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Senate App 12/4/01

CURRICULUM PROPOSAL COVER SHEET
University-Wide Undergraduate Curriculum Committee

I. CONTACT

Contact Person Janet E. Goebel Phone 4971
Department Robert E. Cook Honors College

II. PROPOSAL TYPE (Check All Appropriate Lines)

 COURSE _____

Suggested 20 character title

 New Course* _____

Course Number and Full Title

 Course Revision _____

Course Number and Full Title

 Liberal Studies Approval +
for new or existing course

Course Number and Full Title

 Course Deletion _____

Course Number and Full Title

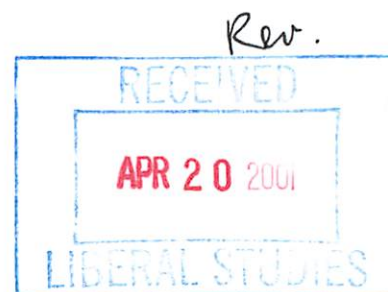
 Number and/or
Title Change _____

Old Number and/or Full Old Title

New Number and/or Full New Title

 Course or Catalog
Description Change _____

Course Number and Full Title



____ PROGRAM: _____ Major _____ Minor _____ Track
____ New Program* _____

Program Name

X Program Revision* Robert E. Cook Honors College

Program Name

____ Program Deletion* _____

Program Name

____ Title Change _____

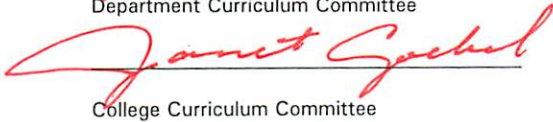
Old Program Name

New Program Name

III. Approvals (signatures and date)



Department Curriculum Committee



College Curriculum Committee

+ Director of Liberal Studies (where applicable)

Department Chair

College Dean


*Provost (where applicable)

**PROGRAM REVISION
ROBERT E. COOK HONORS COLLEGE**

PART II. Description of Curriculum Change

1. Catalog Description for the revised program

Course Requirements for Students Admitted as Freshmen:

Students admitted as freshmen are required to complete 24 semester hours of honors work including:

18 hours: Honors Core I, II, III (HNRC 101, 102, 201) and Honors Core: Sciences (HNRC 202). HNRC 101 and 102 is a first-year sequence; HNRC 201 and 202 may be taken in either order during subsequent semesters. HNRC 101, 102, and 201 replace Liberal Studies requirements for College Writing (ENGL 101), three humanities courses (ENGL 121, HIST 195, and either RLST 100 or PHIL 120), and one fine arts course (either ARHI 101, MUHI 101, or THTR 101). HNRC 202 replaces Liberal Studies requirements for either one non-laboratory science and one social science or two non-laboratory sciences or two social sciences, depending on the units selected.

3 hours: HNRC 499 Honors Synthesis (replaces Liberal Studies requirement for LBST 499)

3 hours: additional honors course work

Students are encouraged to complete at least one honors course during every academic year, although it is recognized that this might not be possible for students participating in study abroad or off-campus internships.

Students are also encouraged to complete an undergraduate thesis for graduation from the Honors College with distinction. Students may enroll for thesis credit by completing the necessary approval forms and scheduling HNRC 483 Honors Thesis or, in some departments, by scheduling a departmental honors thesis course.

Course Requirements for Students Admitted as Sophomores:

Sophomore "transfer" students are required to complete 17 semester hours of honors work and must meet the same course requirements as freshmen with the exception of HNRC 101 and 102 from which they are exempted.

2. Summary of Changes

a. Tables comparing old and new programs.

OLD PROGRAM—23sh (Students Admitted as Freshmen)	NEW PROGRAM—24 sh (Students Admitted as Freshmen)
14 sh—Honors Core I, II, III (HNRC 101, 102, 201)	18 sh—Honors Core I, II, III (HNRC 101, 102, 201) and Honors Core: Sciences (HNRC 202)
3 sh—LBST 499 (H)	3 sh—HNRC 499
6 sh—additional honors courses	3 sh—additional honors course
*non-humanities elective required	*requirement dropped; non- humanities course included in core
*honors course required every year	*honors course encouraged every year
*300+ level honors course required	*requirement dropped

OLD PROGRAM—18sh (Students Admitted as Sophomores)	NEW PROGRAM—17sh (Students Admitted as Sophomores)
4 sh—Honors Core III (HNRC 201)	8 sh—Honors Core III (HNRC 201) and Honors Core: Sciences (HNRC 202)
3 sh—LBST 499 (H)	3 sh—HNRC 499
11 sh—additional honors courses	6 sh—additional honors courses
*non-humanities elective required	*requirement dropped; non- humanities course included in core
*honors course required every year	*honors course encouraged every year
*300+ level honors course required	*requirement dropped

b. List of all associated course changes:

New Course HNRC 202 Honors Core: Sciences
New Course HNRC 499 Honors Synthesis

3. Rationale for Change.

The primary academic reason for adding HNRC 202 to the honors program is to strengthen and broaden the core sequence by including the natural and social sciences. The *Plan for an IUP Honors College* (adopted by the Senate in 1992) created a core sequence comprised entirely of humanities and fine arts units. At the time, no one considered this ideal, but all knew that these were the areas of the Liberal Studies program where there were the fewest prescribed choices, and this made them the easiest areas to target in the beginning. Now, nine years later as the second class of honors students prepares to graduate, extending the core is feasible as well as pedagogically warranted.

Exit interviews with the first class of graduating seniors emphatically urged inclusion of the natural and social sciences in the core sequence. Science majors spoke passionately and persuasively of the need for students to engage scientific knowledge with the same rigor as they now engaged the humanities and fine arts. As one put it succinctly, "You cannot be well educated if you have no idea about science."

The proposed HNRC 202 follows the model—actually the nationally acclaimed model—now in use for the existing core courses. This model, based on intellectually challenging "core questions," will encourage students to think of their core classes as an integrated whole and to carry intellectual skills developed in earlier courses into later ones. While an abstract argument might be made for a 5sh or 6sh version of HNRC 202, experience with the 4sh HNRC 201 demonstrates that a 4sh course is academically justifiable and, in any case, sits at the outside limit of what can be fitted into many student schedules.

Following the existing model in which honors core courses replace certain Liberal Studies requirements, this revision proposes that students taking HNRC 202 earn social science

and/or non-laboratory science credit according to the formula explained above in the new catalog description. It is clearly understood that some students' options may be restricted by requirements set by their majors. A few students may not be able to take full advantage of the exchange, but this is no more or less the case than with the existing humanities/fine arts replacements. (For instance, while the current core sequence replaces all three Liberal Studies humanities courses for most students, English majors are still required by their departments to take ENGL 122 Literary Analysis and history majors to take HIST 202 Western Civilization since 1600.)

As explained in the accompanying course proposal, faculty resources are available from at least three departments, which guarantees that the course will work. Other departments may choose to become involved later as resources and interest dictate.

In addition to the primary academic reasons for HNRC 202, its creation will solve some other nagging scheduling problems. Student exit interviews were justifiably critical of unpredictable scheduling of courses to meet the 6sh of honors electives. While students, especially those with tight four-year schedules, needed to plan well in advance, departments (whose resources were often as just as tight) frequently could not announce honors electives until the last minute. This has led to frustration on all sides. The regular scheduling of HNRC 202 will alleviate much of the unpredictability and pressure both for students and department chairpersons.

The revision also introduces additional flexibility for students with very tight major sequences by allowing HNRC 201 and HNRC 202 to be taken in either order and in any of the last six semesters. Students in some majors argued in their exit interviews for this change, citing instances where it would be beneficial to spread out the honors core requirements so that required foundation courses in the major could be scheduled in proper sequence. (It might be added that student exit interviews expressed two other reasons for spreading out the core: maintaining a sense of community with other honors students after the first semester of the sophomore year, and maintaining the edge to their writing and critical thinking skills throughout the four years.)

Although scheduling will undoubtedly vary by major, the expectation is that after scheduling HNRC 101 and 102 in the first two semesters, most students will find it advisable to schedule either HNRC 201 or HNRC 202 in the sophomore year and the other in the junior year. Students who do not do so will probably have good reason for their decision based on major sequences, study abroad, or off-campus internships. Therefore, for added flexibility, this revision changes the current requirement that students take an honors course each year to an encouragement.

For further flexibility, and in consideration of the university's limited resources to provide elective honors courses, this revision deletes the requirement of a 300+ level honors course, which is often simply impractical. While most elective honors courses are numbered above 300, some highly successful and demanding courses, such as ENGL 208 Art of the Film, are not, and there seems no justification for excluding them on either an academic or practical basis.

This program revision also includes the creation of HNRC 499, an honors version of the senior synthesis course. Such a course was envisioned by the Senate-approved 1992 honors program document, and its rationale is fully explained in the accompanying course proposal. In terms of resources, it takes no more than the current "H-sections" of LBST 499.

A final rationale for the change relates to national credibility and thus to recruiting of superior students. Common shortcomings of honors programs are that they are weak in the sciences and are front-loaded in the first two or three semesters. This revision, which brings the natural and social sciences into the core and extends the program through to the senior synthesis course, will significantly improve the quality, and thus the recognition, of IUP's program.

Note: Requirements for students entering the Honors College as sophomores are being similarly adjusted. The creation of HNRC 202 should significantly strengthen the program for these students by giving them two core experiences rather than one. The total of required credits is being lowered from 18 to 17 so that the number of "additional" hours is a multiple of three, the typical semester hours for an honors

elective. (In any case, the revision removes an existing awkwardness since the current requirement of 11 additional hours makes little sense when all the available elective courses are 3 sh.)

III. Implementation.

1. How will the proposed revision affect students already in the existing program?

The new requirements will be effective for students admitted to the Honors College after the program is approved and appears in the catalog. Students enrolled prior to the new program's full approval will have the option of meeting either the old or new requirements. Students meeting the old requirements may take HNRC 202 as a non-humanities honors elective and use it to fulfill their elective honors course requirements. If the course proposal has advanced far enough through the approval process, the plan is to offer the course, probably at first as an HNRC 281, in Spring 2002. HNRC 499 will replace H-sections of LBST 499 as soon as possible after the course is approved.

2. How will the proposed revision affect faculty teaching loads?

See answers under resources questions on the two course proposals.

3. Are resources adequate? (Space, equipment, supplies, travel funds)

Yes. See details under resource questions on the two course proposals.

4. Do you expect an increase or decrease in the number of students as a result of these revisions? If so, how will the department adjust?

The change will not change the admissions targets for incoming honors students.

PART IV. Course Proposals

HNRC 202 Honors Core: Sciences

HNRC 499 Honors Synthesis

PART V. Letters of Support.