

Honors Department

Annual Unit Plan for Academic Year 2016-2017

October 2015

Describe Department/Unit

Mission/Connection to College Mission

Honors Program Mission:

The Honors Program seeks to prepare students for transfer and to heighten students' educational experiences. The Honors Program supports Cerro Coso's mission to provide academic instruction to promote fulfillment of four-year college transfer requirements and encourage degrees. The Honors Program encourages and recognizes students' academic excellence, degree completion, and transfer readiness.

Catalog Description for Honors:

"The Cerro Coso Honors Program is designed to serve highly motivated students who are interested in a challenging and rewarding academic experience, preparing them for transfer to a four-year college. Honors Program students benefit from priority registration at Cerro Coso, scholarship opportunities, priority admissions at many universities, and other advantages through the Honors Program's transfer agreements with many UC, CSU, and private universities."

Phi Theta Kappa Mission:

Phi Theta Kappa is an international honors society for community college students. Its mission is to recognize and encourage academic achievement of community college students and provide development opportunities through participation in leadership, honors, service, and fellowship. Phi Theta Kappa supports Cerro Coso's mission to encourage degree completion. Phi Theta Kappa membership is one of the ways students are recognized for their academic excellence at Cerro Coso. Our chapter also offers students opportunities for chapter leadership and community and college service.

Connection to College's Strategic Plan Goals:

Both the Honors Program and Phi Theta Kappa support the College's third strategic goal, optimize student enrollment and promote Cerro Coso as the higher education option of first choice to potential students throughout our service area, by directly contacting high school students eligible for the Honors Program, offering a \$1000 scholarship to an outstanding incoming student, and showcasing the best Cerro Coso has to offer in a high-end, quality education. The benefits of the Honors Program and Phi Theta Kappa can help draw students to Cerro Coso and make their time here even more advantageous when applying for jobs, scholarships, and transfer.

Report on Improvements Made and Gaps Identified in the Prior Year

Student Equity

N/A

Population:

Ethnicity: Hispanic

Analysis and Plan:

There is no data collected or provided for students in the Honors Program, so no conclusions can be drawn about gaps. However, UCLA created its Transfer Alliance Program (TAP) with California Community Colleges as a way to adjust their transfer student

populations, specifically seeking to attract underrepresented groups to UCLA.

Population:

Socioeconomic Status: Economically Disadvantaged

Analysis and Plan:

Examining student equity data for Phi Theta Kappa members would be nearly impossible to gather. Even without this data, I already know that for our students, the biggest barrier to joining PTK is the \$70 membership fee, which potentially excludes many of our students who need financial assistance. EOPS tries to address this need by reimbursing EOPS students for this fee, but this is only one population. I have not devised a way to help other economically disadvantaged groups in gaining access to Phi Theta Kappa.

Outcomes Assessment: Overall Report

We are in the process of implementing the improvements in our program learning outcome (PLO) assessment outlined in our last Annual Unit Plan, so no further improvements have been planned.

To identify potential gaps, the Honors Program Committee has revised its program learning outcome assessment rubric, tracking honors courses/contracts, online/onsite, and types of assignments. We made policy changes so that for the first time, all honors classes will have a uniform rigor, specifically a 2,500-word research project, which matches what we have required in Honors contracts. We are in the process of assessing this. Additionally, our new assessment asks instructors for specific information about the type of assignment, the kinds and amount of research required, details about the assignment objectives. This is unique, perhaps, to honors projects since we assess a variety of disciplines, and while the program learning outcome is the same, the specific aims of research projects may vary from discipline to discipline.

Outcomes Assessment: Gaps Identified in Prior Year's Assessments

Progress Made on Program Review

Honors Program

Year of Last Program Review:

2015

Progress in the last year on two-year strategies:

Since our program review was completed last semester, we have not fully implemented or assessed our strategies. That seems appropriate since these are two-year (three-year?) strategies.

Goal 1: Growth

Sustain program growth by mailings and informational sessions to educate Cerro Coso students about the Honors Program and its benefits and by workshops to educate Cerro Coso faculty (particularly those outside of the Ridgcrest Indian Wells Valley campus) about the Honors Program and how contracts work.

Progress Made Toward Goal:

Mailings have been sent and faculty workshops will be scheduled during this and the upcoming year.

Goal 2: Rigor

Sustain program rigor on the front end by working with faculty teaching honors classes and supervising honors contracts and on the back end by assessing projects to verify implementation of Honors Program Committee's policies regarding rigor of honors projects, aiming at uniform and appropriate rigor.

Progress Made Toward Goal:

The Honors Program Coordinator has spoken with faculty new to honors this semester. More than a few months will be needed to more fully implement and assess this goal.

Progress in the last year on five-year strategies:

Honors Program

Year of Last Program Review:

2015

Progress in the last year on two-year strategies:**Progress in the last year on five-year strategies:****Goal 1: Growth**

Sustain program growth by moving more students through the Honors Program. Every semester, inform Honors Program students of their progress through the Honors Program, with specific GPA and number of honors units completed, outlining any deficiencies and necessary remediation, such as improve GPA within one semester, see counselor for advising and creation of a plan to complete the Honors units, or enroll in honors course.

Progress Made Toward Goal:

Unable to assess at this time as it is too soon to see a change in the number of Honors Program graduates.

Goal 2: Consistent Prerequisites

Establish ENGL C070 as a prerequisite for all honors courses. ENGL C070 is the prerequisite for entrance into the Honors Program, so the honors courses must be at the same level.

Progress Made Toward Goal:

59% complete. This goal is not immediately obtainable, but we are making progress in the few months since our Program Review. The Honors Program Committee, which includes the CIC Chair, has agreed to make ENGL C070 the prerequisite for all honors courses. These changes will be made as each COR comes through CIC.

These honors courses have the correct ENGL C070 prerequisite:

- ANTH C121H
- ART C106H
- ENGL C102H, C221H, C22H, C235H, C245H
- HIST C103H, 104H, 132H

These honors courses do not yet have (or cannot yet be confirmed) the correct prerequisite:

- CHEM C113H, C213H
- HIST C131H
- MATH C121H
- MUSC C101H
- POLC C101H
- PSYC C101H

Progress Made on Prior Year Initiatives

Honors Program—Provide Progress Updates to All Honors Program Students

We completely implemented this process ahead of the deadline. The Honors Program Coordinator keeps an up-to-date record of current Honors Program students, looking up every student's academic record every semester. The Honors Program Counselor sends letters to students, informing them of their status, with special attention to those who have fallen below the 3.25 maintenance GPA or who are not making timely progress, which is now officially defined as completion of one honors course or contract every academic year until 16 honors units are completed. Students have one semester to regain the minimum GPA, and those who fail to make this GPA are removed from the Honors Program. Inactive students are also removed from the Honors Program. The result is increased communication with Honors Program students so they know their progress in Program completion. Another result is a more accurate record of Honors Program students. No longer do we count students who join the Honors Program but complete no honors units or have a low GPA. This is not unusual of students entering as high school seniors who then never attain a 3.25 GPA at Cerro Coso, and these students are now removed from the Program in a timely manner. In short, this strategy has been wonderfully successful and will continue.

Honors Program—Sustain Program Growth

In previous years, a lack of District IR support made it difficult to obtain a correct list of students eligible for the Honors Program, but with vast improvements in District IR, this list is now accessible. A lack of time has made it difficult for the Honors Program Coordinator to do as much as might otherwise be possible in outreach, but much has been done and is in the works.

Our approach is two-pronged: educate Cerro Coso students about the Honors Program and its benefits and educate Cerro Coso faculty (particularly non-IWV) about the Honors Program and how honors contracts work.

Students:

All Cerro Coso students eligible for the Honors Program were contacted via email. All eligible high school seniors in our college service area were contacted via mail to their home addresses. Phi Theta Kappa have been represented at all college outreach events, and this semester Honors and Phi Theta Kappa students attended Club Rush at Burroughs High to promote Cerro Coso's Honors Program and Phi Theta Kappa. Information sessions have been held at IWV, Bishop, and Mammoth for students, multiple times both via iTV and in person. Outreach to all campuses, including KRV, still needs to be scheduled before registration begins, starting with a direct email to all students potentially eligible, followed up with a college-wide informational session for eligible students.

College sites and faculty:

Information sessions, including Lunch and Learns, have been held for faculty at ESCC and faculty college-wide. A targeted outreach to KRV still needs to be scheduled.

Phi Theta Kappa—Participate in College Completion Corps Efforts

In the midterm evaluation, this was assessed as a moderate failure but not yet completely dead; however, this semester, this was completed wonderfully by our Phi Theta Kappa officers and volunteers. This effort is entirely dependent on student volunteers. The Phi Theta Kappa Advisor and Student Officers planned and executed a Welcome Week as part of the College Completion Corps. Great, enthusiastic plans were made and, happily, successfully implemented.

Plan Initiatives for Next Year

Initiatives for Next Academic Year

Support Strategic Goal 3.2: Make Cerro Coso the Higher Education Option of First Choice

Action Plan:

Increased awareness among local high school students of what Cerro Coso can offer its top students through the Honors Program and Phi Theta Kappa: a stronger transfer application, better transfer opportunities, scholarships, leadership and research opportunities.

Measure of Success:

More applications to the Honors Program from incoming students

Person Responsible:

Honors Program Coordinator and Counselor: Christine Swiridoff and Karee Hamilton

It directly addresses a college Strategic Goal or Objective

Strategic Goal 3.2: Make Cerro Coso the Higher Education Option of First Choice

Growth and Completion

Action Plan:

Since the current strategies are proving successful and must be ongoing, continued every year--not done once and finished--it seems appropriate to build on our success.

Attract new students:

Sustain program growth by mailings and informational sessions to educate Cerro Coso students about the Honors Program and its benefits and by workshops to educate Cerro Coso faculty (particularly those outside of the Ridgecrest Indian Wells Valley campus) about the Honors Program and how contracts work.

Move current Honors Program students towards program completion:

Every semester, inform Honors Program students of their progress through the Honors Program, with specific GPA and number of honors units completed, outlining any deficiencies and necessary remediation, such as improve GPA within one semester, see counselor for advising and creation of a plan to complete the Honors units, or enroll in honors course

Measure of Success:

Increase in number of Honors Program members, including higher percentage of non-IWV students

Increase in percentage of Honors Program completers (graduates)

Person Responsible:

Honors Program Coordinator and Counselor: Christine Swiridoff and Karee Hamilton

It addresses a program review strategy

Program Review Two-Year and Five-Year Strategies to support growth

Evaluate Resource Needs

Facilities

None

Information Technology

None

Marketing

Continued support from Public Relations, Web Designer, and Print Shop.

Professional Development

Conference attendance for Honors Program Coordinator and Counselor, Christine Swiridoff and Karee Hamilton

- UCLA Transfer Alliance Program (TAP) meetings
- Honors Transfer Council of California (HTCC) meetings
- National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC) Conference

Staffing Requests

1000 Category - Certificated Positions

N/A

Location:

Justification:

2000 Category - Classified Staff

N/A

Location:

Salary Grade:

Number of Months:

Number of Hours per Week:

Salary Amount:

Justification: