A Comprehensive History of Honors at Ball State: 1959-1989

An Honors Thesis (ID 499)

by

John D. Lee

Thesis Director

Anne F. Witty

Ball State University
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John D. Lee
In 1958, the United States was a country that was evaluating the efficiency and effectiveness of its educational system. The launching of the Soviet satellite, Sputnik, in November of 1957 marked the first successful launch of a man-made earth-orbiting satellite and, more importantly, had established Russia as the leader in the race for space. American government and military officials were stunned by the launch and quickly placed the blame for the supplantation of the U.S. by Russia as the technological forerunner squarely on the shoulders of the educational system. Steps were made to revamp, revitalize, and supercharge the learning process across the country, from kindergartens to graduate schools.

Ball State Teachers College was not immune from this epidemic. Ball State itself was in a critical transition state, growing in stature and looming on the brink of conversion from a teachers' college to a full-scale university. However, there were questions and doubts concerning the ability of the college professors to maximize the potential of the students at BSTC. As early as 1955, measures were being taken to understand the interaction between faculty and students, with special emphasis being placed on the gifted students of the college population.
In the spring of 1955, faculty members were elected to attend the Minnesota Workshop, a workshop in teacher education. This four-week workshop at the University of Minnesota, jointly sponsored with the North Central Association for Schools and Colleges, was designed for upgrading programs and instruction at teachers' colleges. Those attending agreed to investigate the problem of the gifted student while at Minnesota and to report their findings to a specially organized steering committee upon their return. The steering committee decided to devote much of its attention to problems centering on the identification and instruction of the gifted student during the 1955-56 school year. The main objective of this study was primarily to improve the academic program for gifted students, but was hoped to improve the quality of the overall instructional program. The following is an excerpt from the report by the steering committee, entitled, "What Can 'Smart' Faculty Members do with 'Smart' Students:"

"From the entering class of freshman students in the Autumn Quarter 1955, 270 students whose A.C.E. scores were in the 8th and 9th deciles were selected as students with high academic potential. At the end of the Autumn Quarter, their grades were analyzed and three groups of students were identified for a more intensive examination of the achievements in the relation to their ability. One
of the groups was comprised of high achievers (3.5 or better G.P.A.) with high abilities (8th or 9th decile of A.C.E.). Another group consisted of students with high A.C.E. scores who failed to achieve highly (lower than 3.5 G.P.A.). The final group consisted of students with high A.C.E. ratings but who achieved a G.P.A. of 3.5 of better. This analysis was repeated at the end of the Winter Quarter.\textsuperscript{1}

After the analyses were complete, meetings were set up with each group of students in the survey. The students were asked about their problems and satisfactions in their academic experience at Ball State. There were significant trends with each group. High potential/low achievement students had several criticisms of college and college teaching, seemed to lack motivation, and placed the responsibility of learning on the instructors. The low potential/high achievement students highly praised the college and their instructors. They seemed eager to please and took responsibility themselves for what happened in the classroom. Finally, the high potential/high achievers were somewhat less enthusiastic than the second group, but had fewer criticisms than the first. They were a little cautious with their observations and comments, especially at first. The majority of this group were women, and a larger percentage lived in the residence hall.\textsuperscript{2}
The study was very significant in the formation of the Honors Program. From the discussions that they had with the students and the observation of general trends within the various groups, the committee members decided to recommend to President John Emens and Dean of Faculty Richard Burkhardt to move ahead with a visible program for gifted students.

For one of the members of the steering committee, Victor Lawhead, the recommendation was the first concrete step toward a goal that he had envisioned for some time. Lawhead and Burkhardt had spent considerable time talking about the possibility of an Honors-type program, but both were aware of obvious resistances within the college. Although there was considerable support from a number of faculty towards a trial program, many were strongly opposed to the idea. The entire principle of education at BSTC at this time was based on equality, and many members of the Teachers College faculty argued that intrinsic reward was of higher value than extrinsic rewards. Even the pay scale of the faculty reflected this philosophy, as teachers were paid solely on the basis of years of service with no compensation for high-quality performance. The major argument of this contingent was that an honors program would contradict the idea of equality and could possibly deny "lower" students the educational stimulation that was due them. Words such as "elitist," "egalitarianism," and, "individuality" were heard quite often from opponents of an honors program.
Lawhead and Burkhardt knew that some firmly were in favor of an honors program and others were just as staunchly against it. They decided not to concentrate so much on these groups, but to try to sway the "fringe element" who were as yet undecided on the topic. There were two points that they felt that were necessary to be stressed: (1) the program wouldn't cost much to set up and (2) no one would lose "status" in the process. They countered the argument of their opponents by saying that it was also unfair to penalize smart students for the inabilities of slower students. A clear division was evident and posed a large threat to further development of the program.

Fortunately for those in favor of an honors program, two factors supported their point of view. As mentioned before, there was a national trend toward improvement of education. Surely an honors program could help to promote higher academic standards at BSTC. More importantly, the Honors Program planners had a very powerful, if not direct, ally -- President John Emens. Emens was concerned with the improvement of the overall quality of education at Ball State and although he never publicly endorsed an honors program, his philosophies were based upon the same qualities that a program of that nature purported. Emens was tired of Ball State being looked upon as a trade school by the liberal arts schools of Indiana and was concerned with the morale of the faculty. He wanted to make Ball State the best teachers
college in the country and felt that it was necessary to convince the faculty that they were doing the best they could. He was also quick to point out that there were more A and B students on Ball State's campus than there were total students at Wabash College. He was intensely proud of Ball State and was always looking to improve the school's image in the eyes of others. Proponents of the Honors Program seized upon these similarities in philosophy and told Emens that with an honors program, Ball State could provide a liberal arts atmosphere to many students while continuing to grow in size and stature as a nationally recognized teachers college. This argument was strong enough to convince Emens and, in 1958, Lawhead was appointed as Assistant Dean with the added responsibility of chairing a faculty committee set up to plan the Honors Program. This committee was concerned with identification of eligible students, determining the scope of participants, and establishing a continuous 4-year program.

The faculty committee was working under a deadline, for the Honors Program was to be put into effect starting in the fall of 1959. After numerous meetings and planning sessions, a satisfactory Honors curriculum was established. Lawhead, remaining true to his promise to create a solid program at a low cost, decided to make the freshman Honors courses special sections of preexisting general studies classes with accelerated syllabi. This move cost the university next to nothing, as faculty were already teaching the courses to non-
Honors students. The sophomore year Honors classes consisted of a three quarter sequence of humanities. The sequence was unique in that, although classified as English classes, it was taught by interdisciplinary faculty. The third year curriculum was composed of three colloquia classes. These classes were to be taught in a more personal setting, with a smaller number of students characteristic of a tutorial style. The colloquia were each a quarter in length, and were concerned with education, social science, and natural sciences, respectively. The final year contained the most formidable course in the Honors curriculum -- the Honors Thesis. The Thesis was to be an independent study designed to be the capstone of the Honors student's liberal arts type education. With a completed curriculum, the next task lay in the recruitment and selection of the first Honors students at Ball State. Through high school records and entrance examinations, students were chosen by their high scores to participate in the Honors Program. A qualifying student had the option of accepting or declining admission to the program. Since Ball State was still a teachers college, the first group of students was comprised largely of education majors. Of the ninety students selected to participate in the initial program, thirty were elementary education majors, thirty were secondary education majors, and thirty were students from other majors offered by Ball State.
By the fall of 1959, the Honors Program was ready to be implemented. Although Lawhead had chaired the committee for the formation of the Honors Program curriculum, the first Honors students were under the direction of Dr. Jerome A. Fallon, who was the associate dean and director of instructional services. In addition, Dr. Fallon was asked to serve on the Honors Committee, which was a permanent committee that evolved from the original Honors Steering Committee that Lawhead chaired in 1958-59. The Ball State News heralded the emergence of the Honors Program and outlined the core curriculum of the program, as well as noting the following special features: automatic excuse from the orientation course that was, at that time, required for all freshmen, excuse from certain courses vis examination in order to move into advanced work earlier than usual, special counseling in respect to program making, library assistance, and general academic procedure, assignment to classes taught by specially designated faculty members, and graduation from Ball State with the designation "Honors Student." The thoroughness of the program was such that it would be several years before any major changes would take place. The program continued under the direction of Dr. Fallon until 1964, when he tendered his resignation in lieu of a post at another university. It should be noted that, at this time, the official title of Honors Program Director had not yet been assigned, and that the Honors Program responsibilities were a
mere fraction of the duties assigned to Dr. Fallon. Nevertheless, he was able to nurture the program as it grew in status and in terms of the number of students, and he was also the first to attend a National Collegiate Honors Conference, obtaining a number of ideas that would enable the program to become better in the future. Additionally, it was also under Dr. Fallon's tenure that the first group of Honors students graduated in 1963.

After Fallon's departure, the reins of the Honors Program were turned over to Dr. Victor Lawhead, who had ascended to the position of dean of undergraduate studies since his previous affiliation with the program. He served as director until 1967, and his administration was marked by two major changes, one direct and one indirect. The indirect change concerned the implementation of a "freshman experience." This so-called experience would be a specially created class for freshmen and would replace requirement sections of general studies classes as the freshmen requirement for Honors students. However, the discussions concerning such a class were not fruitful in producing one during Lawhead's term as director. In fact, the ideas of a "freshman experience" did not become a reality until several years later.

The direct change that occurred under Lawhead was the formation of a student advisory council in 1965. The council was formed in order to assist in student evaluation and to
help introduce the Honors program to the entire student body at the university. Lawhead thought the time was right for the formation of such an advisory body, particularly because the number of Honors students was growing with each passing year. By 1965, the program had ballooned from its original 90 students to 309. In a meeting of the Honors Students group in the Student Center Forum room, Lawhead told the audience that he felt a student advisory council was necessary so that Honors students could "participate more directly in the continued assessment and interpretation of the program." After Lawhead's address, the students in attendance chose twelve of their peers -- three from each class -- and the first Ball State Honors Student Advisory Council was born.

Lawhead relinquished his post as Honors Program director in 1967, and was replaced by Dr. Alexander (Sandy) MacGibbon, a professor of English at BSU. By the time that MacGibbon took over, the number of students involved in the program had swelled to over 800. In 1968, MacGibbon became the first person to bear the official title of Director of the Honors Program, and he took up residence in room 306 of the Administration Building, the office that Lawhead had previously occupied.

It was not too long before MacGibbon realized that the room given to him was not quite as large as necessary for optimum operation, so he began to hatch a plan. Dr. John R.
Emens, the esteemed president of Ball State, would be retiring in June of 1969. However, he was not leaving education altogether, having accepted a position as consultant for AACTE. Emens would not be able to retain his office space in the Administration Building after his retirement and was looking for a place to work on his programs for AACTE. MacGibbon had noticed that there was a house for sale on 203 N. College and explained to Emens that if he (Emens) were able to get the house for the Honors Program, he could have an office within the house for the sole purpose of doing his consultation duties. Emens agreed to the plan, and by December of 1968, the Honors Program had relocated in the first Honors House, further solidifying the program as a separate entity within the growing university.

MacGibbon also expanded the curriculum of the program while serving as director. Being an English professor, he desired to increase the emphasis on the humanities. In order to do this, he authorized an increase in the number of quarter hours in the humanities requirement from eight to twelve, beginning in the 1968-69 school year. He also increased the number of colloquia available by giving individual departments within the university the right to submit ideas for potential colloquia.

Although MacGibbon took over the added responsibilities of Honors Director in 1967, he continued to teach humanities and English classes. By 1970, he began to tire of the
administrative duties associated with the directorship and longed to return to the classroom on a full-time basis. The Honors Program was in search of a new director; and fortunately for future Honors students, graduate student Ronald Galbraith had a suggestion. He had worked with Dr. C. Warren VanderHill and felt that he had sufficient qualifications to become an effective director of Honors at Ball State. Galbraith's voice was heard and in 1970, VanderHill was chosen to succeed MacGibbon.

Under VanderHill, the Honors Program flourished and underwent more improvements than in any other director's tenure. There were several reasons for this, including his long period of service (almost 15 years), the additional time allotted to him to deal with Honors-related affairs (he was the first to have two-thirds of his school time reserved for the sole purpose of Honors administration), his keen administrative skills, and his vision for the future of the Honors Program at Ball State. However, the most important reason may have been the superb personal and working relationship with Provost James Koch. In Koch, VanderHill had a powerful ally with a strong interest in Honors and the administrative muscle to get things done. This was a key in the establishment of many Honors College programs. However, it must be noted that, although VanderHill had several ideas of his own, he was greatly supported by an Honors Committee made up of outstanding faculty and students. The University
Honors Committee was and is a subcommittee of the University Senate, and many of the renovations in the Honors Program were direct results of suggestions by a number of committee members. In addition, the Honors Committee had to approve the actions or motions of Dr. VanderHill and the Honors staff.

VanderHill moved quickly in changing some aspects of the Honors Program. In November of 1970, he announced that the Student Advisory Committee had been reestablished and that interested students were asked to apply to the director. The change in the committee was centered mainly on the number of students on the committee. From the former number of twelve students, three from each class, the amount was trimmed to ten, consisting of two seniors, two juniors, two sophomores, and four freshmen. The main objective of the SAC was still the same: to develop and express the desires of students within the Honors Program concerning its direction, its content, and its organization.5

A problem that continued to arise among Honors students, especially among freshmen and sophomores, was confusion concerning curriculum, both in the Honors sections and in non-Honors sections. VanderHill expressed concerns regarding this subject and discussed the advisability of delegating one curriculum advisor the responsibility of advising all freshmen and sophomores in the Honors Program citing an advantage of filling and maintaining of Honors sections of
general studies courses. Dr. Richard Wires, a member of the University Honors Committee, made the resolution that the committee endorsed the appointment of such an advisor. The resolution was unanimously passed. The first step towards fulfilling the goal was the appointment of an Honors Coordinator to oversee the advising of incoming freshmen Honors students at the Summer Orientation. Finally, in February of 1973, Mr. William G. Hendey was appointed to coordinate the advising of all Honors students beginning in the summer of 1973.

Another change instigated by the Honors Committee was the adoption of the designations cum laude, magna cum laude, and summa cum laude and the use of such terms on the diplomas of those who qualified, regardless of any affiliation with the Honors Program. In January of 1972, Professor David S. Gadziola proposed a resolution outlining this recommendation, along with the additional recommendation that appropriate recognition be given to qualified students during the commencement exercises. The resolution was passed unanimously. The requirements for such Honors were an accumulated G.P.A. of not less than 3.25 for the designation of cum laude, an accumulated G.P.A. of not less than 3.50 for the designation of magna cum laude, and an accumulated designation of not less than 3.75 for the designation of summa cum laude. In a memo to Dr. Richard W. Burkhardt, Vice President and Dean of Faculties, the UHC recommended that the
aforementioned designations be recorded on the student's permanent record and transcript, that the designation which appeared on the diploma be based on the student's complete undergraduate academic record, and that the designation be based on computations up to the academic calendar unit just prior to that in which commencement took place. All of these recommendations were approved by Burkhardt and the diploma designations made their first appearance on baccalaureate degrees during the Spring Commencement of 1973.9

Certain amendments were made to the Diploma Designation Program and/or transcripts and permanent records. Starting in the Spring of 1974, all students who completed the Honors Program had the term "completed Honors Program" on their permanent records. In addition, this designation would be retroactively assigned to all students who had completed the program since its inception in 1963. Finally, a change in qualifications for designations on diplomas was instituted in the Spring of 1978 to reduce the percentage of students graduating with academic Honors from 25% to around 10%. These elevations in requirements for academic Honors recognition were as follows: 3.60 to 3.79 for cum laude, 3.80 to 3.89 for magna cum laude, and 3.90 to 4.00 for summa cum laude.10

Both of the existing freshman Honors core classes originated during the time of VanderHill's service as Honors Director. In the fall of 1974, VanderHill first taught ID
199, the Freshman Honors Symposium in Contemporary Civilization. The course focused on the examination of critical issues and the impact they had on the contemporary age. Special attention was paid to the family unit and the role of the family throughout history. This course was a direct offshoot of some work that VanderHill himself had been researching in his role as a history professor. The course was interdisciplinary, but credit was applicable to general studies in the social and behavioral sciences. The other freshman course began in 1977 and was entitled Biology 199, Honors Symposium in Biology: Human Genetics and Bioethical Decision-making. There were already existing courses in each separate area (genetics and bioethics), but no course combined the two. VanderHill thought that the combination was intriguing and approached Dr. Jon Hendrix, who taught bioethics, and Dr. Thomas Mertens, who taught genetics, on the possibility that they would be interested. Both showed interest and were willing to team teach the subjects involved. The course began as a pilot class designed to meet the general studies contingency for science for Honors students and is now in its twelfth year. Both courses will be discussed in greater detail in the section devoted to classes and programs in Honors.

Prior to 1974, there were no specific housing concessions made for students involved in the Honors Program. The SAC had advocated setting aside perhaps a wing of an
existing residence hall for the sole purpose of housing Honors students. However, there was some opposition to the idea of Honors housing which echoed the same reasons that opponents to the Honors Program had voiced in the late 1950's. Elitism and isolation from the non-Honors student population were thought to be legitimate problems concerning separate housing for Honors students. Despite reservations by housing authorities, the Honors Program was able to acquire the Botsford and Swinford Halls, a brother/sister residence hall in Johnson Complex. Before becoming Honors halls, Botsford and Swinford were used as housing for a living and learning setup known as the Carmichael Project. The objective of the program was to provide a college setting within the larger university for incoming freshmen. Half of the student classes for the year were held in Carmichael Hall, a building directly adjacent to Botsford/Swinford. Freshmen advisors were also located there. At the time of the designation of the Honors halls, there were approximately 800 students involved in the Carmichael Project, although not all lived in Johnson. For several years, the Honors Program and the Carmichael project cohabitated in Botsford/Swinford. However, as the popularity of the Honors Program grew, problems with housing space arose. Although the Carmichael Project was having other problems as well, and in 1982, it was discontinued. Botsford and Swinford were now only Honors
halls, and later, Wilson and Schmidt residence halls were designated to hold Honors students that Botsford/Swinford could not accommodate.

If Honors housing was a shot in the arm for recruitment of Honors students, then the Whiting Scholarships were the miracle cure. The awards, named in Honor of Ralph J. Whiting, a prominent Muncie businessman and president of the Ball State University Foundation, were first given to sixteen matriculating freshmen in the fall of 1976. The scholarships were each valued at $1500 and were awarded based on academic ability, character, creativity, and potential for leadership. They were not based on financial need of any kind, and were renewed annually while the students were enrolled in a baccalaureate program. In order to be eligible, the students had to have graduated in the top ten percent of their high school class and have a combined SAT score of 1200 or above. In addition, all eligible candidates had to come to the BSU campus for an interview and an essay test. The candidates were reviewed by a Whiting Scholars Selection Committee headed by Dr. VanderHill. The main purpose of the Whiting Scholars Program was to boost Ball State's sagging number of students admitted with distinction by offering financial incentive for those with outstanding academic ability. It was also to be of immense public relations value because it would convey the idea that Ball State University was willing to invest significant
scholarship support to young people who showed promise of superior academic achievement. Over the years, the Whitinger Scholarship Program has undergone some changes, paring the number of individual scholarships to ten per class, but increasing the stipend to cover all tuition, room, and board. The program has grown in reputation, and has become, as VanderHill envisioned, a powerful recruiting tool to entice top-notch students to Ball State.

VanderHill was immensely pleased with the success of his Whitinger Scholars Program, but was still not satisfied with the declining number of students admitted with Distinction and with the percentage of Distinction students who enrolled but left before completing a degree. Although he acknowledged the fact that a change in the name from the Honors Program to the Honors College would be largely "cosmetic," he thought that such a change would symbolize a response to the problems from one academic unit within the university. It would also send out a message to other academic units (departments, centers, programs, etc.) that the Honors Program recognized the need for unity among said units in the area of recruitment and retention of academically talented students.

VanderHill cited several reasons for his desire to adopt the concept of collegiality in the Honors Program. A change in name would more accurately reflect the changes in enrollment number and curricular requirements that had taken
place in the program in the 20 years since its inception. More importantly, 1979 (the year VanderHill proposed the change) marked the first time that Honors freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors were living under the same roof in Botsford/Swinford Halls. Additionally, VanderHill had a related proposal for a system whereby outstanding students would be able to do individual Honors work in departments as early as their sophomore year. Each department would elect a Department Honors Representative, whose major task would be to identify undergraduate faculty who might wish to work as mentors with promising undergraduate students. The Honors College could aid such a program by maintaining an up-to-date list of DHR's, serving as a clearinghouse in assisting students with the process of contacting DHR's, and keeping a record of students and faculty who were working together.11

VanderHill emphasized that the Honors College would be a "paper college." That is, no curricular or budgetary shuffling would be necessary in order to facilitate such a change, and the newly created Honors College would not compete with the existing colleges of the university for budget or staff. He thought that this simple change would have more appeal to talented students because no other university or college in Indiana had an Honors College and having an Honors College experience noted on a permanent transcript would have much more appeal than noting "Completed
Honors Program." In theory, this increase in interest would translate into an increase in the number of high-quality students admitted to and retained by Ball State University. It possessed an enormous potential to be a powerful recruiting tool for the Admissions staff.

VanderHill provided a strong argument for collegiality of the Honors Program, too strong for the Honors Subcommittee to deny. On January 15, 1979, a motion unanimously passed concerning the Honors College read as follows:

"The designation of the present Honors Program (should) be changed to Honors College. The proposed Honors College would maintain its present structure: a Director rather than a Dean, a faculty drawn from the regular faculty of the five academic colleges, and selected students who pursue a partially-prescribed curriculum and may choose to live together in a designated university residence hall complex."12

After being passed by many administrative bodies, including the General Studies Committee, the University Educational Policies Committee, University Senate, and the Board of Trustees, the motion became ratified and the Honors Program became the Honors College in 1979.

The Honors College celebrated its change in title by moving from the Honors House on College Avenue to the newly completed Whitinger Business Building on January 31, 1980.
From his new office, VanderHill continued his work on the Departmental Honors Program. The College of Business and the College of Architecture and Planning were the first to accept in principle the program. By January of 1981, many departments had approved of the proposal, and approximately half of those departments had established a G.P.A. requirement of 3.50 or better for participation in the program. VanderHill encouraged negotiations and tactful use of peer pressure to persuade those departments that had not already joined the program to do so. By the Autumn of 1981, the DHP was implemented as an Honors College program, and those students who completed DHP had that accomplishment noted on their transcripts.

VanderHill was always mindful of developing new recruitment devices, and a plan that was based partially in a preexisting program at Indiana State was being developed to get interested high school students involved in the educational process at Ball State. The program was to be called the Honors College Summer Programs and would be open to high school students who were in the summer between their junior and senior year. The program would enable the students to take college courses for credit and have that credit applied toward their undergraduate studies. There was a problem in the early stages due to a major difference in student fees between the ISU program ($115) and the proposed BSU program ($279). However, VanderHill was able to secure
125 scholarships from the Board of Trustees to cover fees for one four-quarter hour course, lowering the cost to $155 per student and enabling the HCSP to be competitive enough to have its first set of students in the summer of 1982. Classes in Biology, English, Psychology, and Architecture were offered at this first session. The HCSP has continued to expand in scope. In the summer of 1989, there are two separate sessions planned, each of which lasts two weeks and has approximately 100 students. Classes in Architecture, Chemistry, Economics, Computer-Aided Drafting, Biology, Psychology, and Speech Communications will be offered. The HCSP has become a good way for promising high school students (admissions requirements for the HCSP are a 3.0 G.P.A. and ranking in the top twenty percent of their class) to see BSU and for BSU to recruit such students. Many current Honors College students were former HCSP participants.

VanderHill's last major contribution to the Honors College was the formation and development of an exchange program with Westminster College in Oxford, England. In 1983, he went over as a visiting scholar to Oxford university with the dual purpose of finalizing the administrative details with Westminster College. The original plan called for an exchange of twelve students to England every other autumn. No plans were made for English students to come to Ball State, but faculty from Westminster were to come to teach American students. It was suggested that a set of
minimum requirements be established in order to select a qualified contingent of students. Such requirements included full-time enrollment at Ball State, a minimum G.P.A. of 3.40, the completion of an essay contrasting some aspects of American and British life, and an interview required of all finalists. The program has been modified somewhat, in that it has been made into an annual exchange instead of being every two years. In the first year of its existence, ten students went to Oxford under the supervision of Dr. Anthony Edmonds, professor of History. Now in its fourth year, the first under the semester system, the program remains a positive experience for those faculty and students involved, despite being hampered by rising travel costs.

In all fairness, it should be mentioned that Dr. VanderHill was no King Midas, and certainly not everything he touched turned to gold. The percentage of distinction students admitted to Ball State fluctuated throughout his tenure, being up one year and down the next. Some of his proposed programs, like the Alumni Achievement Award program, never got off the ground. However, his successes in the Honors College far outnumbered his shortcomings, and the students and faculty were the direct beneficiaries of his expert administrative skills. In fact, many of the result of his efforts are presently being realized, as the number of distinction students and Whiting Scholar applicants increase steadily each year.
By 1985, VanderHill had transformed the Honors College into what he envisioned at the time of his installment as Director in 1970. There was an opening for the position as associate provost, and he was persuaded by Provost Koch to try the position in an acting capacity. VanderHill felt that he had an apt successor as Director of the Honors College in the person of Dr. Arno Wittig, a longtime Honors Subcommittee member and esteemed professor of psychology. In April of 1986, Dr. Wittig was appointed Honors College Director pending approval of the Board of Trustees. In addition to directing the college, his tasks were to include the direction of the Undergraduate Fellows program, Whiting Scholars program, and workshops for talented high school students. He also was to head the selection of students and faculty for the exchange program in Oxford.\textsuperscript{13}

Under Wittig, the Honors College has continued to make bold moves in asserting itself as a powerful entity within the university and as a training ground for outstanding college students and future leaders. Much of the work done in the last three years has been concerned with "fine-tuning" the program, although new avenues are constantly being explored. Wittig is supported by and involved in a number of committees tied to Honors. The Honors Subcommittee of University Senate, made up of five faculty (four appointed by U-Senate, one appointed by UEC), one student, and Wittig, formulate the policies of the Honors College. The Humanities
The committee decides on the curriculum for the Humanities sequence. The Whitinger Scholarship Selection Committee and the Undergraduate Fellowship Committee select deserving students for their respective programs. Several Ad Hoc Committees, including the Honors College Transition Task Force and the Honors College Global Studies Planning Committee, have also been committees formed under the umbrella of the Honors College.

Changes in the Honors College have continued to occur. The Whitinger Scholarship was increased in 1987 to cover all tuition and room and board, greatly intensifying the competition. A concentrated effort to raise campus consciousness towards the Honors College has resulted in a number of new programs aimed at that specific purpose. The Odyssey, a student-published magazine showcasing literary and artistic productions of Honors College students, has been printed for a number of years; News and Notes is a newsletter that updates students on happenings within the Honors College; and a newly created Whitinger Scholar newsletter chronicles the lives of Whitinger Scholars, past and present, through small articles. In addition, an annual Honors Week, sponsored by the Student Honors Council and highlighted by an ice-cream social, a Trivia Bowl competition, and other Honors-related activities has been moderately successful. One of the most successful products of the Honors Week programs thus far was the production of a Westminster College
slide show, which was widely attended and gained national recognition at the National Convention of Honors Councils in Dallas in 1987. Finally, the Honors College has been involved in bringing many outstanding speakers, such as Jeane Kirkpatrick, Henry Kissinger, and John Birch, to Ball State, and offered several Honors students the opportunity to meet with these speakers in question-and-answer sessions.

The Honors College has been able to make great strides with a surprisingly small staff. True to its title of a "paper college," it doesn't compete with the other academic colleges for staff or financial assistance. Wittig, made an official "paper dean" in 1986, currently has one full-time secretary, one part-time secretary, and a student secretary. Most of the summer work, such as orientation programs and office jobs, is done by student workers. In addition, the Honors College now enjoys the services of two full-time advisors: Angie Cooksey, the freshman advisor, and William Hendey, the upperclass advisor. Their assignment, however, is through Dr. Michael Haynes, the Director of Advising.

Operating from its new headquarters, the newly remodeled Burkhardt Building, to which it was moved in 1987, the Honors College continues to plan for the future. A current concern is deriving a method to keep a cap on Honors College enrollment. An overabundant number of students leads to problems in staffing classes, offering smaller classes, and remaining within budgetary restrictions. As the quality
level of students increase, changes in standards for admissions into the Honors College have been instigated in order to keep the number of students within the optimum range of 1000 to 1200. In 1985, invitations were offered to those students (numbering around 400) who were in the top twenty percent of their graduating class and had a 500 or better score on the verbal portion of the SAT. By 1987, when standards were raised to accept students in the top twenty percent of their class and with a composite 1030 SAT or 23 ACT score, a whopping 900 incoming freshmen were eligible. The 1989–90 school year will see another raise in standards, with automatic acceptance going to students who graduate in the top ten percent of their class and who have an 1100 on the SAT or a 25 on the ACT. As the Honors Program/College enters its fifth decade, further changes are being implemented. A plan that will show an Honors heading preceding all Honors core courses on a students' transcript is in the works. Such a setup will show future employers and graduate schools the number of Honors courses a student has taken, and will also enable teachers to get teaching credit for instructing Honors courses. The Honors College is also on the verge of expanding its core curriculum, with a new Honors Global Studies course set to make its debut in the 1990–91 school year. The course will not expand graduate requirements because it can be used in place of current general studies requirements in global studies. It will be
taught in conjunction with the ID 199 course during the freshman year. Plans also call for the movement of the Honors Biology course to the 200 level. The combination of these changes will enable Honors students to have an Honors course every semester for all eight semesters.

With a firm foundation in the past and a keen awareness of the future, the Honors College is enjoying its greatest popularity and success ever. Having emerged with many of its original ideals and principles intact, the Honors College is a fitting tribute to all administration, faculty, and students who have spent much time and effort to make it successful. As it celebrates the 30th anniversary of its origin, the Honors Program/College seems primed to strengthen itself for future endeavors well into the 21st century.
Appendix A

Classes and Programs of the Ball State Honors College

ID 199: Freshman Honors Symposium in Contemporary Civilization (3 semester hours)

ID 199 is a core curriculum class suggested for Honors freshmen. The course is an interdepartmental one, but is most often taught by History professors. The main focus of the course deals with the examination of some of the issues that confront the contemporary age. Although this can be approached in a number of ways, a favorite avenue is the examination of the American family and the effects of history upon it. Dr. VanderHill originated this course to concentrate on the role of the family in history, but some liberties have been taken by other professors. A highlight in many sections of ID 199 is the writing of a biography of a family member taking into account the impact of historical events on his/her life. Since this is a freshman level class, the number of students in each section may tend to be greater than that of other Honors courses, but smaller groups, headed by junior and senior Honors students, are formed and used for weekly discussion of classroom topics. The course can be used for a major, a minor, or to satisfy general studies requirements in Social and Behavioral Sciences.
BIO 199: Honors Symposium in Biology (3 semester hours)

Biology 199 is also a freshman level Honors course, dealing with the interaction between human genetics and bioethical decision-making. The course originated in 1977 and was team-taught by Dr. Thomas Merlens, geneticist, and Dr. Jon Hendrix, a professor specializing in bioethics. The course is not an attempt to make every student a scientist, but to make intellectual students familiar with the nature of science, its strengths, limitations, and practicality. A main thrust of the course is to convince students that the science of human genetics is of significance in their own lives, as well as in contemporary society. This is done by introducing the moral and ethical dilemmas associated with human genetics and helping the students decide how to cope with such dilemmas. Through weekly handouts, quizzes, tests, and a unique tool known as a bioethical decision-making model (developed by Dr. Hendrix), students learn to (1) clarify their values, (2) examine alternate solutions to ethical problems, (3) project the consequences of implementing each solution, and (4) identify the solutions most consistent with their individual values and within the limits acceptable to society. Course lectures are divided between lecturers and discussions on human genetics and the bioethical issues related to the current genetics content. A laboratory session is new to the course, having been added in 1988-89. This course, like ID 199, is large due to the large number of
freshman Honors students, but discussion leaders and smaller
discussion groups are used in a similar manner as in ID 199.
Credit from this course may be applied towards general
studies requirements in the physical, earth, and life
sciences.

**English 201, 202, 203: Honors Humanities Sequence**  
(9 semester hours)

The Humanities sequence has been a part of the Honors Program since its inception in 1959. The sequence is broken down into three courses, each with a three hour credit. The first class deals with the ancient world, and uses some major texts in the literature, philosophy and general thought of the Greek, the Hebraic, and the Roman civilizations. Examples of such texts include *The Iliad*, *The Odyssey*, *Oedipus Rex*, *Agamemnon*, and the Bible. The second course concerns itself with the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and the Enlightenment. Some major texts used are Dante's *Inferno*, Shakespearean plays, *The Prince*, and *Candide*. The final course deals with some major texts in literature, philosophy, and general thought of the 19th and 20th century, including *The Communist Manifesto*, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, and works in Romanticism and Existentialism. In addition, two volumes of *Literature of the World*, edited by Brian Wilke and James Hart, are used throughout the three courses.

The Humanities sequence is concerned with the cultural, philosophic, and mythic assumptions which have shaped the
western human's way of seeing and organizing fundamental notions about the nature of reality. The survey offers a broad, general perspective, and as it introduces the students to their heritage, it raises problems, asks questions, and examines values. Students should learn something about the process of thought and the nature of self-examination. In "following an argument where it leads," they should learn, in due course, ways of standing outside themselves and seeking those truths which appear to be fundamentally enduring.\textsuperscript{15}

Humanities course content is decided upon by a Humanities Committee, made up of anyone who regularly teaches Humanities. Its main objectives are to attempt to coordinate the many sections of Humanities and to work out broad ideas and responsibilities. The Master Syllabus of the Humanities is compiled and revised by the Humanities Committee. The Humanities courses have much smaller class sizes than the freshmen-level Honors courses, usually numbering between twenty and thirty students. Credit earned in this sequence may be applied to majors, minors, electives, or general studies requirements in the Humanities. The sequence also serves as the core for a Humanities minor, available only to Honors students. Prerequisites are English 103 and 104 (English composition).
Honors Colloquia (2 courses - 1 or 2 semester hour(s) each)

The Honors Colloquia are small discussion classes based loosely on the English tutorial system. They are usually taken during the sophomore, junior, or senior year. The hallmark of the colloquia is the range and diversity of subject matter offered. Originally, there were three colloquia offered: one in the sciences, one in the social sciences, and one in education. However, today the colloquia have branched out to encompass nearly every aspect of learning. If a faculty member is interested in teaching a specific course subject, he or she can submit a proposal for a colloquium in that subject to the Honors College dean. If approved, the course is offered to Honors Students under a specific department heading. This practice has enabled many diversified subjects to be offered, including "Human Sexuality," "Death and Dying," "The Jazz Age," "Hitler," and "The Nostalgia Theme in American Cinema." In order to facilitate discussion, colloquia meet once a week for two hours and have a very small class size, ranging from ten to twenty students. Credit from colloquia may be applied towards majors, minors, electives, or general studies requirements.

ID 499: Senior Honors Thesis (3 semester hours)

The Honors Thesis is known as the capstone of the Honors College Curriculum. The thesis is an independent study done
with the guidance of a professor chosen by the student. The relationship between the student and his chosen professor epitomizes what the Honors College is all about -- a student and a professor working together toward a common academic goal. The thesis form can vary greatly depending upon the discipline in which the student is working. Music majors generally choose a senior recital with prepared program notes, while art majors often put together a portfolio of their works. Many science students use research opportunities to complete thesis requirements, and may even get an article in a scientific journal for their efforts. Architecture students usually use their senior Architecture theses as their Honors theses. Honors theses from previous years are kept on file in Bracken Library.

General Studies Honors Sections

The Honors College offers several "H" sections of general studies classes to Honors students. These courses are not required to fulfill any Honors Core requirements, but differ in many respects from non-Honors general studies courses. First of all, Honors general studies are usually much smaller in terms of enrollment, ranging from ten to twenty-four students. On the other hand, regular general studies courses have from 30 to 450 students. Secondly, faculty for the Honors courses are specially appointed by the Dean of Honors and departmental chairpersons and are
subjected to biannual student evaluations. Finally, Honors general studies courses usually emphasize class discussion, and offer more essay tests as opposed to objective testing. Currently, there are Honors general studies classes in English, Economics, Natural Resources, Philosophy, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, and Speech. Credit for these classes is, of course, applied to general studies requirements.

Undergraduate Fellowship Program

The Undergraduate Fellowship Program offers qualified sophomores, juniors, and seniors the opportunity to work with faculty as research associates. The program is competitive, and is open to all students with an accumulated G.P.A. of 3.25 or better, regardless of participation in the Honors College. Undergraduate Fellows receive a stipend of $600 a semester, and usually work 10 to 15 hours a week.

Honors Publications

There are three publications associated with the Honors College. Odyssey is an annual journal designed to be a showcase for the creative endeavors of Honors students, and includes poetry, stories, drawings, and photographs. News and Notes is the official newsletter of the Honors College, keeping all students abreast of what's news and/or newsworthy. A new addition is a Whitinger Scholar
newsletter, which chronicles the lives of Whitinger Scholars, past and present. All publications are student-run.

Honors Library Privileges

All Honors College students are issued an Honors College library card, which entitles them to graduate student privileges. Students may check out a book for the entire year (unless it is recalled by the circulation desk), and also have access to the interlibrary loan system.

Departmental Honors

Since 1981, students have been able to work on Departmental Honors and graduate with such honors in addition to the Honors College honors. The work usually begins in a students junior year and is coordinated by the Honors College through departmental Honors representatives. Requirements for graduation with departmental Honors vary from department to department.

Faculty and Course Evaluation

A faculty and course evaluation program has been conducted by Honors students since 1972. The main objective of this program is to improve both faculty and course matter for the benefit of the student. Copies of every evaluation
are given to the faculty member being evaluated, as well as the Dean of the Honors College. All evaluation are subject to examination by anyone interested in them.

**Student Honors Council**

The Student Honors Council is a student-run governing organization consisting of between fifteen and seventeen members. New members are chosen through an application process, which includes a statement of purpose. The applications are reviewed by the council and new members are selected pending approval by the Dean of the Honors College. There are four traditional offices (president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer), and seven standing committee chairpersons. The committees include the academic challenge, selection (for new members), social/cultural, publications, public relations, Honors Week, and seminars committees. The vice-president serves as student representative for the University Senate Honors Subcommittee. The main functions of the Student Honors Council are to serve as an active link between Honors students and Honors administration and to provide services and organization for Honors College students. It is also active in the Mid-East Honors Association (MEHA), which is a branch of the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC).
Appendix B

The Main Objective of the Honors College

Several members of the Honors College faculty and administration both past and present, were asked to give their opinions on what they thought the main objective of the Honors College was. The following is a sample of their responses:

Dr. C. Warren VanderHill, Provost and Vice-President for Academic Affairs, Professor of History and Director of the Honors Program/College from 1970 to 1985:

"The Honors College is what I call the breadth part of the education of Ball State. It is the part of the education within the larger general studies program to give an opportunity ... to broaden one's intellectual horizons. One's major is the depth of education. Any major is more and more and more. Honors is designed to stretch you laterally to give you some views into areas that you might not have thought of before, whether it's the sciences, the role of the family in history, or the richness of the literature of the Humanities sequence. It also provides the opportunity to go one-on-one
(with people). A lot of what you're going to do in life is one-on-one ... and that's not what the classes are in high school or college: it's usually big groups of people. Because of the one-on-one opportunity that it provides, I think that an Honors education for Honors caliber students is something that students should do."

Dr. Victor B. Lawhead, Professor Emeritus of Education, Member of original Honors Steering Committee, Director of Honors Program from 1964 to 1967. Currently teaching Honors Colloquium:

"The main objective of the Honors College is to provide a group of able students the best possible undergraduate education that this institution can offer. It helps to enhance the students' integration of learning."

Dr. Richard Wires, Professor of History, Instructor of Honors Humanities Courses, former Interim Director of Honors Program:

"To make more opportunities available and to turn out more well-rounded or Renaissance people. You can call it catch-up time. For example, there may be students from smaller communities who have not had many (cultural)
opportunities in high school, but if you make the opportunities available during their four years at Ball State, by the time they graduate, they should be on a par with ... students from fine arts colleges. It comes down to saying, 'These people have the potential, let's find them the opportunity.'"

Dr. Arno Wittig, Professor of Psychology, Honors College Director/Dean from 1985 to present:

"(My goal is) to streamline what we already have. What I mean by streamline is to simply make better what we already have. We have a very good program, but it tends to get out of control because of the size of the group and the number of demands on my time. I need to be free to do more Honors College kinds of things. As far as students are concerned, the Honors College's main objective is to provide special educational opportunities for students who show promise of outstanding academic achievement. The key word is special."
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Honors College Student Enrollment (1980-1989)

Freshmen:

Total: