

THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA HONORS PROGRAM



2011-12 ANNUAL REPORT

August 31, 2012

The University of Iowa Honors Program is a member of
The National Collegiate Honors Council



and

The Upper Midwest Honors Council

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2011-12 UNIVERSITY OF IOWA HONORS PROGRAM ANNUAL REPORT

This report covers the activities and development of The University of Iowa Honors Program during the 2011-12 academic year, including the 2012 summer session (approximately from August 15, 2011 through August 31, 2012). Honors at Iowa has activities and involvement in many areas. This report gives the reader a picture of just what Honors at Iowa has done over the past academic year.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

In this last year Honors at Iowa took a major step in its over 50-year long course of existence. Just a word on the history of Honors at Iowa: the program began in the College of Liberal Arts in 1958 through its founder, Rhodes Dunlap, Professor of English. It continued as a college-wide honors program until 2005, when it became a university-wide program that is administered through the office of the Provost. The Honors director reports to Beth Ingram, Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education and the Dean of University College.

Honors continued in its development this past year with major initiatives and changes. First, there was a change in leadership: the past Honors director, John Nelson, returned to faculty at the end of the 2010-11 academic year, and a new director, Art L. Spisak, was hired and began work in mid-August of 2011. The new director was brought in with the expectation of addressing recommendations for changes in the Honors Program that came from a recent external review of the program.

One of the principal recommendations from external reviewers was that Honors at Iowa develop “a plan or constitution as to what the Honors Program is,” and then the program would be restructured according to that plan. To that end, Honors staff, with the help of an internal grant, undertook a self-assessment of the program (details below) with the idea of establishing a better sense of what the program is and then requirements to suit that program.

The self-assessment looked primarily at data that showed what the students in the Honors Program were already doing and how well the program was fulfilling their expectations. The

assessment also drew into the mix the structure and practices of honors programs at peer institutions, as well as the national basic characteristics of honors programs (as formulated by the National Collegiate Honors Council, the national organization for honors).

The main result of this nearly year-long and far-reaching assessment process was a set of recommendations for changes in requirements the program. These recommendations, which include a required 24 hours of honors work for graduation in the program, give Honors at Iowa a structure and identity that are consistent with what the most active honors students at Iowa are already doing. The recommendations are also compatible with national standards for honors, and are a good fit for the university's culture, mission, and vision.

During the course of their development the recommendations were vetted by various honors constituencies on campus, as well as by staff and faculty groups who would be affected by the changes in the program. The final product was sent to the associate provost and provost for approval in late August of 2012. The recommendations were approved in mid-September, and changes will take effect for the 2013-14 academic year (beginning with the 2013 summer session)

Other major events during the 2011-12 academic year, some of which were implementations of the recommendations of the external reviewers, were a wholesale revamping of the website (in process), beginning of outreach to existing and potential donors, and a reconstitution of the Honors Steering Committee as well as the Honors Students Advisory Committee. We also had several major fellowship winners, including two Churchill Scholars. Details on these and other initiatives and events are found in the report.

Art L. Spisak

Honors Program Director

PERSONNEL OF THE HONORS PROGRAM OFFICE:

As of August 31, 2012, the faculty and professional staff of The Honors College Office included:

- Holly Blosser Yoder, Director of Honors Advising
- LaShelle L. Christensen, Director of Student Activities
- Kelly Dauplaise Thornburg, Director of Scholarships and Fellowships
- Robert F. Kirby, Associate Director; Director of the Iowa Center for Undergraduate Research (ICRU); Adjunct Associate Professor of Psychology
- Art L. Spisak, Director of Honors and Professor of Classics
- Mary L. Uhl, Secretary in the Honors Program
- Andy Willard, Director of Experiential Learning

Bob Kirby, the associate director, is the immediate supervisor of the professional staff, and he reports to the director, Art Spisak. Mary Uhl, who is merit staff, reports to both Bob Kirby and Art Spisak.

HONORS PROGRAM BUDGET:

Summary of the Fiscal Year 2012 spending budget for Honors:

| | |
|--|---------------------|
| Salary for Honors Staff and Faculty | \$543,947.07 |
| Student Staff Salary | \$46,228.95 |
| General Expenses..... | \$65,844.68 |
| Honors Writing Fellows | \$36,586.85 |
| Iowa Mock Trial..... | \$4,365.91 |
| Honors Learning Communities | \$14,767.91 |
| Honors Primetime | \$6,418.74 |
| TOTAL | \$718,160.11 |
| Foundation funds used for scholarships, awards, & expenses | \$76,627.84 |
| TOTAL | \$794,787.95 |

Note: The budget for the Iowa Center for Research by Undergraduates (ICRU), although part of the Honors Program budget, has not been included in the above summary since ICRU serves all undergraduate students at the university and not just Honors students. The total budget for ICRU for FY 2012 was \$440,000.00, all of which went directly to the students in fellowship awards. Details on ICRU can be found in a separate report.

HONORS PROGRAM ADVISORY BODIES:

Honors Steering Committee

The Honors Steering Committee advises the Honors director on the business and operation of the program. The committee underwent a major change in membership this year to bring it in line with the external reviewers' recommendations.

Selection of the Honors Steering Committee is to represent major campus constituencies of the Honors Program. It includes faculty representatives from all the degree-granting undergraduate colleges, as well as a student representative from the Honors Program population. It also includes the Honors Program Director, the Honors Program Associate Director, representatives from the Belin-Blank International Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development and from the Office of Admissions.

| NAME | DEPARTMENT or OFFICE | COLLEGE |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Barron, Michael | Admissions | |
| Bentler, Ruth (Sp sem) | Comm Sciences and Disorders | Liberal Arts and Sciences |
| Colangelo, Nicholas | Belin-Blank Program | Education |
| Croft, Laurie | Belin-Blank Program/Education | Education |
| Eland, Joann | Nursing | Nursing |
| Gidal, Eric (Fall sem) | English | Liberal Arts and Sciences |
| Kirby, Robert | UI Honors Program/Psych | Liberal Arts and Sciences |
| Maierhofer, Waltraud | German | Liberal Arts and Sciences |
| Malanson, George | Geography | Liberal Arts and Sciences |
| Solow, John | Economics | Business |
| Spisak, Art (Chair) | UI Honors Program/Classics | Liberal Arts and Sciences |
| Todd, Dylan (student) | Biology | Liberal Arts and Sciences |
| Wilder, David | Biomedical Engineering | Engineering |

The Honors Steering Committee met monthly through the Fall and Spring semesters. One of its main agenda items throughout the year was working through the external reviewers' recommendations in order to decide whether and how to implement recommended changes. It also vetted and approved the recommended changes in the program curriculum and requirements.

Honors Student Advisory Committee

Selection of the Honors Student Advisory Committee is to represent the general honors student body with consideration given to the four student ranks (freshman, sophomore, etc.) and the undergraduate colleges at the university. It includes the Honors Director and Associate Director.

| NAME | DEPARTMENT | COLLEGE |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Bierwirth, Aubrey | Theatre Arts | Liberal Arts and Sciences |
| Carter, Suzanne | Physics/Math | Liberal Arts and Sciences |
| Cook, Riley | Cinema/Theatre Arts | Liberal Arts and Sciences |
| Gross, Emily | Health and Human Physiology | Liberal Arts and Sciences |
| Jiang, Heju | Actuarial Science/Math | Liberal Arts and Sciences |
| Kindig, Allison | Industrial Engineering | Engineering |
| Oskvig, Kyle | Classics/Philosophy | Liberal Arts and Sciences |
| Rolston, Nick | Physics/Math | Liberal Arts and Sciences |
| Todd, Dylan | Biology | Liberal Arts and Sciences |
| Westercamp, Jeralyn | Management/Marketing | Business |
| Kirby, Robert | UI Honors Program/Psych | Univ College/CLAS |
| Spisak, Art (chair) | UI Honors Program/Classics | Univ College/CLAS |

The Honors Student Advisory Committee met monthly through the Fall and Spring semesters. It served as a sounding board during the self-assessment process by providing the student's perspective, and it also vetted and approved the recommended changes in the program requirements.

HONORS PROGRAM SELF-ASSESSMENT:

Early in the Fall 2011 semester Honors at Iowa undertook, with the help of a grant from the Office of the Provost, a self-assessment. The self-assessment was a foundational step in

addressing our program's unique structure compared to other honors programs nationally – namely, we have a very large number of students in the program (approximately 6,500 – more than a quarter of the university's undergraduate population) who are automatically enrolled in Honors based on high school grade point average and ACT or SAT scores. Also, once here at the university, students who achieve a UI grade point average of 3.33 or higher are automatically put into the Honors Program.

Our Honors students have a menu of options through which they can enrich and accelerate their education, but no requirements to participate in the program (once they are members) other than maintaining at least a 3.33 UI grade point average. As a result of this automatic enrollment and the lack of requirements beyond the minimum grade point average, we had many students who were not active in the program.

The purpose of our self-assessment, then, was not to determine the ways in which the program was meeting its objectives; rather, its purpose was to identify how and in what ways honors students actually use the many opportunities the Honors Program provides. These patterns of usage would then be used to formulate new programmatic goals and requirements.

Although all staff participated in the self-assessment in different ways, a team comprised of four Honors Program students and led by Andy Willard, director of experiential learning in Honors, gathered and processed most of the data. To learn how students used the Honors Program the assessment team tracked a cohort of students (approximately 805) who entered the University as honors students in the Fall of 2006 through their graduation. The team helped to organize data taken from the University's Data Warehouse and to develop, administer, and analyze the survey questionnaires.

Among the more prominent variables, the assessment team examined the number of honors courses taken, participation in honors activities, whether a student lived in the Honors House (i.e, Daum), and whether a student graduated with honors in his/her major(s). A few of the more noteworthy observations are:

- Not surprising, the most common honors engagement was with honors classwork.
- Just over half the approximately 805 students in the cohort took at least one honors class, which made us realize just how many honors-inactive students we had in the program.
- There was a lot of churn in the population, with five semesters being the average length of enrollment in the Honors Program for the cohort being tracked. At the same time new students entered the program – students from the UI population who attained a 3.33 UI GPA and were automatically put in the Honors Program.

- Honors in the major was a more popular option with the students who entered the Honors Program after their freshman year via a 3.33 University of Iowa GPA (rather than coming in directly from high school).

The assessment team also surveyed current students and alumni. Current students were asked about their engagement with the Honors Program and also asked to identify which of their honors experiences were most important. Honors alumni were asked what honors experiences were most useful in preparing them for their experiences after graduation. The team also reviewed honors programs and colleges at peer institutions and national recommendations for honors programs or colleges.

As mentioned above, the assessment's purpose was to inform efforts to improve the Honors Program. Accordingly, the Honors staff developed a set of recommendations for programmatic improvement that drew on the assessment's results – see the next section.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REQUIREMENTS FOR UNIVERSITY HONORS:

The following proposed recommendations for new requirements for Honors at Iowa were developed through the course of the last year. These recommended changes stem in part from the results of a self-assessment of the program during the 2011-12 academic year that tracked current and past activity of UI honors students. Practices of honors programs at peer institutions and national standards for honors programs also were considered.

The recommendations were formulated by the Honors Program staff with input received from deans and/or deans' representatives in the undergraduate colleges and various faculty committees (e.g., the Educational Policy Committee, the Honors Steering Committee).

Recommendations were submitted to the provost for approval in late August, 2012, and were approved in mid-September. Changes will take effect in the 2013-14 academic year, which begins with the summer 2013 session.

Note that the Honors requirements for students in the College of Engineering were still being formulated after requirements for the other colleges had been finalized, and were not finalized and approved until late in the Fall 2012 semester.

1. STUDENTS QUALIFIED FOR ENTRY MUST OPT INTO THE PROGRAM VIA ACCEPTANCE OF A FORMAL INVITATION.

- a. Attendance at an Honors orientation (during the summer or otherwise) is required of all students regardless of when they enter

2. REQUIRED MINIMUM CORE OF 12 SEMESTER HOURS OF CREDIT THROUGH HONORS COURSEWORK.

- a. This first or foundational level 12-hour requirement emphasizes “building knowledge,” and it applies to all students regardless of how or when they enter the program
- b. The first level has the following qualifications:
 - i. It must be completed within 4 semesters of fulltime registration as an Honors student
 - ii. Of the 12 semester hours, only one course may be an approved Honors Contract course
 - In case of special circumstances (e.g., students who enter the program late in their academic career or enter the University with substantial college credit earned in high school) students may use up to 6 hours of approved Honors Contract courses
 - iii. All Honors admits must take an honors course (or approved Honors Contract course) in their first semester in the program
 - iv. Direct Honors admits from high school are required to take an honors first-year seminar in their first semester

3. REQUIRED SECOND LEVEL OF 12 SEMESTER HOURS OF HONORS CREDIT OR EQUIVALENT EXPERIENCES FROM A MENU OF OPTIONS.

- a. This second or experiential learning level emphasizes “learning by doing,” and it applies to all students regardless of how or when they enter the program. Students may begin work on the second-level requirements at any time.
- b. Students may satisfy the 12 semester hour or equivalent experiential learning requirement through the following options or a combination of options:
 - i. Honors in the major (completely satisfies the second-level requirement)
 - ii. Mentored research (12 semester hours or the equivalent)
 - iii. Study abroad for a minimum of two semesters (fall and/or spring) or the equivalent
 - Single semesters of study abroad, including summer and between-semester experiences, may count for up to half of the second-level requirement

- Requires students to carry out an independent project while abroad and to make a presentation or write a report on the project
- iv. Internships may count for up to half (6 s.h) of the second-level requirement
- In some cases, e.g. Colleges of Engineering and Business, internships may count for the entire requirement (12 semester hours or the equivalent)
 - Requires students to carry out an independent project while interning and to make a presentation or write a report on the project.
- v. Honors coursework (including graduate course work) may count for up to 6 semester hours

HONORS ARTICULATION AGREEMENT:

Honors at Iowa began discussions on an articulation agreement with the Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC); DMACC will begin offering a 20-credit honors program in the Fall of 2012. Honors at Iowa provided feedback on DMACC's proposed Honors curriculum – specifically on how it might mesh with Honors at Iowa. The main points of an articulation agreement were set by the end of the summer with formal approval of an agreement finalized during the Fall 2012 semester.

HONORS RECRUITING:

Honors at Iowa plays a very active role in recruiting. Our efforts are in partnership with the Office of Admissions and extend throughout the calendar year. The entire Honors staff participates in recruiting in some way.

Communication with prospective students (i.e., Honors-eligible) begins in the fall of prospective students' high school junior year with the mailing of information about Honors at Iowa (Honors brochure and a letter). Mailings in an electronic format to this group continue until they actually are admitted and enrolled in the Honors Program. Honors works

with Admissions in the development and updating of the Honors brochure and the various correspondence sent out to prospective Honors students.

Campus visits for prospective Honors students. These visits have taken three forms:

1. Visits that are part of Hawkeye Visit Days (regularly scheduled, large group, all-day campus visits):
 - Honors takes a self-selecting breakout group from larger group – typically from 80 to 120 people – and gives the group a presentation on Honors, a tour of the Honors student facilities, a visit to a room in the Honors House residence (Daum Hall), and then lunch in Burge Dining Hall (total time of about a two hours)
 - During this past year there were twelve Hawkeye Visit Days with contact with approximately 1,200 people. For each visit there were at least four Honors professional staff participating as well as Honors Student staff and Honors Peer advisors
 - Both Honors and ICRU send staff to the Exploring Majors Fair that is a part of Hawkeye Visit Days; staffed by one Honors professional staff and two student representatives
2. Daily visits to the Blank Honors Center: small group visits that are scheduled by request for the prospective students
 - A member of the Honors professional staff meets with a small group (not to exceed 20 people) in the Blank Honors Center; a tour is also given by one of the Honors Peers advisors; this is typically an hour experience
 - During this last year the Honors staff hosted a total of 389 prospective students on daily visits; this number does not include the family and friends that typically accompany prospective students
3. IowaLIVE: an overnight, campus-visit program for high-achieving prospective students; it occurs twice in the Spring semester with about 30 total prospective students participating
 - Honors partnered with Admissions to host and facilitate the program
 - Honors also organized and staged a student Talent Show for the prospective students

HONORS OUTREACH AND COMMUNITY-BUILDING:

Honors at Iowa worked on outreach this last year in several ways:

- **External advisory board:**
 - Research and consultation were done on forming an advisory board
 - A list of alumni/ae who have been active while part of the program was compiled, and several persons who were contacted agreed to serve
 - Projected date for formation of the board is the end of next year (2013)

- **Alumni/ae Database:**
 - Met with an Alumni Association representative to gain access to our alumni/ae database (BGI)
 - Were able to identify all the past donors to the program

- **UI Foundation Connection:**
 - Met with Foundation representatives throughout the year on a regular basis.
 - Developed various projects for possible funding
 - Presented to the regional Foundation development officers on opportunities for giving to the Honors Program
 - Reestablished a webpage presence on the Foundation's website
 - Explored opportunities to connect with Journalism on fundraising
 - Secured a gift for an Honors scholarship (Williams Scholarship)
 - Attended various donor events; presented at one

- **Honors@Iowa Newsletter**
 - The online Honors newsletter, which is produced by Holly Yoder, goes out to over 800 parents, alumni, faculty, administrators and other friends. It released fall, winter, spring and summer issues during the 2011-2012 year – a doubling of the previous year's output.
 - In May, a team of two student editors replaced the graduating senior who had launched Honors@Iowa in fall 2010, and updated the format for the newsletter.
 - Nineteen volunteer student writers from various majors contributed articles to the newsletter.

HONORS COURSES AND ENROLLMENT:

Summary of Honors Course Offerings:

- Honors Courses (fall 2011 semester) 76 sections
 - Total enrollment..... 1,219 students
- Honors Courses (spring 2012 semester) 31 sections
 - Total enrollment..... 626 students
- Honors Contract Courses (2011-12 academic year)..... 358 Contract Courses

Most Honors courses are sections of General Education courses, such as Rhetoric and Chemistry. The Honors contract option can be used with any course (with the instructor’s permission). Honors courses that differ from these two options are listed and described below.

Honors Introductory Courses:

- **Honors Primetime Workshop** (fall 2011 semester)..... 12 sections
 - Total enrollment..... 192 students

Honors Primetime offers first-year Honors students an academic and social orientation as they launch their UI experience with fellow Honors students. This is accomplished over three days the week before fall classes begin as students join workshops and explore subjects of their own choosing, while learning-by-doing in small teams. Andy Willard facilitates the staffing of the workshops, which carry one semester hour of credit, cover a range of subjects, including art, criticism, performance, science, singing, society, and writing. See Appendix D for a list of Primetime 2011 workshops and their instructors.

- **Honors First-Year Seminars** (fall 2011 semester)..... 26 sections
 - Total enrollment..... 306 students

First-year seminars (fewer than 20 students) are designed to engage students intellectually and thus introduce them to the academic experience. They are variable topic courses – i.e., every seminar has a different topic, and grades are based on participation and short assignments (no tests).

Honors Seminars:

- Seminar-style Honors courses are offered on various topics from different departments, sometimes co-listed with the department, although restricted to Honors students
 - 2 Honors Seminars for fall 2011.....27 students total
 - 2 Honors Seminars for spring 201244 students total

Honors Studies:

- Independent studies arranged with faculty members who certify satisfactory completion of study plans and performance for topics not covered by other UI courses.
 - 2 sections for fall 2011 2 students total
 - 2 sections for spring 2012 2 students total

Honors Experience-Based Courses:

- **Honors Peer Advising**

Peer advising is a form of service-learning that’s anchored in the Honors Peer Advising class (1-2 semester hours). The Honors Advising Director, Holly Yoder, teaches the class and directs the peer advisor activities.

- Honors Peer Advising (fall 2011).....27 students
- Honors Peer Advising (spring 2012).....20 students

Honors Peer Advisors serve as mentors to other Honors students. Each semester they organize a range of events that give students interested in Honors at Iowa help in pursuing honors educations at Iowa (see below under Section 13). Peer Advisors also help host prospective students and their families on the various campus visit day events.

- **The Iowa Policy Research Organization (IPRO)**

IPRO is a University of Iowa undergraduate student research group based around a two-semester course sequence. Professor Rene Rocha is the instructor for the associated classes and faculty mentor for the research component.

- Problems in American Politics (fall 2011)..... 10 students
- Honors Policy Research Practicum (spring 2012) 11 students

Participants prepare original policy research reports. Some of these reports are specifically requested by Iowa state legislators or other public officials. All the analyses IPRO students produce are non-partisan and designed to take an objective

look at the issues. Recent reports have examined a wide variety of topics, including mandatory drug testing for welfare recipients, state support for e-waste recycling programs, and government regulation of large-scale hog breeding facilities.

All reports are posted online and the group occasionally receives feedback from readers – e.g., this past spring, the group was contacted by a policy analyst for Planned Parenthood of the Heartland who found a report two students authored about recent changes to abortion policy. The analyst was impressed with the quality of the report and wanted to discuss the students’ research further.

- **Honors Writing Fellows**

Students read theories of and research on writing processes, collaborative learning, and writing across the curriculum.

- Honors Writing Fellows: Wr Theory&Pract (fall 2011).....14 students

This program is a joint initiative of Honors and the Department of Rhetoric. Professor Carol Severino teaches the associated class and directs and facilitates the field experience. Each year it employs (writing fellows are paid) some thirty Honors undergraduates to teach as Honors Writing Fellows. Writing fellows receive initial training through a 3 credit hour class. Thereafter writing fellows are assigned to specific classes to assist students in that class with writing assignments.

In the 2011-2012 academic year, 30 writing fellows assisted in 20 courses in 13 different disciplines. Six of the experienced writing fellows were also employed in the Writing Center, which helped meet the enormous demand for writing center tutoring, especially by second language writers.

- **University of Iowa Mock Trial Association**

Although a student organization, Iowa’s Mock Trial team ties officially to Honors via course credit and sponsorship. The course teaches legal analysis, argumentation, and performance for University of Iowa Mock Trial. Students take part in all practices and competitions unless arranged otherwise with the teacher. Megan Lowe and Patrick Ralph taught the associated classes and Ms. Lowe was the Head Coach for the team.

- Mock Trial (fall 2011).....27 students
- Mock Trial (spring 2012)29 students

In its history the Mock Trial has been very competitive – e.g., it’s won two national championships. It sends teams to compete regionally and nationally, and it hosts its own annual tournament, the Cornshucker Challenge.

- **ICRU Research Ambassadors**

ICRU Research Ambassadors share knowledge and experiences in research; weekly meeting and interaction with students through presentations, online chat, or other venues to answer questions, provide information, and inform students about undergraduate research opportunities; and provide student perspective on how to navigate research opportunities at The University of Iowa.

- 1 section for fall 20115 students
- 1 section for spring 2012.....7 students

- **Honors Research Practicum**

A major goal of the research practicum is to provide a research experience to help honors students develop research skills by working individually with faculty members on the faculty member's research.

- 10 sections for fall 2011.....11 students total
- 11 sections for spring 2012.....12 students total

- **Honors Teaching Practicum**

The Honors Teaching Practicum awards academic credit, typically three semester-hours, for assisting professors with their instruction of undergraduate students. It may include providing tutorial assistance, conducting review sessions, and aiding course organization, while the professor mentors the student in the relevant teaching duties and principles. Teaching practica are usually one-on-one experiences.

- 10 sections for fall 201114 students total
- 10 sections for spring 2012.....15 students total

- **Honors Service Learning**

Service learning incorporates community engagement into academic coursework. Guided reflection links community-based student experience to course learning goals and objectives. Honors service learning experiences are designed to respond to real community needs and enhance students' civic responsibility.

- 1 section for fall 20111 student
- 1 section for spring 20121 student

- **Honors Thesis or Project**

Culminating project of research or artistic creation done one-on-one (faculty and student); preparation and completion of the final product is associated with graduation with honors in the student's major.

- 3 sections for spring 20123 students total

HONORS ADVISING:

Holly Yoder, Honors Advising Director, is responsible for Honors advising. The main challenge to Honors Advising is to access and provide relevant information to the Honors Program's many members across colleges and majors. Holly provided advising to students by using some established methods as well as experimenting with new ideas:

- **Presentations and mentoring at recruitment events and Summer Orientation/registration:** working with trained student partners (Honors Peer Advisors, Honors Ambassadors) at campus visits, university recruitment events, and summer orientation, Honors advising staff provide introductory information to prospective and incoming first-year students.
 - 30 students served as Honors Peer Advisors or Peer Advising Teaching Assistants in 2011-12
 - 20 Honors students served as Honors Ambassadors at Orientation
- **"Getting Started with Honors" sessions:** these sessions provide new-admits with an introduction to Honors and the offer of follow-up advising on a personal basis.
 - In spring 2012, more than 150 students attended five of these sessions, which were conducted by Honors Peer Advisors under the Advising Director's supervision.
- **Honors listserv:** once students are on campus, weekly contact through the Honors listserv alerts students to Honors opportunities in classes, research, internships, study abroad, and departmental honors. New students are added to this listserv each semester, as they qualify for honors status.
 - **Roadshows:** as ongoing outreach, Peer Advisors planned and implemented 12 presentations, which eventually came to be called roadshows, that often grew out of their own interests in professional or graduate programs. With this outreach they assist fellow students in preparation for current and future steps toward professional and academic goals. Roadshows for 2011-12 year drew in more than 200 students.

In addition, Peer Advisors hosted on November 2, 2011 the seventh annual “Scoops for Scholars,” that brought Honors students together with Honors faculty, professional staff, and administrators. Attendance was 114 students.

- **“Honors Roadmap”**: a PowerPoint presentation that was developed for Honors Orientation 2012
 - This is a clear overview of the academic path Honors recommends to its incoming students, beginning with Honors Primetime, first-year seminars and general education classes, followed by experiential learning such as research, an internship, or thesis project.
 - These recommendations of classes-plus experiences grew in part out of the Honors Assessment process undertaken in 2011-2012, and built on existing program strengths.
 - The direction provided by this Roadmap likely contributed to the high participation in first-year seminars, as all 24 were filled by the final Orientation session.

Academic Advising Center

Honors advising maintained a close connection with the Academic Advising Center:

- Regular contact with Julie Claus, Senior Academic advisor and liaison to Honors
- An annual meeting with the academic advisors as a group
- Several meetings with the Director of Academic Advising to discuss the possibility of Honors-specific advisors

Departmental Advisors and Faculty

Developing good relationships and establishing regular and personal contact with departmental honors advisors and faculty were priorities of the past year.

- Honors Director Art Spisak and Advising Director Holly Yoder met with approximately 45 faculty and staff in fourteen 50-minute meetings across campus during November and December of 2011.
- Meetings were in small groups.
- Similarly, connections with faculty who teach Honors first-year seminars were strengthened through a well-attended luncheon in spring, during which instructors spoke about their experiences teaching honors first-year students and worked up a definition of an honors class.

HONORS STUDENT STAFF & PROGRAMMING:

Honors at Iowa employs Honors students as student staff members to help run the Honors Student Center on the third floor of the Blank Honors Center and the fourth floor reception desk. Student staff also plan events, stage activities for the Honors residence halls and Honors students, and help out with Honors summer orientation and registration. LaShelle Christensen, Honors Activities Director, supervises the student staff. Over the 2011-12 academic year Honors employed 16 Honors students as staff members and 20 summer ambassadors at a cost of \$46,228.95.

Honors programming falls into categories, as outlined below:

- **Honors Arts:** This program helps Honors students learn by participating in cultural events in the University and the surrounding community. It encourages attendance through complimentary tickets and further learning through related programs. These offer glimpses behind the scenes, conversations with performers and directors, presentations by student groups or professors, and community visits.
 - 5 events165 attendees
- **Honors Discourses:** This program enable students to gather for discussion and debate on intriguing topics of the day. The topics come from students, and the student programmers organize conversations with an expert on the topic.
 - 8 events105 attendees
- **Honors Diversity:** Programming in this area offers students opportunities to expand their horizons, meet new people, and encounter new ideas. Events often differ greatly from one to the next, so the planning and preparation involves lots of imagination and innovation.
 - 5 events.....39 attendees
- **Honors Gallery:** Designed to display art and present student projects in research and service, the third and fourth floors of the Blank Honors Center house the Honors Gallery. Works from all fields at the University of Iowa are welcome in the Gallery. Most showings last two weeks, and individuals who display their work have the opportunity for receptions to spotlight their efforts and discuss the results with their guests.

In addition, there were two Honors Gallery hands-on events, where students were creating art under the direction of an artist.

- 2 events 35 attendees

- **Honors Game On:** This program allows Honors students to gather for the fun and learning available from playing video games. The student programmers organize the game selection and play, usually in the Honors Activities Center (BHC 414), and also provide refreshments.
 - 3 events66 attendees

- **Iowa City Foreign Relations Council (ICFRC):** The ICFRC is a local non-profit organization of community members interested in learning about ongoing events in foreign countries and global affairs. Members meet for a catered luncheon roughly every week while the University is in session. There they hear a distinguished expert on a current topic of international importance (speakers have included President George H. W. Bush, United States Congressman Jim Leach, diplomatic historian Michael Hogan, and several winners of the Nobel Peace Prize).

The Honors student staff liaison to the ICFRC coordinates its efforts with those of Honors and facilitates participation by Honors Students by providing free tickets to Honors Students for ICFRC luncheons and by arranging special, small-group meetings with the speakers.

 - 24 events..... 235 attendees

- **Honors Volunteers:** Honors at Iowa has a tradition of innovation and contribution in community service. Student staff programmers help Honors students build positive relationships between the University and community organizations. Most of the volunteering was done through the University Hospitals.
 - 10 events..... 48 attendees

- **Presidential Scholars Community:** This program encourages community among Iowa’s Presidential Scholars through annual traditions and occasional events. These events enable Presidential Scholars to enjoy each other’s company, meet University leaders, and access University resources to help them be involved at Iowa and beyond. Recent events organized by the Presidential Scholar student staff programmers include Presidential Teas, writing letters to university donors, and meeting with prospective presidential scholars.
 - 4 events 90 attendees

- **Other Activities** staged for Honors students:
 - **Honors Activities Fair** is an Honors at Iowa tradition that uses the first four floors of the Blank Honors Center to showcase Honors co-curricular activities and other opportunities. Tables are set up where Honors students who are veterans

of each activity and/or members of the Honors Professional Staff present and take questions on the topics. This year 47 students attended.

- **Puppy Study Break**, an event regularly staged for Honors House residents, was opened up to the general Honors population this last year. LaShelle Christensen, Honors Activities director and service dog trainer, brought her dog to the Blank Honors Center for interaction with the students. There were 15 students attending.

HONORS LIVING LEARNING COMMUNITIES:

Honors at Iowa had two dedicated residence halls for its population.

Honors House: Honors House is located in the Daum Residence Hall, which is linked by a skywalk to the Blank Honors Center. Last year Daum housed approximately 340 students. It is primarily for entering first-year students, although selected students are allowed to return beyond their first year. Honors House residents had access to programs planned by its Honors student staff coordinators.

Honors Centerstone: The Centerstone building, which features apartment-style accommodations, is a block to the north and east of the Blank Honors Center. It houses Honors students who are past the first year of study at Iowa — including transfer Honors students. This last year the number of Honors residents was 114.

HONORS SCHOLARSHIPS AND FELLOWSHIPS:

Kelly Thornburg, Fellowships Director for Honors, facilitated the scholarships and fellowships. Below is a summary of awards for the 2011-2012 academic year:

Scholarships:

Honors at Iowa awarded 41 scholarships totaling \$65,500.00 to students across disciplines and at every stage of their education at Iowa.

Fellowships:

Fellowships director Kelly Thornburg supported 22 undergraduate students in their pursuit of national scholarships and fellowships, with 7 of the university's national nominees receiving awards totaling \$355,000.00 for undergraduate and graduate studies and research.

Special Projects:

Kelly Thornburg contributed to the following scholarship-related projects in 2011-2012:

- Presidential Scholarship Program Assessment Committee - January through June of 2012
- Presidential Scholarship Program Selection Process - January 2012
- UIHP Scholarships Web Application Redesign & Launch – November 2011 through February 2012
- Launch of the Guy D. and Betty J Williams Environmental Innovation Scholarship
- Launch of Harold Laster Interdisciplinary Project Award – February 2012
- Development of various Social Media & Electronic Resources, including the New Website design and content development for scholarships and fellowships
- Fall 2011 Workshops – 9; Presentations - 5
- Spring 2012 Workshops – 13; Presentations – 6
- Summer Scholar Development Writing Group – A seven week personal statement and application development series. May – July 2012

HONORS RECOGNITION EVENTS

Honors at Iowa holds two major events to recognize the accomplishments of its students and participates in one smaller scale event, which is hosted by the president of the university.

- **Honors Recognition Ceremony:**

Organized by Kelly Thornburg and held on April 15th, this ceremony recognized winners of major national and international scholarships and fellowships, as well as Honors scholarships.

The Recognition Ceremony also is used to announce awards going to faculty, staff, alumni, and friends of Honors:

- Scholarships and awards for students (46 scholarships totaling \$58,000.00)
- The Davis Award for Honors Team-Teaching: Karen Heimer and Joseph Lang

- **Honors Commendation Ceremony:**

Honors Commendations are designed to recognize and celebrate achievements by Honors Students. Commendation awards are facilitated by Andy Willard. Each Honors Commendation involves twelve semester hours of Honors courses or roughly equivalent Honors experiences. Although there are many ways to get Honors Commendations, most Commendations are awarded to students for having graduated with honors in their major field(s) of study. Commendations also are awarded for research, creative expression, teaching, study away (domestic or international), community service, and service to the Honors Program.

Commended students receive a certificate signed by the University President and Honors Program Director, and Honors presents these certificates each spring at the Honors Commendation Ceremony held in Macbride Auditorium.

On May 11th Honors at Iowa celebrated students who were graduating as members of the University of Iowa Honors Program.

- Honors Staff and Faculty presented medals to all attending students who are graduating as members of Honors at Iowa.
- In addition, representatives of the undergraduate colleges gave cordons to all attending students who are graduating with Honors in the Major (259 students graduated with Honors in the Major).
- They also bestowed presidential certificates on all the graduating students who earned Honors Commendations. Nearly 300 honors students received one or more Commendations.
- The Honors award for Honors Advising and Campus Support: Pat Folsom

- **Presidential Senior Honors Dinner – May 9, 2012:**

The University President invites a diverse collection of outstanding Honors seniors for dinner at her home. Students in turn invite a mentor who has contributed greatly to their education at Iowa. Kelly Thornburg facilitates the guest selection. There were nine student guests this year.

HONORS AFFILIATIONS AND SERVICE:

Honors at Iowa has many affiliations with other offices, programs, and organizations both on and off campus. The ones listed below are noted because they have a close connection with honors education and Honors staff members have provided substantial service to them.

Honors Student Organizations

- **Phi Eta Sigma**
Description: The purpose of the society is to promote a higher standard of learning and to encourage high scholastic attainment and service among the freshmen in our institution of higher learning.
- **National Society of Collegiate Scholars**
Description: NSCS is a nationally recognized honor society which honors and inspires integrity and success. It provides high-achieving students with opportunities to excel in academics, leadership, and service. Collegiate honor students are invited during their first or second year depending on GPA and class rank.
- **Omicron Delta Kappa**
Description: To recognize and bring together university leaders in the areas of scholarship, athletics, service, social activities, government, journalism, and the creative and performing arts.
- **Mortar Board**
Description: The purpose of this group is to provide better cooperation between senior honor societies; to promote college loyalty; to advance the spirit of service and fellowship among university students; and to stimulate and develop college students at the University of Iowa.

These four student organizations (above) are local chapters of national societies with membership based on high academic standards. They are active in service on campus and in the community. Holly Yoder, the Honors Advising Director, is advisor for all four.

In 2011-2012 about 30 students served in various leadership roles within these organizations as officers. A subset of these – the presidents, membership chairs, and chairs of the parent and faculty award – worked closely with Holly Yoder. This relationship provided continuity, supported good leadership, and facilitated new initiatives.

The parent awards presented at Homecoming, and the Murray & Huit faculty awards, presented in spring at the Finkbine Dinner, are projects of two of these honor societies.

In 2012, Mortar Board began a new halftime tradition, a gavel exchange between Iowa and newest Big Ten member Nebraska during the annual Heroes Game. The gavel exchange is to represent and reinforce academic values within the context of university competition.

- **Associated Iowa Honors Students (AIHS)**

Description: AIHS provides a community for members of the UI Honors Program to share activities and develop relationships. It also advances common goals of Honors students such as volunteering and networking. Members of this club plan socials and charity events, and have unique opportunities to volunteer and network along with their fellow AIHS members.

The advisor for AIHS is Art Spisak, Honors Program Director, and Honors at Iowa on occasion supplies financial support.

Last academic year AIHS staged four major events:

- Masquerade Ball (fundraiser)
- Ice Skating (Coralville Mall)
- Hawks at the Beach (trip to the Macbride Raptor Project just outside of Solon, IA)
- Paint War (fundraiser)

- **The Mock Trial Team**

Description: University of Iowa Mock Trial is a competitive student organization focused on the art of mock trial. Mock trial is a combination of public speaking, forensics, drama, debate, and trial advocacy. The organization is open to all majors and all undergraduate students. While any student may join the organization, the current competing roster is limited to 50 students. Students are required to try out to be selected for the competing roster.

The advisor for Mock Trial is Andy Willard, Honors Experiential Learning Director, and Honors at Iowa provides financial support for the class associated with Mock Trial and for its travel and office expenses.

Last academic year the Mock Trial team competed in over 14 tournaments across the nation, gathering over 30 individual awards and 4 tournament championships. They also staged their own annual tournament, the Cornshucker Challenge on the UI campus.

University of Iowa Programs and Offices

- **Iowa Center for Research by Undergraduates (ICRU)**

Description: ICRU promotes undergraduate involvement in mentored research and creative projects at the University of Iowa. It serves all degree-seeking undergraduates at the university across all disciplines of study, staff, and faculty and work to create opportunities, provide support, and share the knowledge that comes from these collaborative efforts.

Bob Kirby, the Associate Director of Honors, is the Director of ICRU. A portion of his time is spent providing students the guidance and support they require for becoming involved with undergraduate research.

Although ICRU is part of Honors at Iowa (including its budget), its annual report will be separate from the Honors annual report.

- **Scholarship Programs – Presidential and Old Gold**

These two scholarships involve two selection committees, a staff and faculty committee. Honors staff served on both last year – Kelly Thornburg and Andy Willard on the staff side, and Art Spisak on the faculty side.

Also, Kelly Thornburg and Art Spisak were part of a provost committee formed in the Fall of 2011 that reviewed the Presidential Scholarship Program. That committee, which was chaired by Spisak, worked through the Spring semester and into the summer of 2012 formulating its recommendations for changes in the scholarship program.

- **International Programs**

The Honors Scholarship and Fellowship Director, Kelly Thornburg, worked with International Programs on fellowships and grants, such as Fulbrights and the Stanley, that take students (including graduate students) abroad.

- **Belin & Blank International Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development**

Honors at Iowa shares a building with the Belin-Blank Center and interaction between the two programs is varied and frequent.

- The staff of the two programs meet for a luncheon on an annual basis to make connections.

- Students from the Belin-Blank Center's China Scholars Program that come to the university are automatically enrolled in Honors at Iowa and live in Honors House.
- Likewise, students from the Belin-Blank Center's National Academy of Arts, Sciences, and Engineering (NAASE) program that come to the university are automatically enrolled in Honors at Iowa and live in Honors House.
- The Honors at Iowa director, Art Spisak, is a member of the Belin-Blank Advisory Board.
- Nick Colangelo, the director of the Belin-Blank Center, is a member of the Honors Steering Committee.

Honors Regional and National Organizations

- **Upper Midwest Honors Council (UMHC)**

The UMHC is one of the six regional Honors organizations in the country. Honors at Iowa was a participating member this last year.

- Honors director Art Spisak attended the annual business meeting in Phoenix, Arizona (held at the National Collegiate Honors Council conference)
- Five Honors staff members and two Honors at Iowa students attended the regional conference held at Clarke University in Dubuque, Iowa (April 2012). One staff member and the two students presented.

- **National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC)**

The NCHC is the national/international Honors organization. Honors at Iowa was a participating member this last year.

- Institutional and professional memberships
- Two staff members, Bob Kirby and Art Spisak, attended the annual conference in Phoenix, Arizona (Oct 2011)
 - Spisak participated in a panel session on Developing New Honors Courses
 - Spisak was a co-presenter on the topic of Inclusive Excellence in Honors Programs
 - Kirby and Spisak attended the NCHC business meeting
- Spisak was elected to a three-year term on the NCHC Board of Directors (Dec 2011) and has attended board meetings in Lincoln, NE (headquarters of the NCHC) – one in February and the other in June, 2011
- Spisak served on the following NCHC committees
 - Assessment and Evaluation Committee
 - International Education Committee
 - Nominating Committee

- Andy Willard attended the first half of the NCHC Assessment and Evaluation Institute (July 2012) – on assessment
 - Spisak attended the second half of the NCHC Assessment and Evaluation Institute (July 2012) – on evaluation with the purpose of being certified as an NCHC site visitor
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- **Committee on Institution Cooperation – Honors (CIC+)**

The CIC+ Honors is the break-out organization of Committee on Institutional Cooperation, a consortium of the Big Ten member universities plus the University of Chicago. Governed and funded by the Provosts of the member universities, CIC mandates are coordinated by a staff from its Champaign, Illinois headquarters.

 - Participating institutional member
 - Two staff members, Bob Kirby and Art Spisak, attended the annual CIC+ Honors meeting in Columbus, Ohio (May 2012), which was hosted by the Ohio State University
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