

UNIVERSITY HONORS PROGRAM

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY STATEMENT

I. PURPOSE AND PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

A. Library Collection Development Objective

The library seeks to support curricular and research needs for all honors undergraduate classes and teaching faculty.

The mission of the University Honors Program at Valdosta State University is to provide for the stimulation of academically motivated students so that they achieve their full academic potential, while at the same time providing recognition for such students' endeavors. The Honors Program encourages meaningful connections between disciplines, innovative and unusual approaches to subject matter, and reliance upon experiential learning that is fully integrated into the course content. The Honors Program also provides extra-curricular opportunities for students to broaden themselves through lectures, service opportunities, and other forms of activity that relate to their education. Finally, the mission of the Honors Program is to attract the best students to Valdosta State, and to assist in retaining those students through all four years of their undergraduate experience. In this way Honors Program students will make a visible and positive impact on the entire university community, thereby enriching the diversity of the Valdosta State University community as a whole.

B. Description of User Groups Supported

User groups supported include undergraduate students and faculty. The University Honors Program offers special courses and activities designed to help qualified students realize their full intellectual potential and to provide them with the best possible preparation for their major degree programs. It does so through a wide range of special classes, interdisciplinary seminars, and extra-curricular programs supported by departments and faculty across campus.

The Honors Program currently offers twenty-five courses spanning sixteen different disciplines, and is supported by faculty from four of the five colleges at VSU. As presently configured, the focus of the Honors Program is on freshmen and sophomores, servicing approximately fifty to

ninety underclassmen each quarter, although the Program has a broader direct contact through newsletters and advising with over 400 students, who at some point in their academic careers have made some progress toward completion of an Honors Program certificate. All regularly offered Honors courses are enhanced versions of core curriculum courses, which out of necessity will be geared primarily toward freshmen, sophomores, and some transfer students.

The Honors Program also offers interdisciplinary and innovative seminars on a wide range of topics, both at the freshman and junior levels. Students are required to take one seminar at each level. Some of the seminars offered in the past have included: Myth, Mandela, and Freedom; Native American Religions; Cosmology; Contemporary Views of Mankind; Ecology; Women in the Arts; The Role and Function of a University; Modernism, Society, and the Individual; and Moving Beyond Hatred: Conflict and Resolution.

The Honors Program is also engaged in encouraging students in activities related to the classroom environment and beyond. These activities range from independent research to presentations of research at regional conferences, as well as to attending colloquia and forums that are of scholarly and popular interest.

C. New and Expanding Areas of Interest

The Honors Program clearly needs to move into the upper curriculum and also needs to offer more incentives to students to enter and stay in the program. More courses in the upper curriculum will mean that Honors courses will count toward completion of a student's major, as well as will encourage work of greater depth, and work that will be professionally useful to students as they prepare for graduate school and other post-baccalaureate opportunities. Part of this effort, then, entails working with all five colleges and their departments to begin development of an Honors presence in the upper curriculum. The particulars of these developments would be worked out within the various departments through the efforts of Honors Development Committees in liaison with the Honors Program director. However, some common qualities would be expected, such as an emphasis on independent research, interdisciplinary approaches, completion of an Honors Thesis, and presentation of research at national and regional professional meetings.

Another curricular incentive for the Honors Program would be the construction of truly accelerated courses, patterned after the Honors Spanish courses (SPA 195 and 196), that would offer more credit than

would the typical standard, non-Honors versions, thereby allowing sufficiently motivated students to move quickly through core curriculum requirements. These courses may be interdisciplinary in nature, actually combining two or even three disciplines (e.g., English, history, and philosophy) in such a way that the subject matter is extended and reinforced, rather than being merely compressed. Such a track of courses could be expanded to allow students to finish a BA or BS in three years rather than four.

Along interdisciplinary lines, the Honors Program should also be instrumental in setting up mechanisms allowing sufficiently motivated and focused students to work closely with several departments in the development of individualized and interdisciplinary major programs of study that are not addressed by the traditional configuration of majors.

D. Areas of Established Specialization

N/A

II. TREATMENT OF SUBJECT DEPTH

A. Treatment of Subject Depth

Please refer to the departmental collection development policies for subject depth and collection levels for the Honors Program:

1. French
2. Spanish
3. Political Science
4. English
5. Art
6. Music
7. Philosophy & Religious Studies
8. History
9. Math
10. Communication & Mass Media
11. Biology

B. Specific Delimitations

Formats collected: Audiovisual, monographs, reference and other, selectively.

Imprint dates collected: Current, 20th century, 19th century and earlier, selectively;

Chronological focus: Current, 20th century, 19th century, and earlier, selectively.

Languages collected: English, extensively.

Places of publication: North America, Western Europe, selectively.