

## HONORS PROGRAM TASK FORCE

Approved June 18, 1987  
Board of Regents' Meeting

### FINAL REPORT

The Honors Program Task Force was established with the specific mandate to develop a curriculum based honors program. This report represents the final results of the work of this Task Force.

#### **I. Review of Existing Honors Programs:**

The Task Force, before beginning its discussions about the characteristics of an honors program at Morgan State University, reviewed about fifteen honors programs from institutions both within and without the State of Maryland. The most outstanding features common to them all were high admission standards, an enriched curriculum, a clearly defined organizational structure, departmental involvement, and honors thesis defended before a wider audience. The main aim of this review was to allow the members of the Task Force to become better acquainted with the concept and the place of honors programs in four year colleges.

#### **II. Philosophy:**

The members of the Task Force were, from the very beginning, guided by the following considerations:

- A. The need to establish a program that addresses and challenges academically advanced students;
- B. Such a program should provide eligible students with an enriched curriculum both in General Education as well as in their major concentration.
- C. Such a program should be highly selective.
- D. Such a program should serve as a scholastic stimulus for the University as a whole.
- E. Such a program should be the tangible expression of the commitment of the University to scholastic achievement.

The Task Force understands that an Honors Program should not weaken or replace the proven commitment of the University to students of all levels of preparedness. All students must be challenged to grow. It is in this upward movement where the Honors Program finds its proper place: not to segregate an elite, but serve as a spear-head, an avant-garde.

#### **III. Recommendations:**

In view of the foregoing considerations and in view of the mandate to develop a curriculum based Honors Program at Morgan State University, the Honors Task Force recommends that:

1. A curriculum based Honors program be established at Morgan State University.
2. The Honors Program include an enriched curriculum in General Education.
3. To that effect, departments providing courses in General Education (English, Mathematics, History, etc.) establish honor sections to be scheduled at the request of the Director of the Honors Program as needed.
4. In addition to an enriched curriculum in General Education, students be exposed to an enriched program in their major area of study.
5. To that effect, each department develop an honors curriculum for its eligible students. This honors curriculum may include (where feasible) special honor courses, additional course requirements (similar to the MARC program in the Natural Sciences), in-depth study of a topic or topics pursued in regular courses, etc. It is to include a senior honor thesis to be presented by the student to and defended in front of the faculty of the department and the honors committee.
6. Incoming Freshmen be invited to join the program if they meet the following eligibility criteria: GPA: 3.5 (last two years in high school) and SAT of 950, or a GPA of 3.2 and an SAT of 1050; students are expected to have been enrolled in what is commonly known as the "A" ("Academic") course or to have taken the following courses: Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, Trigonometry; two natural science courses, at least two years in a foreign language in addition to four years of English and two years of Social Science.
7. Beginning Sophomores be invited to the program if they have completed successfully a minimum of 24 credit hours (excluding corrective courses), a GPA of 3.5 (excluding corrective courses), if they are eligible for the departmental honors program and are recommended by the departmental honors advisor.
8. Eligible students be admitted after writing an essay given to and evaluated by the Honors Committee and an interview.
9. Students in order to remain in the program, must complete at least 30 credit hours per year (after the freshman year), maintain a GPA of 3.5, continue meeting the requirements for the departmental honors program, have no grade below a "B".
10. The Honors Committee may use its judgement in making exceptions to the above requirements of admission as well as of continuance in the program.

11. Students who are not eligible for the University Honors Program but have a GPA of at least 3.2 in the last two years of high school, an SAT of 900, have taken the courses as specified under 6), and students who maintain a GPA of 3.2 in General Education as well as in their major will be considered honors associates and will be invited to participate in some aspects of the Honors Curriculum both in General Education and in their major.
12. Honors students upon graduation receive an honors diploma, notation be made on the transcript, be given a certificate from the Director of the Honors Program, be given other benefits such as scholarships, guaranteed admission to graduate or professional school, etc.
13. Honors faculty to teach the honors sections of General Education courses be appointed upon recommendation from the department and the Honors Committee.
14. Departmental honors advisors be appointed by the departments to assist and supervise the academic progress of the honor students in the department.
15. The program be administered by a Director.
16. The Director be assisted by an appointed Honors Committee.
17. The Honors Committee, the honors faculty and honors advisors hold meetings whenever advisable with an agenda prepared by the Director.
18. That the program be supervised by the academic Vice President.
19. The catalog carry a description of the Honors Program.
20. Departments submit their honors curricula and courses no later than February 15, 1987.
21. The Honors Program begin to operate in Fall, 1987.

Respectfully submitted,

Otto R. Begus, Chairman  
Honors Task Force

ORB:jh

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