

May 13, 2013

The College Honors Program
Curriculum Committee Report for 2012-13

It was another good year for honors at Rhode Island College.

48 students entered the General Education Honors Program as freshmen last fall. We have reviewed 201 applications for the 2013 freshman class and invited 173 to join the program, both by far all-time highs. The larger numbers reflect efforts to identify talented inner-city and minority students who may not have done well on the SATs. As of this writing, 37 students have matriculated, another high for this date, and there should be no problem achieving our target of forty to fifty new students in the program. Overall, the General Education Honors Program currently stands at 186.

27 students will graduate this May with General Education Honors, 8 of whom will also receive College Honors. It is a strong group academically, with an average GPA of 3.69, and includes 10 students graduating *summa cum laude*. 30 students successfully completed departmental honors projects in 16 different majors, another all-time record, with another 2 students still working on their projects as of this writing. Efforts to improve the timely submissions of departmental honors projects to the library seem to have yielded results, as have efforts to raise awareness of honors among and reporting on honors by departments. I also think that the change of venue for the Departmental Honors Poster Session from the Student Union Ballroom to Alger Hall worked well and will help to facilitate better attendance in the future (along with better publicity).

The De Stefano Undergraduate Research Program is now in its third full year of operation, and 11 students from various majors received funding to support their honors projects. 5 students received funding to attend the Northeast Regional Honors Council Conference in Philadelphia in April, and several others presented at various regional scholarly meetings. The honors website and Facebook page have been enhanced, the latter under the able direction of a student webmistress. We are up to 184 friends and have had increasing numbers of visitors. The new Admissions Honors brochure for this year was a major improvement, and honors has received increased attention from Admissions under the guidance of Lucy Rios Saunders.

The adaptation of the General Education Honors Program to the new General Education Program has gone well with the successful running of sections of Honors 100 (FYS), Writing 100H, and revised "area distribution" honors classes. Sections of Honors 264: Connections, the new Connections seminar, will run for the first time in 2013-14.

My major priority for 2013-14 will be to prepare my successor as Director of Honors and the DeStefano Research Fund, respectively. In consultation with the new director, I would like to revisit the so-far recalcitrant problem of identifying and recruiting, in an efficient and timely manner, transfer students for honors and to lobby both the administration and the RIC Foundation for more honors scholarship monies. The one

negative trend that I see relating to honors is a decline in the number of “top” students (in terms of class rank and SAT scores) who wind up matriculating at RIC.

Spencer Hall

Dr. Spencer Hall

Director of Honors

Director of the Anne and Bob DeStefano Undergraduate Research Program