UNIVERSITY HONORS PROGRAM
Honors Committee Meeting
323rd Meeting
September 13, 2013
1:30-3:30 PM, CLB 110

I. Welcome and Introduction of Committee Members

II. Election of the Committee’s Faculty Chair

III. Approval of Agenda

IV. Approval of Minutes from April 26, 2013

V. Staff Reports
   A. Associate Vice Provost for University Honors
   B. Assistant Director of Academics and Advising
   C. Assistant Director of Programming and Communication
   D. Assistant to the Associate Vice Provost for University Honors

VI. Additional Reports & Updates

VII. Old Business
   a. Honors Faculty status

VIII. New Business
   a. Setting deadlines for the committee’s business this year
   b. Should we establish working groups?
   c. University Honors Student Advisory Committee
   d. Ideas for Engaging and Supporting Faculty
   e. University Honors Strategic Planning Projects
      i. CEET Course Transformation
      ii. External Program Review
      iii. University Honors Assessment Plan
      iv. New course development—“Challenge” course and Foundations of Research

IX. Adjourn

The next meeting is Friday, October 4, 2013.
UNIVERSITY HONORS PROGRAM
Honors Committee Meeting
323rd Meeting
September 13, 2013
1:30-3:30 PM, CLB 110

APPROVED

Voting members present: Bart Sharp (BUS), Scott Balczerak (LAS), Dave Ballantine (LAS), Dave Changnon (LAS), Micheal Duffy (LIB), Nick Pohlman (EET), Masih Shokrani (UCC/HHS), John Evar Strid EDUC and Honors students Daihee Cho, Dan Jeffries, Rachel Lapidus, Luis Lopez, and Jerrell Ross

Voting members absent: Patricia Braun (HHS)

Ex-officio members present: J. D. Bowers (Honors) and Anne Birberick (Vice Provost)

Ex-officio members absent: None

Others: Honors staff Jes Cisneros, Joanne Ganshirt, and Jason Goode, and Michael Kolb (Acting Associate Vice Provost)

I. Welcome and Introduction of Committee Members
Committee members introduced themselves.

II. Election of the Committee’s Faculty Chair
Ballantine/Pohlman moved to nominate Sharp to continue as chair. The motion passed. Ballantine/Changnon moved to close the nominations. The motion passed. Sharp was elected by acclimation.

III. Approval of Agenda
Ballantine/Changnon moved to approve the agenda as presented. The motion passed.

IV. Approval of Minutes from April 26, 2013
Duffy/Changnon moved to approve the minutes as presented. The motion passed.

V. Staff Reports
A. Associate Vice Provost for University Honors
Bowers said there were a lot of initiatives he had pledged at his interview to jump into and he has started that process. He thanked the Honors Program staff members for assistance with the transition period.

- University Honors by the Numbers (Day 10 counts)--Bowers informed committee members the total Honors Program enrollment 10 days into the academic year is 1,064. Over 100 transfer students and 217 freshmen
joined during summer orientation. A concerted effort will be made to get more involved in recruiting transfer students. Collaboration with community colleges will be sought. President Baker likes the enrollment numbers but like to see it increase.

- Academics—The Honors Program is offering 33 Honors-only courses with 35 faculty teaching them. (Several courses are being team taught.) There are 101 mini-sections also being offered. The number of mini-sections may be a little skewed because the College of Engineering and Engineering Technology is offering a large number to accommodate students in the college Honors Program. Four Honors-only courses had to be canceled due low enrollment.

There will be 30 Honors-only courses offered during spring 2014. As yet the number of mini-sections has not been finalized. Lists of course offerings are still be received.

- Study Abroad—There were two study abroad programs offered this summer for Honors students. Birberick accompanied students to Montreal. This program will be run again in 2014. Currently a new faculty leader is being sought to work with Birberick in 2014 and then become the sole leader in 2015. A three-year commitment is being requested. Birberick informed the committee members that speaking French is not required though it would be helpful. Part of the agreement with the University of Montreal is to provide a bilingual assistant. Shokrani asked when the program is offered and for how long.

Bowers led a group of five students to The Hague for a “Genocide and Justice” study abroad program. This will be offered again in 2014. There has already been some interest in this program. In addition, a new E-21 Project will be added in The Hague for the coming summer.

Baker has authorized Bowers to go to China next month to work on an exchange program for the Honors Program with Chinese universities. With this cooperation, the Honors Program will be approaching the five continents, five programs initiative Bowers has created. NIU’s Africa study abroad programs are good now so the Honors Program will partner with them. That leaves only Central and South America in which to create programs. There was a great start to the Honors study abroad initiative so it will continue.

Because of the generosity of the colleges all of the academic surcharge monies have not been allocated for courses during the fall and spring semesters, permission has been received to offer up to four courses during the summer 2014 semester. Bowers asked committee members for suggestions on the type of courses to offer.
Bowers wants to move forward with the Honors Faculty Status proposal. He would like to develop a cohort of faculty.

Alumni—A meeting of the Honors Alumni Affinity Group needs to be set so Bowers can meet with them for the first time.

This is the year of the alumni for the Honors Program. A lot of programming will be done to include them and help to reconnect them to the Honors Program. Alumni are guest speakers at SOUPer Wednesday. Two such events have already been held.

A homecoming event called Alumni College will be held to try attract Honors alumni. Two faculty members will be giving 15 minute lectures on latest in the respective fields. There will also be student speakers. The event will be held in the Campus Life Building from 11:30 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. thus allowing participants to attend tailgating events. A donor as given money for the purchase of gift items to encourage more giving by other alumni. The items have been ordered.

Fundraising for the Honors Program continues. The Rachowicz Challenge is now in its third year. This year is a 3-1 match on any donation given through the NIU Telefund. A new story will appear in NIU Today to get momentum for this effort. The hope is that the notoriety of the gift will spark more giving by Honors alumni. During the 2012-13 giving period, 61 donors, out of approximately 4700 alums, contributed. Donors include Earl and Cindy Rachowicz, Michael Maibach and a couple of corporations. The Rachowicz are pleased that 100% of their donation is being used to benefit students.

There is an $8000 from Maibach for an event to be held on October 3 and scholarships. The donation will be split in half for each. Bowers is hopeful that Maibach will continue donate this money beyond the initial promise. There is also a donation that will only become available from the estate of John Castle. Scholarships—Bowers reported he is looking for new scholarship funding sources for Honors students. There are also new developments with the NIU Scholarship offering process.

Student initiatives—McKearn Fellows is a program jointly run by the Honors Program, the Office of Student Engagement and Enhanced Learning, and Birberick. All 12 of the Fellows were Honors students. This is a program that could be rolled out long term and become
permanent. The Fellows were taken to visit NIU alumni, met with President Baker and conducted research.

The second year of the Summer Scholars Program is progressing. Goode will give a further update during his report.

- Bowers and Goode will attend the annual National Collegiate Honors Council convention in New Orleans the first week of November.

- External Review—Outside consultants have been contacted and will be on campus October 31 and November 1. The reviewers will speak with the committee members during the regularly scheduled Honors Committee meeting. Assessment information is being gathered and sent to each of the reviewers before their arrival. Bowers said this will lead to full assessment plan starting with students as freshmen continuing through graduation.

- Projects in Development—Bowers informed committee members of a number of projects that being developed for Honors students, faculty, and recruitment. These include a “Challenge” course in cooperation with the Office of Environmental Studies titled *Water, Life, Society*; a China study abroad and university partnership, a faculty symposium; and new publications and videos.

- Follow-up to on-going projects—Some of the Vision 2020 money will go to the College of Engineering and Engineering Technology for development of the college Honors Program.

B. Assistant Director of Academics and Advising

Cisneros made the following report:

- He has been meeting with a lot of students. He has had 65 unique student advising appointments in first two weeks.

- Taft was a big success. A large group attended this year. Feedback from evaluation forms is much the same as that received in past years. He thinks the Honors Program is on right track and will continue to move forward with this event.

- He is working on a possible Taft session in the spring for graduating seniors to get feedback on the Honors Program.

- He attended the UNIV 101 resource fair, the Second Year at NIU fair and the College of Engineering and Engineering Technology welcome reception for engineering Honors students.
A workshop on applying for EYE grants is being developed by a past recipient with the help of Cisneros. He asked faculty members on the Honors Committee to let him know of any concerns they can think of concerning past EYE grants. These concerns would be based on the evaluation process.

He is working on an initiative to increase interaction between alumni and students across campus.

He held a training session for the Honors Fellows prior to the Lorado Taft Retreat for Freshmen.

He will be conducting Capstone workshops to supplement the one-on-one advising meetings with students. These workshops will be an introduction to the Capstone process.

He will again be serving as the Honors Student Association Faculty advisor.

He attended many beginning of the school year social events including the Honors Welcome Back Barbecue and the Campus Life Building Open House.

Native recruiting will be done for the first time in several semesters. The enrollment numbers have been holding but with the president requesting more students in the Honors Program the recruiting effort will need to be done.

Cisneros presented the enrollment numbers for the beginning of the academic year. The most interesting number is that for minorities. Approximately 26% of the Honors Program lists ethnicity as non-white.

### INCOMING FRESHMEN ACT/CLASS RANK MEAN SCORES

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*These numbers are approximations as data is still being entered into the database*

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*77 Students list two or more ethnicities*

### ENROLLMENT BY GENDER

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<td>266</td>
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17 started at NIU in the CHANCE Program; 20 are athletes; 9 are veterans; 685 are NIU Scholarship recipients (65%)
C. **Assistant Director of Programming and Communication**

In the absence of Segundo the following written report was presented:

1. **Fall Programming Calendar**
   a. **Welcome Back Barbeque**
      200 students attended. President Doug Baker was our guest of honor.
   b. **Volleyball with the Doctors**
      Please note future dates as we kindly request faculty presence.
   c. **Social Justice Conference**
      Your support in encouraging students to attend is greatly appreciated. We also extend the invitation to you!

2. **Communication developments**
   a. **Web page changes**
      New sections, updated information.
   b. **Monday, weekly updates to all University Honors students**
      Please let me know if you would like to share information with our students via this platform. I would need all messages by Friday.
   c. **Social media presence**
      Facebook: Northern Illinois University Honors program
      Twitter: UnivHonorsNIU
   d. **Newsletter**
      To be released in early October.

3. **Honors House**
   a. A thank you to Drs. Dave Ballantine and Dave Changnon for serving as our Faculty Advisors for the 2013-2014 academic year
      Early move in
      Taco Thursday

4. **House Leaders and Community Advisors**
   a. **Selection**
   b. **Collaboration**

5. **Fall programming calendar (given as a handout)**

6. **Residents**
   180 total; up 30 from last year.

Cho said he attended Volleyball with Doctors and wished there were more faculty and staff participating.

Ballantine reported the first Taco Thursday was held at the Honors House. It was very well attended. Promod Vohra, Dean of the College of Engineering and Engineering Technology, talked to students about what skills and knowledge they
will need to be competitive in a global market. Two more Taco Thursdays are planned for this semester. The speakers for these are being finalized.

Changnon informed committee members that number of House Leaders has been reduced from four to two. The House Leaders have been very busy so far. There has been a good start to the year.

Ballantine reported that students from the Honors Program will be attending the NIU-Purdue football game. After the game, these students will meet with members of the Purdue Honors Program. Bowers said he will be at the game and also attending the meeting. Sharp said he will be at the game and would like to join this meeting as well.

D. Assistant to the Associate Vice Provost for University Honors

Goode presented the following report on his activities during the summer to the present time:

- University Honors Summer Scholars—Copies of the student biographies for each Scholar were presented to the committee. The three Scholars are Octavio Escalante-Aguirre, physics major; Elliott Ihm, psychology major, and Lauren Nale, rehabilitation services major. Each has completed nine weeks of research during the summer and has started doing their blogs.

- End of Year Funds—Using tuition waiver monies that had been unused during the spring semester, Goode was able to help three students satisfy bills with the University. This allowed two students to enroll for the fall and one student to get his transcripts upon graduation. Two students were also hired as student workers to staff Northern Neighborhood.

- John Henrik Clarke Honor Society—Goode invited 34 of the 41 new inductees to join the Honors Program. Of those, four students have joined.

- Common Reading Experience Committee (CRE)—Goode helped with a marketing strategy and interweaving the new book into the curriculum.

- AVP Search—He attended the office interviews and some of the candidate open forums of the finalists for the Honors Program position.

- Honors Fellows Training—Segundo and Goode hosted a training session in April for the fall 2013 Honors Fellows. At that time duties were assigned and gave them expectations for the coming academic year.
• McKearn Summer Fellows Program—Goode spent much of the summer working with this program. Duties included delivering a session on National Scholarship, Fellowships, and Recognition opportunities; confirming all speakers, rooms, travel accommodations; picked up food when necessary; and attended weekly staff meetings. He also worked with four students as their McKearn contact person. Events he attended included travelling to Nanophase; meeting with Congresswoman Robin Kelly; meeting with Bruce Niemi; touring the Arts Club of Chicago, the British Consulate and Sagent Pharmaceuticals; and attending the Castle Reception, the barbecue hosted by President Baker, the Chicago White Sox game, the concluding presentations, and the mentor reception.

• National Scholarships—He is working with four students interested in applying for the Rhodes Scholarship (Oxford) with an October 2 deadline; one student interested in applying for the Gates Cambridge Scholarship with an October 15 deadline; and one student interested in applying for the Marshall Scholarship with an October 1 deadline.

• Taft—Goode made a presentation on continuing student tuition waivers, Honors Fellows, Honors house Leader, scholarships, fellowships, and recognition opportunities.

• Walk-ins—He met with several students who had been referred to him to discussion scholarships and the Honors Program.

VI. Additional Reports & Updates
Bowers will have a report on the Capstone evaluations conducted over the summer for the next meeting.

VII. Old Business
A. Honors Faculty status
Sharp apologized to committee members because he did not get the revised proposal sent to them. It was sent to the staff the morning of the meeting and will be sent to the committee members for input. Bowers said he has spoken with Brad Bond, Dean of the Graduate School, about the faculty. This initiative was put on hold during the change of AVP, but Bowers would now like to continue the work. He said this initiative is about creating an established list of faculty who teach Honors courses that could lead to an HONS designation for courses. This will take a lot of work. He added there will be some pushback on this but it needs to be done and will help the program in the long run. A core group of faculty is needed who could answer questions about what it means to teach an Honors course.
VIII. New Business
A. Setting deadlines for the committee’s business this year
   Deadlines will remain the same as previous years. The committee will need to
   name an Outstanding Alumni Award recipient for 2014, so deadlines will need to
   be set for that. The 2013 recipient will be honored at the same time as the
   Northern Lights event in November.

B. Working groups
   The following working groups have been established:

   Outstanding Alumni Award—Cho, Ballantine, Cisneros, Sharp
   Assessment—Changnon, Pohlman, Ballantine, Duffy, Cisneros

   Faculty Status—Ballantine would like to have representative from each college on
   this working group. Sharp asked if the proposal was to the point that the entire
   committee could work on it. This will need to be discussed at the October
   meeting.

   Sharp asked if a working group on diversity is needed Cisneros said he thinks the
   process is fine as it is. Bowers said committee input was important so he would
   like committee members to continue watching the enrollments. He added the
   Honors Program has been doing a great job, but this is an issue that cannot be
   ignored.

C. University Honors Student Advisory Committee
   Bowers said a proposal has been approved by the Honors Committee to create a
   student advisory council to act as a liaison between the program and its students.
   This council has not been created. He would like to put this on hold. Currently,
   there is the Honors Student Association, 14 Honors Fellows, and five student
   members of the Honors Committee. Bowers said it seems redundant to have yet
   another student council. He added that the students who would want to be on the
   advisory committee are already participating in Honors Committee or are Honors
   Fellows. The current group of student groups offers plenty of mechanisms to get
   feedback from students.

   Cho said when Christopher Jones, past Associate Vice Provost for University
   Honors, presented this idea to last year’s Honors Fellows the idea was to have one
   person from each college, ethnicity, and other representative group on campus.
   Ballantine said he wanted the main constituencies represented, not just colleges.
   This would include freshmen, sophomores, juniors, seniors, transfers, and other
   underrepresented groups. This student advisory council would be an attempt to
   address the lack of representation the Honors Program of some groups. If this
   could be addressed through other means, the council would not be needed.
   Cisneros was asked how the Honors Student Association worked on issues within
   the Honors Program. He said the HSA is always there to provide feedback but
   has been focused on social and community service work.
Ballantine suggested waiting until the assessment process starts and then see where the gaps might be amongst the various groups. Birberick suggested waiting until after the external review. Sharp said this was an effort to copy national best practice. Pohlman added that staff members select the Honors Fellows and students elect the Honors Committee student members. The intention of the advisory council was that each group could elect its own representative. Bowers said he wondered how far this should go because of all the different demographic groups on campus. He added he is not sure how to get the representatives without hand picking students.

He asked if all committee members are okay with letting this wait or if it something that needs to be done immediately. Changnon asked if all students feel they have a voice in the Honors Program. They are the people who should be deciding this issue. If the students think they are not being heard on the committee that needs to be known. Jeffries said for students like himself the advisory committee would be redundant because they don’t have a problem speaking out. Cho added that students who speak up tend to be those most involved in the Honors Program. Changnon suggested doing a survey of all students to see if they want to have this type of council.

Changnon/Ballantine moved to table this issue. The motion was approved.

Bowers said he will make all students aware of the people to whom they should speak about any concerns. Lapidus said she will have a suggestion box in the Honors House. She will bring suggestions to the committee. Pohlman suggested adding a student report to the list of reports made during the Honors Committee meetings. The student representatives agreed to work on this.

D. Ideas for Engaging and Supporting Faculty
Bowers was allocated $5,000 to be given for course enhancement of Honors-only courses this semester. So far, only about $1,300 has been requested. The Honors Program staff needs to make sure Honors faculty put together initiatives that will add to the class. As part of the Vision 202 money, a spring summit will be held focusing on what it means to teach an Honors course.

Other University Honors Vision 2020 Projects include College of Engineering and Engineering course transformation, the external program review, University Honors Program assessment plan, and new course development. Bowers is currently with staff from the Environmental Studies center on a six-hour challenge course called “Water, Life, and Society.” This would be taught by various faculty so each could teach a four-week session.

Birberick announced Kolb, Acting Associate Vice Provost for General Education, will be attending meetings in her place. He will continue with his current duties but will also assist with duties in the Vice Provost office dealing with curricular issues. This will tie in with issues being dealt with by the Honors Committee.
IX.  **Adjournment**
Ballantine/Cho moved to adjourn the meeting at 3:05 p.m. The motion passed. The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, October 4 at 1:30 p.m. in Campus Life 110.