

FY12 & Beyond Annual Report

FY12

Initiative: Strengthening the University Honors Experience

Goals	Milestones	Performance Indicators	Results
Strengthen the University Honors experience with an emphasis on freshmen and sophomores thereby improving recruitment, retention, student satisfaction and success, and graduation rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add an academic advisor/national scholarship coordinator • Develop enhanced learning grants for study abroad • Launch summer camp for high-ability high school students • Develop a summer honors scholars program • Support freshmen-sophomore honors courses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of successful applicants for prestigious national/international scholarships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Increase the number of applicants and success rates of funding • Recipients of grants will acknowledge a positive impact of these experiences • Summer scholars will acknowledge a positive impact of these experiences • 50% of the freshmen and sophomore honors students will have 50% of their honors credit hours consist of stand-alone honors seminar courses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No scholarship applicants at this time; new academic adviser/national scholarship coordinator to be hired in summer 2012 (FY13) • 15 University Honors students received study abroad grants for summer 2012; experience has not been completed or assessed • Global Leadership and Philanthropy Camp has been organized; recruitment was highly successful with 26 high school students slated to participate in July 2012; interest in camp was considerable and all applicants could not be admitted; experience has not been completed or assessed • Two University Honors Summer Scholars were selected for summer 2012 and their research projects are underway; experience has not been completed or assessed • 65 stand-alone University Honors courses are scheduled for 2012-2013 compared with only 36 courses in 2011-2012; fall registration is in progress

Strengthen the University Honors experience with an emphasis on freshmen and sophomores thereby improving recruitment, retention, student satisfaction and success, and graduation rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduation rates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase percent of graduates receiving honors' degrees from 0.8% to 0.9% in three years • Increase percent of graduates receiving honors' degrees for 1% in five years • Increase percent of graduates receiving honors' degrees to 1.2% by 2020 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 185 honors graduates (12 in summer 2011, 21 in fall 2011, and 152 in spring 2012) constitutes a <i>significant</i> increase from the previous year in which there were 141 honors graduates (8 in summer 2010, 29 in fall 2010, and 104 in spring 2011).
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Significance/Impact:

- With the exception of hiring a new academic adviser/national scholarship coordinator, all University Honors-related strategic planning initiatives have been launched as of June 2012 – summer camp for high ability students, study abroad grants (in collaboration with the Division of International Programs), University Honors Summer Scholars Program, and a significant expansion of stand-alone University Honors course offerings.
- In its June 2013 report, the University Honors Program will be in a far better position to describe the impact of the outcomes and the specific contributions made to Vision 2020 and the four strategic planning imperatives as well as the number of students, faculty, and external stakeholders impacted. The aforementioned “milestones” will not be delivered and assessed until FY13.
- At this early point, however, Strategic Planning funds are definitely having an important impact. This funding has provided financial support for 15 University Honors students study abroad in summer 2012; 26 high-ability high school student will participate in a University Honors-sponsored leadership camp in summer 2012, two exceptional University Honors students will conduct pre-Capstone research in summer 2012; and the University Honors Program’s incoming freshman class will have considerably more stand-alone University Honors courses to select from as they build their fall 2012 schedules during the summer orientation period.
- Given the availability of strategic planning funds, more academic departments and faculty are clearly willing and able to offer more stand-alone University Honors courses.
- Collectively, more University Honors courses, academic advising, national scholarship support, study abroad funding, programs of distinction (e.g., Summer Scholars Program), and avenues to recruit high ability students (e.g., leadership summer camp) create the foundation and potential to attract high quality students to the university, enhance student success, bolster the number of Honors graduates, and advance the regional and national visibility of NIU. These objectives are in line with the Academic Programming section of the final *Vision 2020* report, which emphasizes recruitment, scholarship resources, signaling participation in Honors is an important institutional value, and the need for the University Honors Program to have adequate resources to meet NIU’s established goals. The *Strengthening the University Honors Experience* initiative also corresponds to the planning imperatives set forth in the *Great Journeys Strategic Plan*, particularly “Preserving, Strengthening, and Extending NIU’s Teaching and Learning Environment,” and making “NIU an Institution of ‘First Choice’ for Faculty, Students and Staff.”

Presentations & Publications:

- No presentations and/or publications

External Funding Applications & Awards:

- No external funding applications or awards.

Plans:

- Summarize plans to address the project goals during the next year. Include any important modifications to the original plans

No important modification to original plans.

1. Hire academic adviser who will specialize on assisting freshmen and sophomore University Honors students. Twenty-five percent of his or her time will be devoted to serving as a campus-wide resource person for national scholarship and academic award opportunities. The new hire will be asked to devote considerable effort to identifying such opportunities, sharing such information with eligible students, learning the complicated application processes, recruiting students to apply, and assisting students navigate the application processes.
2. Continue to collaborate with the Division of International Programs to award study abroad travel grants to University Honors students. Assess the overseas experiences of students who complete study abroad programs.
3. Continue to collaborate with the Division of International Programs, the Center for NGO Leadership and Development and LA&S External Programming to deliver the new Global Leadership and Philanthropy Camp for high-ability high school students. Assess the camp experience of participating students. Track the extent to which camp participants apply for an accept admission to NIU and the University Honors Program.
4. Continue delivery of University Honors Summer Scholars Program throughout summer 2012 and the 2012-2013 academic year with students completing research, required number of blogs, end-of-summer reports, high quality University Honors capstones, public presentations, and assessment. Select summer 2013 University Summer Scholars in spring 2013.
5. Deliver a significantly expanded number of stand-alone University Honors course offerings during the 2012-2013 academic year with an emphasis on servicing freshmen and sophomores. Track the extent to which freshmen and sophomore honors students complete 50% of their University Honors credit hours as stand-alone honors courses.