

Weber State University  
Biennial Report on Assessment of Student Learning

Cover Page

Department/Program: Honors Program  
Academic Year of Report: 2022 & 2023 (covering Summer 2021 through Spring 2023)  
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The Institutional Effectiveness website hosts a page for each program that displays assessment reports and information. All available biennial assessment and program review reports are located at the bottom of the program's page on our site. As a part of the biennial report process, we ask that you please review your page for completeness and accuracy, and indicate below the changes that need to be made in sections A-E.

Program page link: <https://www.weber.edu/ie/Results/Honors.html>

### A. Mission Statement

Information is current; no changes required: Yes  No  X

Update:

The WSU Honors Program is home to all intellectually curious and academically adventurous students, faculty, and staff. Honors provides supportive, high-quality interdisciplinary experiences for intellectual and affective development, for academic and cultural expansion. We build habits of learning that support and sustain lifelong engagements with complex questions, issues, and ideas.

### B. Student Learning Outcomes

(Please include certificate and associate credential learning outcomes)

Information is current; no changes required: Yes  No  X

Update:

## Honors Program Outcomes

### Advising-Based Outcomes

- All students will meet with a program advisor to receive information, ask questions, and organize an academic plan featuring the best Honors pathway for them and their degree requirements.
- Student progress will be regularly monitored for retention of students and degree completion.
- Students will receive continual updates about program and campus deadlines;
- Students will provide feedback to assist in the continual improvement of the program.

Course-Based Learning Outcomes

- Students will demonstrate critical thinking that is curious, open-minded, persistent, and interrogative.
- Students will analyze familiar cultural assumptions and views in context of the world’s diverse values, traditions, and belief systems.
- Students will adapt and apply ideas, concepts, skills, methodologies, and/or theories across disciplines.
- Students will write and communicate in clear and compelling ways.

Portfolio-Based Outcomes

- Students will design, develop, and deliver a portfolio project requiring higher-order skills of integration and synthesis.
- Students will engage in reflective practice and metacognitive thinking in relation to their educational experiences and identities.
- Students will present an excerpt of their portfolio in a public forum.

**C. Curriculum Grid**

(Please review your current curriculum grid and verify that at least one course has been identified for each outcome in which you expect your students to demonstrate the desired competency of a graduating student. This could be shown in a variety of ways: classroom work, clinical or internship work, a field test, an ePortfolio, etc. You may request access to the Google Sheet on our site if that is easiest, or we can make the updates. Please reach out to [ojie@weber.edu](mailto:ojie@weber.edu) if you wish to have access)

Information is current; no changes required: Yes  No

Update:

| Complete List of Courses in the Honors Program |               |                                |  |          |          |          |
|--|---------------|--------------------------------|--|----------|----------|----------|
| Course prefix for all Honors classes: HNRS     |               |                                | Program Learning Outcomes  |          |          |          |
|  |               |                                | (Faculty will select an outcome then develop an assignment that accomplishes the intended learning.) |          |          |          |
| <i>Number</i>                                  | <i>Gen Ed</i> | <i>Title listed in catalog</i> | <i>1</i>   | <i>2</i> | <i>3</i> | <i>4</i> |
|  |               |                                |  |          |          |          |

|      |          | <i>(credit hours)</i>   |   |   |   |   |
|------|----------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1110 | HU       | Introduction to Honors: The Construction of Knowledge (3)                               | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 1500 | PS       | Perspectives in the Physical Sciences (3)   | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 1510 | LS       | Perspectives in the Life Sciences (3)   | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 1520 | LS       | Perspectives in the Social Sciences (3)   | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 1530 | CA       | Perspectives in the Creative Arts (3)   | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 1540 | HU       | Perspectives in the Humanities (3)  | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 2010 | HU       | Exploring Key Concepts in the Disciplines: Humanities (3)                               | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| 2020 | CA       | Exploring Key Concepts in the Disciplines: Creative Arts (3-6)                          | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| 2030 | PS       | Exploring Key Concepts in the Disciplines: Physical Sciences (3)                        | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| 2040 | LS       | Exploring Key Concepts in the Disciplines: Life Sciences (3)                            | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| 2110 | HU/SS    | Intellectual Traditions: Great Ideas of the West in the Classical and Medieval Eras (3) | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| 2120 | HU/SS    | Intellectual Traditions: Great Ideas of the West in the Modern Era (3)                  | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| 2130 | HU/SS/DV | Intellectual Traditions: Great Ideas of the East (3)                                    | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| 2830 |          | Directed Readings, Projects, and Research (1-3)   | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |

|      |  |  |   |   |   |   |
|------|--|--|---|---|---|---|
| 2900 |  | Honors Colloquium (1-3)                              | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| 2920 |  | Short Courses, Workshops, and Special Programs (1-3) | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| 3110 |  | Great Books (3)                                      | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| 3900 |  | Honors Colloquium (1-3)                              | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| 4830 |  | Directed Readings: Senior Project Research (1-3)     | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| 4900 |  | Honors Colloquium (2-4)                              | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| 4920 |  | Short Courses, Workshops, and Special Programs (1-3) | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| 4900 |  | Honors Senior Project (3)                            | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |

1 through 4 represents the levels each outcome addresses per course:

1 = Introductory

2 = Developing mastery

3 = Competence at mastery

4 = Mastery

#### D. Program and Contact Information

Information is current; no changes required: Yes  No

Update:

Honors Program

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## E. Assessment Plan

We have traditionally asked programs to report on outcome achievement by students at the course level. We are encouraging programs to consider alternative assessment approaches and plans that are outcome-based as opposed to course-based, though course-based assessment can continue to be used. A complete assessment plan should include:

- a timeline (which courses or which outcomes will be assessed each year),
- an overall assessment strategy (course-based, outcome-based, reviewed juries, ePortfolio, field tests, etc.)
- information about how you will collect and review data
- information about how the department/program faculty are engaged in the assessment review.

Information is current; no changes required: Yes No X

Update:

### Honors Program Assessment Plan

For the last year and a-half, the Honors Program has been in a period of deep change. The start point for the change certainly extends back even farther, as the former director, Dan Bedford, initiated many important revisions. I speak in this document however about the substantial changes that have occurred under my tenure as director, a span which began in August 2022.

For one, we have a new set of strategic goals that are important to keep in mind when reading through our new vision of assessment. In fact, as you'll see, the fourth goal is centered specifically on establishing, enacting, and sustaining a meaningful assessment plan.

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2023 Honors Program Strategic Goals:

- 1) Integrate recruitment, retention, and advising efforts for sustained and meaningful connections with all students from the point of first contact to degree completion.
  - 2) Provide high-quality, high-impact learning experiences for students in all Honors courses and through events.
  - 3) Lead in teaching and curricular innovation and excellence by utilizing the unique features of an Honors course and the attributes of quality-seeking Honors students.
  - 4) Develop meaningful assessment that improves student learning, faculty teaching, and program practices.
-

Assessment is perhaps always complicated, but it is deeply challenging in this program for various reasons. Traditionally, the Honors Program has used a course-based assessment process, which mixed results. The plan articulated in this report, however, turns the program in a new direction, away from course-based assessment only and toward a holistic approach that will use both narrative and numerical forms of data. In order to design this plan, all of the significant points of contact, activity, and engagement in Honors have been mapped. These points now become sites for collection, analysis, and reflection. Such a map promises to present a portrait of key student experiences and programmatic effectiveness.

Within a new holistic outcome-based approach, Honors will employ a mixture of practices. Such a mixture is necessary because there are so many program variables and complexities. For example, some Honors courses count for general education, and others do not. Some students in the program will be required to complete a portfolio, and others will not.

#### SPR Goal 1

Integrate recruitment, retention, and advising efforts for sustained and meaningful connections with all students from the point of first contact to degree completion.

The first dimension of the new assessment approach hones in on the realm of advising. Honors directs significant attention and resources toward highly-improved practices in the realms of recruitment, retention, and advising, all of which are now designed as a set of highly-interconnected and mutually-constituting services. The outcomes in this realm inform our structures, and our structures zero in on the achievement of these outcomes.

#### SPR Goal 2

Provide high-quality, high-impact learning experiences for students in all Honors courses and through events.

The second dimension of our new approach centers on course learning. Honors is a leader on campus in terms of innovative, student-centered teaching and learning. To streamline our course assessment procedures, Honors will use a narrative-centered 'evidence of learning' worksheet, a form that will be useful in our general education courses, in regular Honors courses, and in our newly-designed "intro-level core" classes. The worksheet for these introductory courses will be modified slightly to capture information on some of our

common activities and retention interventions. In the intro courses, we will measure teaching and learning effectiveness as well as the quality of particular supports and extensions. The narrative-based information will generate a place for reflection, collective conversation, and for continual improvement. Both of these worksheets are included in this report.

### SPR Goal 3

Lead in teaching and curricular innovation and excellence by utilizing the unique features of an Honors course and the attributes of quality-seeking Honors students.

Finally, the third dimension of our new approach, centralizes portfolio-based outcomes that are applicable to students taking Honors through the “University” Honors pathway. These students represent our most immersed population. They have extended and deep engagements in the program. Our new structure means that these students will receive access to the portfolio template when they enroll in the program. This document will be available to them from the first day until after graduation. As they move through the program, they will receive regular support and guidance. Before graduation, they will enroll in a capstone course entitled “Trajectories” that will provide individualized feedback and mentoring. Rather than serving as simply an electronic resume, the portfolio in Honors will capture formative moments in the student’s experience. We will provide a format that allows them to reflect, synthesize, and grapple continually with their own emerging intellectual and affective identities.

In short, the portfolio will showcase:

- 1) integrative learning across classes, into the realm of the real world, and across experiences, especially event and travel experiences;
- 2) deep learning, so that students are revisiting assignments and projects across multiple intervals and through multiple acts of focus and refinement. Ultimately, we will aim for demonstrations of mastery through practices of evaluation, analysis, and revision.

Ultimately, students will present their portfolios to the Honors Faculty Advisory Board for a kind of juried review. Additionally, all eligible students will present an excerpt of their portfolios at the annual Undergraduate Research and Engagement Symposium, an event held each spring semester.

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This following assessment plan means to do more than merely generate and archive artifacts. Instead, it means to generate program structures and practices that support the achievement of crucial outcomes.

| PROGRAM OUTCOMES   | TIMELINE  | METHOD OR EVIDENCE OF LEARNING                                  | STRUCTURE FOR THE ACHIEVEMENT OF OUTCOMES  | PARTICIPANT & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT  |
|--|---|---|--|---|
| <b><u>Advising-Based Outcomes</u></b>  |   |   |  |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All students will meet with a program advisor to receive information, ask questions, and organize an academic plan featuring the best Honors pathway for them and their degree requirements. Some will also receive information on the portfolio projects.</li> </ul> | First advising session.   | Meeting.  |  | Advisor   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student progress will be regularly monitored for retention of students and degree completion.</li> </ul>  | At the 5 <sup>th</sup> week of every semester, from the point of first contact to graduation. | Regular meetings and faculty participation in <b>Starfish</b> . |  | Advisor and all Honors Faculty (Using Starfish will be noted as a pedagogical expectation.) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will receive continual updates about program and campus deadlines;</li> </ul>  | First contact to graduation.  | Regular meetings, emails and social media posts.                |  | Advisor   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will provide feedback to assist in the continual improvement of the program.</li> </ul>  | First contact to graduation.  | <b>Entrance and exit surveys.</b>                               |  | Advisor   |
|  |   | Where do our students go after graduation?                      | <b>Numerical data</b> to be collected: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Total number of courses; gen. ed, and other;</li> <li>Faculty, departments, rank;</li> </ul> | Honors Staff  |

|  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|
|  |  |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Team-taught courses;</li> <li>○ Persistence in program;</li> <li>○ Completion rates with total number enrollments;</li> <li>○ Student GPA's.</li> </ul>   |  |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Course-Based Learning Outcomes</u></b></p> <p>All Honors courses will be assessed with a narrative-centered 'evidence of learning' worksheet.</p> |  |  | <p><b>Course Structure</b></p>   |  |
|  |  |  | <p><b>All intro-level courses</b> will be designed to provide an enriched <b>first-time Honors culture</b> that will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Training for faculty in all intro-level courses in recognizing and meeting the needs of first-year students;</li> <li>○ Honors workshops that induct students into the skill sets necessary for success in Honors courses and that increase their ability to map the trajectory of their educational journey and identity;</li> <li>○ Advising sessions and common events will be built into course schedules;</li> <li>○ Faculty utilization of Starfish to facilitate progress checks.</li> </ul> <hr/> |  |

|   |                                      |  |   |                         |
|---|--------------------------------------|--|---|-------------------------|
|   |                                      |  | <p>Additionally, students will provide an important source of early feedback to instructors each semester in the form of a <b>faculty feedback survey</b>. (This will be embedded in the Honors Canvas tab.)</p> <hr/> <p>All outcomes will be presented to faculty at a fall and spring semester <b>faculty orientation session</b>, along with reporting measures and information on student portfolios.</p> <hr/> <p><b>Feedback loop:</b> Data from faculty narratives compiled over time will be presented in excerpted form to faculty at new orientation sessions. This will share info on prior classes with faculty teaching new classes for improvements in practice.</p> |                         |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will demonstrate critical thinking that is curious, open-minded, persistent, and interrogative.</li> </ul>                                | Each course; portfolio contribution. | Instruction, coursework, and assignments; SA and portfolios. |   | Faculty, students, OIE. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will analyze familiar cultural assumptions and views in context of the world's diverse values, traditions, and belief systems.</li> </ul> | Each course; portfolio contribution. | Instruction, coursework, and assignments; SA and portfolios. |   | Faculty, students, OIE. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will adapt and apply ideas, concepts, skills, methodologies, and/or theories across disciplines.</li> </ul>                               | Each course; portfolio contribution. | Instruction, coursework, and assignments; SA and portfolios. |   | Faculty, students, OIE. |

|  |                                      |  |   |  |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will write and communicate in clear and compelling ways.</li> </ul>  | Each course; portfolio contribution. | Instruction, coursework, and assignments; SA and portfolios. |   | Faculty, students, OIE.  |
| <p><b><u>Portfolio-Based Outcomes</u></b></p> <p>Portfolios will be completed by students in the University Honors pathway only. However, this is a growing segment of the Honors Program.</p> |                                      |  | <p><b>Program and Course Structure</b></p>  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will design, develop, and deliver a portfolio project requiring higher-order skills of integration and synthesis.</li> </ul>                   |                                      |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial meeting with the advisor will provide a comprehensive overview of the portfolio project, including all sign-up information;</li> <li>All intro-level courses will develop the portfolio projects;</li> <li>The “Trajectories” course will refine the portfolio and prepare it for presentation at the symposium;</li> <li>HFAB will evaluate the portfolios, providing a kind of juried review. Feedback will be provided to students. Feedback from these evaluations will inform our practices.</li> </ul> | Faculty, students, advisor, and the Honors Faculty Advisory Board (HFAB) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will engage in reflective practice and metacognitive thinking in relation to their educational experiences and identities.</li> </ul>          |                                      |  |   | Faculty, students, advisor, and HFAB                                     |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will present an excerpt of their portfolio in a public forum.</li> </ul>   |                                      |  |   | Faculty, students, advisor, and HFAB                                     |

## F. Student Achievement

Please come back to this section later. The dashboard is being updated and is not yet on Site Manager. OIE will send out an email when it is ready.

Percent and number of students completing degrees within 2 years of achieving 90+ credit hours (or just time to graduation for graduate programs) and a reflection on that metric.

Here are instructions on how to access this information:

1. Log into the eWeber portal
2. Search for, and select the app, "Report Gallery"
3. Agree to the FERPA warning
4. In the Report Gallery search for Program Review Undergraduate- you can enter that text into the search bar or you can scroll down the list of dashboards until you find it.
5. Select the tab at the top labeled "Time to Grad" at the top of the page.
6. Select your Program Unit and Program Level on the right side
7. Select Priority 1 under Priority

You should now be in the right settings for understanding your program's time to graduation. Please reflect on what you are seeing, discuss any highlights or concerns, and outline what initiatives the program is doing to address the numbers shown. If you require assistance or have questions, please email [oe@weber.edu](mailto:oe@weber.edu). You may use a screenshot of the information shown in the dashboard as a part of your report.

## G. Evidence of Learning

There are a variety of ways in which you can choose to show evidence of learning, including the traditional Evidence of Learning Rubric, the updated Evidence of Learning worksheet, a narrative describing your assessments and evidence of student learning, or other tools such as ePortfolios, Signature Assignments, juried reviews, and so on, or a combination of any of these.

Whichever method you choose, please include:

1. Each learning outcome addressed in the course, and an interpretation of the outcomes as necessary to help outside reviewers understand the learning goals
2. The methods used to assess learning for each outcome – ideally, each outcome will be measured with at least two different methods, e.g., multiple quiz questions and a signature assignment, multiple exam questions and lab reports, course discussions and homework assignments, etc.
3. The threshold of acceptable performance – preferably a multi-stepped threshold, such as “80% of students will score 80% or better on the set of quiz questions” – and brief explanation for why that target was selected
4. The results of the assessment for each outcome. If possible, include specifics such as the number of students who meet, exceed, or fall short of the threshold.
5. A reflection on, or interpretation of, the findings. For example, if 100% of students correctly answer all quiz questions, might they need to be too easy?
6. A plan of action to address the findings, even if the threshold was met, and/or reflection on changes made as a result of (or in the interim since) the last biennial report.
7. How you plan to monitor and assess the success of changes you will make/have made (“close the loop”).

If individual faculty who provide data or participate in the assessment of these courses would like feedback or support from GEIAC or the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, provide their names and contact information here:

### **Types of Assessment**

1. Course-based assessment
  - a. This is the format we have traditionally suggested programs use for assessment. The familiar 'evidence of learning worksheets' are included in the template and can also be accessed from the IE website.
  2. Outcome-based assessment
    - a. Moving from course-based to outcome-based assessment has the potential for programs to gather and reflect upon data that are more meaningful, and to connect assessment findings from throughout the program. The approach may be much easier for associates and certificate programs where only select students in classes are earning the credential. For more information email ([oi@weber.edu](mailto:oi@weber.edu))
    - b. Reporting options include:
      - i. A traditional evidence-of-learning [worksheet](#) with an outcome (across multiple courses) as the focus (instead of a course with multiple outcomes).
      - ii. A report that is more [narrative-based](#).
      - iii. Other tools such as an ePortfolio in which key or signature assignments have been identified by the faculty, and uploaded by the student with their reflection. The key or signature assignments are aligned to student learning outcomes. (ePortfolio is an excellent assessment tool for certificates and associate degrees.)
      - iv. There are other approaches such as juried reviews, physical portfolios, field tests, etc.
  3. General Education course assessment needs to continue to be reported at the course level using either the [traditional template](#) or a more [narrative-based format](#). See the [Checklist and Template](#) page for area-specific worksheets as well.

**Note: if you cannot download templates directly from this document, please visit our [template page](#) for downloads.**

Alternative Evidence of Learning Grid  
Narrative-Based Evidence of Learning Worksheet

Honors Program

Semester:  
Course:  
Faculty Name:

|   |  |
|---|--|
| List the course outcome you have selected as a point of particular concentration for your teaching: |  |
| Describe the assignment or project that will achieve this outcome:                                  |  |
| Describe your expectations in terms of student performance:   |  |
| Describe the actual performance of students:<br><br>What surprised you?                             |  |
| What are your interpretations regarding student performance?  |  |
| Given these findings, what is your action plan in terms of your teaching practices?                 |  |
| Do you have any insights or suggestions for the program in terms of improving student learning?     |  |

**Narrative-Based Evidence of Learning Worksheet  
For Honors Core Intro-Courses**

Semester:

Core Class:

Faculty Name:

|   |  |
|---|--|
| List the course outcome you have selected as a point of particular concentration for your teaching: |  |
| Describe the assignment or project that will achieve this outcome:                                  |  |
| Describe your expectations in terms of student performance:   |  |
| Describe the actual performance of students:<br><br>What surprised you?                             |  |
| What are your interpretations regarding student performance?  |  |
| Given these findings, what is your action plan in terms of your teaching practices?                 |  |
| Do you have any insights or suggestions for the program in terms of improving student learning?     |  |
| What common activities or events worked and how? What should be modified?                           |  |



## Appendix A

Most departments or programs receive a number of recommendations from their Five/Seven-Year Program Review processes. This page provides a means of updating progress towards the recommendations the department/program is enacting.

Date of Program Review: October- November 2020

| Recommendation 1  | Text for the 2020 Recommendation   | Progress and Updates   |
|---|--|--|
| <p>The 1<sup>st</sup> recommendation concerns:<br/><br/>Honors Staffing, Resources and Budget</p> | <p>The Site Visit Team recommended that an additional staff member be added to the team along with dedicated Honors faculty members. Dan Bedford the former Honors Director, responded to the site visit review by agreeing with the recommendation for an additional staff position and dedicated Honors faculty. Dan suggested an additional staff position responsible for diversity, equity and inclusion. He also recommended developing an Honors Teaching Fellows program. Additionally, the site review team recommended folding the instructional costs into the overall Honors budget rather than asking the Provost to backfill the budget to cover additional instructional costs.</p> | <p>Over the last year and a half, the Honors Program has worked intently to define its identity. For many years, Honors was really the only option for unconventional and/or interdisciplinary courses. Because of this, Honors ran courses that otherwise didn't fit within any other placements. Many of these classes are great additions to the campus community, but they are not Honors courses. Additionally, The Honors staff has done the work to set-up all of these non-Honors courses.</p> <p>The landscape on campus has changed. There are options now outside of the Honors Program. These options allow us now to define and publicize our identity as a program.</p> <p>Beginning spring 2024, all courses listed as Honors courses are, in fact, genuine Honors courses in the sense that they adhere to defined pedagogical expectations.</p> <p>I mention all of these details in relation to recommendations on staffing because a greater definition to the program has allowed us to define our staffing priorities and areas of focus. By more precisely defining what we do, the Honors staff have been able to define their day-to-day work commitments in relation to program goals. (EDI commitments are central to all of us. I prefer that these commitments be enfolded into the duties of every staff member rather than delegated to one member of the team.) This intentionality means that we don't need new people as much as we need support for our current staff. Support should come in:</p> |

|                  |                        |  |
|------------------|------------------------|--|
|                  |                        | <p>1) The transition of a part-time position into a full-time position. The Honors Program media and marketing person has exceptional skills and has benefitted the program in more ways than even expected. Her contributions are so dimensional that we are always bumping up against the time constraints of her part-time position. Turning the position into a full-time post would be enormously helpful, and in ways beyond marketing and media. Full-time status would allow us to maintain all current media and marketing activities but also contribute to recruitment, retention, and advising duties. The demand in these areas is growing dramatically.</p> <p>2) The director needs support given the demands inherent in running the program. She currently receives 6 hours of release and is on a 10-month contract. This is wildly out-of-tune with the demands of the program. It does not reflect the time commitments of the position. Instead of additional release hours, there needs to be a different arrangement entirely. It's important for the director to teach in the program and to teach in her home department. The Vice Provost is aware of these issues.</p> <p>3) The Fellows program is an enormously successful endeavor, one that furthers faculty skill in interdisciplinary team-teaching, in the contribution of innovative courses to the campus roster, and to immersive, profound student learning experiences. Honors welcomes an increase the number of teaching fellowships. Right now, we award one each fall and spring semester. Given the faculty interest, however, this arrangement could be expanded. The Honors budget has an instructional wage line. An increase to this budget line would allow additional fellowships.</p> |
| Recommendation 2 | Text of recommendation | Progress and Updates   |
|                  |                        | Aletheia is no longer in existence, and the Honors Program has a   |

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <p>The 2<sup>nd</sup> recommendation concerns:</p> <p>Recruitment, Admissions and Scholarships</p>        | <p>Most of the recommendations from the site visit team in this category pertain to better definition and management of the Presidential Scholarship recipients and Aletheia. It was noted that the Aletheia Club will no longer exist by the 2022-23 academic year. Further, it was noted that the Honors course requirement for scholarship recipients was reduced to 3 credit hours.</p>       | <p>healthy, productive relationship with Presidential Scholars.</p> <p>This recommendation is reconciled.</p>  |
| <p>Recommendation 3</p>   | <p>Text of recommendation</p>   | <p>Progress and Updates</p>  |
| <p>The 3<sup>rd</sup> recommendation concerns:</p> <p>Diversity, Equity and Inclusion</p>                 | <p>The Site Visit Team recommendations in this section generally suggest necessary actions in the process of reimagining the Honors program through an equity, diversity and inclusion lens.</p>  | <p>The massive changes in Honors have been and continue to be animated by a sincere commitment to equity and inclusion.</p>  |
| <p>Recommendation 4</p>   |   |  |
| <p>The 4<sup>th</sup> recommendation concerns:</p> <p>Communication and Misconception around “Honors”</p> | <p>The Site Visit Team recommendation in this category suggests that the Honors program redefine itself and then effectively communicate the redefinition to the broader campus community. Additionally, it is recommended that Honors recruit new kinds of students to the program. It is noted that both scholarships and admissions in the program should be reconsidered and fleshed-out.</p> | <p>As noted, we have focused on redefining our identity. We also have worked extensively to communicate that identity and vision across campus. The program now has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A new website;</li> <li>• A new social media presence and approach;</li> <li>• New faculty and student materials, including a new faculty orientation document, a common Canvas front page in all classes, and a resource page accessible through Canvas;</li> <li>• A new course proposal system that democratizes and makes teaching opportunities transparent;</li> </ul> |

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|  |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A new Starfish referral system that allows faculty to refer students to us.</li> </ul> <p>Since fall 2023, we have contacted and/or met with every team of college advisors on campus and a representative from every support center, office, or service, including but not limited to FYE, International office, LGBT Resource Center, Non-Trad, Peer Mentors, Women’s Center, and Wildcat Advantage.</p>  |
| Recommendation 5   |  |  |
| <p>The 5<sup>th</sup> recommendation concerns:</p> <p>Curriculum</p> | <p>The Site Visit Team recommendation in this category focuses on three underlying curricular issues:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) a very high number of general education courses that do not lend itself to offering a common pedagogy and/or curricular approach in Honors and require a lot of people power to manage tracking and assessment;</li> <li>2) the absence of an Honors First-Year Seminar experience to build community and retain students;</li> <li>3) 3) the lack of consistency and definition of what it means to achieve departmental Honors.</li> </ol> | <p>I disagree with this first recommendation. Actually, Honors courses lend themselves nicely to some common pedagogical practices and orientations. Further, the teaching experiences in Honors courses translate beyond Honors, to general departmental classes.</p> <p>The Honors Program has implemented highly-focused orientations for faculty to bring them into the program’s pedagogical expectations. The conversation with faculty centers on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contextualizing and translating course content to students who come from a diversity of majors;</li> <li>• Drawing out the lived experiences of students in class discussions through the use of a ‘funds of knowledge’ approach that encourages connections and increased relevance;</li> <li>• Developing higher-order skills related to close reading, research, and clear forms of writing and communication;</li> <li>• Envisioning and practicing grading as a means to fostering mentoring relationships with students.</li> <li>• Building assignments for project-based learning;</li> <li>• Constructing a student-centered syllabus, with intentional language about office hours as student “drop-in hours” and “I pledge statements” from faculty to students.</li> </ul> <p>The unique features of Honors courses, features like small class size, discussion-centered instruction, interdisciplinary content, and diversity of</p> |

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|  |  | <p>majors within the same class setting, allow faculty to enhance their teaching skills. These dynamics demand that faculty truly “meet students where they are.” It makes sense for Honors to lead-out in the work of deepening faculty knowledge and skill.</p> <p>The development of teaching skills through Honors courses benefits departments and Gen. Ed. teaching. Honors has a history of supporting and featuring courses that become fixtures in Gen. Ed. or in other programs, such as Interdisciplinary Studies. Our work with faculty advances a campus culture centered on vibrant, inclusive teaching.</p> <p>On another note, Departmental Honors contracts were revised over the summer of 2023. These revised contracts will be approved through each department beginning spring 2024.</p> <p>We are also currently establishing Departmental Honors at the graduate level.</p> |
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Many of the recommendations from the program review are outdated. I want to list some crucial recommendations as next steps in the process of expanding and improving the program. During spring and summer semesters 2024, we will:

- Update the catalog;
- Build a new intro-level course to replace the successful, long-running “Construction of Knowledge” class;
- Build a new “First-time in Honors” structure compete with common events, workshops, and advising services;
- Review the successes and weaknesses in the portfolio projects that have been piloted within two courses: “Narratives and Numbers” spring 2023 and “Construction of Knowledge” fall 2023;
- Develop a portfolio template informed by the pilot models;
- Develop a Portfolio onboarding system for students using the Adobe Express platform;
- Design and implement a new Honors Capstone course, entitled “Trajectories;”
- Design and implement new entrance and exit surveys.

## Appendix B

Please provide the following information about the full-time *and adjunct faculty* contracted by your department during the last academic year (summer through spring). Gathering this information each year will help with the headcount reporting that must be done for the final Five-Year Program Review document that is shared with the State Board of Regents.

| Faculty Headcount  | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 |
|--|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| <b>With Doctoral Degrees (Including MFA and other terminal degrees, as specified by the institution)</b> |         |         |         |         |
| Full-time Tenured  | 28      | 20      | 29      | 24      |
| Full-time Non-Tenured (includes tenure-track)  | 12      | 6       | 2       | 5       |
| Part-time and adjunct  | 0       | 4       | 2       | 4       |
|  |         |         |         |         |
| <b>With Master's Degrees</b>   |         |         |         |         |
| Full-time Tenured  | 0       | 0       | 0       | 1       |
| Full-time Non-Tenured  | 0       | 2       | 0       | 0       |
| Part-time and adjunct  | 2       | 3       | 13      | 7       |
|  |         |         |         |         |
| <b>With Bachelor's Degrees</b>   |         |         |         |         |
| Full-time Tenured  | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       |
| Full-time Non-tenured  | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       |
| Part-time and adjunct  | 1       | 1       | 0       | 0       |
|  |         |         |         |         |
| <b>Other</b>   |         |         |         |         |
| Full-time Tenured  |         |         |         |         |
| Full-time Non-tenured  |         |         |         |         |
| Part-time  |         |         |         |         |
| <b>Total Headcount Faculty</b>   |         |         |         |         |
| Full-time Tenured  | 28      | 20      | 29      | 24      |
| Full-time Non-tenured  | 12      | 8       | 2       | 6       |
| Part-time  | 2       | 8       | 15      | 11      |

## Appendix C

1) Looking back at your previous biennial report where you identified strategies for improvement, what progress has been made in implementing improvements?

The previous biennial report states the following strategies for improvement: "As part of a comprehensive revision of the Honors Program (mission statement, requirements, core competencies, learning outcomes), program assessment will shift from course-based assessment to assessment of program outcomes. This will be accomplished by requiring students to complete ePortfolios, in which they record and reflect upon their work as WSU students. Students will take two 1-credit hour classes, one to build their portfolio, the second to reflect on its contents. Assessment of the portfolios will focus on 11 learning outcomes derived from AAC&U VALUE rubrics, and will serve also as assessment of program effectiveness. Support in offering the ePortfolio classes would be valuable, as nobody working with the Honors Program has experience or expertise in this area at present."

Response:

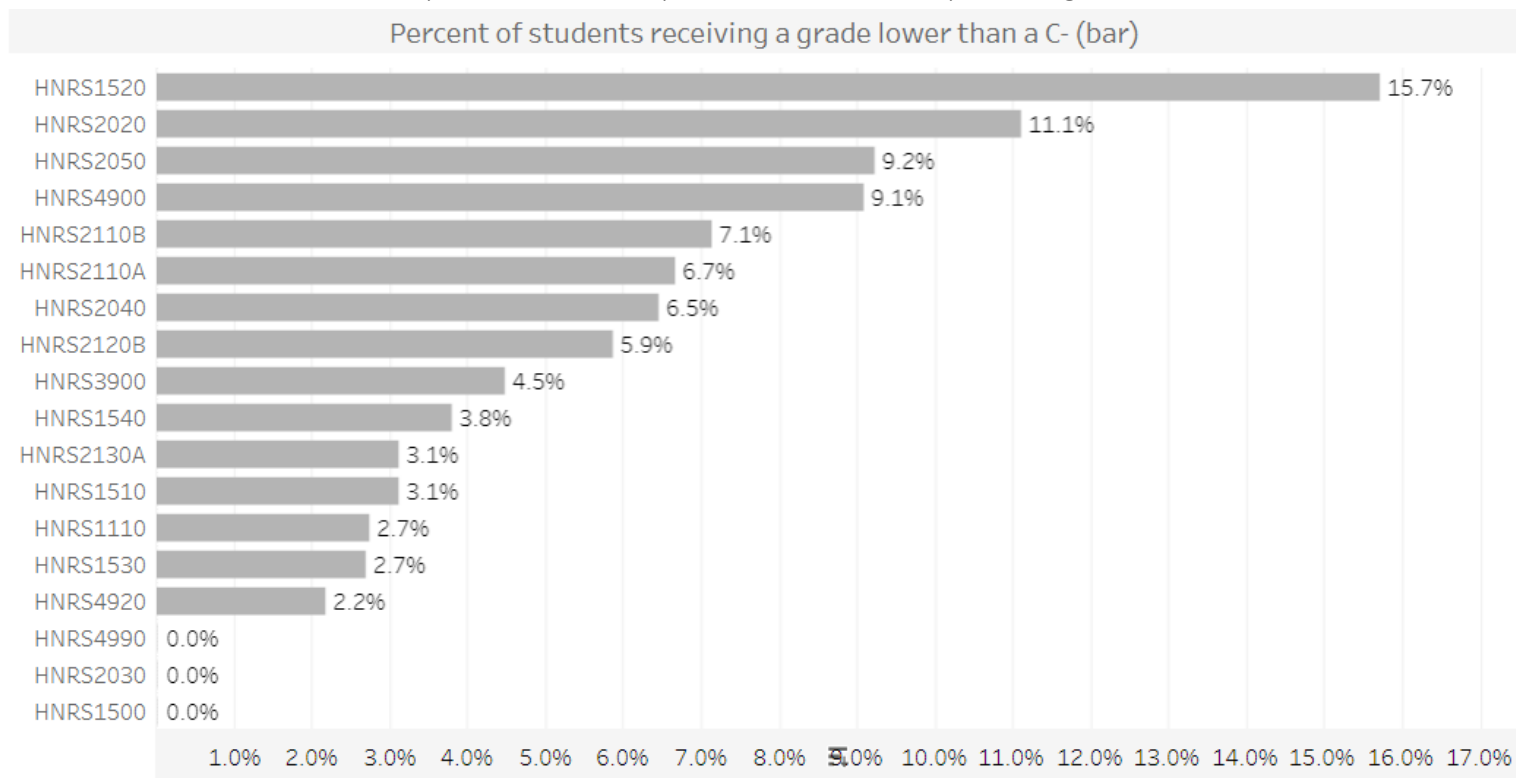
The plan here moves Honors to a program outcome model. It articulates a new structure for student portfolios. It is thorough and achievable, and it will achieve meaningful assessment of the program.

2) Please take a few minutes to review the new DFWI dashboard in the Report Gallery. This dashboard allows you to see the percentage of students in each course who earn a D+, D, D-, E, W, UW, or NC grade. The data can be filtered by several parameters. Reflect on the DFWI rates overall and of your underserved minority students versus your Caucasian students:

We looked at Honors courses (HNRS prefix) in spring, fall, and summer semesters from 2018 - 2022, excluding HNRS 2830, 2900, and 2920, as these courses are either 1-credit book discussion courses or were not Honors courses but only listed under the HNRS prefix (an arrangement that has ended as of spring 2024). By default, the Report Gallery sets at 25 students in each category. Honors courses are typically capped at 15, however.

When comparing Honors course DFWI data to the campus as a whole, our courses factor at an average to low range, with 0.0 - 15.7%. Honors 1520 has the highest percentage of students within DFWI at 15.7%. Next, HNRS 2020 ranks at 11.1%. And HNRS 2050 and 4900 come in at 9.2 and 9.1% respectively.

The average GPA within the highest DFWI course is 3.25, which is lower than every other Honors course GPA. However, this GPA is comparable to other courses in other departments on campus with similar DFWI percentages.



Notably, the intro to Honors course “The Construction of Knowledge” (HNRS 11010) has a very low DFWI rank, an encouraging sign.

An analysis of this information is difficult as Honors courses change almost every semester. For example, within 2018 to 2022, the Honors 1520 class has featured four different courses taught by different faculty from different colleges. Here is a breakdown of this course as it has run over these years:

Fall 2018:

- Economics, Politics and Social Issues: Searching for a Middle Ground (Economics)
- Exploring Wicked Problems (Psychology, Nursing, Social Work)



Spring 2019:

- The Rich & The Rest of Us (Economics)
- Media - TV History (History)

Spring 2020:

- Exploring Wicked Problems (Psychology, Nursing, Social Work)
- The Rich & The Rest of Us (Economics)

Fall 2020:

- Nuclear Landscapes: Culture and Society in the Atomic West (Sociology)

Spring 2021:

- Introduction to Wicked Problems (Teacher Education, History)

Ethnicity data for Honors 1520 seems to show a significantly higher DFWI rate for Hispanic students than Caucasian students. It is difficult to discern any strong trends between male and female DFWI rate comparisons. Freshman predominantly take HNRS 1520.

The biggest concern for us is the lack of reliable data. Honors advising records indicate that students of color took this class and took other classes within the chosen parameters, and yet this is not indicated in the data. The dashboard does not ethnicities other than “Hispanic” or “Caucasian.”

Aside from this, however, I am confident that our new approaches in underscoring pedagogical expectations with faculty will improve students experience and learning. The assessment plan articulated in this report means very directly to improve teaching and learning, and to do this by limiting the failure or withdrawal rates.

Honors is in need, of better, more reliable data. This is an ongoing issue for us that is still unresolved. Removing non-Honors courses from the Honors index will improve data, and this move will be achieved in spring 2024.

3. We have invited you to re-think your program assessment. What strategies are you considering? What support or help would you like?

The plan articulated in this report details how we have re-thought our strategies and how we will enact a new approach.

## Glossary

### Student Learning Outcomes/Measurable Learning Outcomes

The terms 'learning outcome', 'learning objective', 'learning competency', and 'learning goal' are often used interchangeably. Broadly, these terms reference what we want students to be able to do AFTER they pass a course or graduate from a program. For this document, we will use the word 'outcomes'. Good learning outcomes are specific (but not too specific), are observable, and are clear. Good learning outcomes focus on skills: knowledge and understanding; transferrable skills; habits of mind; career skills; attitudes and values.

- Should be developed using action words (if you can see it, you can assess it).
- Use compound statements judiciously.
- Use complex statements judiciously.

### Curriculum Grid

A chart identifying the key learning outcomes addressed in each of the curriculum's key elements or learning experiences (Suskie, 2019). A good curriculum:

- Gives students ample, diverse opportunities to achieve core learning outcomes.
- Has appropriate, progressive rigor.
- Concludes with an integrative, synthesizing capstone experience.
- Is focused and simple.
- Uses research-informed strategies to help students learn and succeed.
- Is consistent across venues and modalities.
- Is greater than the sum of its parts.

### Target Performance (previously referred to as 'Threshold')

The level of performance at which students are doing well enough to succeed in later studies (e.g., next course in sequence or next level of course) or career.

### Actual Performance

How students performed on the specific assessment. An average score is less meaningful than a distribution of scores (for example, 72% of students met or exceeded the target performance, 5% of students failed the assessment).

### Closing the Loop

The process of following up on changes made to curriculum, pedagogy, materials, etc., to determine if the changes had the desired impact.

### Continuous Improvement

An idea with roots in manufacturing, that promotes the ongoing effort to improve. Continuous improvement uses data and evidence to improve student learning and drive student success.

### Direct evidence

Evidence based upon actual student work; performance on a test, a presentation, or a research paper, for example. Direct evidence is tangible, visible, and measurable.

### Indirect evidence

Evidence that serves as a proxy for student learning. May include student opinion/perception of learning, course grades, measures of satisfaction, participation. Works well as a complement to direct evidence.

### HIEE – High Impact Educational Experiences

Promote student learning through curricular and co-curricular activities that are intentionally designed to foster active and integrative student engagement by utilizing multiple impact strategies. Please see <https://weber.edu/weberthrives/HIEE>.