



# **Davis Division Academic Senate**

## **Request for Consultation Responses**

### **University Honors Program Proposal**

**March 5, 2014**

Associate Vice Provost - Honors Program Kelman is seeking Academic Senate feedback concerning potential changes to the University Honors Program.

# **Council of School & College Faculty Chairs (ENGINEERING)**

**February 6, 2014 11:03 AM**

The College of Engineering Faculty Executive Committee supports this proposal.

# **Council of School & College Faculty Chairs (LS: SOC SCI)**

**February 7, 2014 11:05 AM**

The L&S Executive Committee discussed this document at length and (a) endorsed the idea of creating a coherent, effective honors program for excellent students, but (b) had strong reservations about parts of the current proposals. Most members said that offering excellent professors an opportunity to teach a small class of bright, highly motivated students is an excellent idea, but this would leave other large courses taught by those faculty members to lecturers who would have to be hired on an ad hoc basis, with many unpredictable but bad outcomes for students. The new honors program should include small classes taught by top-tier professors, but this should not be done at the expense of the quality of the mainstream courses. Having an excellent honors program would be a plus for the honors students and for the University, but eroding the already strained mainstream course offerings to achieve it would be a major mistake. As the faculty grows, according to current plans, both the honors courses and the mainstream courses should be kept in mind, and the honors offerings should not grow faster than the departments' ability to staff those courses and their regular courses with excellent teachers. --Phil Shaver, Chair

# **Graduate Council**

**January 16, 2014 8:17 AM**

*No response at this time.*

# **Undergraduate Council**

**February 26, 2014 1:30 PM**

Re: University Honors Proposal

The Undergraduate Council (UGC) discussed the proposal to revise the university honors program at its meeting on 2.21.2014.

The Council strongly supports efforts to improve the quality of the honors experience at UC Davis. The council views the proposal overall as being very strong, especially those aspects of the program that will increase faculty participation in honors and those aspects of the program that will allow students to incorporate honors into their degree course work.

The Council strongly urges the honors program to maintain and improve efforts towards diversity in admissions and retention. We would like the honors program to include students with widely varying perspectives and experience, as this will enhance the overall quality of the experience. We hope that the program will continue and strengthen outreach efforts to students from underrepresented groups.

The Council notes that study abroad is an option within honors and hopes that this will remain a key component of the program.

The Council strongly approves the proposal's efforts to hold program faculty "harmless" for teaching smaller sections in the honors program than they would otherwise teach. Some more concrete assurances that this approach will be sustained over the long run would be welcome.

Matthew J. Traxler  
Professor and Chair  
Undergraduate Council