I. Welcome and Introduction of Committee Members
   A. Staff
   B. Faculty Members
   C. Student Members

II. Approval of Agenda

III. Approval of Minutes from September 4, 2015

IV. Staff Reports
   A. Director
   B. Assistant Director of Academics and Advising
   C. Assistant Director of Programming and Communication
   D. Assistant to the Associate Vice Provost for University Honors
   E. The Luminary advisor

V. Additional Reports & Updates
   A. Program Prioritization
   B. Spring courses

VI. Old Business (addressed in Director’s report)
   A. Student Handbook subcommittee
   B. Honors Faculty status subcommittee
   C. Website and Communication subcommittee
   D. Benchmarking
   E. Co-curricular program requirements
      a. Honors Engaged
      b. Resumes

VII. New Business
    A. Community College outreach and articulation
    B. Walk-on items

VIII. Adjourn

The next meeting is Friday, November 6, 2015
Voting Members Present: Karen Hovde (LIB), Christine Nguyen (EET, for Nick Pohlman), Leila Porter (LAS), Rebecca Houze (VPA), James Burton (BUS, for Bart Sharp), Mary Elaine Koren (HHS), David Hedin (LAS), Masih Shokrani (HHS), and Honors students Jasmine Hernandez, Sarah Moudy, and Amir Toghraee

Voting Members Absent: Timothy Crowley (LAS) and John Evar Strid (EDU) and Honors students Jesse Laseman and John Stavropoulous

Ex-officio Members Present: Joel Stafstrom (Honors)

Ex-officio Members Absent: Ed Klonoski

Others: Honors House advisor Dave Ballantine and Honors staff Jes Cisneros, Joanne Ganshirt (Recording Clerk), and Steve Uhren

In the absence of Bart Sharp, chair of the committee, Stafstrom served as the chair for this meeting.

I. Welcome and Introduction of Committee Members
   Because new members were in attendance, Stafstrom asked everyone to introduce themselves.

II. Approval of Agenda
    No motion was made to approve the agenda. Stafstrom moved to the next item.

III. Approval of Minutes from September 4, 2015
     Hedin/Houze moved to approve the minutes as presented. Motion passed with two abstentions.

IV. Staff Reports
   A. Director
      Stafstrom presented the following written report:

      Update Items
      1. Program Prioritization: Administrative Task Force; draft narrative due to Vice Provost Birberick on October 26
         a. Importance to University Mission/Operations [22%]
         b. Quality/Effectiveness [22%]
         c. Productivity/Efficiency [22%]
d. Internal/External Demand [22%]
e. Opportunity Analysis [12%]
Stafstrom said a rubric has been developed for for each of the individual units. There will not be an Honors Committee meeting before the submission deadline. Birberick wants to be sure everything in her unit shows in the best way possible. The draft submitted by the Honors Program staff will not be the final draft as her staff will go over it to make sure it is done accurately.

2. Spring Courses – been a big project. Help of Marcy and Joanne so it not as difficult as he thought.
3. Rachowicz Challenge Funds: student “thank you” letters
4. The Luminary
5. Excellence magazine—Stafstrom said there has not been an issue completed since fall 2014. It is usually done twice a year. He would like to get one out this fall.
6. Honors Engaged: co-curricular requirement; revised description to be on webpage and in Handbook

Develop Sub-Committees (discuss under Old Business)
1. Website and publicity:
   a. new website launched 9/24/15
   b. subcommittee meeting on 9/30
   c. add information as needed
   d. link to activities of The Luminary student blog
   e. Help from Presidential Scholars
2. Student Handbook: streamline to include critical information about programs (Lower, Upper, University) and program requirements (curricular and co-curricular); remove detailed descriptions of every program and activity (study abroad, service, etc.)?
3. Honors Faculty status: subcommittee meeting on 9/30/15
4. Benchmarking: Honors Colleges and Programs at regional public universities
   a. Entry requirements (HS rank, HS GPA, ACT); continuation requirements (GPA, curricular, co-curricular)
   b. Course work types, hours of Honors credit
   c. Scholarships: % receiving? How much? 4 years? What’s available for transfers?
   d. What’s striking (pro or con) from website and publicity?

HC guidance and advice
1. Resume requirement
   a. Tabled at September meeting
   b. Current: initial or update due from all students every October
Director Activities
1. Enrollment Management Committee (VP Eric Weldy, chair)
2. McKearn Fellows: first 4-year cohort
   a. 4-year plan and 2nd year activities
   b. Additional 4-year cohorts: begin recruitment soon
3. Scholarship Committee
   a. Lincoln Laureate:
      i. 14 complete nominations (high), 4 interviews
      ii. Kiranjit Gill selected, POLS, Matt Streb nominator
   b. Presidential Scholars
4. HCIR (Honors Council of the Illinois Region)
   a. Directors meeting, 9/25/15, Jason Goode attended
   b. Annual conference at NIU, 2/27/2016; student research and artistry presentations
   c. Lexie Williams (Honors Fellow) is spearheading organization
5. NCHC (National Collegiate Honors Council; conference in Chicago, Nov. 11-15)
6. Video interview of me (and several students) for university publicity, 9/22
7. Working with PLUS Writing Implementation team
8. Honors House trip to Starved Rock, Saturday 9/26

B. Assistant Director for Academics and Advising
Cisneros presented the following report:
1. Spent time meeting with many new and continuing students in the program. Native recruitment letter went out, and prospective students began coming in.
2. Participated in the processing and finalization of Honors Capstone proposals for fall.
3. Approved final In-Course Contracts for fall.
4. Attended on campus veterans planning meeting.
5. Worked on some edits for University Honors Handbook.
6. Working on items for “parents’ information” handout or (eventual) website items.
7. Lead workshops for both Capstones as well as In-Course Contracts.
8. Spent time working with Office of Admissions in planning for University Honors presence at October 12 NIU Open House.
9. Spent time revisiting Honors Assessment Plan and feedback from NIU OAS.
C. **Assistant Director of Programming and Communication**  
Uhren presented the following written report:

Event programming:
1. Mindfulness Monday’s started September 14 from 8:10-8:40AM  
a. The event has had large success thus far with at least 15 students attending each event  
b. Compared to last year’s opening weeks, there may have been 2-4 students at each event.  
2. Make a Difference Day  
a. October 3  
b. Courtney Vandreese has helped organize 4-Honors Teams with 5-students each  
3. Dennis Barsea’s Social Entrepreneurship Series  
a. October 7, 14, and 21 from 5-7:30PM  
b. We will have the appropriate food and drink for the students.  
c. We have opened up our registration from 25 to 40-students which filled immediately.  
4. Social Justice Conference which has been the main priority since starting.  
10/10/2015  
a. A majority of time and resources have been spent getting the final details put in place and off the ground. In the last month we have created our flyer, create and set our itinerary, ask for sponsorship, set up our interpreters for accessibility purposes, and order the catering.  
b. Our main sponsor for the event is the Student Association which gave $885. This helped cover the catering expenses for food and drink from Hy-Vee.  
c. Flyers are now out and marketing has begun. We have posted the event on Huskie Links and have around 50 students registered. I have found out that registration for this event usually increases heavily a few days prior to the event.  
d. Our goal is to have at least 150 guests in attendance.  
5. Honors STEM-Fest Table: 10/17/2015  
a. We have all of our students for the respective time slots:  
b. 9:30a-1:30p  
c. 1:00p-5:00p  
6. Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week  
a. Sleep out is planned for Saturday November 14 at 9 pm.  
b. Our student sub-committee has set the itinerary for the event leading up to the sleep out.  
i. Making tie-blankets  
ii. Speaker- TBD  
iii. Drinks and Snacks: Trail-Mix Bar
iv. Build-A-Box competition

7. Academic Decathlon
   a. Our goal is to have 20-teams of 2-3 students compete to answer 10 question ranging in difficulty. The questions will come from any professor in any department here in the university. The goal is to offer challenging academic questions and have students compete for the most right answered in the fastest amount of time.
   b. Honors Fellow Sharon Tucker is working on this event.

8. We now have a majority of our events on Huskie Links under the University Honors Program. This will allow registration for events to occur online. The registration list can be downloaded into Excel. Having Huskie Links also allows links to be put into the weekly update as opposed to flyers which tend to clog the update. Honors students have been urged to join the Honors Organization in Huskie Links in order to RSVP for events. Uhren explained that Huskie Links is an interface through the Office of Student Involvement and Leadership Development. Students may find a list of all events (Honors and other) being held on campus. Students may also register to attend these events. This site may also be used to take attendance as each event takes place. Before using this site, the Honors Program had to take RSVPs via e-mail or verbally and take attendance using sign-in sheets.

Stafstrom asked Uhren to explain Honors Engaged events. Uhren told the committee these are mostly events that the Honors Program sponsors or hosts. This year the Honors Program has stepped away from this idea in order to get students to attend other events on campus. Hedin asked if volunteering for STEM Fest would be Honors Engaged. Uhren said it was discussed and it was decided not to accept volunteering as an engaged event. Toghraee said he would rather not see the volunteering count since there are many other organizations that need volunteers to run programs. This could be up for debate. Stafstrom said any request made for Honors Engaged credit will be discussed between himself and Uhren.

Shokrani asked how someone would get an event to be Honors Engaged. Uhren said anyone interested in creating such an event should contact him. Shokrani said creating programs that are attractive to students seems to be the problem with time conflicts, other events, etc. that limit the number students who might attend. Stafstrom said he is open to suggestions for solving these problems and getting diverse Honors Engaged events.
D. Assistant to the Associate Vice Provost for University Honors

In his absence, Goode presented the following written report:

- **McKearn Program**
  - First meeting of the semester with the fellows to lay out their requirements for the year
  - Merged the McKearn administrative four-year plan with the McKean handbook
  - Setup the McKearn Network/advisory board
    - Zach Howard, Linnea Scherer, Rachel Lapidus, Jeffrey Kamholz, Lexie Williams, and Ken Barnett

- **National Scholarships and Fellowships**
  - Met with thirteen students regarding the Rhodes, Gates, and Marshall
    - Elena Palomo and Jim Feeney are interested in applying for the Rhodes
    - Priscilla Leonard and Raymond Jenkins are interested in applying for the Gates

- **Fulbright Interview Committee**
  - Read and evaluated applications, then participated in face-to-face interviews to determine if NIU will endorse the candidates’ applications

- **HCIR Directors Meeting at Moraine Valley Community College**
  - Update on the current financial state of the HCIR
    - Treasurer/recording secretary resigned position
      - No one volunteered to fill the role
    - Dues are now by fiscal/academic year
  - Upcoming HCIR student research conference at NIU in February 2016
    - When you host the conference, you are the president of the HCIR for the next year
      - This is not written in the bylaws, but has been the standard practice for the past three years. The committee will update the constitution to reflect this along with language that may allow this practice to be altered, but it will come to a vote at the next meeting
  - Proposed a new position for the e-board to evaluate Margaret Messer’s Grant apps
    - Awarded twice a year in fall (September 11 or 12) and spring (February 13)
  - Website is www.honorscouncil.com and Harper College is responsible for updating the website so please send any requests to honors@harpercollege.edu
  - Suggested partnering with honor societies to engage students and have an additional avenue to do programming or conferences when budgets are cut
➢ Honors Faculty Training (Done at Moraine Valley)
  ▪ Four-week online training class to train faculty who have not taught
    honors classes before; the final week is a face-to-face meeting where
    each faculty member has to take the program components and merge
    them into their own discipline in the form of a presentation; and the
    readings for the online class are generally taken from the NCHC
    journal

➢ Honors Scholars
  ▪ Collected their five-page summer reflections and their Capstone proposals.
    Per the guidelines, they were approved by Joel Stafstrom
  ▪ Updated their information on the Honors website

➢ Honors Scholarship tuition waiver/scholarship recipient service announcement
  ▪ Worked with Honors Fellows to ensure each service area had activities
    and a clear understanding of how to track student participation

➢ New Honors Website
  ▪ Site launched on September 25 per the request of Joel Stafstrom
  ▪ Organized photoshoots to get new pictures placed on the website
  ▪ Organized interviews with Dr. Stafstrom and students for the new website
    video

➢ UNIV 101
  ▪ Visited Joel Stafstrom’s UNIV 101 class to give an overview on
    scholarships and host a writing activity to help students form better
    scholarship essays

➢ Mortar Board co-advisor
  ▪ Send updated bank statements to the treasurer (Nick Gaston) and the other
    staff advisors (Denise Rode and Kelly Smith)

➢ NPHC (National PanHellenic Council)
  ▪ Co-advisor with Don Bramlet and Dr. Laverne Gyant
    ▪ We alternate weekly group and exec meetings at 9:00 p.m. on Tuesday
      evenings
    ▪ Met with Morgan Brickley to see how we can assist her with the council

E. The Luminary advisor
Elizabeth Denius, advisor for The Luminary presented the following written
report:

New blog format to launch in October
The Luminary team, led by Honors student Maggie Miller, is working on a new
multi-channel blog format to tell the story of the Honors program with news,
features, photos, video, and original contributions by Honors students.
The e-board is assembling a team of bloggers and working on populating the blog with start-up content. Maggie is setting up a deadline schedule so that the blog will get fresh content on a regular schedule, though the blog will be able to be refreshed with new items at any time.

The e-board held a meeting this week to assign tasks for the blog’s start-up content. Maggie Miller and I also meet once a week to go over things and keep the momentum going.

As soon as the blog format is firm and start-up content is posted, we will send out a link so you can take a look at the draft. We’d appreciate any input.

Stafstrom said *The Luminary* should fill in the gap for the web page because it will be dynamic and changing. He had hoped the web site could be dynamic and changing, but the University wants the web site to remain static. Ballantine asked if this will replace the old *Luminary* that allowed students to post artwork and creative writing. Stafstrom said this will be in addition to that. There will be student profiles, program information, etc. as well as the creative works.

V. Additional Reports & Updates
A. Program Prioritization
   This was covered in the director’s report.

B. Spring courses
   This was covered in the director’s report.

VI. Old Business (addressed in Director’s report)
A. Student Handbook subcommittee
   Stafstrom said the handbook was initially created last year. It gives a clear description of everything the Honors Program does including requirements for courses, course descriptions, and co-curricular requirements. Descriptions of such things as the study abroad programs offered and social justice activities (STAND, GLAP, CAUSE) may not be part of the core mission that needs to be in the handbook. Stafstrom said the program may need to be readdress what this document is and rewrite it from the beginning. The Honors Program handbook needs to be useful to the core and include only what does not change frequently. Peripheral information should be left out. Porter said the program handbooks she looked at online were short and concise. Stafstrom asked for student input. What would work for them? Toghræe thinks the Honors Program is elite, so knowing what it has to offer is good, but it should be concise. Hernandez said knowing a handbook is out there would helpful. Moudy suggested too much information may overwhelm students. Ballantine said there are aspects of the Honors Program that are on the website that still need to be in the handbook, such
research opportunities. Other items should not be in the handbook but should be available elsewhere. Stafstrom said the general consensus appears to be that a simpler document is needed.

B. Honors Faculty status subcommittee
A subcommittee of Porter, Shokrani, and Houze met with Stafstrom. Honors faculty status was priority for Christopher Jones and continued with J. D. Bowers, both former Associate Vice Provosts for University Honors. The Undergraduate Coordinating Council (UCC) thought it was a little heavy handed. Rather than have a high threshold for becoming and remaining faculty there should be different levels of status. UCC had a lot of questions about this proposal. It was then put aside.

Shokrani said he would like to have the information sent to the full committee to be discussed at the next meeting in November so it can continue down the road to approval. Once the proposal is complete and approved it should be more attractive to faculty. Houze said the committee needs to clarify what the goal is and how to communicate this to UCC without confusion. The Honors Program wants the university to recognize the participation of faculty members.

Ballantine said having a recognized Honors faculty will mean that departments cannot just assign any faculty member to teach an Honors section. Instead it would be a faculty member who is engaged and will help the Honors course work become better. This will make the Honors Program more appealing to students. Koren asked if across the university there is a requirement for Honors faculty to have a Ph.D. There is no such requirement. If there are too many requirements no one will want have the Honors faculty designation. Ballantine said this is not limited to professors. There are several instructors who regularly oversee Capstones and teach Honors sections. Stafstrom said in a practical way this comes down to how the program would interact with chairs to get courses. The Honors Committee can say what it thinks an Honors faculty should be and then rely on chairs to decide if a faculty member will be appropriate. If someone has never taught an Honors course that person would talk to Stafstrom to decide if they understand and can achieve the goals of an Honors faculty member. Porter said she is a member of the graduate faculty status committee and there are specific requirements that gives a new level of bureaucracy. She would like to see avoided. Shokrani likes the idea of teaching a course to get the status but just because a faculty member wants to teach a course does not mean the chair will allow it. There must be another way for the faculty to stay in compliance if they cannot teach for a semester or two. Toghraee asked if student evaluations are used
to select Honors faculty. Stafstrom said that was in the original document but it is a hot button topic as there is dispute about the value of them.

9. Website and Communication subcommittee
Stafstrom said this ties into *The Luminary* for outreach. Denius, Goode, Hernandez and Stafstrom went through the website and found changes to be made. Hernandez said some parts were lengthy and there were formatting errors. Stafstrom said it needs to be streamlined and easy to use.

10. Benchmarking
A subcommittee looked at peer colleges’ websites to see how they compare with what their Honors Program have to offer and how NIU compares. There is a lot in common. Houze said she and Porter looked at area colleges—University of Illinois, Eastern Illinois University, Illinois State University, Southern Illinois University, Western Illinois University and University of Illinois-Chicago. She said there is a lot of consistency. The NIU Honors Program minimum GPA is lower than most of the universities. Porter looked at different types of Honors offered (department, LDH, UDH). She said only two had Honors colleges. She not impressed with other college websites. It was hard to find some of the information for which she was looking. Moudy said SIU has video on home page. Others have a video or a slide show. NIU only has a picture and a brief paragraph.

11. Co-curricular program requirements
a. **Honors Engaged**
   This was discussed in above reports.

b. **Resumes**
   This initiation was started last year. There was not staff available to evaluate all of them. Ballantine suggested not requiring submission every year but stagger to every other year. This would mean that far fewer would come in every semester. This might be able to be coordinated with an Honors Fellow. Stafstrom said as part of the UNIV 101 course he is teaching the students must do a resume. The peer instructor is meeting one on one with students to improve the resume. The Honors Program has hosted many workshops on doing resumes. Burton asked if there is a way to encourage students to meet with career Services before submitting the resume. Stafstrom said Career Services will not look for grammar mistakes but will only check for proper formatting. Burton said he was thinking that a freshman would be able to check off that box on the to-do list and then be able to easily update the resume with Career Services. Toghraee said he thinks this is a better idea because Career Services staff
are the experts with resumes. Burton there must be some way to get
students to use these services. Cisneros said this could be added into the
advising component.

VII. New Business
A. Community College outreach and articulation
Stafstrom said the Honors Program needs to focus more on this. He mentioned
this to the committee because he was at meeting with provost and she said that
Honors connections and articulation with the College of DuPage are not as good
as they could be. This will be looked at during another meeting.

B. Walk-on items
There were no walk-on items.

VIII. Adjournment
The meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m. The next meeting will be Friday, November 6 at 1:30
p.m. in Campus Life 110.