Honors Program Senate Task Force Meeting Minutes
January 11, 2012

Task Force members present: Sema Alptekin, Cheri Baumgarten, Ken Brown, Adrienne Greve, Jim Mueller, Kate Murphy, Lina Pranata, & Lou Tomatzky.
Honors students in attendance: Brita Bookser, Alexandra Highsmith, & Michele Jenkins

Agenda item 1: Determine date for next meeting:
The next meeting will be on Wednesday, January 25, at 4:00 pm in the Honors Program office (Library, Room 510).

Agenda item 2: Determining best practices at other institutions:
Task force members discussed the report that was prepared by Haley Peterson providing an overview of select peer universities’ honors programs.
1. Task force members agreed that data will be collected from two additional institutions: Polytechnic Institute of New York University, Brooklyn NY and Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Worcester, MA.
2. Other CSU Honors Programs will also be reviewed and added as an addendum to the current report done by Haley Peterson.
3. Those Honors Programs with interdisciplinary curricula will be contacted via email and/or telephone to determine: 1. the interdisciplinary nature of courses (is it focused on one major? What does it mean to them to be interdisciplinary?); and 2. how these courses are funded. Sample syllabi will be collected if available.

Agenda item 3: Honors Program Mission/Vision Statement:
The task force members evaluated the existing mission statement and determined that the program’s current mission/vision statement needs to be redesigned. The new statement will be designed to align with Cal Poly’s ULO’s (will build on them, and will extend further). We will make an attempt to include best practices from other honors programs at peer institutions. Lou Tomatzky agreed to prepare the first draft of this statement.

Additional items discussed:
1. Task force members discussed the possibility of having a group of Honors students meet with college deans to discuss their vision for the program. This was put on hold for the time being.

2. The task force members agreed that a timeline for the presentation of the committees’ recommendations to the Academic Senate needs to be determined.

Meeting adjourned at 5:05 pm.
Honors Program Senate Task Force Meeting Minutes
January 25, 2012

Task Force members present: Sema Alptekin, Cheri Baumgarten, Ken Brown, Adrienne Greve, Jim Mueller, Kate Murphy, Lina Pranata, & Lou Tornatzky.
Honors students in attendance: Brita Bookser

Agenda item 1: Update regarding Honors Task Force’s charge
No new charge has been identified.

Agenda item 2: Additional research regarding best practices
An updated report summarizing honors best practices across the country (and the CSU) was distributed prior to the meeting. Task force members agreed that a very thorough analysis has been prepared by Haley Petersen and Cheri Baumgarten and decided to move forward with revising the mission/vision statement.

Agenda item 3: Mission/Vision statement:
The first draft of the revised mission/vision statement prepared by Lou Tornatzky was distributed. The task force members will be emailed an electronic copy and will make any needed revisions/additions. This topic will be discussed during the next meeting.

Agenda item 4: Task Force’s recommendations for Honors Program
The task force members discussed an increase in the minimum GPA requirement (currently 3.3) to graduate with the Honors designation. Increasing it to 3.5 cumulative GPA was suggested. Task force members felt this was appropriate since 3.5 is the minimum GPA required to receive the cum laude designation. If recommended, this requirement would become effective for the incoming freshmen class 2012. Changing the minimum GPA required to remain in good standing within the Honors Program from 3.0 to 3.3 was also discussed. If enacted, this change would also become effective for the incoming freshmen class 2012. The impact such changes on the overall Honors student body needs to be analyzed before a final decision is made.

The task force members will make additional program recommendations after the mission/vision statement has been finalized. Other possible changes may include an increase in entrance requirements for incoming freshmen. The possibility of waiting until students have completed one quarter at Cal Poly before inviting them to join the program will also be considered. However, the Honors housing option (at Cerro Vista) for Honors freshmen would need to be a consideration in this decision.

Additional items discussed:
1. Task force members discussed scheduling an appointment with the new Provost, Kathleen Enz Finken, to discuss what her vision is for the Honors Program. We hope to get on her calendar in late February.

2. Ken Brown will discuss the timeline and the format for the Academic Senate presentation of the Task Force’s recommendation with Rachel Fernflores.
Meeting adjourned at 5:10 pm. Next meeting scheduled for Wednesday, February 8 at 4:00 pm.
Honors Program Senate Task Force Meeting Minutes
February 8, 2012

Task Force members present: Sema Alptekin, Cheri Baumgarten, Ken Brown, Jessica Carson, Jim Mueller, Kate Murphy, & Lina Pranata.
Honors students in attendance: Aly Highsmith & Michele Jenkins

Agenda item 1: Announcement of meeting with Provost Kathleen Enz Finken
Meeting scheduled for Wednesday, February 29 at 4:00 pm in the Honors office.

Agenda item 2: Mission/Vision statement
Task force members worked on developing a short mission statement. See below drafts:

NOTE: Draft #2 reflects our attempts to incorporate the idea of personal, as well as academic, growth after Aly & Michele (two of our student members) shared that this has been an important component of the program for them. We just haven't quite worked it out stylistically.

DRAFT #1:
The Cal Poly Honors Program brings together students, faculty and friends of the University to provide an academically enriched learning experience for the University’s most outstanding and highly motivated students. The program is designed for students eager to explore the limits of their academic potential.

DRAFT #2:
The Cal Poly Honors Program brings together students, faculty and friends of the University to provide an academically enriched learning experience for the University’s most outstanding and highly motivated students. The program is designed for students seeking a challenge and willing to explore the limits of their academic potential, and to foster personal growth.

Once the new mission statement is finalized task force members will move forward with developing a set of GOALS. Copies of Cal Poly’s VISION statement and strategic imperatives: http://www.academicaffairs.calpoly.edu/StrategicPlan/ were distributed during the meeting.

Agenda item 3: Planning for meeting with Provost
The objectives for the meeting will be discussed at the next task force meeting on Feb. 22. The new vision statement along with the peer institution analysis will be sent to the provost prior to the meeting.

Agenda item 4: Task Force’s recommendations for Honors Program
Further recommendations were not discussed.

Additional items discussed:
1. Clarification regarding the discussion concerning an increase in current GPA requirements noted in previous minutes was again discussed. It was noted that prior to instituting any change to the current GPA requirements (or any similar change) further
analysis should be done to determine the impact of such a change on the overall Honors student body.

2. Task force members were asked to come up with a three or four bullet points for the goals prior to the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 5:05 pm. Next meeting scheduled for Wednesday, February 22 at 4:00 pm.
Honors Program Senate Task Force Meeting Minutes  
February 22, 2012  

Task Force members present: Cheri Baumgarten, Ken Brown, Jessica Carson, Jim Mueller, Kate Murphy, & Lina Pranata.  
Honors students in attendance: Brita Bookser & Michele Jenkins  

Agenda item 1: Reminder of meeting with Provost Kathleen Enz Finken  
Meeting with provost scheduled for Wednesday, February 29 at 4:00 pm in the Honors office.  

Agenda item 2: Finalize mission statement  
a. Short version: Task force members finalized the short version mission statement:  
[Mission Statement DRAFT #4]  
The Cal Poly Honors Program provides an academically enriched learning experience for the University’s most outstanding and highly motivated students. It brings together students, faculty, and friends of the university to seek challenges, participate in experiential learning, grow as individuals, and expand the boundaries of their academic potential.  

b. Expanded version for on-campus use: Several suggested bullet points for the expanded version were submitted by members; however, it was elected to review those at a later time.  

Agenda item 3: Planning for meeting with Provost  
The general consensus was that getting the provost’s vision for the program early in the process will help us move forward to develop our vision for the program.  
a. Meeting objectives:  
1. Her vision for the program.  
2. Program for the best and brightest at the flagship CSU; we’d like to see our program reflect this.  
3. Advancement will likely be a key vehicle to accomplish this; therefore, we think that the Honors Program should be a high priority for new advancement efforts. How can she help us accomplish this?  

b. Materials to share with the provost prior to the meeting:  
Sema/Cheri will email her a document with basic information about the program (e.g. admission requirements; curricular requirements; current student demographics, etc.)  
A copy of this document will also be sent to the task force members.  

Agenda item 4: Other agenda items  
The members tentatively plan to meet again on Wednesday, March 7 to debrief from meeting with provost and also continue the discussion on the expanded mission statement.  

Meeting adjourned at 5:00 pm. Next meeting scheduled for Wednesday, February 29 at 4:00 pm.
Task Force members discussed the meeting with the provost. The discussion highlighted the need to define a strong vision for the program and to move away from the current 'patchwork' structure. The provost suggested focusing on interdisciplinarity might give the program a clear and well-defined identity. She also highlighted the suitability of such a focus since Cal Poly has made a commitment to promoting interdisciplinary learning. The provost also stressed the need for the program to be structured in a way that gives it value to Cal Poly, is meaningful to its students, and also can work within students' majors.

Housing the current UNIV courses under the Honors Program was one suggestion as a way to further enhance the interdisciplinary nature of the program. The ultimate goal would be not merely to house these classes but to develop a true interdisciplinary focus for the program; this likely would involve developing new interdisciplinary classes. Honors students would then have the option to take cross-listed UNIV classes for Honors credit as well as new interdisciplinary courses within the Honors program. The task force's previous research into honors programs at peer institutions (RPI, Ga Tech, Virginia Tech, UC-Irvine, etc.) will provide one starting point for developing the new interdisciplinary elements of the program. The new mission statement will need to be revised to reflect this emphasis on interdisciplinarity, but members agreed that the first step is to determine the new interdisciplinary structure of the program.

The provost also raised the issue of attrition rates within the program. One suggestion to help address this problem was to try to get new interdisciplinary classes (where relevant) included within departments' approved electives list. This would be particularly important for majors that only allow students to take electives from a short, pre-approved list. Another suggestion was to further educate students on their options within the program, perhaps through the use of peer advisers.

Task force reaffirmed commitment to reducing the overall size of the program from current levels. Raising the criteria for admission to the program was one suggestion for how to begin this process.

Task force members agreed to continue meeting in the spring quarter on a weekly basis. Everyone was asked to update their Zimbra calendars as soon as possible.

Meeting adjourned at 5:10pm. Next meeting will be scheduled during the second week of the spring quarter.
Honors Program Senate Task Force Meeting Minutes
April 5, 2012

Task Force members present: Sema Alptekin, Cheri Baumgarten, Ken Brown, Jim Mueller, Kate Murphy, Erika Rogers, Tom Trice & Lou Tornatzky.
Honors students in attendance: Michele Jenkins.

Agenda item 1: The task force welcomed two new members: Erika Rogers (former Honors Program Director) & Tom Trice (instructor of Honors 100 Orientation course).

Agenda item 2: Recommendations for program changes were discussed:
1. The need to raise the program’s current admission requirements to help reduce the program’s size was again reaffirmed, as well as raising the current required GPA (3.3) to graduate with the honors designation to a 3.5 so that it’s aligned with the GPA required to receive the cum laude designation.
2. Adding an honors thesis or capstone requirement to current program requirements, to serve as a culminating experience within the Honors program. This might take the form of an interdisciplinary project-based course that allows students to draw upon what they have learned in the Honors GE classes and to work collaboratively across disciplines.
3. Ken suggested conceiving of the program as having two tracts:
   • 1. Honors in GE (e.g. students complete the program by taking Honors GE courses).
   • 2. Honors Interdisciplinary track – perhaps housed under a theme such as sustainability.
      Members discussed that this option would not be feasible for students in most majors due to strict curricular requirements.
4. Lou suggested that the program try to tap into Cal Poly’s national merit scholars.

Agenda item 3: Academic Senate Report:
The members discussed what should be included in the report and how it should be structured. Everyone agreed that the report should be concise and include a clear vision of how the current program can be strengthened. Ken suggested that the report start by emphasizing the program’s strengths (i.e. Honors GE courses) and then move on to more specific recommendations on how to improve the program. Erika suggested that the report also emphasize the program’s ability to act as an incubator where innovative curriculum can be developed. It was also suggested that the report be structured in a way that demonstrates why the program is valuable to the university.

Sema suggested the option of having a longer meeting at some point to conduct a strategic planning session. This option will be discussed further at the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 2:05pm. Next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 12 at 1:00 pm. Members agreed that the meetings would be changed to Fridays (1:00-2:00 pm) beginning on Friday, April 20.
Honors Program Senate Task Force Meeting Minutes
April 12, 2012

Task Force members present: Sema Alptekin, Cheri Baumgarten, Jim Mueller, Kate Murphy, & Erika Rogers.
Honors students in attendance: Brita Bookser & Michele Jenkins.

Agenda item 1: The remainder of meetings this quarter will be held on Fridays from 1:00-2:00 pm starting next Friday, April 20.

Agenda item 2: Recommendations for changes to the current program requirements were again discussed, and task force members present unanimously voted to enact the following changes.

Note: these changes will only apply to new students entering the program.

Recommended changes:
1. The Cal Poly cumulative GPA required to graduate with the Honors designation will be raised to 3.5.
2. In order to remain in good standing in the Program, and to make satisfactory progress toward graduating with Honors, students are expected to maintain the following academic standards:
   - A cumulative Cal Poly GPA of 3.3 at the end of freshman year
   - A cumulative Cal Poly GPA of 3.4 at the end of sophomore year
   - A cumulative Cal Poly GPA of 3.5 at the end of junior year
   - A cumulative Cal Poly GPA of 3.5 at the end of each subsequent year
3. Mid-year applicants and transfer students will be required to meet the above GPA requirements to be eligible to apply to the program.
4. The following changes will be made to the application process for mid-year and transfer student applicants:
   Mid-year and transfer applicants will be required to:
   - Submit an essay with their application (essay prompt TBA)
   - Submit the name of one Cal Poly faculty member for reference (to streamline this process for faculty a recommendation template will be generated).
   - Be enrolled in the Honors Program for a minimum of four quarters prior to graduation.
5. The entrance requirements for incoming freshmen will be raised for the 2013/2014 academic year. These changes will be done in consultation with the Admissions Office to determine the appropriate requirements.

Agenda item 3: Report to Academic Senate: The content of the report was reaffirmed. It was agreed that the report will recommend that the program continues. The report will also articulate a vision for strengthening the program and the need for additional funding (secured through fundraising efforts). Erika also suggested including a recommendation that priority registration be added as a program benefit. The rationale for justifying this benefit will be drafted using the guidelines from the policy for granting priority registration (see attached document for policy). The difficulty of fitting the program's curricular requirements within the framework of student's major requirements was one justification identified during the discussion.

Meeting adjourned at 2:00 pm. Next meeting is scheduled for Friday, April 20 at 1:00 pm.
Agenda item 1: Kate reported on her meeting with Rachel Fernflores. The meeting was called to discuss the progress of the task force. Rachel said the Senate’s spring agenda is filling quickly and that it would be unlikely that the Honors presentation will make it to the agenda this year, even if the report is completely within the next few weeks.

Agenda item 2: Draft outline of Senate report (see attached). A draft outline (prepared by Kate) for the Academic Senate report was reviewed and discussed. The draft includes three parts:
1. Vision for program
2. Value program brings to the university
3. Future direction/recommendations for moving forward

Part one of the draft report was discussed during today’s meeting:
1. Vision for program
   a. Recommended changes approved on 4/12/12: The program’s current GPA requirements (i.e. for graduates, current students, and incoming students) were revised. The application requirements for mid-year and transfer students were also slightly modified. See minutes from 4/12/12 for complete details on these changes.
   b. Capstone course: Taskforce members unanimously voted to add a capstone course to current program requirements. This interdisciplinary, project-based capstone will serve as a culminating experience for students and also as a ‘book-end’ to the Honors 100 experience. It was agreed that more than one option should be available to students to allow flexibility for the various majors in the program. The various forms this capstone project might take were discussed:
      i. Erika suggested resurrecting HNRS 490: President’s seminar as one possible option. This could serve as a unique opportunity for students not offered by other honors programs. Possibilities for this seminar could include having the students meet with various campus leaders and high profile visiting guests. The students could then be asked to reflect on these experiences the following quarter and the results published in an Honors journal.
      ii. Interdisciplinary project-based courses. Lou suggested that a group of faculty could be recruited to lead these projects, although some form of compensation would likely need to be part of the equation. Ken suggested “commandeering” the current UNIV courses for this purpose, however, both Jessica and Kate voiced concerns that this may not well-received by some of the campus community – particularly if the courses were restricted to only students in the
Honors Program (other related issue is also how to ensure a true “honors experience” if these courses are not restricted to only members of the program).

iii. Adrienne suggested using video conferencing (a model used in EDES 410) as a mechanism to allow access to national leaders for a speaker-series type capstone.

c. Student-faculty research program: Serna outlined the previous model used for undergraduate honors research program. A course is already in place (UNIV/HNRS 321: Undergrad Research Methods/Practice) to allow students to receive credit for research with a faculty member. It was also suggested that such student-faculty research could be one of the potential models for the capstone course.

d. Introduce other interdisciplinary classes? Ken suggested using the UNIV courses as a way to accomplish bullets b,c. and d of the Senate report draft, however, as mentioned above (ii) this could prove problematic if the courses were restricted to only students in the Honors Program.

Erika suggested highlighting three main program cornerstones: enrichment (for students, faculty and the broader community); student-faculty research; and interdisciplinary learning (beginning with HNRS 100 and ending with the capstone) in the Senate report and leaving the minute details vague – which will allow more time to really structure and plan the new curriculum. Everyone agreed that the report should also highlight the value of the program to the university, and aligning the report recommendations with the strategic plan and WASC recommendations maybe one way to accomplish this. This discussion will continue at the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 2:00 pm. Next meeting is scheduled for Friday, April 27 at 1:00 pm.
Honors Program Senate Task Force Meeting Minutes
April 27, 2012

Honors students in attendance: Brita Bookser, Aly Highsmith & Michele Jenkins.

The primary topic of discussion during today's meeting centered on the content of a report issued by the UNIV Task Force (UTF) dated April 3, 2012. The report was brought to the meeting by Ken who had communicated with the Provost about the possibility of having UNIV courses housed under the Honors Program. The report describes the preliminary results of the UNIV task force, and concludes that "decentralization of the UNIV courses to the individual colleges ... is not a long-term solution for developing interdisciplinary education to its full potential envisioned by Cal Poly through its mission, vision and strategic plan." A second document that proposes a new Center for Integrative Education as a "shared resource" was also reviewed during the meeting. Since the UTF report also suggested incorporating input from the LAES and HNRS programs in further discussions regarding the above, a meeting is arranged for Wednesday, May 2 at 10:00 am with UTF. Kate, Ken and Sema (and others who have time) will be attending the meeting representing the Honors Task Force.

A suggestion was made to look into the number of required Honors classes (bullet “c” of Honors Task Force Draft Outline for Senate Report, April 27, 2012).

Meeting adjourned at 2:10 pm. Next meeting is scheduled for Friday, May 4 at 1:00 pm.
Task Force members present: Sema Alptekin, Cheri Baumgarten, Ken Brown, Jessica Carson, Kate Murphy, Jim Mueller, Erika Rogers & Lou Tornatzky.
Honors students in attendance: Brita Bookser & Aly Highsmith.

Agenda item 1: Minor revision to short mission statement: The group agreed to include the term interdisciplinary to the revised mission statement to reflect the recent emphasis on highlighting the interdisciplinarity of the program. See revised mission statement below:

Revised Mission Statement:
The Cal Poly Honors Program provides an academically enriched learning experience for the University’s most outstanding and highly motivated students. It brings together students, faculty, and friends of the university to seek challenges, participate in experiential and interdisciplinary learning, grow as individuals, and expand the boundaries of their academic potential.

Agenda item 2: Draft report: The draft senate report was reviewed and minor changes were suggested. Changes include adding the revised mission statement under the vision section. Erika’s suggestions will also be incorporated in the report. A revised draft will be discussed at the next meeting.

Agenda item 3: Reducing current number of classes required: Members agreed to leave required number of course unchanged for now. This issue may be revisited in the future.

Meeting adjourned at 2:00 pm. Next meeting is scheduled for Friday, May 18 at 1:00 pm.
Honors Program Senate Task Force Meeting Minutes
May 18, 2012

Task Force members present: Sema Alptekin, Cheri Baumgarten, Ken Brown, Jessica Carson, Kate Murphy, Jim Mueller, Erika Rogers & Lou Tomatzky.
Honors students in attendance: Erin Clark

The latest version of the Academic Senate report was reviewed and discussed. Minor changes were suggested, primarily pertaining to the structure of the report.

Kate will make the final revisions to the report and email it to the HTF members this weekend. If no other changes are suggested, the final report will be issued early next week.

Meeting adjourned at 2:00 pm.