

Honors Council
13 August 2007 – 10 a.m.
LIB 622

Members present: Christian Rubio (chair), Deanna Buczala, Rebecca Stephenson, Serpil Saydam, Ralph Brown, Chris Thompson, Megan Lowe, Ruth Smith

Members absent - excused: Loren Hayes, Sandy Hill, Ron Hill, and Mark Doherty

Members absent – unexcused: Holly Wilson

Holly Casey has resigned.

Chair Rubio opened the meeting with a discussion of meeting times. He indicated that he wished to change the schedule for meetings. Every month he will meet with the chairs of the subcommittees. He does not intend for the whole committee to meet frequently. The day for meetings has changed from Monday to Thursday; time remains 4pm. The schedule is as follows:

September 13: Subcommittee chairs only

October 4: All members

November 15: Subcommittee chairs only

Last meeting is TBA – to take place during the week of finals

Committees are as follows:

- Quiz Bowl: Ralph Brown (chair), Deanna Buczala
- Recruitment & Retention: Rebecca Stephenson (chair), Mark Doherty, Serpil Saydam, Ron Hill, Megan Lowe, Chris Thompson
- Scholarship: Sandy Hill (chair), Loren Hayes, Holly Wilson
- Assessment: Christian Rubio (chair)

Rubio mentioned two opportunities for recruitment and retention: Career Fair, September 11 and 12, 8am – noon, and Browse on the Bayou, November 3.

Rubio also indicated that he had had contact with a student regarding the lack of communication between the Honors Council and the Honors students. The student expressed his frustration via email with Rubio but declined to sit in the Council meetings. Rubio suggested that we pick a good candidate for such an arrangement. Rubio also mentioned that he intended to meet with all the students and that the elections for the Student Honors Council still needed to be held. Saydam indicated that the council needed to be careful regarding appointing students to sit in Honors Council meetings - the President of the Student Honors Council (or Student President appointed stand-in) is supposed to sit in on Honors Council meetings. She stressed the importance of following the rules and policies, in order that the Council not find itself in an awkward situation. Smith recommended that Rubio meet with the students and go over the rules and policies of the Honors Program. She recommended that it not take place in colloquium, but if

could happen in a more interactive setting. Rubio agreed and intends to meet with the students by the end of August.

Rubio also indicated that student Heather Black suggested a possible honors project with local high school honors students, some sort of research symposium where awards would be given. Smith mentioned participating in Arts & Sciences 'Celebration of the Humanities' event on October 25, with a possible display.

New applications to the Honors program were then dispersed and read. The following students applied: Dana Marler, David Newton, Christopher James, Adam Cascio, and Danielle Jones. Smith mentioned a female student (whose name is not currently available) that she enrolled in honors classes but needs to be contacted by the Honors Council and assisted with formal application. Rubio and Stephenson mentioned Cody Fontenot (Air Force) who had expressed an interest in the Honors Program. Stephenson mentioned that students who were accepted into the program would need their schedules changed and that freshman schedules cannot be changed by the students themselves, that Robin Jordan must make the change. Rubio indicated that he could talk to the students and deal with the changes. A motion to accept all the applicants – provisionally for Dana Marler and Adam Cascio – was moved by Brown, seconded by Thompson, and all voted unanimously.

Smith mentioned the Noel-Levitz report and how it recommended that the University focus on the Honors Program. She mentioned Kim Griffith in Recruitment as a contact.

Rubio then addressed the issue of Honors Colloquium. He indicated that the professor slated to teach it will not teach it, leaving the course without an instructor. He suggested that Colloquium be cancelled for this semester and believed that no students would be adversely affected by this cancellation. He also expressed his belief that the course needs a complete redesign; he also noted that the professor who teaches Colloquium is not paid for teaching it, and this ought to change. Smith stated that Colloquium "shouldn't feel like a class." Ideally, Colloquium should be an opportunity to explore ideas and discuss those ideas with presenters. Rubio indicated that he would seek student input when he met with the students. Stephenson moved that Colloquium be cancelled, seconded by Brown. Vote was unanimous for cancellation.

Rubio then introduced the problem of co-chair. Hill was slated to be co-chair of the council but has had to withdraw, as she has been made Associate Head of English. Rubio stated that the council needs a co-chair, who will succeed the chair. Rubio also indicated a desire of making the terms of chair-ship one year as co-chair, one as chair, but was content to let the term remain two and two for now. He stated that he was not looking for volunteers at this time, but was hopeful of having somebody by the spring. He expressed his willingness to serve for two years, provided a co-chair was found. He wanted a vote on changing the terms of service, but Stephenson suggested that the issue not be dealt with at this time, especially with vacancies on the council, and problems with the suggested change (namely consistency of leadership), so the vote was postponed. Rubio indicated that professors were needed from the departments of Business and Education on the council.

Smith suggested, as part of consistency of leadership and maintaining better communication, that a sign hang outside the chair's office (not on the door) and that students really staff the Honors

Program office (Hanna 220). Rubio stated that 03 money was available for student workers. Smith suggested that the student workers call possible candidates for the program. Rubio stated that he would speak with the Provost to make sure the money really was available.

The committees were then discussed. Rubio answered questions Buczala had regarding Quiz Bowl such as timeframe (Feb/Mar). The issue of T-shirts was brought up – more for the Honors Program itself than necessarily for QB – T-shirts without years on them, so they could easily be used from year to year. Smith suggested polo shirts with the Honors College seal.

Rubio indicated that he and Saydam and Sandy Hill could access CISPLUS about contact information for possible and current applicants. Smith indicated that Andria Price could help with information from CISPLUS.

Smith asked a question regarding how scholarship money from the summer would be dealt with and if extra money would be available for the fall, as well as whether or not money was available for intercession classes. Rubio indicated that the money would be dealt with, and that money was available for intercession classes. The issue of assigning honors advisors was brought up, and Rubio indicated that with 14 members on the council, it would be possible for 3 advisors to be assigned to each year - freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior. Advisors would rotate and follow students, i.e., a student would have the same advisor throughout their honors program experience. This would allow the council to better track when and where scholarship money was needed, as well as facilitating better communication. The need for social functions was expressed to maintain good contact and prevent feelings of disempowerment in the students.

The question was posed regarding whether the council would bring back giving awards to professors who teach honors. The council seemed amenable to renewing this practice.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Megan Lowe