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1961-62

The Honors Advisory Board Recommends Establishing a Plan for

Honors at Graduation

Background: When a committee was formed five years ago to consider the possibility of making provisions for intellectually superior students on campus the decision was made to work slowly and carefully, building up a program and testing it through several semesters. Original plans called for honors seminars and independent projects called "tutorial study." The faculty approved institution of both in principle, but again it was decided to develop the seminars first. The ultimate objective was to be the awarding of honors at graduation.

The program of honors seminars has now been in effect for three years. The program is clearly established. It has earned the approbation of students, faculty and administration. It has even been paid the ultimate compliment of being copied by other institutions. Throughout the last three years the program has profited from the constructive criticism of the students in it, and the faculty consultants who have been associated with it. The honors program has passed the experimental stage. It is time to complete a plan for honors at graduation, and to put such a plan into effect as soon as possible.

The success of the program to date is due principally to the generosity of faculty members who have contributed their time and efforts repeatedly in order that the program might be established. The interest of the faculty and administration in the welfare of the intellectually superior student has been a constant source of inspiration for the people associated with the program.

Proposed policy: Honors at graduation should be awarded to students who earn the recognition through excellence in their general college work and through their participation in the honors program. The present program is founded on the principle of providing special work for students of demonstrated ability. It differs from all other "honorary groups" in that it demands performance -- the utilization of superior ability in situations of special challenge. By virtue of this fact alone it is superior to any system of awarding degrees with distinction solely on the basis of the mathematical grade average. Throughout the country the trend in honors is in the direction of what we already have.

All honors work on campus should be correlated with and ultimately channeled through the present honors program. Chaos could easily result from too many programs going in different directions. Provisions for freshmen and sophomores should lead into the present program by making successful participants in such programs automatic candidates for the honors program. In fact, such an arrangement would greatly improve the selection mechanism now in effect. The present recommendation system could be retained to provide for "late blossoming cases" and others missed by lower divisions provisions. The danger of overlooking competent students would clearly be lessened. It would not be necessary that a student come through the lower division program, but those who did would have profited that much more from their college experience.

Records copy  
amended by senate  
after lengthy deliberation  
see p. 2  
under "Plan"  
#1 and #4b

Copy 2

Plan: Students meeting the requirements of the plan for honors at graduation would receive the bachelor's degree "With honors."

Their names would appear in a separate section of the graduation program.

The words "With honors" would appear on the diploma.

A fitting symbol for honors should be included as part of the graduation dress, such as a special sash. (Gold, in keeping with the school colors, or white, etc.)

Only one classification of honors is recommended.

To qualify for award of honors at graduation a student must be admitted to the honors program and must complete the following minimum requirements:

1. He must participate successfully in at least <sup>two</sup> ~~one~~ honors seminar.
2. He must maintain a high level of performance in his regular studies.
3. He must take the Graduate Record Examinations in his senior year and demonstrate a mastery of the fields of general education and of his major to the satisfaction of the honors board.  
*Some other comparable exam or a similar test*
4. He must complete one of the following:
  - a. an independent project in his senior year, culminating in a paper that would be approved by the department in which it was done and the honors board.
  - b. a minimum of <sup>three</sup> ~~two~~ honors seminars, ~~one of which could be the seminar mentioned in "1" above.~~
5. He must be recommended for the award by the honors board.

Comments on plan: Students in the program have strongly recommended "1" as a prerequisite to any kind of independent study or honors at graduation.

2. The board would establish a high grade average for work taken after the student becomes a junior. This would take care of cases in which the first semester or two is inordinately low for special reasons.

3. These examinations come closest of any in existence to fitting the programs we have in effect.

4. Two choices are afforded to take care of cases in which an independent project cannot be done because of the nature of the field, availability of staff members, etc.

In keeping with raised standards it should be noted that not all students in the honors program will be able to qualify for honors at graduation. A student could still have the benefit of the program, as at present, and not try for the honors award. Also, a student who tried, but whose work was not of acceptable calibre, would still have credit for the work done.

In order to implement the independent project, the following course should be established:

Honors 200. Independent Project. (name of field, such as "Physics") Two hours. Assignment of credit would take care of the student who works hard and produces something good, but not good enough to merit honors at graduation. Any student desiring to do such a project would have to make arrangements with the honors board and with the chairman of the division or department concerned.

The above plan is the recommendation of the Honors Advisory Board, consisting of Mr. Doyle Brooks, Dr. Choquill, Dr. Gaywood, Mr. Marple, Dr. Edwin Martin, Dr. Yarns Parish and Mr. Rematore (chairman).