

# Honors Department

## Annual Unit Plan for Academic Year 2018-2019

October 2017

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### Describe Department/Unit

#### 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 Mission:

Both the Honors Program and Phi Theta Kappa support the College's mission to produce and support student success and achievement.

##### 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.

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### Report on Improvements Made and Gaps Identified in the Prior Year

#### Student Equity: Actions Taken

##### Honors

Nothing concrete. We continue to do outreach broadly, trying to reach all eligible students. I have had preliminary talks with the Equity Director but not a formal meeting to outline potential ways to more narrowly target our outreach.

## Phi Theta Kappa

EOPS continues to promote Phi Theta Kappa and even pay students' membership fees, so this is the best outreach we might have for Phi Theta Kappa.

Starting this semester, the Cerro Coso Community College Foundation will support 122 students eligible for Phi Theta Kappa. While this does not specifically target any particular equity group, it will definitely help many low-income and financial aid students who otherwise could not afford to join Phi Theta Kappa.

## Student Equity: Gaps to be Addressed

### Gender: Male

#### Gap Identified:

We have no new equity data for this year. Last year was the first and only year data was available, and it was generally inconclusive except to show that the Honors Program is disproportionately female and young, with higher 19 or younger.

Of students eligible for the Honors Program, 65% are female and 35% male, so that the membership of the Honors Program skews female is more a matter of academic performance of high school males than of our recruitment methods.

Without knowing why more females than males attend college or why females than males are eligible for the Honors Program, it is difficult to determine an appropriate remedy for the disparity. I welcome insight and advice from those who know more about this issue.

### Age: 19 or younger

#### Gap Identified:

Again, we have no new equity data for this year. Last year was the first and only year data was available, and shows that the Honors Program is disproportionately female and young, with higher 19 or younger. The reason for this is clear: we do direct recruitment at the high schools, mailing invitations home for parents of eligible students and offering a \$1000 scholarship to a graduating high school senior. We hold college tours for high school junior and seniors. The Honors Program offers no such aggressive or profitable recruitment for anyone over the age of 18. A sizable portion of our Honors Program members join from high school or shortly after arriving at Cerro Coso, showing that such recruitment is effective. I do not know how to match it for the 20-39 age groups. I welcome insight and advice from those who know more about this issue.

Breakdown of students eligible for the Honors Program:

- 19 and under: 13%
- 20-29: 35%
- 30-39: 20%
- 40+: 32%

It is interesting to note that the older the student, the more likely she is to have completed an associates, bachelors, or masters degree and have completed fewer units at Cerro Coso, suggesting that they are less likely to be seeking additional associate degrees.

## Socioeconomic Status: Economically Disadvantaged

#### Gap Identified:

Positive steps taken:

EOPS continues to support their students eligible for Phi Theta Kappa. This year we are trying to streamline the process. Instead of having students pay membership fees and then seek reimbursement from EOPS, we hope that EOPS students can join Phi Theta Kappa with no money out of pocket and have EOPS pay Phi Theta Kappa directly. This is a goal for this semester.

As noted before, starting this semester, the Cerro Coso Community College Foundation will support several students eligible to join

Phi Theta Kappa. The hope is to not have these students use any money out of pocket and have the Foundation pay Phi Theta Kappa directly.

## Outcomes Assessment: Actions Taken

### Actions taken in the prior academic year

Without updates in Curriconet, I cannot determine which honors courses have completed SLOs, but we were on target to have SLO assessments completed for 100% of the Honors Program courses. This data would be captured by individual departments.

The Honors Program Committee agreed that all honors courses should have ENGL C070 as a prerequisite, and we have been working towards that. Of the 20 honors courses, 3 CORs are currently being updated, leaving only 3 courses not yet updated with ENGL C070 prerequisite: MUSC C101H, POLS C101H, and PSYC C101H.

## Outcomes Assessment: Gaps to be Addressed

**None**

**Type:**

SLO

**Target Missed/Gap Detected:**

No gaps identified.

**Type of Gap:**

**Analysis and Plan for Improvement:**

**Anticipated Semester for Implementing Planned Improvements:**

**Anticipated Semester of Next Assessment:**

## Program Review: Actions Taken

### Honors Program

**Year of Last Program Review:**

2014-15

**Actions Taken in the Prior Year to Address Strategies:**

**Goal 1:** To increase growth of Honors Program, by educating Cerro Coso faculty, especially those outside of Ridgecrest area.

Actions:

- Held college-wide informational session via iTV and CCC Confer for faculty
- Held college-wide informational session for Honors Program students

**Goal 2:** Consistent prerequisite

Actions:

- Changing prerequisite to ENGL C070 in CORS for all honors classes. CIC Chair is helping achieve this consistency.

**Goal 3:** Maintain uniform and appropriate rigor across honors classes and contracts

Actions:

- Updating CORS and reviewing contract requests to ensure that all honors courses and contracts require a 2,500-word research paper. CIC Chair is helping achieve this consistency.

**Strategies Still to be Addressed:**

**Goal 1:** Support/grow program by educating faculty and students

- The informational session for faculty was a near complete failure as only one faculty person attended. While I had a productive conversation with that one counselor, outreach and education does not work one person at a time.
  - Strategy: Find a better way of educating faculty. Currently, I use email and have one-on-one conversations to follow-up with faculty new to contracts. This helps faculty when they need help, but it lacks the ability to generate large-scale buy-in of the Honors Program. We have only achieved that at Bishop and Mammoth. Will look into attending a counselors' meeting.
- The information session for students was well attended and successful.
  - Strategy: Repeat annually.

**Goal 2:** Consistent prerequisite

- At the time of last year'sAUP, six CORS needed to be updated to include ENGL C070 prerequisite. We now have three remaining.
  - Strategy for further action: This will happen when those courses are revised at CIC. CIC Chair is helping achieve this consistency.

**Goal 3:** Uniform and appropriate rigor

- All honors courses and contracts now require a 2,500-word research paper.
  - No further action is needed.

## Annual Planning: Actions Taken

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

We had a slight increase in the number of high school students applying to the Honors Program, but not significantly improved. Moreover, these applicants were all from the Ridgecrest area. We have gotten a few more honors students online. But the enrollment levels have remained about the same: 45 current, up from 43 the year before, though the numbers were higher the two years before that.

### Growth and Completion

As with the number of students entering the Honors Program, the number completing has remained consistent. It varies from year to year, so I think looking at numbers over a longer period to see trends is more useful; however, the nature of an annual unit plan is to look at annual changes. We graduated fewer honors students in 2017 (10 grads) than in 2016 (13 grads).

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## Review of Current Year Initiatives

### Reminder of Initiatives for the Current Year

#### Support growth of Phi Theta Kappa

This is already done. No assistance needed.

## **Leadership Course**

We no longer have a Director of Outreach and Student Life, which eliminates my ability to collaborate, and I do not know the status of that position.

So if I am going solo on this, I think I need some leadership training, something more formal than what I've learned on the job as Phi Theta Kappa advisor. No request here other than we may need money for conferences or training seminars for the two PTK advisors.

## **Phi Theta Kappa Involvement**

Already receiving the assistance I need from President Jill Board and the Cerro Coso College Foundation and Natalie Dorrell.

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# **Plan Initiatives for Next Year**

## **Initiatives for Next Academic Year**

### **Growth**

**Is this part of a multiyear initiative?**

Yes

**Specific Action Steps to be Taken:**

Improve outreach to current Cerro Coso students

Better educate Cerro Coso employees (full-time faculty, part-time faculty, counselors, ed advisors, site directors, etc.) about the Honors Program and Phi Theta Kappa

**Lead Measure of Success:**

Number of students joining the Honors Program

Number of employees spoken to about Honors

**Are any of the lead measures identified above lacking assessment instruments?**

No

**Does the department request help to develop these instruments?**

No

**Lag Measure of Success:**

Number of students joining the Honors Program by end of year

Number of employees spoken to about Honors by end of year

**Person Responsible:**

Christine Swiridoff

**It addresses a program review strategy**

**Which strategic goal does this initiative address?**

Goal 1: Maximize Student Success

## **Leadership**

**Is this part of a multiyear initiative?**

Yes

**Specific Action Steps to be Taken:**

Research on need for leadership course for Phi Theta Kappa officers and perhaps Student Government or other groups

Get training for Phi Theta Kappa advisors in leadership: research most appropriate and relevant training options

Write CORS for CIC, if appropriate, for leadership course or a series of courses

**Lead Measure of Success:**

Research in progress

Training planned

**Are any of the lead measures identified above lacking assessment instruments?**

No

**Does the department request help to develop these instruments?**

No

**Lag Measure of Success:**

Research completed and need determined

Training completed

Need for CORS determined

CORS written and presented to CIC

Leadership course offered for Phi Theta Kappa officers

(Obviously this may take more than one year.)

**Person Responsible:**

Christine Swiridoff and Sarah King

**It addresses a gap in outcomes assessment**

Phi Theta Kappa is designed to provide opportunities and growth for students in four areas: honors, leadership, service, and fellowship. Currently, about a dozen students wish to be chapters officers, and I feel that our chapters does a decent job at providing the opportunity to lead to all who are interested, but we could do a better job at training leaders, more than modeling leadership and

on-the-job experience. The Phi Theta Kappa advisors have no formal training in leadership, so there is a need here.

Additionally, if a leadership course were offered, then we could collect FTES and students could earn college credit for time-consuming work, such as the Honors in Action project, college presentations, and conference travel.

### **Which strategic goal does this initiative address?**

Goal 1: Maximize Student Success, Goal 3: Ensure Student Access, Goal 5: Strengthen Organizational Effectiveness

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## **Evaluate Resource Needs**

### **Facilities**

None

### **Information Technology**

None

### **Marketing**

The marketing efforts currently available—college-wide messages, email, web banner, brochures, posters, etc.—are sufficient for our needs. However, to attract more incoming students, marketing at the high schools throughout our service area would be beneficial. While we mail letters to home to high school seniors eligible for the Honors Program, more could be done to help high school students and their parents realize that Cerro Coso and the Honors Program can help them transfer to their ideal school. More newspaper publications of student success stories throughout our service area is one way to reach these potential students and their parents.

I have tried to meet with our local high school faculty and vice principal to find ways to make better inroads with students and parents and could use some better ideas. Several of our Honors Program and Phi Theta Kappa students are eager to return to Burroughs High School and share their enthusiasm for and experiences at Cerro Coso. This is the kind of thing that can be difficult to coordinate on my own, so any support available would be appreciated. And this is much more difficult outside of Ridgecrest as we simply do not have the honors students there.

### **Professional Development**

Conference attendance for Honors Program Coordinator and Counselor, two faculty, and/or Phi Theta Kappa Faculty Advisors, two faculty, or all three faculty as relevant:

- Honors Transfer Council of California (HTCC) meetings (in-state travel)
- Honors Transfer Council of California (HTCC) Undergraduate Research Conference (in-state travel)
- National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC) Conference (out-of-state travel)
- Leadership conference/training (in- or out-of-state travel)
- Phi Theta Kappa Nevada/California Regional Conference (in- or out-of-state travel)
- Phi Theta Kappa National Convention (out-of-state travel)

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## **Staffing Requests**

### **1000 Category - Certificated Positions**

### **2000 Category - Classified Staff**