

University: North Carolina State University

Program: University Honors Program

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Description of Program:

To whom is the strategy or initiative directed among first-year students?

The Mission of the University Honors Program at NC State University is to provide a challenging and enriched learning environment that will provide appropriate educational opportunities and enhance the intellectual achievements of our most outstanding undergraduate students. The University Honors Program is intellectually rigorous and personally and culturally enriching, fostering learning and discovery through independent and collaborative inquiry, supporting research and analysis of ideas, resulting in the formation of an honors learning community. The Honors Program is characterized by pedagogical innovation and the use of technology to enhance learning, cross-disciplinary approaches to knowledge, rigorous engagement with the disciplines, independence of thought, and reflection on learning. The Honors Program challenges students to connect the classroom and the larger world, broaden students' social and cultural horizons, and promote the practice of civic responsibility and pursuit of the common good. Graduates of the University Honors Program will be prepared to become distinguished professional, social, cultural, and civic leaders who are highly supportive of their alma mater.

Among these targeted students, how many or what percentage participate or benefit? In not all targeted students participate, how are participants selected?

Admission to the Honors Program is based on the assessment of students' potential for exceptional academic work at NC State. We reach this decision based on a of SAT scores, high school grades, rigor of courses taken in high school, class rank (when available), and evidence of creativity, initiative, and aspirations to excellence. Overall, the average SAT score of last year's entering class was 1375 and the average high school GPA was 4.5.

Approximately 35% of students invited to participate actually attend NC State and participate in the Honors Program. Another 5% of students invited attend NC State and do not participate in the Honors Program.

What connections does the program or strategy have to formal classroom experiences and learning outcomes?

The Honors Program sponsors a variety of formal classroom experiences (Honors Colloquia, Honors Seminars, Honors Sections of regularly scheduled classes, and Contracts for Honors Credit in regularly scheduled classes). The Program has a set of specific cognitive developmental learning outcomes which are assessed each year. Honors students and faculty are asked how well their classes met these outcome objectives; students' work is also reviewed by an outside team.

What qualitative or quantitative assessment data are available to suggest effectiveness?

Results of 3 semesters of evaluation questionnaires and the outside team's assessment of student development in the first year are available. Two reports from an outside review team from the National Collegiate Honors Council on the planning and implementation of the Honors Program are also available.

How long has the program strategy been practiced? How has it evolved?

The program was planned in 1999-2000 and implemented in 2000-2001 and in 2001-2002. The strategy is evolving with experience toward more specific definitions of outcomes, more extensive evaluation, and more refined evaluation instruments.

Have others emulated the practice, or has it received formal recognition for effectiveness?

Not to my knowledge. We are too new to have much exposure.

What is the source of funding? Is the funding available?

Source of funding is state-appropriated funds. Funds are available.