

# Proposal for an Honors Program

**Memo to:** The Northeast Texas Community Board of Trustees.

**From:** Submitted by the Honors Committee: Elise Brazier, Larry Brough, Robert Fenton, Carrie Pritchett, David Rangel, Jeri Thornton, Andrew Yox, Chair, with the support of the Dean's Council.

**Date:** March, 2007.

**Subject:** Proposal to begin an Honors Program at NTCC in the fall of 2007.

Introduction: Overview of the Proposed Program, p. 2.

- I. Criteria for Admission, p.4.
- II. Mission Statement, p.6.
- III. Place of the Honors Program in Administrative Structure, p.7.
- IV. Curriculum, p.10.
- V. Program Load Requirements, p.12.
- VI. Satisfaction of Core Requirements, p.13.
- VII. Visibility and Reputation, p.13.
- VIII. Faculty, p.14.
- IX. Space, p.14.
- X. Honors Committee, p.15.
- XI. Honors Student Committee, p.16.
- XII. Special Academic Counseling, p.16.
- XIII. Honors as an Engine of Progress, p.17.
- XIV. Critical Review of Honors Program, p.18.
- XV. Opportunities for Students, p.18.
- XVI. Articulation Agreements, p. 18.

Conclusion: Proposed Budget for the 2007-08 Year Based on our Recommendations, p. 19.

Appendix I: Guidelines for Honors Programs, Approved by the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC) Executive Committee, p. 22.

Appendix II: 2007/2008 Cost Estimate of Honors Program, Spreadsheet.

# Introduction: Program Overview

Key elements of the NTCC mission become the quintessential aims of the Honors Program. We are proposing that at least for fifteen top student applicants, “*affordable*” and “*superior*” education becomes “*free*” and “*exemplary*.” Commitment to “personal” and “cultural” development becomes a proactive vetting of students to achieve excellence. “Wide-ranging educational service” inspires a comprehensive program that not only caters to the most highly recommended students, but inspires others to pursue original ideas, and successful projects.

This program would consist of two tiers of students, a Presidential Scholars committee, a director, an Honors Committee, and Honors Professors.

The first tier of students, “**Presidential Scholars**,” would receive tuition waivers and scholarships. They will either enroll each semester in the six- to seven-hour Interdisciplinary Honors Seminar of paired general education courses, or qualify for the waiver and scholarship after having taken two Honors Seminars. In this case, upon taking at least two courses for honors credit in a given third or fourth semester, they could maintain their scholarships and waivers. **Presidential Scholars** will also elect among their number a **Presidential Scholars Committee**, with a chair who will represent their interests in the Honors Committee.

The second tier, “**Honors Students**,” would include those who are not receiving Presidential scholarships and tuition waivers, and who are taking at least six hours of classes for honors credit in a given semester. There are two kinds of honors courses available to those who do not qualify for the Interdisciplinary Seminar. The first kind would be a **Linked Course**, which would have a professor-initiated honors component in a class that would include honors and non-honors students. The second would be a **Designated Course**,<sup>1</sup> a class in the NTCC catalogue deemed apt to permit

---

<sup>1</sup> The following numbers indicate the starting level at which courses in a discipline may begin to sponsor an honors component. Course numbers, according to the Texas Common Course Numbering System, that are equal to or greater than the following, could include an honors component: Accounting 2301, Agriculture

an honors component. A student in a Designated Class could initiate the effort to receive honors credit. With the permission and oversight of his or her professor, as well as the approval of the relevant division director and honors director within ten calendar days after the course has started, the student could achieve an honors citation on her or his transcript.

Students are welcome to take less than six hours of honors credit in a semester. They would still receive an ‘h’ on their transcript for honors courses successfully completed. Like instructors who confer honors credit in Designated Courses without teaching a Linked Course or Interdisciplinary Seminar, students taking less than six hours in honors would not be considered as part of the Honors Program. However, the director will encourage all students pursuing honors work to become part of the program.

The **Director** will work to recruit students to fill both tiers and to promote the transferability and success of Presidential Scholars and Honors Students. The director will propose Interdisciplinary Seminars and Linked Courses, and help set the standards for all honors courses. The director will be answerable to the **Vice President for Instruction and Student Services**, and will report on developments each semester to the Honors Committee.

An **Honors Committee** would be chaired by the director, and its members chosen by the Vice President for Instruction and Student Services. It would include at least one full-time faculty member from each of the following: Humanities, Math/Science, and Workforce; the committee will also include an administrator, and the chair of the Presidential Scholars Committee. The Honors Committee will give preliminary approval of course offerings, and articulation agreements. The committee will oversee any exceptions and/or changes to stated rules that the director might report on, or propose.

---

2301, Agricultural Management 2380, Anthropology 2351, Art 1301, Auto Body Repair 2255, Biology 1406, Business 1301, Chemistry 1405, Communications 1307, Computer Science 2320, Information Science (ITSE) 2313, Cosmetology 2410, Cosmetology Instructor Training 2514, Criminal Justice 2301, Dental Hygiene 2201, Economics 2301, Emergency Medical Services 2330, English 1302, Forensic Science 2440, History 1301, Humanities 1301, Management 2303, Math 1325, Mechanical Power Technology, 2325, Medical Assistant 2460, Medical Laboratory Technician 2431, Music 1301, Nursing 2360, Office Technology 2312, Philosophy 1301, Physical Therapist Assistant 2301, Physics 1401, Political Science 2305, Psychology 2301, Radiologic Science 2305, Social Work 2361, Sociology 2301, Spanish 1411, Speech 2333, Theatre 1330.

**Honors Professors** will be those instructors in any semester who are teaching an Interdisciplinary Seminar and/or a Linked Course. They will be called on to assist the director with implementing Program policies, attending honors events, and in taking trips, and conferences, especially in cases where their expertise is crucial.

# I. Criteria for Admission

We are proposing admission standards for Presidential Scholars, students in “Linked” Honors Classes, and those pursuing Honors credit in Designated Courses.

## **A. Criteria for entering and re-entering the Presidential Scholars component:**

1. High school students who have scored a minimum of 25 on the ACT or a minimum of 1140 on the SAT or who have graduated in the top 10 percent of their high school class are eligible to apply. For the first semester of the program, returning college students<sup>2</sup> with a 3.25 cumulative GPA after twelve hours can apply; after the fall of 2007, Honors Students at NTCC or other colleges<sup>3</sup> who have completed six hours honors credit could apply, as well as returning students with twelve hours of college credit and a 3.5 cumulative GPA. Aspiring Presidential Scholars must also submit an application which will include a one-page essay showing how they could work successfully in the program.

2. Only Presidential Scholars can enroll in the Interdisciplinary Honors Seminar, a team-taught, paired six-seven hour course. Once a student qualifies as a Presidential Scholar enrolled in this Seminar, she or he must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.25 to retain their scholarships, as well as a B average or better in the Interdisciplinary Honors Seminar. Presidential Scholars will be required to do five hours of community service per semester. If a student, for whatever reason, drops out of the Presidential Scholars

---

<sup>2</sup> “Returning college students” defined as those who have completed 12 hours of college credit in Designated Courses listed above.

<sup>3</sup> The director and Honors Committee will decide on the merit of honors credit outside of NTCC.

component, they are eligible to reapply the next semester. To graduate from NTCC as a Presidential Scholar, students must have taken a minimum of twelve hours in Interdisciplinary Seminars, and at least eighteen hours of overall Honors credit at NTCC or sister institutions.<sup>4</sup>

**B. Criteria for enrolling in Linked<sup>5</sup> Honors Courses:**

1. Any student who has fulfilled the necessary prerequisites can enroll in any Linked Course announced as “honors.” Students with a 3.0 GPA after twelve credit hours in College, or high school graduates or students with an equivalency of a B or better average in High School can also receive an honors designation for a Linked Course without being Presidential Scholars, if they receive a B or better on the Honors portion of the Linked Course. All students desiring honors credit must make this clear to the professor within ten calendar days after the course begins. Though students taking Linked Courses for Honors credit do not need to have applied to become a Presidential Scholar, if they do apply, and if funds are available, they could receive an honors scholarship and/or a tuition waiver for taking the honors portion of a Linked Course, as well as at least three other hours of honors credit.

**C. Criteria for receiving Honors credit outside of the Interdisciplinary Seminar and Linked Courses:**

1. Other courses may be designated as honors (with an ‘h’ appearing on the transcript) when students initiate a special component/project to enhance the course beyond the traditional concepts. These components must be approved by the professor of the course, the division director, and the honors director, and meet standards set by the Honors Committee to be counted for honors credit. Student-initiated honors can occur in any Designated Class offered by the college,<sup>6</sup> with the consent of the instructor, the division director, and the honors director, within 10 calendar days after the course has started. In order to pursue

---

<sup>4</sup> See Footnote 3 above.

<sup>5</sup> By “linked” we mean a professor-initiated course that would include honors and non-honors students. Honors Courses would be limited to Designated Honors Courses. See Footnote 1 above. Care would have to be taken to emphasize that any student may enroll in Linked Courses for traditional credit, but only students who choose the Honors route may receive Honors credit.

<sup>6</sup> See Footnote 1 above.

this option the student must have a 3.0 GPA or better with twelve hours college credit, or—in the case they are first-semester college students or high school students--have the equivalent of a B or better High School GPA. It will be expected that in order for a student to receive an honors citation, they will, among other commitments, show a consistent “with-it-ness,” coming prepared to class, ready to field and address apt questions. They will also complete a project which could be an extension or enhancement of a pre-existing assignment of the course. The grade in the enhanced course would have to be at least a B for the student to receive honors credit.

## **Justification for the criteria in Section I.**

The “bottom line” of the Honors Program is “unprecedented student success stories.” Presidential Scholars should comprise a class of more motivated and professionally minded students. The Interdisciplinary Seminars are intended to provide a transformative experience in this regard, with enough leverage—coming from two honors professors, Presidential-Scholar peers, and the prospect of a single grade for six to seven hours—to enable successful projects. The director and honors professors will promote the success of Presidential Scholars at the highest levels, and consequently promote the College by obtaining its “best publicity”—student achievement narratives. The Presidential Scholars component will also be porous enough to admit rising students. Thus the director, and honors professors will encourage the success of Honors Students, and invite them to apply to the Presidential Scholars component. The standards for Linked Courses and student-initiated honors courses will also be designed to raise the levels of achievement and enthusiasm in classes throughout the college.

## **II. Mission Statement**

### **NTCC MISSION STATEMENT**

*Northeast Texas Community College exists to give an affordable and superior education. The College strives to enhance access to higher education and offer programs that support personal, cultural, and economic development. It resolves to provide open admissions, equal opportunity, and wide-ranging educational service in the community.*

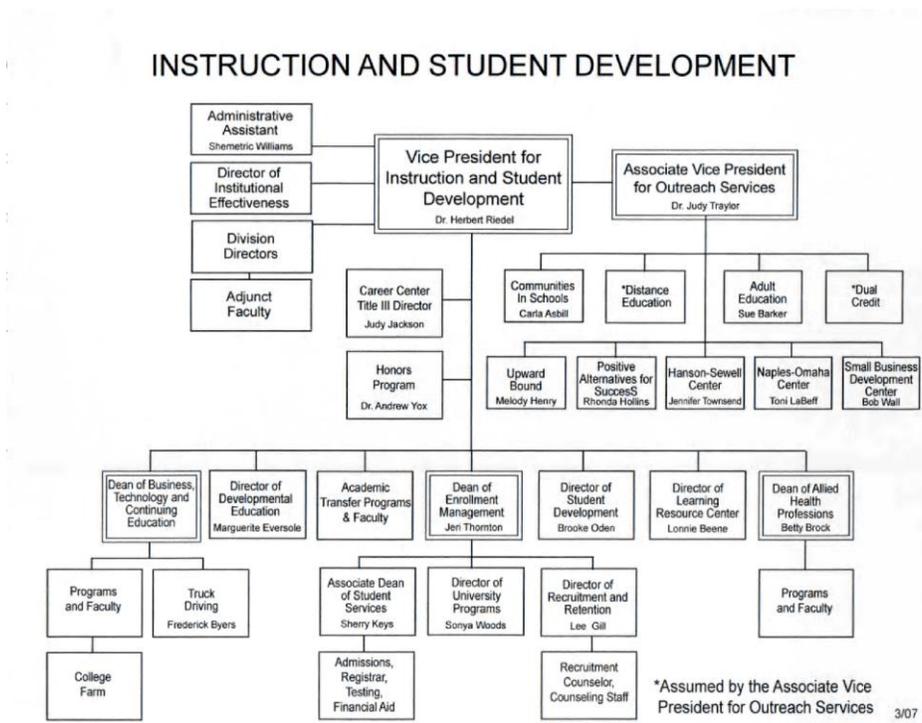
**PROPOSED MISSION STATEMENT OF THE NTCC HONORS PROGRAM**

The Honors Program at Northeast Texas Community College strives to provide free and exemplary education. It exists to develop original ideas and successful projects. Inclusive and supportive, the program resolves to enroll ambitious, rising, students, promote their careers, and enhance the vitality of the college and surrounding community.

### III. Place of the Honors Program in the Administrative Structure

**A. Institutional Place:** We propose that the Honors director be answerable to the Vice President for Instruction and Student Development (Figure 1). The director will also coordinate her or his activity with instructional deans, and division directors.

Figure 1: Proposed Inclusion of Honors Director



**B. The Position of Director:** The success of the Honors Program will hinge on the activities of the director.<sup>7</sup> Because success depends on someone being responsible, and responsibility hinges on the capacity that is granted, we propose a two-course reassignment time for the director plus an administrative supplement of \$1,500 dollars per semester.

**The Director** will:

1. be the adviser for all Presidential Scholars—affording them one-stop registration for classes, and continuing counsel.
2. cultivate relationships with the guidance counselors of the fourteen high schools of NTCC's Service Delivery Area, and with home school groups, recruiting top area students for the Presidential Scholars seminar.
3. encourage students on campus to apply to become Presidential Scholars, and to enroll in Linked Courses, and to pursue student-initiated courses for honors credit.
4. determine and propose standards for honors courses.
5. create and disseminate brochures and recruitment material in cooperation with the Admissions Office.
6. propose and help secure the budget for the program.
7. pursue scholarship opportunities for Presidential Scholars, and if possible, Honors Students, that will offer ongoing, institutionalized funds for students in the program, and expand the number of scholarships that can be offered.
8. propose to the Honors Committee what honors courses will be offered, and the professors who will teach them.
9. when viable, teach as one of the professors in the Honors Program.
10. promote student projects in honors courses that will lead to positive publicity for the college, transferability to University Honors programs, and career-boosting achievements for the students.
11. arrange for Honors trips, and attendance at conferences.
12. chair the Honors Committee, and be a non-voting member of the Presidential Scholars Committee.
13. determine who is admitted into the program, and who stays in according to the criteria in Section I above; reporting to

---

<sup>7</sup> Theresa A. James, *A Handbook for Honors Programs at Two-Year Colleges* (Birmingham, Ala., 2006), 15.

the Honors Committee about the process that is being used to make these decisions.

14. arrange for articulation agreements with the directors of four-year university Honors Programs, so that the students of NTCC's Honors Scholars Program could count on transferring to an Honors Program of other universities.
15. maintain good relations with the Vice President for Instruction and Student Development, and the Honors Committee.

The director should:

1. be a respected member of the faculty, and acknowledged as one of its best teachers.
2. have a Ph.D. or a record of outstanding achievement as a teacher or scholar.

**D. Honors Committee:** Sections X and XIV below discuss the duties and responsibilities of the Honors Committee.

## **Justification**

The National Collegiate Honors Council recommends that the director of the Honors Program be answerable to the chief academic officer of the institution.<sup>8</sup> As the director can not hope to please all faculty members, his or her position should be dependent on the support of the Vice President for Instruction and Student Services. However, the director will appeal to the support of the Honors Committee for curriculum offerings, for the criteria that is used to determine honors credit, and for admission, articulation, and retention policies.

## **IV. Curriculum (First Semester and Beyond)**

---

<sup>8</sup> This recommendation occurs in point number three in Appendix I below.

## **A. First Semester:**

**1. Interdisciplinary Seminar.** The Honors Seminar would be a six- to seven-hour, paired course that would encourage original thought, and successful projects. Thus English 1302 could be paired with Biology 1406 in a “Descriptions of Life” course, or Math 1350 and History 2321 combined as a “Sets, Systems, and Theories” six-hour course. The Interdisciplinary Seminar would include two professors in one class, and opportunities for new perspectives as the assumptions of disciplines would be reassessed, and new interdisciplinary categories created, by the Honors Professors and Presidential Scholars. The load for each professor in this class would include the entire six- to seven-hour segment, making her or him responsible for learning and participating in the segment of the course that falls outside of his or her expertise. Both professors would cover the necessary content of their courses, and at the same time, inspire students to: pursue crossover applications of the one discipline to the other, address macro-extra-disciplinary questions, and create new labels to represent insights gained by the seminar.

**2. Two Linked Honors Classes.** Each Linked Class would be composed of both students enrolled for regular credit and students enrolled for honors credit. In addition to traditional coursework, students taking the honors component would engage in specialized coursework with the oversight of their professor. At least one course should be first offered from the Science and Math curriculum, and one course from the Humanities curriculum. A Linked Course would have to be one of the Designated Courses listed in footnote 1 above.

## **B. Beyond the First Semester:**

**1. Addition of New Courses:** Both Interdisciplinary Seminars and Linked Honors courses could be added based on the number of scholarships the program is capable of dispensing, and on enrollment needs. The director is responsible for proposing subsequent classes to the Honors Committee, and in conveying the proposed courses to divisional deans and all authorities who will determine the schedule.

**A. Interdisciplinary Seminars:** If scholarship possibilities and enrollment expands, more Interdisciplinary Seminars could be offered. As these courses would contribute two courses to a professor’s load, and as other honors courses could be taught by a

seminar professor, NTCC could in time sponsor a core of professors “fully committed” to the Honors idea, as is recommended by the NCHC in point #8 in Appendix I.

### **B. New Linked Courses:**

1. Professors who are approved by the director and Honors Committee for teaching Linked Courses will receive a \$400-dollar stipend for developing special Honors aspects of their course in the semester before they are offered.<sup>9</sup> Many Linked Courses over time would no longer require stipends as they could be re-taught. The third Linked Course could come from the Workforce Education curriculum. The Director and the Honors Committee will need to decide which educational areas are suitable for Honors participation.

## **Justification:**

See points 4-6 in Appendix I.

The Interdisciplinary Seminar would be the flagship of the Honors Program. This is because Linked Courses, and Designated Courses with honors components would be taught by instructors whose responsibility could not be exclusively focused on unprecedented student success. The six-to-seven-hour paired class would also exert more leverage than a three-hour class to achieve student success. The increase of contact time with not only one, but two professors, and peers in the Presidential Scholars seminar is meant to impel excellence. So too a “brightness dividend” would encourage successful projects. Presidential Scholars should cover the material of a course more rapidly than other students. When the “time remaining” is added twice, for the two paired courses, there should be a dividend time to enhance the pursuit of a successful project.

“Student Success” in a real sense, hinges in turn on original thought, what the interdisciplinary seminar should also inspire. Major scholars of modern culture such as Anthony Giddens, Jean-François Lyotard and Jürgen Habermas have delineated the “reflexivity” of modern culture—its tendency toward rapid change based on rapid change in knowledge. The Interdisciplinary Seminar, in questioning typical ways of conceiving reality, will stimulate students to develop a knowledge that goes beyond traditional

---

<sup>9</sup> As there are no funds available for such courses to be developed by the fall of 2007, those teaching Linked Courses in the fall of 2007 would be paid the \$400-dollar stipend for teaching the course.

categories, one that can label new realities, and can question existing structures.

Linked Courses and Designated Courses with honors credit will also pursue the mission statement of the NTCC Honors Program to develop original thought, and successful projects. The National Collegiate Honors Council encourages the emergence of “special” courses<sup>10</sup> designed to fulfill the program’s mandate. These courses will be special, as the director and Honors Committee will charge all Honors Professors to develop opportunities for critical analysis, and a special research project. As for students taking credit in Designated Courses, guidelines approved by the Honors Committee will encourage outlets for originality, and the compilation of a successful project.

## **V. Program Load Requirements**

The NCHC recommends a mean of 20 to 25 percent—as the percentage of a student’s load in honors courses per semester (Appendix I, point #5). Presidential Scholars will have a minimal semester load per student of six to seven hours, about 35 percent. Other Honors Students could acquire as much, taking Linked Courses, and Designated Courses for Honors Credit. An average of over 25 percent per semester would be advantageous for NTCC students, both for their transferability, and to allow for down times--for the possibility that the student may have started honors late (perhaps even after taking college credit courses in High School), or would find a need later to lessen the honors component for a semester. As some programs around the country have block schedules where 100 percent of the coursework is Honors, we would have this possibility also at NTCC. A premiere student at NTCC could pursue Linked and Designated Courses for honors credit, and could receive honors credit for all of their courses.

---

<sup>10</sup> See Appendix I, number 4.

## VI. Satisfaction of Core Requirements

As the Honors Program needs to help its students complete core requirements, we propose that all honors courses in the first semester offer general education credit. In time with more resources, students, and a better sense of which workforce programs dovetail best with honors, Linked Courses and perhaps even the components of an Honors Seminar could move into the workforce area.

All honors courses will confer credit as they are designated in the Texas Common Course Numbering System (TCCNS).

## VII. Visibility and Reputation

To secure the reputation of the Honors Program, we propose to begin in the fall of 2007 with only one Interdisciplinary Seminar, with an enrollment cap of 15, and two Linked Courses, with an enrollment cap of 20 apiece. The program will expand after that slowly and deliberately, keeping in mind its mission to provide “free” and “exemplary” education—and thus promote a more professional student. The visibility of the Seminar will be enhanced by a Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday schedule plan, the five hours of mandatory community service for the Presidential Scholars per semester, and also honors events on campus planned by members of the Presidential Scholars Committee, and supported by the director. The director will also encourage Presidential Scholars and Honors Students to assume leadership roles in student government, and to participate in Phi Theta Kappa.

## VIII. Faculty

**Criteria for Faculty Assignments:** Candidates for director will apply to the Vice President for Instruction and Student Development. The director will propose which faculty members will teach the Interdisciplinary Seminar and Linked Courses in a given term to the Honors Committee, which will, in turn, approve or modify this proposal. Professors who would like to teach honors classes, or who have been chosen to do so, should send the director a

brief proposal. If the course is approved, the professor should send the director a syllabus during the first week of the course. After the course is taught, the professor will give the director a description of how the proposal was implemented.

## IX. Space

One of the NCHC experts on community college honors programs, Dr. Ronald Brandolini, calls the honors space on campus, the “retention tool extraordinaire.”<sup>11</sup> An honors space for both Presidential Scholars and Honors Students--who are taking six hours or more of honors credit--would assure these students that they are valued, and that they are welcome to remain on campus to pursue their course work. This would also be a place where students in the Honors Program could meet, bond, and share in an “honors experience.” A coffee pot, occasional doughnuts, meetings, and informal discussions—could all serve to increase retention, and enthusiasm for the program.

We propose that a space on campus be used exclusively by the Honors Program. This should include a classroom with a central table, chairs seated around the table, and space on the side for smart boards. It could include a lounge, and additional office space with desk space. Suggestions for an honors space include:

1. *The Library Instruction Room.* This is a beautiful room that may well deserve more use, and more of a place in the consciousness of the student experience at NTCC. It would greatly commend the Presidential Scholars Seminar, and Linked Courses. Its proximity to the library would promote “successful projects.”

2. *UHS 222 or 223* with nearby lounge. This is an attractive site that seems under-used.

---

<sup>11</sup> National Collegiate Honors Conference, Philadelphia, November 2006. Brandolini’s success at Valencia Community College in Florida in retaining students, and building a large program has been almost legendary. The retention rate of his honors program after one year at 65 percent has been enough to raise retention levels for the entire college.

3. If necessary, even a desolate place like *BT 109* would be better than nothing. Especially in this case, a single office could be made available in addition to the larger space.

## X. Honors Committee

The Honors Committee should be recognized as a permanent College committee, with the Honors director as its chair. At least one Committee member should be drawn from the Math and Science Department, at least one member from the Arts and Humanities, and at least one from the Workforce sector of the College. An administrator should also participate. The Vice President for Instruction and Student Services will select the members of the committee.

The student chair of the Presidential Scholars Committee will also serve on the Honors Committee with full privileges, including a vote.

Although the director is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the Honors Program, the Honors Committee will exercise oversight over all of its aspects. The Honors Committee will approve and/or modify articulation agreements for administrative consideration, and the standards of the Interdisciplinary Seminar, Linked Courses, and the courses for honors credit. They will approve or modify exceptions to honors requirements. Each semester the director will propose to the Honors Committee, the courses for the next semester, and they will be approved or modified as the committee decides. The committee will also forward recommendations for improvement to the director and, if necessary, the Vice President for Instruction and Student Services. The Committee would meet at least once a semester.

## XI. A Student Honors Committee

The Presidential Scholars Committee will meet with the support of the director. The director will assist the student chair of this committee in

calling meetings, and attend as a non-voting member. Presidential Scholars will determine: A) the number of members their committee should have B) who serves and chairs the committee. The Chair of the Presidential Scholars Committee would sit on the Honors Committee composed of college personnel, and have the privileges of a voting member.

The purpose of this committee will be to forward suggestions for improving the Honors program to the director and Honors Committee, to plan social events and cultural events, and to consider honors participation in campus-wide activities.

## XII. Special Academic Counseling

The director will serve as the academic advisor for all Presidential Scholars. She or he will determine, according to the criteria approved by the Honors Committee, who is to be admitted and who remains in the Presidential Scholars component, and who obtains Presidential and/or any other type of honors scholarships. Before the fall and spring semesters, there would be one-stop registration for Presidential Scholars at the office of the director (As noted in III.B.1 above).

The director will also attempt to meet the Honors Students, and any other students taking an honors component in Linked or Designated Courses. The director will encourage their progress, and maintain an accessible, open-door policy in hearing their concerns.

## XIII. Honors as an Engine of Progress in Overall College Instruction.

Interdisciplinary seminars would impel professors and students to think about their fields in radically new ways. It would encourage original perspectives and help professors to better engage students who do not always grasp the relationships in learning that exist between disciplines. Professors would also gain insights about teaching from observing one another in these paired, interdisciplinary courses, and test new ways of presenting their ideas.

The Presidential Scholars would have the six-seven-hour seminar together, but after that, they would be a part of the life of the campus. To the extent a new kind of student is recruited or attained, the Presidential Scholars should infuse the entire campus with life, with added eagerness to learn, and provoke meaningful class discussions.

Linked Courses would also encourage professors to think about their traditional course offerings in new ways. New avenues of education could be tried such as service learning, interactive approaches, game techniques, extended role playing, and virtual learning communities. The Linked Course would provide an opportunity for those Presidential Scholars and Honors Students in the course to inspire students outside the program—those with zero to five hours in honors courses in a given semester--to increase their participation in the program. Moreover, Linked Courses could provide research opportunities for students and cover additional material, not covered in the traditional portion of the course.

When students choose to pursue an honors component in Designated Classes, this also should improve the life of the college. Such a component, with its emphasis on “with-it-ness” and a special project will encourage more meaningful interaction between students and professors, and provide models of achievement for other students.

## XIV. Critical Review of Honors Program

The Honors Committee should formally review the progress of the Honors Program at least once each school year. The Committee should seek input from all concerned parties including students, faculty, and administrators.

## XV. Opportunities for Students

Presidential Scholars and Honors Students will have the opportunity for trips and special activities based on the needs of the Interdisciplinary

Seminar, Linked Courses, and initiatives taken by the Presidential Scholars Committee. The director will encourage all students in the Honors Program to participate in the honors society, Phi Theta Kappa. The Director with help from other honors professors will vet student success, and guide student applications to present work at conferences, publish papers, or engage in other projects that might benefit the cultural and intellectual life of Northeast Texas.

## XVI. Articulation Agreements

The director will seek articulation agreements with honors programs at universities we expect our students to transfer to. All articulation agreements will have to be approved first by the Honors Committee before being considered by the NTCC administration.

### *Conclusion:*

#### *A. Proposed Honors Budget for the 2007-2008 School Year*

##### **A. Actual Costs:**

Travel	\$7, 500
--------	----------

This could include a faculty member and a top student attending the National Collegiate Honors Council Meeting, a few students attending the Great Plains Regional Conference with two faculty members, local recruitment trips, and other field trips that support the program's mandate.

Membership in the National Collegiate Honors Council:

Institutional \$500

Honors Programs that are unaffiliated with the NCHC will have a more difficult challenge securing articulation agreements with four-year programs that do.

Program Expenses: \$1,300

This would include graduation paraphernalia, honors notebooks, pens, cards brochures, newsletters etc.

Scholarships: For fifteen Presidential Scholars,  
two semesters (books, room, and board,  
see Appendix II) \$37,437

Release Time for Director (Incremental Adjunct Pay) \$4,800

Administrative Supplement for Director \$3,000

**Total Ongoing Costs: \$54,537**

Course Development Stipends \$2,800

**Incremental Revenues to NTCC  
Outside Scholarship Funds -\$9,826**

**Estimated First Year Net Cost for Program \$47, 511<sup>12</sup>**

---

<sup>12</sup> It is necessary--given the mission statement and structure of the program we are proposing--to have a minimum yearly allotment budgeted by the college for the honors program. Radical year-to-year fluctuations would make it impossible to recruit top students in a creditable manner, or to fulfill the Program's mandate.

**Estimated Second Year Net Cost (30 Students)     \$69, 862<sup>13</sup>**

**B. Funds sought from grants, foundation, and other philanthropic sources:**

Membership in the National Collegiate Honors Council:

Two Faculty Members     \$200  
Fifteen Presidential Scholars \$525

Two faculty members and fifteen students becoming members of the National Collegiate Honors Council: This would reduce conference rates, give the students a sense of participation in a national professional organization, and keep professors attuned to what is going on nationally.

Laptops for fifteen students     \$15,000<sup>14</sup>

**TOTAL FUNDS SOUGHT OUTSIDE THE COLLEGE BUDGET     \$15,725**

**C. Institutional, In-Kind Expenses:**

An Honors Classroom  
An office or lounge for Presidential Scholars and Honors Students  
10 Hours of Secretarial Work, Week

Special Honors Interactive Website attached to NTCC's Website  
Designated personal computers if scholarship laptops for honors students are not obtained.

---

<sup>13</sup> See Appendix II.

<sup>14</sup> Gadsden College claims that part of their success in starting their honors program last year resulted from giving lap tops to their Presidential Scholars in addition to tuition waivers, but in lieu of additional scholarships. They did have a student body, twice as large, however, to draw from. Kenny Goodson estimates that we could get the price of a good lap top for 1,000 dollars per student. The money for this could come from grants or perhaps even a scholarship fund established by the NTCC Foundation.

## Interdisciplinary Seminar

As both of the professors in the Interdisciplinary Seminar, would be present for the entire six-to seven-hour a week combination, each professor's teaching load in the seminar would count as six to seven hours apiece. This would greatly enhance the mission of the program as noted above in sections IV, XIII, and XV.

### **C. What we are not budgeting:**

1. An administrative-level salary for the director. As noted in section IIIB above, the director's responsibilities would be extensive. In addition to handling weekly administrative deadlines and program requirements, and unlike the case of a dean or director, the commitment to teach honors students, advise, and vet students would also become more complex.
2. Increased salaries for honors professors. We are, at the cost of our unanimity, recommending one-time stipends, instead of salary increases, despite the fact that vetting outstanding students would remain a consuming enterprise.
3. Stipends for professors who accept student-initiated honors components.
4. Airfare to regional conferences or airfare for field trips.
5. Transfer Scholarships, Special Awards or Prizes.
6. Seed money for initiating an Honors Scholarship Fund.
7. Honorariums for outside speakers.
8. A budget for the Presidential Scholars Committee

## **Appendix I**

# Guidelines for Honors Programs, Approved by the NCHC Executive Committee

## Basic Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors Program as stated by the National Collegiate Honors Council

1. A fully-developed honors program should be carefully set up to accommodate the special needs and abilities of the undergraduate students it is designed to serve. This entails identifying the targeted student population by some clearly articulated set of criteria (e.g., GPA, SAT score, a written essay). A program with open admission needs to spell out expectations for retention in the program and for satisfactory completion of program requirements.
2. The program should have a clear mandate from the institutional administration ideally in the form of a mission statement clearly stating the objectives and responsibilities of the program and defining its place in both the administrative and academic structure of the institution. This mandate or mission statement should be such as to assure the permanence and stability of the program by guaranteeing an adequate budget and by avoiding any tendency to force the program to depend on temporary or spasmodic dedication of particular faculty members or administrators. In other words, the program should be fully institutionalized so as to build thereby a genuine tradition of excellence.
3. The honors director should report to the chief academic officer of the institution.
4. There should be an honors curriculum featuring special courses, seminars, colloquia and independent study established in harmony with the mission statement and in response to the needs of the program.
5. The program requirements themselves should include a substantial portion of the participants' undergraduate work, usually in the vicinity of 20% or 25% of their total course work and certainly no less than 15%. Students who successfully complete Honors Programs requirements should receive suitable institutional recognition. This can be accomplished by such measures as an appropriate notation on the student's academic transcript, separate listing of Honors Graduates in commencement programs, and the granting of an Honors degree.
6. The program should be so formulated that it relates effectively both to all the college work for the degree (e.g., by satisfying general education requirements) and to the area of concentration, departmental specialization, pre-professional or professional training.
7. The program should be both visible and highly reputed throughout the institution so that it is perceived as providing standards and models of excellence for students and faculty across the campus.
8. Faculty participating in the program should be fully identified with the aims of the program. They should be carefully selected on the basis of exceptional teaching skills and the ability to provide intellectual leadership to able students.
9. The program should occupy suitable quarters constituting an honors center with such facilities as an honors library, lounge, reading rooms, personal computers and other appropriate decor.
10. The director or other administrative officer charged with administering the program should work in close collaboration with a committee or council of faculty members representing the colleges and/or departments served by the program.
11. The program should have in place a committee of honors students to serve as

liaison with the honors faculty committee or council who must keep the student group fully informed on the program and elicit their cooperation in evaluation and development. This student group should enjoy as much autonomy as possible conducting the business of the committee in representing the needs and concerns of all honors students to the administration, and it should also be included in governance, serving on the advisory/policy committee as well as constituting the group that governs the student association.

- 12. There should be provisions for special academic counseling of honors students by uniquely qualified faculty and/or staff personnel.
- 13. The honors program, in distinguishing itself from the rest of the institution, serves as a kind of laboratory within which faculty can try things they have always wanted to try but for which they could find no suitable outlet. When such efforts are demonstrated to be successful, they may well become institutionalized, thereby raising the general level of education within the college or university for all students. In this connection, the honors curriculum should serve as a prototype for educational practices that can work campus-wide in the future.
- 14. The fully-developed honors program must be open to continuous and critical review and be prepared to change in order to maintain its distinctive position of offering distinguished education to the best students in the institution.
- 15. A fully-developed program will emphasize the participatory nature of the honors educational process by adopting such measures as offering opportunities for students to participate in regional and national conferences, honors semesters, international programs, community service, and other forms of experiential education.
- 16. Fully-developed two-year and four-year honors programs will have articulation agreements by which honors graduates from two-year colleges are accepted into four-year honors programs when they meet previously agreed-upon requirements.

Approved by the NCHC Executive Committee (3/4/94)

## **Appendix II 2007/2008 Cost Estimate of Honors Program by Vice President for Administrative Services, Beth Thompson.**