

To: All Teaching Faculty

From: Honors Program Committee

Kelli Slunt, Director, CAS, Chemistry

Laurie Abeel, COE, Foundation, Leadership, and Special Populations

Porter Blakemore, CAS, History and American Studies

Gail Brooks, COB, Accounting and Management Information Systems

Teresa Kennedy, CAS, English, Linguistics, and Communication

Suzanne Sumner, CAS, Mathematics

CC: Richard Finkelstein

Jay Harper

Mary Gendernalik-Cooper

Lynne Richardson

John Morello

Taiwo Ande

RE: Student Learning Outcomes for the Honors Program

On September 13, 2011, the University Faculty Council (UFC) approved the general curriculum for the honors program. At that meeting, a draft of the learning outcomes was presented but discussion was tabled to allow more time for the development of the outcomes. The following is a report on the outcomes that have been developed by the committee. The UFC will consider these at its next meeting on October 11, 2011. If approved, the call for course proposals will be issued to the faculty.

Honors Program – University of Mary Washington

The Honors Program at UMW is a unique interdisciplinary learning opportunity for students. Students will be enrolled in challenging learning experiences but will also be part of a community of learners. Through coursework, students will learn to analyze their own and others’ assumptions and to apply critical reading, writing, speaking, problem solving, and thinking skills that incorporate information literacy, and an appreciation of audience. In addition, participation in co-curricular activities will create an academic community that is dedicated in promoting good ethical behavior and citizenship.

Student Learning Outcomes for the University Honors Program

Upon the completion of the honors program at Mary Washington, in addition to earning the appropriate credits for their degrees, students will be able to:

- A. evaluate carefully the relevance of disciplinary contexts when presenting a position using a methodology specific to the discipline of study
- B. apply interdisciplinary approaches to research that demonstrates multiple disciplinary contexts in order to articulate the value of such study
- C. actively pursue independent educational experiences inside and outside of the classroom.
- D. articulate an appreciation of ethical behavior and the values of good citizenship and service.

Mapping Specific Student Learning Outcomes to Programmatic Elements of the Honors Program

Student Learning Outcome	Means of Assessment	Programmatic Element Associated with this Outcome
A	assessment of representative student work provided to the honors program by faculty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honors first-year seminar • Other honors designated coursework (as determined from the course proposals) • Capstone honors course
B	assessment of proposed interdisciplinary research plan and of the final project stemming from the capstone honors course or project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project/Research Design Seminar • Capstone Honors Course OR Honors Project (Thesis or Performance) in a discipline or

		Interdisciplinary Project
C	<p>assessment of representative student work provided to the honors program by faculty</p> <p>reflective essay at conclusion of program about learning</p> <p>exit interview – at the conclusion of the program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honors first-year seminar • Other honors designated coursework (as determined from the course proposals) • Sponsored/mentored Service Project • Mentoring first year honors students • Honors program leadership • Co-curricular events
D	<p>reflective essay after the project is completed – evaluated by honors program committee</p> <p>exit interview – at the conclusion of the program – assess student opinions on leadership, service, citizenship</p> <p>opinion surveys – at the start of the program and at graduation, students will complete opinion surveys</p> <p>participation in co-curricular events</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sponsored/mentored Service Project • Mentoring first year honors students • Honors program leadership • Co-curricular events

Honors Designated Courses

Faculty are encouraged to develop courses or sections of courses that are geared to meet the objectives of the honors program. Honor program courses feature small class sizes (limited to 20-25 students, except Honors First-year seminar which are limited to 15 students) with highly motivated, achieving students. The committee encourages you to develop the intellectual potential of your students through activities that:

- develop communication skills
- incorporate interdisciplinary focus
- include innovative pedagogy
- analyze their own and others' assumptions
- enhance research skills

- apply critical reading, writing, speaking, problem solving, and thinking skills that incorporate information literacy, and an appreciation of audience
- include greater breadth than non-honors course sections
- incorporate enrichment opportunities to students and faculty
- utilize flexible approaches that accommodate different learning styles

Each course proposal must clearly articulate learning outcomes for the course. The Honors program committee has identified specific learning outcomes for the Honors First-year Seminar and Project/Research Methodology Seminar Course (see below). Proposed courses must clearly indicate these learning outcomes and how the course will meet those objectives.

The honors program committee will determine if a course is approved to receive the honors designation and be included in the program. The committee will forward its recommendations for approval for endorsement by the University Faculty Council.

Student Learning Outcomes for the Honors First-Year Seminar Course

All FSEM100 courses at UMW must meet the following goals:

- Students will engage in several writing assignments and become better writers
- Students will engage in numerous discussions, speaking assignments, and become better public speakers
- Students will make use of primary sources of information and be able to draw conclusions from the materials
- Students will utilize research techniques and conduct research relevant to the subject

In addition, upon completion of the Honors First-year Seminar, students will be able to:

- formulate an academic argument with appropriate research documentation
- articulate the value of the goals of the honors program as it relates to the liberal arts as an multidisciplinary, systematic approach to knowledge
- apply specific academic solutions to broader, interdisciplinary fields of study
- integrate multiple viewpoints involving different cultures and/or perspectives

Student Learning Outcomes for the Project/Research Methodology Seminar Course

Upon completion of the Project/Research Methodology Seminar Course, students will be able to:

- examine various methodologies for conducting research appropriate to a discipline
- critique scholarly literature to document research problems and solutions

- analyze the elements of an effective problem thesis
- analyze and critique the elements of research articles
- examine methods of collecting, analyzing and organizing data
- articulate a quality research proposal

Honors Program Course Proposal Form Designation of an Honors Section of a Course Form

The Honors Program at the University of Mary Washington will enhance students' intellectual growth by engaging them in rigorous honors designated coursework, interdisciplinary seminars, strong internship experiences, extended research and creative projects, and community service that develop a community of learners. Coursework in the program should not involve extra work but rather should offer differentiated learning opportunities that challenge a student to grow intellectually. Quality rather than quantity is the goal of an honors course.

All courses offered as honors designation (H) must be approved by the Honors Program committee. Existing courses can be submitted directly to the Honors Committee for H designation. New courses need to be first approved by the appropriate curriculum committees. Faculty wishing to offer courses in the Honors program may submit a proposal for approval by completing the attached form. The deadline for courses to be offered in Fall 2012 semester is November 2, 2011 and for Spring 2013 semester is February 1, 2012. E-mail the completed proposal with supplemental materials to the director of the Honors Program, Kelli Slunt, kslunt@umw.edu. In addition, send one hard copy of the original completed proposal form to Kelli Slunt, Jepson Hall.

Faculty are encouraged to develop courses or sections of courses that are geared to meet the objectives of the honors program. Honor program courses feature small class sizes (limited to 20-25 students, except Honors First-year Seminar which are limited to 15 students) with highly motivated, achieving students. The committee encourages you to develop the intellectual potential of your students through activities that:

- develop communication skills
- incorporate interdisciplinary focus
- include innovative pedagogy
- analyze their own and others' assumptions
- enhance research skills
- apply critical reading, writing, speaking, problem solving, and thinking skills that incorporate information literacy, and an appreciation of audience
- include greater breadth than non-honors course sections
- incorporate enrichment opportunities to students and faculty
- utilize flexible approaches that accommodate different learning styles

Honors Program Course Proposal Form
Designation of an Honors Section of a Course Form

Proposer's Name: _____ Date: _____

Department, discipline: _____

Course number and title: _____

Number of credits: _____ Prerequisites: _____

Proposer's signature: _____ Date: _____

Department Chair's signature: _____ Date: _____

Semester the Honors (H) designation should take effect _____

Frequency: Fall Spring semester check one: Yearly alternate years

List of faculty who will likely teach this course: _____

Catalog description:

REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS:

1. **Rationale statement** -How this course is appropriate for the Honors Program. How does it differ from existing courses or non-Honors counterpart?
2. **Sample Syllabus with Course Outcomes Clearly Articulated**
3. **Statement about Assessment.** Faculty teaching honors courses will assist the honors program committee with the assessment of the program and the honors courses (similar to how faculty assist in assessing the general education program). At the start of each course, faculty will provide to the honors program director a statement about how the course outcomes will be met throughout the term. At the end of the term, the faculty member will generate a report for the honors program director about the success of the course in meeting those outcomes. In addition, the faculty member will provide electronic copies of representative samples of student work (anonymous) that reflect the program goals. The course proposal must include a statement about the faculty member commitment to

assisting with the assessment.