Spring 2010 we also sent out an e-mail version of this letter). We will now calculate what percent of these students subsequently joins the HP. In this way we will keep track of the total number of students in the program; the percentage of eligible students who join the program; and the relative increase or decrease in percentages. The Questions 1-11 on the Survey of Current Honors Students should be useful in determining which attributes of the HP are most important in attracting students to the HP. Questions 1-10 ask students to identify the importance of each of ten different factors that may have attracted students to the HP. Question 11 then asks the student to identify the primary reasons. Finally, if an annual external program review is conducted, we will seek comparative data on our recruiting practices and results.

Table 4: Honors Students as of Fall Commencement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year (Fall)</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>468</td>
<td>429</td>
<td>449</td>
<td>387</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>757</td>
<td>743</td>
<td>774</td>
<td>685</td>
<td>604</td>
<td>503</td>
<td>489</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African-American</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1225</td>
<td>1172</td>
<td>1223</td>
<td>1072</td>
<td>954</td>
<td>794</td>
<td>804</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Honors Open House Recruiting Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>letters sent</th>
<th>Students attending</th>
<th>applications</th>
<th>admissions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010 Good Friday Open House</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010 October Open House</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010 Honors Day</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011 Pulaski Day Open House</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
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</table>

Table 6: Native Student Recruitment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Letter Sent</td>
<td>903</td>
<td>1231</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native student who joined</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Goal 6. The HP will provide “a living and learning environment that promotes academic excellence.” There are three basic methods for the HP to assess the success of our living learning environment. First, during our annual focus group, the questions will include.

1. What do you like about living in Honors House?
2. What don’t you like about living in Honors House?
3. How could living in Honors House be made better?

Our hope is that the focus group will provide not a general measurement of the success of the Honors House, but also some concrete ideas for improving it. Second, on the **Graduate Survey** the following question will be asked.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

21. Living in Honor House added considerably to my experience at NIU. (Please leave blank if you did not live in Honors House.)

Provided external reviewers are funded annually, they will also be asked to evaluate the importance and effectiveness of Honors House as a living learning environment.

Goal 7. The HP will organize and deliver “extra-curricular programs that help students to cultivate an understanding of excellence in what is thought, written, and created in the human experience.” During the focus group, students will be asked the following questions.

How frequently do you attend extracurricular activities funded or sponsored by the HP?

What do you like about the extracurricular activities funded or sponsored by the HP?

What don’t you like about the extracurricular activities funded or sponsored by the HP?

How would you improve the extracurricular activities funded or sponsored by the HP?

Second, on the **Graduate Survey** the following questions will be asked.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

22. I regularly participated in extracurricular activities funded or sponsored by the HP.

23. I would positively assess those extracurricular activities sponsored by the HP that I attended.

Finally, the Program Coordinator for the HP will keep a list of all programs held during the year and a list of all HP events held during the year and an estimated (or actual)
number of participants for each event. These will then be totaled annually to track both trends in the total number of events and the total number of participants served.

**Table 7: Extracurricular Activities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2008-09</th>
<th>2009-10</th>
<th>2010-11</th>
<th>2011-12</th>
<th>2012-13</th>
<th>2013-14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Events held</td>
<td>46</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students attending</td>
<td>1,971</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average number</td>
<td>42.8%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**VI. Use of Results by Goal**

**Goal 1.** The HP will “include small courses taught by outstanding faculty committed to undergraduate education.”

One of the goals of both the HP’s Strategic Plan and of NIU’s Strategic Plan is to increase the size and quality of the HP. At the heart of this will be increasing the numbers of stand alone honors courses and the quality of the faculty members teaching them. Keeping better track of the number of, and enrollment in, stand alone honors courses, will allow us to make demonstrate to the Provost’s office whether the number of honors courses is sufficient, or not.

In addition, our goal is to increase the percent of HP courses taught by outstanding faculty. Thus over time we will be attempting to add courses taught by award winning teachers. However, not all outstanding faculty have already won teaching awards, thus we are also collecting input on our teaching faculty on our Course Evaluation Forms and in our focus groups. Thus, those who are highly evaluated by our students will be asked to teach again for the HP. Conversely, if a professor is poorly evaluated by the students in the course, or by the students during the focus group, then the HP will avoid having these professors teach regularly for the HP in the future. Thus our hope is that eventually all of our courses will be taught by faculty who are considered outstanding by our students.

**Goal 2.** The HP will “encourage students to reflect and inquire.”

This is admittedly a difficult goal to either measure or to enable progress. However, both are possible. Thus we will be asking students both on the Course Evaluation Form and on the Graduate Survey whether or not their courses encouraged reflection and inquiry. Those courses which did not, may be dropped from the program. Conversely, those courses which are particularly adept at developing our students’ ability to reflect and inquire can be examined as to why they succeeded. These questions will also be explored in the focus groups. What is learned as to the most effective strategies for encouraging students to reflect and inquire, will be shared with our faculty in the Faculty Handbook, which we are developing, so that they may be emulated by others.

**Goal 3.** The HP will help students “develop critical thinking skills.” This too is a difficult goal to measure or to enable progress. Nonetheless, over time, progress is possible. Thus as we discover which courses and faculty are best at developing critical thinking skills, those classes
will be repeated more often and those instructors will be encouraged to teach in the program more frequently. Also if patterns can be found as to which methods are utilized in the successful courses, these will be written into the Faculty Handbook so that they may be emulated by others.

**Goal 4.** The HP will help students “develop high-level literacy and conversational skills.” There are five assessment methods that will at least indirectly measure either the literacy level or the conversational skills of Honors students. For example, the Capstone Review Form will help us learn whether the students have a good understanding of the relevant literature. Literacy skills, however, are likely developed primarily in work assigned for classes. The same is true of conversational skills. In general, Honors courses are capped at a smaller number of students, ideally twenty, so that considerable discussion will occur. Thus, while the HP does not have refined methods for assessing either literacy levels or conversations skills, it will have indicators as to when the literacy level is low, or when students do not believe that they are not being given sufficient opportunity to develop their literacy or conversational skills. If students do not believe they are receiving sufficient opportunity to develop these skills, and communicate this via the Course Evaluations Form, Graduate Survey or focus groups, we will communicate this to the faculty responsible for teaching honors courses. If the problem is limited to specific instructors, then the Honors Director will be responsible for communicating this information directly to those affected. If, however, this has become a more general problem then it may be dealt with via the Faculty Handbook that the HP is currently preparing for use by all instructors who teach in the University Honors Program.

**Goal 5.** The HP will identify “exceptionally talented and highly motivated students and encourage them to participate in the Honors Program.” While the HP hopes to develop more consistent data over time as to how effective it is in recruiting eligible students to the university HP, other factors will help shape how that information is used. In particular, during times of expanding resources if the HP finds it is not recruiting a sufficient percentage of eligible students to the HP, it will increase its recruiting efforts. Conversely, if the percentage is steady and no new resources are available the HP will continue its normal recruiting activities. The Current Student Survey also included questions that help identify which forms of recruitment are most effective. Overall, collecting this assessment data will allow the HP to better synchronize its recruitment efforts with the available resource level. Hopefully, the focus groups will also generate some creative ideas for future recruiting practices. The HP Program Coordinator and Director will work toward implementing those ideas deemed feasible.

**Goal 6.** The HP will provide “a living and learning environment that promotes academic excellence.” Of the three assessment methods to be utilized here, it is hoped that the Graduate Survey and external review will be able to provide an assessment of the adequacy of the HP’s efforts to provide a “a living and learning environment that promotes academic excellence.” The focus group should also assist with assessing our success, and will also provide ample opportunity for students to suggest tangible and creative improvements to the program.

**Goal 7.** The HP will organize and deliver “extra-curricular programs that help students to cultivate an understanding of excellence in what is thought, written, and created in the human experience.” Our annual review of extracurricular activities will provide the most comprehensive examination of our extracurricular activities. This will provide a benchmark as
to how many program are offered annually and how well attended particular types of events are. It will also give us some idea as to which types of activities attracted the most students, and will thus drive future programming. We will use the Graduate Survey and the Survey of Current Honors Students to help determine the overall quality of the extracurricular activities. On the Survey of Current Students, Questions 68-74 ask a number of evaluative questions about our extracurricular activities. Questions 75-80 ask about service and social extracurricular activities sponsored by the HP. They also question whether these should be offered and whether they should be required. (They were once required for those who lived in the Honors House, but are no longer.) Questions 89-93 seek to assess students’ interest in a variety of possible future programs. Finally, the focus groups will be asked to evaluate past activities, to determine which were more beneficial and to solicit ideas both for improving existing programs and for new programs.

VII. Further Information Needed
In late spring 2001 Professor Jay Wagle, then Director of the HP, submitted a document entitled “ASSESSMENT PLAN STATUS REPORT,” in which he essentially wrote an extremely thorough Assessment Plan. This plan borrows a number of the methods from that plan. However, the plan was likely somewhat overly ambitious in its methods. The amount of data necessary for fulfillment of the plan was rather daunting. It included ten separate goals and fourteen separate methods, none of which had been implemented previously. Unfortunately, Professor Wagle completed his plan during the final months of his tenure as the Director of the HP. It isn’t clear what happened subsequently. However, there is no evidence that the plan was implemented. Nor is there evidence that the new Director Professor Michael Martin, provided a new assessment plan. If there was a new plan, the staff was unaware of its existence. Some student surveys were completed. These were apparently reviewed on an occasional basis and the results summarized for the Honors Committee. Thus, the HP has no existing assessment data to work with.

VIII. Timeline:
This spring the Honors staff will be working on collecting the data that is already available. This will include data on the previous number of stand alone honors courses; data on HP extracurricular activities; data on the number of honors students by gender and ethnicity; and initial recruitment data.

- On April 14, 2010, 11:30-1:00 PM, the Honors Student Association will host its first annual HP focus group. The Director and Program Coordinator will be present. This meeting will be repeated once each subsequent spring semester.

- April 2010, Survey of Current Students will be made available to all current students who attend the focus group. These will be provided as the students depart from the focus group. Copies of the survey will also be mailed electronically to all existing students and hard copies also will be available in the HP office. This procedure will be repeated at each annual focus group.

- Honors Awards Night, April 2010, a Graduate Survey will be given to each graduating senior. This process will be repeated annually.
• Summer 2010, the HP Office Support Specialist will mail out the Graduate Survey to at least one class of past graduates, likely the class of 2000.

• Summer 2010, the Director and Assistant Director will each review at least three capstones using the Capstone Evaluation Form. More will be reviewed if time allows. This process will be repeated annually.

• June 2010 the Office Support Specialist (OSS) will send out letters from the Director to all freshman, sophomores, and juniors who have maintained a 3.2 GPA or better and are not members of the HP. In October the OSS will then calculate the percentage of eligible students who have subsequently joined the program. This process will be repeated in January 2011. It will be conducted twice in each subsequent year.

• August 2010, the Program Coordinator will finalize her annual Review of Extracurricular Activities and present it to the HC at the first meeting of the HC. Data will also be entered into the Table for Annual Extracurricular Activities (see table above). This process will be repeated annually.

• August 2010, the Assistant Director will collect and enter the data for the total number of Honors students, and a break down by ethnicity and gender. This process will be repeated annually.

• October 2010: If funding is provided the director of an HP at a neighboring university will be invited for a two day visit to review the program. If funding is provided this will be repeated every one to two years.

• December 2010, copies of the Course Evaluation Forms will be distributed to all faculty members who teach stand alone honors courses for fall 2010. This will be repeated in April and December of each subsequent semester.

IX. Resources Needed

The HP is requesting $400 for each of the next five years to bring in an HP administrator from a neighboring university to visit each year. The $400 would include a $250 honorarium and up to $150 in expenses to cover the costs of a two day visit. To keep costs to a minimum, during the first five years only administrators from universities that are within driving distance of NIU will be invited. Those invited would be asked to read the NIU HP Assessment Plan, the 2008 NIU HP Strategic Plan and to meet with the staff, students and faculty of the NIU HP. Within three weeks of their visit, they would then be asked to submit a report of three to five pages that included their assessment of areas in which they believe NIU’s HP is meeting its goals; areas in which the HP is not meeting its goals; and recommendation for the improvement of NIU’s HP.
Appendix 1: Honors Course Evaluation Form
For use with a scantron form. Course Name (term)________________
Please use the following scale to respond to each statement. Consider each question as a comparison to non-honors courses.

Strongly Agree  Agree  Neither Agree nor Disagree  Disagree  Strongly Disagree
A     B     C     D     E

1. The instructor was prepared for class.
2. The instructor was enthusiastic.
3. The instructor was patient when answering questions in class.
4. The instructor made students feel free to ask questions or express opinions in class.
5. The material presented was interesting.
6. The material presented was appropriately challenging.
7. The material presented was important to my life or career.
8. Students in the course learned a significant amount.
9. The difficulty of this course, including readings, tests and assignments, was appropriate.
10. Overall I would assess this course to be worthwhile.
11. This course encouraged me to reflect on important issues.
12. This course encouraged my interest for further inquiry into the subject of the course.
13. This course helped me develop critical thinking skills.
14. This course helped me develop a high level of literacy.
15. This course helped me develop appropriate conversational skills.
16. Living in Honor House added considerably to my experience at NIU. (Please leave blank if you did not live in Honors House.)
17. I regularly participated in extracurricular activities funded or sponsored by the HP.
18. I would positively assess those extracurricular activities sponsored by the HP that I attended.
Appendix 2: Honors Graduate Survey Form
For use with a scantron form.

Please tell us about yourself:
1. I completed: 
   a. lower division honors only;
   b. upper division honors only;
   c. full university honors (upper and lower division honors)
   d. don’t know
2. During which year did you first attend NIU?
   a. freshman
   b. sophomore
   c. junior
   d. senior
3. Currently what is your highest educational degree?
   a. Bachelor’s degree
   b. Master’s degree
   c. Medical degree (MD, DO, DOS, DVM)
   d. Law degree
   e. Ph.D or Ed.D.
4. When did you graduate from NIU?
   a. this year
   b. between 1 and 5 years ago
   c. between 5 and 10 years ago
   d. between 15 and 20 years ago
   e. more than 20 years ago

Please use the following scale to respond to each statement. Consider each question as a comparison to non-honors courses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Honors instructors were generally well prepared for class.
6. Honors instructors were generally enthusiastic.
7. Honors instructors were generally patient when answering questions in class.
8. Honors instructors made students feel free to ask questions or express opinions in class.
9. The material presented in Honors course was interesting.
10. The material presented in Honors courses was appropriately challenging.

11. The material presented in Honors courses was important to my life or career.

12. I learned more in Honors courses than in most other courses.

13. The relatively smaller size of my Honors courses contributed positively to the learning environment.

14. The difficulty of Honors courses, including readings, tests and assignments, was appropriate.

15. Overall I would assess Honors courses to be more worthwhile than the other courses I have taken.

16. Honors courses encouraged me to reflect on important issues.

17. Honors courses encouraged my interest for further inquiry into the subject of the course.

18. Honors courses helped me develop critical thinking skills.

19. Honors courses helped me develop a high level of literacy.

20. Honors courses helped me develop appropriate conversational skills.

21. Living in Honor House added considerably to my experience at NIU. (Please leave blank if you did not live in Honors House.)

22. I regularly participated in extracurricular activities funded or sponsored by the HP.

23. I would positively assess those extracurricular activities funded or sponsored by the HP that I attended.

24. The capstone experience contributed significantly to my Honors experience at NIU.

25. The capstone experience improved my ability to conduct independent research.

26. I learned more from my capstone experience than I would have from an additional regular course.

27. Consulting past capstones in the capstone library was beneficial to my capstone experience.

28. My experiences as an honors student were of help in my subsequent studies for an advanced degree. (Answer only if you are now pursuing or previously pursued and advanced degree).

29. My experiences as an honors student were of help in my subsequent career. (Answer only if you are currently employed or were employed in a full time position).
Appendix 3: A Survey of Current Honors Students at NIU

Please indicate how much you agree with each of the following statements about why you originally joined the Honors Program at NIU.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Wanted smaller classes</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Wanted more personalized attention from professors</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Thought it would look good on a resume, scholarship application, or</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>graduate school application.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Wanted to meet people with similar backgrounds, ideas and goals</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. My parents persuaded me</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. A high school advisor persuaded me</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. A community college advisor persuaded me</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. An NIU advisor persuaded me</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Wanted a better education experience</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Wanted priority registration.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. Of the above statements, which one statement best describes the primary reason that you joined the Honors Program? Number _____

12. How rigorous should the academic entrance requirements to a honors program be? (circle one)

   Not Rigorous             Extremely Rigorous
   1 2 3 4 5

13. How rigorous are the present academic entrance requirements to NIU’s Honors Program? (circle one)

   Not Rigorous             Extremely Rigorous
   1 2 3 4 5

14. Have you ever had an advising appointment with a peer advisor? (circle one)

   Yes                 No (If no, skip to question 23)

Please indicate how much you agree with each of the following statements about your session with a peer advisor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15. The peer advisor was available</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. The peer advisor saw me on time</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. The peer advisor was friendly</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. My appointment was an appropriate length of time</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. The peer advisor was knowledgeable</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. The peer advisor was able to answer my questions</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. I received accurate advice from the peer advisor</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Overall, my advising appointment was helpful</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
23. Have you ever had an advising appointment with the director, assistant director, or program coordinator? (circle one)

Yes  No  (If no, skip to question 32)

Please indicate how much you agree with each of the following statements about your session with the director, assistant director or program coordinator.

**Strongly Disagree**  **Strongly Agree**

24. My advisor was available  1  2  3  4  5
25. My advisor saw me on time  1  2  3  4  5
26. My advisor was friendly  1  2  3  4  5
27. My appointment was an appropriate length of time  1  2  3  4  5
28. My advisor was knowledgeable  1  2  3  4  5
29. My advisor was able to answer my questions  1  2  3  4  5
30. I received accurate advice from my advisor  1  2  3  4  5
31. Overall, my advising appointment was helpful  1  2  3  4  5

---

**Honors Courses**

**Cornerstones:** A cornerstone class is a class comprised of 20 to 30 honors students, typically a general education course, taken the first semester, freshman year.

32. Have you ever taken a Cornerstone class? (circle one)

Yes  No  (If no, skip to question 40)

Please indicate how much you agree with each of the following statements about Cornerstone classes.

**Strongly Disagree**  **Strongly Agree**

33. The size of the cornerstone class added to my learning experience.  1  2  3  4  5
34. My cornerstone professor was available during office hours or by appointment.  1  2  3  4  5
35. I understood the grading procedure for my cornerstone class  1  2  3  4  5
36. The cornerstone course was offered at a convenient time  1  2  3  4  5
37. The cornerstone course was taught at the appropriate level given prior knowledge of students  1  2  3  4  5
38. The cornerstone was a valuable intellectual experience  1  2  3  4  5
39. The cornerstone professor showed an interest in me as an honors student.  1  2  3  4  5

**Mini-sections:** A mini-section class is a large class with both honors and non-honors students enrolled. The small group of honors students has different requirements than the regular students.

40. Have you ever taken an honors mini-section class? (circle one)

Yes  No  (If no, skip to question 51)

Please indicate how much you agree with each of the following statements about mini-sections.
41. The small honors-group of the mini-section added to my learning experience
   1 2 3 4 5

42. My mini-section professor expressed an interest in my honors project.
   1 2 3 4 5

43. I understood the grading procedures for the honors project in my mini-section
   1 2 3 4 5

44. The mini-section was offered at a convenient time
   1 2 3 4 5

45. The honors portion of the mini-section was taught at the appropriate level given prior knowledge of students.
   1 2 3 4 5

46. The honors portion of the mini-section was a valuable intellectual experience.
   1 2 3 4 5

47. The mini-section professor showed an interest in me as an honors student.
   1 2 3 4 5

48. The overall quality of the various mini-sections I have taken has been consistent.
   1 2 3 4 5

49. What aspect of the mini-section did you like best? ______________________________________
   __________________________________________

50. What aspect of the mini-section did you like least? ______________________________________
   __________________________________________

Seminars: A seminar course is taken during a student’s junior or senior year outside the student’s major, is small and discussion oriented, and only honors students are enrolled in the course.

51. Have you ever taken an honors seminar class? (circle one)
   Yes
   No (If no, skip to question 60)

Please indicate how much you agree with each of the following statements about seminar courses.

52. The size of the seminar added to my learning experience.
   1 2 3 4 5

53. My seminar professor was available either during office hours or by appointment
   1 2 3 4 5

54. I understood the grading procedures for this seminar
   1 2 3 4 5

55. The seminar was offered at a convenient time
   1 2 3 4 5

56. The seminar was taught at the appropriate level given prior knowledge of students
   1 2 3 4 5

57. The seminar was a valuable intellectual experience
   1 2 3 4 5

58. The seminar professor showed an interest in me as an honors student
   1 2 3 4 5

59. The overall quality of the various seminars I have taken has been consistent.
   1 2 3 4 5

In-course Contracts: An in-course honors contract is a regular 300- or 400-level course offered by the university, for which the student is registered, but the student also completes a contract with the professor to earn honors credit.
60. Have you ever done an in-course contract in a class? (circle one)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No (If no, skip to question 68)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please indicate how much you agree with each of the following statements about in-course contracts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>61.</td>
<td>The individual nature of this contract course added to my learning experience</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62.</td>
<td>My in-course professor showed an interest in my honors project.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63.</td>
<td>I understood the grading procedures for the honors project involved in this contract</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64.</td>
<td>The honors assignment involved in this contract was clearly defined</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65.</td>
<td>The in-course contract was a valuable intellectual experience</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66.</td>
<td>The in-course professor showed an interest in me as an honors student</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67.</td>
<td>The overall quality of the various in-course contracts I have taken has been consistent</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Honors Extracurricular Activities**

68. Have you ever participated in an honors-sponsored off campus event? (Second City, Museums, etc)? (circle one)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No (If no, skip to question 75)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please indicate how much you agree with each of the following statements about honors-sponsored off campus events.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>69.</td>
<td>The trip I went on was affordable</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70.</td>
<td>The date and time of the trip were convenient</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71.</td>
<td>I was satisfied with the transportation for the trip</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72.</td>
<td>The event’s destination was desirable</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73.</td>
<td>The trip was worthwhile</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74.</td>
<td>Overall, I had a good time at the event</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please indicate how much you agree with each of the following statements about extracurricular requirements to be an honors student at NIU.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>75.</td>
<td>There should be both service and social requirements</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76.</td>
<td>There should be service but no social requirements</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77.</td>
<td>There should be social but no service requirements</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78.</td>
<td>Social and service activities should be offered, but students should be rewarded for participating rather than required to participate</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79.</td>
<td>Service and social events should be offered, but both should be optional</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
80. Service and social events should not be sponsored by honors at all  
1  2  3  4  5

**Honors Communications**

Please indicate how frequently you do each of the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>81. Send or receive emails from honors</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82. Use the honors computer lab</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83. Use the honors website</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84. Receive scholarship information from honors</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you:

85. Know about the Honors House? Yes No
86. Know what you need to do to graduate with honors? Yes No
87. Know who the honors staff is? Yes No
88. Understand what a capstone project is? Yes No

**Some New Ideas**

If honors were to offer the following activities, how interested would you be in participating? Please mark the appropriate answer for each question.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>89. Practice GRE / GMAT sessions</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90. Alumni Mentor program</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91. Faculty Mentor program</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>92. Regular group discussions about honors</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93. Opportunities to present your work at professional conferences</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Tell Us a Little Bit about Yourself**

94. Please indicate the number of hours of course work you have completed at NIU?  
   - 0-29
   - 30-59
   - 60-89
   - 90-120
   - Over 120

95. When did you join the Honors Program?  
   - As a freshman
   - As a sophomore
   - As a junior
   - As a senior

96. Which category best describes you?  
   - Live in Honors House
   - Live in residence hall, but not in Honors House
   - Live off campus in DeKalb (apartment, sorority/fraternity house, townhouse, etc.)
97. Which age category best describes you?
- □ 18-19
- □ 20-21
- □ 22-23
- □ 24-25
- □ Over 25

98. Are you enrolled in a departmental Honors Program?
- □ Yes
- □ No
- □ Don’t know
What is your cumulative GPA?
☐ 2.00-2.50
☐ 2.51-3.00
☐ 3.01-3.50
☐ 3.51-4.00

Are you the first person in your immediate family to attend a 4-year college or university?
☐ Yes ☐ No

What is your major? ________________________________________________________________

Please make any additional comments below:
Appendix 4: Capstone Review Form

1. Name of Student__________________________________________________________
2. Term of Capstone Completion______________________________________________
3. Department of Capstone___________________________________________________
4. Faculty Advisor__________________________________________________________

Please use the following scale to respond to each statement. Consider each question as a comparison to non-honors courses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. This capstone provides evidence that the student has developed the ability to thoughtfully reflect on the subject matter it analyzes.

A     B     C     D     E

6. This capstone provides evidence that the student has developed a meaningful capacity for academic inquiry.

A     B     C     D     E

7. This capstone provides evidence that the student has developed appropriate critical thinking skills.

A     B     C     D     E

8. Please provide any comments on the overall quality of the research or presentation of this capstone____________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

9. Name of Capstone Reviewer________________________________________________.