

LHC Assessment Report (Draft) 2/28/08

Introduction and Context

The mission of the Carl and Winifred Lee Honors College is to provide a lively, rigorous undergraduate program for bright, highly motivated, and active students. At the core of this mission is continuous improvement based in part on formative and summative assessment that informs faculty, administration, and staff about student learning, engagement, and program quality. Data from assessment also assist LHC leadership in effective decision-making regarding resource allocation, strategic planning, and capital planning.

Enduring LHC Mission Elements

- To facilitate Civic Engagement
- To foster Critical Thinking
- To support Research and Creative Activities
- To encourage Lifelong Learning

LHC Student-centered Goals

- To provide academic and student-life experiences that foster individual and group development for highly motivated students.
- To provide a challenging but supportive academic program involving learning communities (clusters), unique learning experiences, foreign study, research, and creative activities
- To sponsor student-life activities in an inclusive social and learning community in conjunction with the Honors Student Association
- To maintain a residential-life program that supports the academic, social, and cultural goals of the College into the honors course of study
- To ensure timely and caring advising and student support that encourages honors students to share their needs, concerns, and future goals.

LHC Administrative Goals

1) To recruit academically gifted and motivated students by:

- Implementing a new admissions policy and process that invites high-performing students to join the LHC
- Becoming the four-year Honors College of choice for transfer students
- Attracting more National Merit Scholarship winners and top 10% of class students
- Improving the diversity of LHC faculty and students
- Aggressively pursue qualified lateral transfer from within WMU
- Creating a LHC financial aid package, including job opportunities, to attract worthy but needy students

2) To foster scholarship and academic excellence by:

- Providing challenging Honors courses that stimulate scholarly thought and activities

- Offering undergraduates with opportunities to conduct research and creative activities under the direction of faculty mentors
 - Promoting scholarly inquiry and creative exploration by offering a range of scholarships, awards, and grants that facilitate student-faculty engagement
 - Promoting consistent academic standards and the achievement of defined learning outcomes for Honors courses and the senior thesis
 - Identify and assist students whose aptitude and academic performance make them viable candidates for national and international prestigious scholarships
 - Sponsoring the Honor Societies of PKP, PBK, and ALD
 - Establish a curriculum review committee (consisting of such people as Jon Martell, Jo Reish, Tim Light, Tim McGrew)
- 3) To increase the institutional effectiveness of the LHC by:
- Designing and implementing a comprehensive assessment plan that allow for regular formative and summative evaluation of the LHC programming and administration.
 - Developing systems, methods, and tools that measure achievement of student learning outcomes, progress toward graduation, and student satisfaction
 - Redesign and maintain a web site that provides useful, timely, and accurate information to current and prospective students, parents, faculty members ,advisors, and the community at large
 - Increasing the LHC funding base through creative development activities and by promoting a LHC alumni association
- 4) To involve Honors students in community and civic-minded activities by
- Integrating service learning activities into the Honors curriculum
 - Encouraging students to participate in volunteer and service activities that promote the general and specific welcome of our communities
 - Providing encouragement and funding, when possible, for study abroad programs that enhance cultural competencies.

LHC Student Learning Outcomes

The LHC partners with academic colleges and faculty to provide the means and opportunity by which students achieve the following LHC learning outcomes

- Complete an original piece of research or creative activity culminating in a thesis
- Demonstrate leadership and responsible citizenship in the university and wider community for the betterment of both.
- Demonstrate the ability to take responsibility for their own learning
- Honors students will be good critical thinkers able to develop sound arguments and able to recognize fallacious arguments.
- Communicate effectively orally and in writing

LHC Program Quality Objectives

All students in the Lee Honors College are expected to fulfill the following requirements in order to remain in good standing:

1. In the first two years, students must take either: (a) two designated clusters as listed in the LHC catalogue, (b) one designated cluster, plus enough additional LHC single classes to reach a total of five classes, or (c) five single classes.
2. During the junior and senior years, students must take two upper-level LHC classes (numbered 3000 or above). There is no double counting allowed: that is, no class taken as part of requirement I may count for requirement II.
3. Students who enter the LHC as sophomores must complete either (a) one designated cluster, or (b) three single LHC courses to satisfy requirement I.
4. Transfer students or those who enter in their junior year must complete three single upper-level LHC classes in order to satisfy requirement II. Requirement I is waived for these students.
5. Those students who choose to study abroad or to participate in an internship (HNRS 3990) or independent study (HNRS 4950) will receive credit for the equivalent of no more than one upper-level course to fulfill requirement II, so long as their class is for a minimum of 3 credit hours.
6. Students must attain a cumulative GPA of 3.25 to remain in the LHC.
7. All students who intend to graduate from the Lee Honors College must complete and defend an honors thesis project.
8. All students in each incoming class must attend six cultural events and write a short synopsis of each even

LHC Assessment Principles

1. The LHC in partnership with faculty, academic and non-academic departments is responsible for planning and delivering high quality programs that prepare our students to lead productive and satisfying lives.
2. The LHC uses systematic assessment, including multiple assessment and data collection vehicles, as a key component of its continuous improvement process.
3. The primary focus of the LHC assessment process is to evaluate the program's success in achieving student learning outcomes. Specifically data from the assessment will be used to strengthen student learning, enhance advising, improve the curriculum, increase retention, improve pedagogy and instructional effectiveness, and develop the LHC infrastructure to support mission and goals.
4. A review of assessment data will be included in the annual goal setting process, decision-making processes, and annual action plans.

Assessment Methods and Targeted Groups

The College proposes to use the following instruments in its assessment process.

- 1) Student survey distributed to all LHC students annually in April
- 2) Senior Thesis Evaluation survey to be completed by members of the student's thesis committee.
- 3) Field Experience Survey completed by faculty member supervising field experience at the end of the field experience semester

Timeline

An annual survey of all LHC students will be conducted each April (end of Spring semester). Graduation survey will be conducted one month prior graduation dates established by the Academic Calendar. Evaluation of thesis is conducted at the end of each semester. Assessment of Field Experience and Independent Study will be conducted at the end of each semester.

Provisions for Administration

The Associate Dean of the LHC is responsible for implementation of the plan. Data will be collected and summarized by College staff. An analysis will be prepared by the Associate Dean who will report and summarize results for the Dean and within the College.

Use of Information

Information from the assessment will be shared with all key internal stakeholders including students, department chairs, academic deans, and participating faculty members. The data will be used for purposes of continuous improvement, decision-making, resource allocation, strategic and annual planning.