UNIVERSITY HONORS PROGRAM
Honors Committee Meeting
310th Meeting

2 September 2011
1:30-3:30 PM, CL 110

APPROVED

Voting members present: Brianno Coller (EET), Greg Conderman (EDUC), Michael Duffy (LIB), William Goldenberg (UCC/VPA), Nancy Nuzzo (HHS), Tim Ryan (LAS), Barton Sharp (BUSE), Ann Van Dijk (for Sinclair Bell/VPA), and Honors students Tatanne Butler and David Parlberg.

Voting members absent: Sien Deng (LAS), Scot Schraufnagel (LAS), and Honors student Nora Lindvall.

Ex-officio members present: Anne Birberick (Vice Provost) and Christopher Jones (Honors).

Ex-officio members absent: None.

Others: Nancy Castle (Honors House advisor) and Honors staff Jes Cisneros and Joanne Ganshirt (Recording Clerk).

I. Welcome and Introductions

Jones opened the meeting by introducing himself and welcoming members to the first meeting. All those in attendance introduced themselves.

II. Election of a New Faculty Committee Chair

RYAN/NUZZO MADE A MOTION TO NOMINATE SHARP. DUFFY/CONDERMAN MOVED TO CLOSE NOMINATIONS. BOTH MOTIONS PASSED. Sharp was elected chair.

III. Approval of Agenda

CONDERMAN/RYAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED. THE MOTION PASSED.

IV. Approval of Minutes from 5 May 2011

CONDERMAN/RYAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS PRESENTED. THE MOTION PASSED.
V. **Meeting Schedule Change**

Jones informed the committee that four members had conflicts with the scheduled November meeting. He asked if it would possible to move meeting from November 5 to October 28. Committee members agreed to change the meeting date.

VI. **Associate Vice Provost for University Honors (AVPUH) Report**

Jones said he had been told that there were issues with quorum during the last year. He asked committee members to find a replacement to attend meetings if they are unable to attend.

Jones gave the committee an overview of vision and goals for the University Honors Program. He views the AVPUH position as a multi-dimensional role:

1. **Academic leader.** To this end he will teach one Honors course every semester.
2. **Curriculum innovator.** Is the Honors Program working for all the colleges? What works in one college won’t work in all colleges, so flexibility is needed to be able to customize the program for colleges. Former director Daniel Kempton did the ground work for this, and the committee started the process by allowing customization of Upper Division Honors.
3. **Affective administrator.** The University Honors Program needs to be a well-functioning program serving students and faculty effectively.
4. **Entrepreneur.** The Honors Program is not cash rich, so he will need to work with other departments to get support. The funding received by the Honors Program is not enough, so he will need to find creative ways to fill the gaps.
5. **Active recruiter.** Following the State of the University address by President Peters, the pressure is on the Honors Program to grow. The Honors Program will need to find creative ways to achieve this growth.

Part of the vision for the Honors Program is to do the basics well. Jones wants to make sure there is high quality advising, there is a good work relationship and a quality product is provided to students. The Honors Program is about students.

Jones noted that good ground work had been done by Castle and former director Daniel Kempton to solving some of the problems facing the Honors Program. He added he was glad that Emily Del Monaco had been hired from the College of Business to be the program coordinator.

Important efforts have been made to engage alumni and friends. Fundraising needs to continue. The Honors Program needs to find ways to bring dollars into the program that have not been available before.
Standardization of financing for courses is also needed. That is an area on which Jones says will need to work. He hopes to find incentives to get faculty to teach, be it through grants, the current financial arrangement, or something else. The challenge is going to be fiscal in nature because it relates to whole university. The Honors Program needs to get NIU’s best faculty teaching its best students. How do we get recipients of the Presidential Teaching Professor, Presidential Research Professor, and Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Awards to teach Honors courses?

Jones said the AVPUH should be an ambassador of the program. He wants to reach out to deans and chairs at a strategic time when he can present new incentives while asking for something. The culture at NIU needs to shift. There are new faculty members who the Honors Program staff needs to get involved with the Program. If staff members mention components of the Honors Program to the new faculty, they do not know what the Program is. The Honors Program must get people involved and enthusiastic.

He would also like to customize the Honors Program to the colleges and major departments. In addition, a way needs to be found to make it easier for departments and programs to offer Honors courses. This could be enjoyable for all faculty and students. But departments are under pressure to put students in seats, so ways to limit punishment for low-enrollment courses needs to be found. Who would not want to teach a small class of bright students? he asked. Can we reach out to departments who don’t reward faculty for doing capstone projects? A reward is given to faculty who direct dissertations, but nothing is given for directing a Capstone. Honors can be imbedded in future hiring with the help of the provost. He said he hopes this is something that the central administration might be open to consider. Jones added he is open to ideas from committee members.

Recruitment and retention is important. Marketing the Honors Program will need to be done. Kathy Buettner, vice president of University Relations, is working on branding. The Honors Program needs to find ways to get honors-eligible students already at NIU involved. Promoting diversity is also important. NIU is changing, and the Honors Program should reflect the student body as best as possible. To that end Jones will reach out to the Black Student Union, Latino Resource Center, non-traditional students, veterans and other underrepresented student organizations.

Jones concluded by saying with support of the Honors Committee and staff the Honors Program can move to next level. Peters wants to grow the institution, and Jones wants to grow the Honors Program. He said he has energy and excitement but needs help because he wants to improve Honors Program, so that it can be something of which to be proud.
Developments and Updates (since July 1)

Jones said he tried to hit the ground running. Being named an associate vice provost is a sign that central administration is saying the Honors Program is growing in importance. Deans and chairs might be more willing to sit down with Honors staff regarding courses or to meet to create more scholarships, better housing for Honors student, etc.

President Peters mentioned the Honors Program several times in the State of the University Address. As a result he has been approached by several people wanting to schedule meetings.

Jones agreed to teach an Honors course (POLS 285H) as part of the “Global Experience” Themed Learning Community, which has involved multiple planning meetings with Julia Spears and TLC colleagues, Mike Duffy (MUSC 220H) and Kate Braser (UNIV 101H). This was not originally something he was scheduled to do, but he stepped in when Kempton left the University. There are 19 very bright students in the course.

Jones also served on the search committee that hired Emily Del Monaco (formerly of the College of Business) as the new program coordinator; negotiated with Del Monaco and secured the hiring authorization; and worked with Denise Rode at the First Year Orientation office to secure Emily a section of UNIV 101. Del Monaco has been involved in living-learning communities and developed a manual to train house leaders. The College of Business dean informed Jones that we had selected a good person.

He has met with Cisneros and Ganshirt multiple times as he became acclimated to the new duties. Both have been very helpful during this transition. Castle has also helped by sharing her experiences as acting director. Jones said he is thankful for people with experience.

Jones informed the committee he is to create and sustain a real “team” approach at University Honors. He is consulting with Cisneros and Ganshirt regularly, soliciting advice and information from Castle and holding weekly staff meetings with Cisneros, Ganshirt, Del Monaco, and Anne Quinlan (program advisor). He shared details of his leadership philosophy and style. He has also met with his Honors colleagues individually. In addition, he is involving Cisneros in many meetings with other units (e.g., Academic Advising, Foundation, Housing, Admissions, etc.) as well as Ganshirt (e.g., Scholarships). The discussions have been very frank and open and should create good relationships.

Cisneros is now fully responsible for advising. He will also be the acting director when Jones is out of town. Jones will be attending the National Collegiate Honors Council conference in Phoenix in October. Cisneros will be in charge while he is gone, and he is very comfortable with that.

Thanks to Cisneros the annual freshmen retreat at NIU’s Lorado Taft was successful. Ganshirt, Quinlan, Del Monaco, and the student peer advisors and Honors House and
community leaders played important supporting roles. Jones was responsible for recruiting and coordinating administrator, faculty and staff participation in the retreat. He said he was pleased by the strong response received. Faculty members who attended the retreat included Ray Alden, Executive Vice President and Provost; Birberick; Brian Hemphill, Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management; and Castle. He received a lot of positive feedback from those attending. He told committee members to let him know if they are interested in attending next year.

An office-wide assessment of responsibilities, division of labor, and staffing needs was completed. A request was made to Birberick to fill the vacant receptionist position and authorization was received. Job is now posted and everyone hopes to have a good person in place by October. All staff members will be involved in the interview process.

The Office of Admissions is doing a video and asked Jones to be in it. Kitty McCarthy, director of Enrollment Management, was asked to give money for an Honors-only recruiting video. She agreed it was a good idea to add one to the web show at orientation session. Filming started at the Taft Retreat and has now moved on campus. Staff members have been interviewed. This video will be shown to the committee upon completion. An institutional spot featuring the Honors House (one of five videos created by University Relations) has also been completed.

Jones has met and is collaborating with personnel in the Office of Admissions on University Honors receptions to be held at fall 2011 Open House events. These receptions will be held in the University Suite of the Holmes Student Center and will feature four presentations held hourly.

University Honors has received a $50,000 Matching Gift from Earl and Cindi Rachowicz ($10,000 for five years). This is unrestricted money that may be used as the Honors Program needs. Jones, Castle, and Cisneros met with representatives of the NIU Foundation regarding this gift. The Foundation has also established an Honors-only calling pool. This is a huge step for the Honors Program as it has never been done before.

Jones also agreed to be interviewed by a reporter from the Northern Star regarding his new appointment. He also wrote a 500-word column about University Honors for the Northern Star’s welcome back edition. He has also worked on improving the Honors website. It has now been moved to the template NIU is using. Content has been improved tremendously. Staff photos and biographies will be added. He said it is important the students know who staff members are.

In addition to these items, Jones submitted the following as part of a written report:
• Accepted VP of University Relations Kathy Buettner’s invitation to speak to her about “branding” the Honors Program and featuring the program as a focal point of NIU’s recruitment strategy.

• University Honors, the Alumni Association, the NIU Foundation, and the Office of Admissions are partnering on an Honors Alumni and Prospective Student reception at Catigny Park in Wheaton. This event will build on the success of the 40th anniversary event last spring, rollout and recognize the Rachowicz gift, and provide a venue for prospective students to connect with the University Honors Program staff and Honors alumni. There will be little or no cost to our program.

• Met with Margee Myles of the College of Education’s Teach House regarding advice and information for the Honors House.

• Two meetings with Julia Spears to cooperate on a Graduate School Preparation Workshop.

• Significant effort devoted to revamping and improving the University Honors Program website. We converted to the new university shell; changed the structure and content on the front page; and updated other areas of the site. This will be an ongoing process. Staff photos and bios will be added next.

• Meeting with Mike Stang and Angela Branson of Housing; received a very receptive response to a Jones-Cisneros proposal to enhance academic programming in the Honors House under the direction of Jes and through the hiring of faculty liaisons for each college; secured LA&S financial commitment to cost share with Housing on a faculty liaison and will reach out to HHS soon. We’ll “baby step it” and possibly just use two faculty liaisons this year as a trial program.

• Meeting with Michelle Pickett and Jon Ferguson of Academic Advising regarding collaboration on advising issues of mutual interest.

• “Welcome” meeting with Tim Griffin, Ombudsman

• Productive meeting scheduled with Anne Hardy regarding collaboration on scholarship issues.

• I delivered a 30-minute presentation to prospective NIU Honors students at the Huskie Enterprise in Leadership & Philanthropy (HELP) Camp. Our former program coordinator, Kate Braser, was one of the staff leaders of this enterprise. Also four of our peer assisted.

• Registered to attend the National Collegiate Honors Council annual meeting in October.
• Collaborated with the College of Engineering on a proposal to increase that College’s participation in the University Honors Program (see below).

• Met with academic advisers from the School of Art.

• Met with our new vice provost, Anne Birberick, to outline my vision and discuss a full range of issues and challenges related to the program.

• Met with Anne Birberick, Sue Saari (vice provost’s business manager) and Joanne Ganshirt regarding the University Honors Program budget.

• There has been significant growth in the number of Honors students relative to last year.

• Upcoming meeting scheduled with Brian Hemphill, vice president for student affairs and enrollment management, to discuss future Honors House options.

• Upcoming meeting scheduled with President Peters to discuss University Honors Program.

• The University Honors Program is highlighted in the final Vision 2020 Report.

• The University Honors Program was highlighted in 2011 State of the University Address.

• Accepted invitation to speak at the Lambda Sigma Sophomore Honor Society in September and a Phi Beta Kappa working group meeting; delivered “teaching” presentations at university TA orientation and College of Liberal Arts & Sciences new faculty orientation...striving to be visible on campus.

• Worked with Anne Hardy in the Scholarship Office to complete planning and advertising related to the Student Lincoln Laureate Award.

VII. Assistant Director’s Report

Cisneros made the following report:

• He has been really busy with advising. He currently has appointments with students every half hour. He is also seeing students on a walk-basis because he does not want to turn anyone away. Part of the reason students join the Honors Program is to get personal attention.

• One hundred thirty-one students attended the annual Lorado Taft Freshman Orientation Retreat. For the first time, we had a surplus in the budget. Part of the reason we have not had a surplus is that the fee is waived for those who can’t attend. The number of these waivers has started to increase. We figured
out a way to be more efficient and proactive to cut the costs. Next year the fee for the Taft Retreat will appear on a student’s Bursar’s Office bill.

- We have had a nice start to our public relations effort. All three administrators attended the Academic Convocation. Front and center was Honors student Sarah Stuebing. She is on the cover of the most recent *Northern Now*.

- He attended the Welcome Back Barbecue held the first day of classes in Central Park.

- Spears and Cisneros made a presentation.

- He is the new faculty advisor for the Honors Student Association. He is enjoying this because even though he knows the students through advising, he is now able to see them involved in their own activities. The Birthday Boxes project has gotten quite a bit of publicity.

- He is teaching the Honors section of EPFE 201 – Education as an Agent for Change.

- He will be speaking at sections of UNIV 101 and the Latino Resource Center.

Cisneros distributed enrollment numbers for the start of the semester. Referring to new freshmen admitted during the summer orientation session, he noted the average ACT score is good. The class rank is low, and he is concerned about this. There was quite a dip from previous years. There is a two-fold explanation for this. With the economy NIU is casting the net wider and the pool of Honors-eligible students might be less rich, so the recruiting was less stringent. Another factor that affected the class rank was the result of a collaboration started by Kempton with the Scholarship Office. At some point in the communication process, students were encouraged by the Scholarship Office to consider joining the Honors Program even though they did not meet the Honors criteria. Staff members heard from a number of students they had been admitted to the Honors Program by way of getting a scholarship. This process has been revisited, and the problem should be fixed.

The transfer numbers are solid. There is a steady enough flow of quality transfer students that even though the minimum GPA requirement is 3.2, the staff is only inviting students with a 3.5 or above in order to keep the staff from being overwhelmed with advising students. Also, there tends to be a drop in the GPA while transitioning from a community college to NIU.

Current enrollment is 984. This is significant because Cisneros said he has been ruthless in removing those students who are not truly active in the Honors Program. Some
students like to have the benefits but do not actively take courses. As a result he has been following closely the progress of each student. The current enrollment is a good solid number of students making progress toward graduation with Honors. Birberick asked about the increase in upper-division students. She said it was great to see but wondered if this was due to new transfer students. Cisneros said it was to a point. He added that some students joined the program at a point that would let them start lower division honors, but they have now switched to only completing upper division honors. This number also includes new continuing NIU students who have joined recently.

Cisneros said he concerned about the number of College of Business students as it is very low. He will investigate the cause of this. The number of students from the College of Visual and Performing Arts is trending upward. Students from the Colleges of Visual and Performing Arts, Education and Engineering and Engineering Technology often struggle to complete Honors because of regimented programs of study. Also, advisors can discourage students from taking part in the Honors Program. Students will also complete Lower Division Honors and not continue into the upper level. Enrollment of students from the College of Health and Human Sciences has also increased. There are a lot of communicative disorders majors. Birberick said it is impressive that the enrollments have increased. Maybe the Honors staff needs to find out what is being done and use that as a model for other colleges. Jones said Acting Dean Mary Pritchard is encouraged that Honors is getting more HHS students.

The number of undecided majors has not changed much. Most Honors students tend to be more focused. They tend to have a strong idea what the major will be even if it changes later. Cisneros said he will work with the staff of the Academic Advising Center to increase numbers.

Cisneros reported there was a large increase in the number of Latino students enrolled in the Honors Program. He said he will continue to work with other cultural centers on campus to get more involvement. The gender numbers are not a shock. There tends to be many more females. This is usual in most Honors Programs/Colleges across the country.
September 2011 Monthly Report Tables

Table 1
ACT Scores and Class Rank for Incoming Freshman Honors Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Freshman Mean Composite ACT</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27.06</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>26.78</td>
<td>28.52</td>
<td>27.77</td>
<td>28.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshman Mean Class Rank</td>
<td>89.4</td>
<td>92.4</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>89.3</td>
<td>89.8</td>
<td>88.9</td>
<td>86.9</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>85.46</td>
<td>86.8</td>
<td>86.21</td>
<td>81.26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2
GPA for Incoming Transfer Honors Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean Transfer GPA</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>3.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Table 3
Current Active Honors Enrollment by Part of Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Currently pursuing LDH</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>660</td>
<td>593</td>
<td>716</td>
<td>571</td>
<td>467</td>
<td>409</td>
<td>373</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>492</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currently pursuing UDH</td>
<td>481</td>
<td>495</td>
<td>417</td>
<td>508</td>
<td>395</td>
<td>385</td>
<td>385</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>381</td>
<td>492</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>961</td>
<td>1155</td>
<td>1010</td>
<td>1224</td>
<td>966</td>
<td>852</td>
<td>794</td>
<td>698</td>
<td>861</td>
<td>984</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Table 4
Current Active Honors Enrollment by College

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LA&amp;S</td>
<td>521</td>
<td>482</td>
<td>572</td>
<td>414</td>
<td>374</td>
<td>377</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V&amp;PA</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H&amp;HS</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E&amp;ET</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>38</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 5

Students in Honors by Self-ID Race/Ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>818</td>
<td>944</td>
<td>874</td>
<td>1001</td>
<td>799</td>
<td>721</td>
<td>665</td>
<td>574</td>
<td>721</td>
<td>795</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None listed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Minority</strong></td>
<td><strong>142</strong></td>
<td><strong>198</strong></td>
<td><strong>131</strong></td>
<td><strong>201</strong></td>
<td><strong>139</strong></td>
<td><strong>131</strong></td>
<td><strong>129</strong></td>
<td><strong>122</strong></td>
<td><strong>122</strong></td>
<td><strong>163</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 6

Students in Honors by Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>623</td>
<td>726</td>
<td>649</td>
<td>787</td>
<td>612</td>
<td>546</td>
<td>503</td>
<td>432</td>
<td>548</td>
<td>631</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>337</td>
<td>428</td>
<td>361</td>
<td>437</td>
<td>354</td>
<td>306</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>961</strong></td>
<td><strong>1154</strong></td>
<td><strong>1010</strong></td>
<td><strong>1224</strong></td>
<td><strong>966</strong></td>
<td><strong>852</strong></td>
<td><strong>794</strong></td>
<td><strong>698</strong></td>
<td><strong>861</strong></td>
<td><strong>984</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VIII. Program Coordinator’s Report

Jones told the committee that many of the events Del Monaco has been involved with have been previously mentioned. She has been very enthusiastic and hit the ground running.

In her absence the following written report was presented:

“I’d like to begin by offering my sincerest apologies for not being present at today’s Honors Committee meeting. I am very excited to have joined the University Honors Program staff as of August 10 and wish I were able to join you to introduce myself as well as deliver my first report in person. I have been very busy in my first three weeks on the job. I assisted with the Taft Retreat, participated in Academic Convocation, implemented the Honors Welcome Back BBQ in Central Park, and volunteered to do House Calls on the four floors of the Honors House. I’ve also been meeting regularly with my student staffs and promoting and accepting RSVPs for the Microfinance Series. The first SOUPer Wednesday event for the semester was held this week and featured three executive board members from the Honors Student Association. Special guests scheduled to speak at upcoming SOUPer Wednesdays include Dr. Julia Spears, Becky Harlow, Dr. Brian Pilsbury, and Abbey Wolfman. Planning for Floor Wars and Don’t Stress the Test are well underway. The Community Leader Birthday Box service project has already received a great deal of attention, having been featured in Northern Today and the Daily Chronicle. The kick-off of the new Honors peer mentor program took place last night. Meetings for the Honorable Mentions ‘zine and HSA Outreach are scheduled for Sept. 12. I’ve also been involved in updating the University Honors Program web pages, recruiting students to the “Northern Illinois University Honors Program” Facebook group, and conversations preparing for the October and November open houses, Homecoming, and the October 12 Honors Alumni and Prospective Student reception at which I will be present along with my student staffs. Additionally, I continue to update students via the Honors email list and take reservations for the Honors Lounge. Beyond this I also co-teach a section of UNIV 101, mentor two new freshmen through the Student-Faculty Links program, and serve as co-advisor to NIU’s chapter of Mortar Board Senior Honor Society. The group held a retreat for its executive board members in DeKalb and Chicago this past Saturday and its first executive board meeting for the semester on Wednesday. Lastly, I am delighted to be joining Dr. Jones in traveling to Phoenix for the NCHC Conference in October.”

IX. Alumni Relations and Development Report

Castle reported the NIU Foundation has had an interest in the Honors Program in the last couple of years. This is good for everyone. The Foundation wants money to come to NIU, so helping Honors with donations will help with that. The Foundation paid for HELP camp through a Venture Grant. This was a one-time grant. The goal of the camp was to get high-achieving high school juniors and seniors to take a look at NIU and the
Honors Program. A new funding source will need to be found for next year’s camp. Students attending the HELP camp had to use $20 for a microfinance investment after attending a workshop by Dennis Barsema. Honors Program community leaders each have a group of students to keep in touch with through the year. Students will come back to campus this spring to decide what to do with the microfinance investment.

Castle said Earl Seaver, Deputy Provost, gets a lot of credit for getting the Castle donation for the Honors Program because if Seaver had not made her the acting director, the Honors Program would not have been brought to her husband’s attention. The Castle donation was rolled out to get attention for the Program to get additional donations. For the last few years, Earl Rachowicz, Honors alum, has been looking at the Honors Program for a large donation, but the Foundation had him flagged as a donor for the College of Business. Rachowicz had made it clear that he wanted the Honors Program to receive his donation, but he did not see any commitment to the Honors Program either internally or externally. But in last year that has changed. Rachowicz and his wife, Cindy, have made a $50,000 challenge grant. For every new dollar donated, they will match it up to $10,000 per year. New money is anything beyond two years or an increase in an annual donation. This is the first time the Honors Program has gotten external interest for donations. The October 12 event will be paid for by the Alumni Association to make the rollout announcement and publicly thank the Rachowiczes. This will also be a recruiting event to get alumni to mentor prospective students. Jones added this event will be photographed and put in papers and on the website.

Referring the above-mention Honors-only calling period, Castle informed committee members the Foundation does annual fund raising based on major. This time the Foundation will focus on anyone who hasn’t given to the major in the last five years and any who were members of the Honors Program will be asked to give to Honors. A postcard will be sent with information and calls start in late October. The ball is rolling, Castle added, and thanked Birberick and Peters for their support of the program and putting it out front.

Sharp asked what the money be generally be used for. Castle said the money left by her husband will be for Honors international study and will be administered through the Honors Program. Faculty will be able to apply for assistance with international travel if they want to create international courses. Rachowicz money is open ended. Jones said that is the best part of this funding--if someone wants to do field research, work on a Capstone--this money could be used for it. Del Monaco could use money for social and academic programming. Sharp said it would be a good idea to think about starting a process on how to apply for this money if the committee runs out of EYE grant money. Jones noted there is also money left by Dick Noreen, former Honors administrative assistant, to use for scholarships. This year there is nearly $4000 for scholarships.
X. **New Business**

A. **CEET-University Honors Proposal**

Jones presented a proposed catalog change created by Nicholas Pohlman, assistant professor of mechanical engineering. This was a collaboration among Pohlman, Omar Ghayreb, associate dean of the College of Engineering and Engineering Technology, and Honors Program staff Jones and Cisneros to facilitate greater cooperation between the college and the Honors Program. This proposal will be shared with college chairs. The college will need to give its approval as well. Jones wanted to share this proposal with the Honors Committee for endorsement. Birberick added this was a proposal approval from the Honors Committee before it was sent through curricular channels.

Jones told the committee members this was a two-prong process. While approval was being sought from the Honors Committee, Pohlman and Ghayreb would be presenting it to CEET department chairs. This proposal could be used as a model for other colleges. Sharp wanted clarification that Lower Division Honors would be completed through the Honors Program, then Upper Division Honors would be completed through the college. Jones said he did not want to wall off engineering students. They will have access to the opportunity to earn University Honors and will need to follow the requirements of the Honors Program.

Cisneros said the honors model at a large, comprehensive university is driven by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. The Honors Program is trying to do customization in a way that won’t affect the well-rounded aspect and diversity of requirements. He said the Honors Program does not want students to be specialists. The agreement will allow for a more proactive recruitment of students who would not have joined because the major is so restrictive. This agreement would allow the requirements for UDH to be decided by faculty in the college. De facto that is already happening, Cisneros said. This is just codifying it in the catalog. He added it is a good fit based on the misconception that students only do Honors in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. This allows students to work within the constraints of the major requirements.

Jones said he was comfortable with this arrangement because the Honors Committee had already made it easier for departments to have different courses by approving the policy to allow students in departmental honors programs to take a seminar in the major. Cisneros added that while this would not be a “cookie cutter” model for all colleges, Honors Program staff will be willing to work with faculty from other colleges to create a program in which they see
value added for their students, but he does not want to water down or change requirements of the Honors Program.

Birberick asked for clarification that students in CEET would complete LDH like all other members of the Honors Program and that Upper Division Honors would be completed differently. She asked if students would still have the Honors tag on transcripts. Jones said the CEET students would receive all the same recognition as all students completing the Honors Program, plus college honors. Cisneros added that if this plan does not work, no one will be losing anything.

Jones said this proposal won’t interfere with the integrity of the Honors Program. The staff of CEET know what their students need most, but this will allow them to learn more about recourses available to them from the Honors Program. Coller said the departments seem receptive to the proposal. A presentation will be made in the next week to all members of the college faculty.

Castle asked if students will still have to complete LDH. Students would just not have to complete an Honors seminar to earn University Honors. Cisneros said this proposal would allow students to look at other academic pursuits from the college that would fulfill seminar credit, such as study abroad and engaged learning. Both of these options would be in the spirit in the seminar course. Jones added the college will have to create a curricular structure to meet the seminar requirement.

Cisneros said the college and Honors Program are being proactive in getting this proposal approved. This will get faculty involved in mini-sections and help decide what constitutes an Honors component within a mini-section course. To that end, Jones said Ghayreb said it would be beneficial if the Honors Program and Honors Committee could come up with some assessment goal to imbed.

Parlberg said students talk to each other, and he wondered if this will cause problems with students who are not offered this opportunity. Will they see it as unfair? Cisneros said that was a good question. This proposal will mostly be used a recruitment tool. Students who are majoring in departments within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences that have departmental honors programs are also given this same opportunity. Jones said that the previously approved LAS proposal was why he is comfortable with adding this to CEET.

COLLER/PARLBEG MOVED TO ENDORSE THE COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING AND ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY PROPOSAL. THE MOTION PASSED.

B. New Website Rollout and Continuing Changes
Jones showed the committee the new Honors Program website and the changes that have been made. He wanted the website to have a more academic look.
He gave a big thank you to Mike Orson of the Vice Provost Tech Team for making all the changes.

C. **Distinguished Alumni Award**

Castle told committee members that an awards banquet for the 40th anniversary was to be held as a follow-up to the April event. The idea was to start having an awards dinner of outstanding alumni each year. Next spring the event may be held in conjunction with Honors Day. A call was put out at the event this past April for outstanding alumni nominations. No nominations were received. Jones added the deadline for the nominations was July 21. He wanted to bring this issue before the committee and see what committee members wanted to do. What be most appropriate to honor alumni? Castle recommended having an event in the spring which could be announced at the upcoming October event. This would allow time to figure out a way to name outstanding alumni. Sharp suggested this might be something a working group could do.

D. **Program “Branding” and “Tagline”**

The University Honors Program has been asked if the current tagline should be kept or a new one should be created. Sharp asked committee members if this was something that should be discussed or if a working group should be created to create a tagline. Ryan said it should be discussed, but a working group was not needed. Sharp suggested letting the students create a new tagline. Del Monaco could take charge of this by requesting suggestions from students via e-mail. Jones asked if committee members would like to propose tagline ideas. Sharp said it could be left open for committee members, but students tend to be more creative. Birberick suggested having a contest with a deadline and prize for the winning suggestion.

Committee members agreed a contest should be held to have suggestions ready by the October Honors Committee meeting.

E. **Defining and Organizing Working Groups for 2011-2012**

Sharp asked if there were any suggestions for working groups. Jones said diversity is very important. There was a working group for that last year, but more work needs to be done. Jones also suggested working on a faculty handbook. It was to have been worked on last year, but it has since been discovered that the faculty handbook posted online is the same as the student handbook. Sharp said an e-mail could be sent to committee members asking for volunteers to form working groups on diversity and the faculty handbook. Jones asked if a working group should gather faculty perceptions on developing
specific Honors Program specifications for the various colleges. Sharp suggested working with individual committee members.

XI. Announcements

There were no announcements.

XII. Adjournment

DUFFY/COLLER MOVED TO ADJOURN. THE MOTION PASSED. The meeting adjourned at 3:40 p.m. The next meeting will be at 1:30 p.m. on October 7 in Campus Life Building 110.