

Honors Program
White Paper No. 3
By Committee on Designated Curriculum Matters
Northwest Missouri State University

This report is the third of a series of four white papers documenting the research and recommendations of the Designated Curriculum Matters subcommittee in the 2004-2005 academic year. This white paper will address faculty concerns regarding Northwest's Honors Program.

Background

When surveyed in the fall of 2004 regarding the six curriculums areas cited in its charter, the Designated Curriculum Matters subcommittee found Northwest's faculty regarded the Honors Program as warranting attention.

While there was no indication that the university at large resists adoption of this new program, there was a consistent presence of confusion surrounding the implementation and maintenance of the Honors Program. Of particular concern were:

- The chain of command for making decisions and reporting information to faculty; How will decisions be made and by whom?
- The selection process for faculty who will teach Honors sections; will there be a higher expectation or standard for Honors section faculty?
- The scheduling of Honors sections; will the sections be scheduled widely across the day so that more students can participate?
- The assignment of Student Credit Hours to departments; will the credits be assigned to departments or to the Honors Program or both?
- The criteria for students to join and complete the program and the benefits that the students will receive from finishing the program.

Call for Action

Since Northwest's Honors Program is new and has no history of controversy, this survey indicates faculty want to know more about what the program is, how it will be maintained, and what the benefits of the program will be for students. Our recommendation is to create and maintain an information process that will codify and publish the Honors Program's primary caretakers, the entrance and completion requirements, and the outcome benefits for students.

Suggested Plan for Addressing Faculty Concerns Regarding the Honors Program

The subcommittee on Designated Curriculum Matters proposes the following process for alleviating the above concerns:

- Select a Director and an advisory board.
- Create a reporting process.
- Publish, either electronically or in print, the Honors Program's primary caretakers, the entrance and completion requirements, and the outcome benefits for students.