Honors College, UNC Charlotte
Redesign of Honors Education Vision 2013
Mission and Objectives

The Task Force for the Redesign of Honors Education at UNC Charlotte (2012-13)¹ reviewed:

- the recommendations of the Honors College Self Study (2011-12)
- honors education at our peer institutions and UNC system/regional competitors
- best practices for honors colleges statement by the National Collegiate Honors Council
- current honors program structure, curriculum, mission, and programming on campus.

The Task Force solicited feedback on early drafts of documents from the University Honors Council, Deans and Associate Deans of the colleges, Department Chairs, Program Directors of current honors programs, and the CLAS Faculty Council. Further faculty feedback will be sought as Deans determine appropriate.

The Task Force produced three vision documents to guide redesign of honors education at UNC Charlotte: one, this mission and objectives statement; two, guidelines for new programs and revision of existing programs; and three, a recommendation regarding resources to support redesign. These documents are intended as internal university documents to undergird honors redesign; public statements of mission, objectives, curriculum and programming, while emanating from these vision documents, should be crafted with a public audience in mind.

Mission and Objectives

Our Mission:

The Honors College at UNC Charlotte is grounded in the key aspirations the University holds for all its students:

- education that equips students with intellectual and professional skills, ethical principles, and an international perspective
- a strong foundation in liberal arts and opportunities for experiential education to enhance students’ personal and professional growth
- a robust intellectual environment that values social and cultural diversity.²

The Honors College is committed to developing these elements more deeply and broadly in highly-motivated UNC Charlotte undergraduates who seek intellectual excitement and challenge.

¹ Members of the task force: Nan Fey-Yensan, James Frakes, Dan Jones, Pat Moyer, Malin Pereira (ch), John Smail, Heather Smith, John Szmer, Connie Rothwell, Diane Zablotsky.
² http://administration.uncc.edu/university-mission-statement
Our identity:
Honors College faculty, staff, students and community partners embrace our role at the forefront of UNC Charlotte’s mission as an urban research university, ranging across the disciplines of the sciences, arts, technology, education, professions, and humanities.

Our culture:

- We respect the distinctive needs of our students, offering multiple paths through Honors, with different points of access and modes of completion.
- We mutually invest, creating opportunities for developing and demonstrating behaviors that reflect our shared valuing of each other, the university, and the community.
- We foster intellectual curiosity, providing experiences designed to enrich personal and intellectual development.

Our focus:
To cultivate creative, analytical, synthetic and reflective thinking practices through in-depth research and inquiry, which enables our students to identify, define, understand and effectively articulate the inherent tensions of complex problems at home and abroad and learn how to contribute in meaningful ways toward progress.

Our results:
Honors College students discover and become increasingly confident in their unique paths to and beyond graduation, emerging as intellectual and public leaders who understand the importance of cultural awareness, considered risk-taking and the benefits of mutual exchange among academia, the professions, and communities.

Objectives:

1. Nurturing an environment of excellence and achievement
   - To offer high quality curriculum and programming
   - To provide supportive and well-informed advising
   - To connect students with departmental and college-level advising and mentoring for graduate school and prestigious scholarships and awards

2. Fostering intellectual curiosity and excitement
   - To scaffold opportunities and situations which generate intellectual curiosity and excitement
• To guide students in joining the continuum of intellectual curiosity and excitement that exists across time and communities

• To provide opportunities for students to think across disciplines, topics, coursework and to demonstrate this ability

3. Taking a multi-level approach to research and inquiry

• To foster an appreciation of the complexities of aesthetic, social, physical, and environmental challenges

• To cultivate critical consumption of discovery and outcomes of the research process through increasing the students’ depth of disciplinary understanding and ability to integrate multidisciplinary findings

• To encourage undergraduate experience and immersion in the research process, exposing students to multiple research processes and disciplinary methodologies and advancing opportunities for students to collaborate with faculty

4. Facilitating intercultural and intrapersonal understanding

• To appreciate the complexity of identity formation in cultural and social contexts, better understanding one’s own ethical positions in society, as well as those of others

• To broaden the basis for one’s own creativity and problem-solving ability

• To provide effective service and leadership to diverse communities (from the local to the global)

5. Building leadership and an ethos of community membership, contribution, and impact

• To provide opportunities for progressively increasing students’ levels of responsibility and, commensurately, an understanding and appreciation for their roles in improving themselves and the communities around them

• To provide the skills and tools necessary for students to understand and appreciate those responsibilities, modeling effective participation and entrepreneurial problem-solving