

**A VISION FOR THE FUTURE:
MASTER PLAN FOR THE HONORS COLLEGE, 2009-2019**

Submitted March 2009



**MIDDLE
TENNESSEE**
STATE UNIVERSITY

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Part I: Background

History

MTSU will celebrate its centennial in 2011. MTSU marked the thirty-fifth year of its honors program in 2008. Honors was established as a program in 1973 and became home to the first honors college at a Tennessee state institution in 1998. The Honors College moved into a 21,000 square foot building in 2004, which began with a donation from the College's first Honors graduate, Paul Martin, and his brother, Lee.

For many years Honors Students were housed in two nearby dorms, Wood and Felder Halls, which had not been updated for some time. Fortunately, Lyon Hall, which is located on the historic part of campus, was recently refurbished to include numerous amenities and began serving in the fall of 2008 as the new residence hall for honors students.

In 2007, the College inaugurated the Buchanan Fellows Program to replace an earlier program, with no common curricular requirements and a modest stipend. The revised program, named after an MTSU graduate who received a Nobel Prize in Economics, accepts 20 incoming students each year, who agree to take several classes in common, and it pays their full tuition and fees as long as they continue to meet honors college requirements and make satisfactory progress toward an Honors degree.

The College currently publishes an award-winning bi-annual Newsletter, the *Honors Edition*, and an award-winning bi-annual literary magazine, the *Collage*. The College sponsors the Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society and the Honors Student Association (HSA) and recently helped establish a campus branch of the Rotary Club.

The current full-time staff of the College includes an Honors Dean, Dr. John R. Vile, an Associate Dean, Dr. Scott Carnicom, and two administrative assistants, Ms. Kathy Davis and Ms. Karen Demonbreum, all of whom work from the main office complex. Three other staffers have offices on the same hall. Ms. Georgia Dennis works with event scheduling and coordination; Ms. Marsha Powers coordinates the newsletter and literary magazine and takes care of the Honors College library, and Ms. Laura Clippard was recently hired as an academic advisor who also works with student recruitment and scholarships. Dr. Phil Mathis, a former Honors dean (Biology), currently helps with fund-raising, and five faculty members, who are associated with academic departments, reside in the honors building and help with Honors concerns. All positions within the Honors College were reviewed (and some appropriately reclassified) within the last four years.

For the last two years, the Honors College has had a Board of Visitors consisting of from twelve to eighteen alumni, friends, and supporters whose mission is "to provide leadership in promoting sustained program quality and positive change in the University Honors College."

In addition, the College has an Honors Council, consisting of Honors faculty and students. Its members meet regularly throughout the academic year to accept new honors faculty, oversee the curriculum, and help sit on thesis committees.

Since its founding in 1973, five individuals, each from a different academic discipline, have overseen the growth of the Honors College. They are Dr. June McCash (Foreign Languages), Dr. Ron Messier (History), Dr. John Paul Montgomery (English), Dr. Philip Mathis (Biology), and Dr. John R. Vile (Political Science). All of the deans have had reputations as teacher/scholars and have been active in the National Collegiate Honors Council.

Honors Requirements and Curriculum

The Honors College is open to incoming students with a 3.5 grade point average and a score of 25 or higher on the ACT exam or equivalent SAT scores (1160). Once students have enrolled and completed 12 or more hours of credit at MTSU, they may qualify to take honors classes if they have a 3.25 grade point average or better. Students must meet this same requirement to continue to enroll in Honors classes.

Students may graduate with Honors in any major. In order to do so, students must complete a total of 31 semester hours of Honors classes. These include 20 hours of lower-division Honors courses and eleven hours of upper division classes. The latter includes four hours of upper-division Honors courses; a three-hour Honors interdisciplinary seminar; a one-hour Honors Thesis Tutorial; and three hours of Honors Independent Research (the Honors thesis).

In order to promote student-faculty interaction, the Honors College caps enrollments in lower-division Honors classes at 20 students, and upper-division classes at 15. Upper division students may also convert one regular three-hour class into an Honors option class by entering into a special agreement with their professors and the Honors College as to how their experience in such a class will be enhanced.

Professors design honors classes to be challenging, but the goal is not to make classes more difficult but to increase student-faculty interaction and participation. Honors students who filled out surveys for this report indicated high levels of satisfaction with the teaching and learning that they were experiencing in their Honors classes. An increasing number of Honors students are participating in study-abroad programs.

Over the past several years, Honors students have been awarded Goldwater, Phi Kappa Phi, and Fulbright scholarships. Honors graduates have been accepted into graduate and professional programs at Oxford, Yale, Chicago, William and Mary, and other prominent institutions of higher learning and have made important contributions to their professions.

Special Events

The mission of the Honors College reaches beyond meeting the needs of its students to enhancing the educational experience for the entire university. In addition to the Honors Lecture Series, the College sponsors an Honors Martin Lecture. Last year's speech featured Tennessee Governor Phil Bredesen. This year's lecture features Judge Martha Daughtrey from the U.S. Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Each semester the College sponsors an interdisciplinary lecture series, which meets once a week, on a topic of contemporary interest. In the fall of 2008 it sponsored a series that focused on Politics and the Press; the spring 2009 series Searching for Athena, focused on honors and gifted education and featured speakers both from on and off campus. The programs are publicized so that outside guests may attend.

The College frequently co-sponsors speakers with other departments and organizations on campus. Events in the fall of 2008 included an ice cream social, a GRE Test Prep Workshop, a meeting on Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity Grants, special videos, a priority registration orientation workshop, a law school forum, a Pulitzer-Prize nominated poet, a pre-thesis workshop, a Rotaract interest meeting, a food drive, a speech by a Russian policy expert, a tailgate party, special advising for students interested in studying abroad, etc.

In part because of its stellar facilities, the Honors College also regularly hosts visits by groups that are interested in MTSU in general and in the Honors College in particular. High school students and their parents are encouraged to stop by the Honors College for visits, and the Honors advisor and/or the Dean or Associate Dean makes an effort to meet them.

Each year the College hosts a visiting artist who resides on campus for a week, teaches an intensive, seminar for Honors students for credit, and participates in a public performance or exhibition. This year's artist was the poet Beth Ann Fennelly, who teaches at the University of Mississippi.

Enrollment and Graduation Trends

Over the last ten years, the Honors College has enrolled from 656 to 1182 students in classes each fall and (because some students take multiple classes) has filled from 999 to 1610 seats. The high point was in the Fall of 2004. Over the last ten years, enrollments have varied from 543 to 1,126 and seat numbers from 710 to 1,126 each spring. The high point in fall enrollments was in 2004, and in spring enrollments in 2005.

A survey of honors-eligible students who enrolled at MTSU in the fall of 2007 (presumably new freshmen) shows that the surrounding Rutherford County provided 61 of 389 students, and the nearby counties of Bedford accounted for 14, Coffee for 15, Davidson for 28, Sumner for 23, Williamson for 40, and Wilson for 19. Shelby County, the home of Memphis, provided a total of 33 students, almost half of whom were from private schools, while Knox County provided 9 and Sevier County 5.

Much of the change in total enrollments within the Honors College corresponds to a strategic decision in 2004 to increase and simplify the standards for honors students. The criteria for entering the Honors College were changed from a high school grade point average of 3.5 and an ACT score of 24 or a 26 and a grade point average of 3.0 to minimum 3.5 GPA *and* a 25 or better on the ACT. Additionally, one criterion for remaining in, and graduating from, the College was increased from a 3.0 to a 3.25. Still, many MTSU students who are eligible to enroll in the Honors College do not choose to do so.

The number of students who write the thesis and complete the full 31-hours of honors credit, continues to climb. In 2003-04, there were 7 such graduates. This increased to 12 in 2004-5, to 14 in 2005-06, to 25 in 2006-7, and to 28 in 2007-8. This number should continue to increase, especially in two years when the first cohort of Buchanan Scholars (all of whom are committed to graduate with Honors) are scheduled to graduate.

University and Alumni Support

Perhaps as much as any College or program on the MTSU campus, the Honors College depends on the support of others. The very building in which the Honors College is housed was the dream of its alumni, and students receive continuing scholarship support both from the University and from alumni donations.

The College has been especially blessed to have had consistent support from its own alumni and from the MTSU Administration. President Mel Scarlett helped bring the program to campus, and every subsequent president has nurtured it.

One of the first and most important initiatives of current President Dr. Sidney McPhee was helping to raise the money needed to match the gift for construction of the Honors Building, which was given by the first graduate of the Honors College, Paul Martin, and his brother, Lee. Dr. McPhee has enthusiastically supported the Buchanan Program and hosts student receptions for Buchanan students in his home. President McPhee has commissioned this report and featured the achievements of a number of outstanding students and professors from the college in his most recent Biennial Report for 2006-2008.

Dr. Kaylene Gebert, the Executive Vice President and Provost at MTSU, has also been highly supportive of the Honors College as have deans and department heads of other colleges and departments who regularly supply faculty for Honors classes. Alumni continue to make contributions and to serve on the Honors Board of Visitors. As long as the College continues to receive such support, it is likely to remain the University's "crown jewel" that the president often describes it as being.

Part II: Current Goals and Mission

Goals

The mission of the Honors College is: “to provide undergraduate education of exceptional quality to a small but diverse student population having a deep commitment to scholarship and to the ideas and virtues engraved on the north façade of the Paul W. Martin Sr. Honors Building: character, commitment, curiosity, discipline, faith, honor, and creativity.”

The MTSU Academic Master Plan, *Building on the Blueprint for Excellence*, further identifies three goals to which the University as a whole is committed. These are:

Goal 1. Middle Tennessee State University will promote academic quality by enhancing learning, teaching, scholarship, and service and by celebrating MTSU’s distinctive strengths.

Goal 2. Middle Tennessee State University will promote individual student success and responsibility for accomplishments through fostering a student-centered learning culture.

Goal 3. Middle Tennessee State University will promote partnerships and public service to enhance educational, social, cultural, and economic well-being.

Special Focus

Although the Honors College is committed to all of these goals, the University Master Plan specifically recognizes the College’s contributions to academic quality and student-centered learning. The University Master Plan commits the University to “**promote the Honors College as a national model program.**” It further observes that “The Honors College will distinguish itself nationally as a leader in offering a scholarly and collegial environment dedicated to attracting and educating highly qualified students who effectively compete for admission to prestigious post-graduate programs and professional schools.”

Honors College literature, and members of the Honors Board of Visitors, reiterate the College’s desire to present an Ivy League or Public Ivy (a selective publicly-supported institution) education at a public institution. The enhanced opportunities that the MTSU Honors College offers will help Tennessee to retain many of its finest graduates within the state.

Significantly, the 2008 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), which is administered by the Indiana University Center for Post-secondary Research and partly sponsored by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, reported that “student experiences and outcomes are more varied among students within institutions than among institutions (p. 6).” Specifically, the report found that “for almost all of the benchmarks, less than 10% of the total variation in effective educational practices is attributable to institutions. The lion’s share of the variation is among students, within institutions (p. 7).”

The success of Honors students and graduates suggests that these students are among those who are getting maximum benefits from their educations at MTSU. Students in the Honors College have won Goldwater, Fulbright, and Phi Kappa Phi scholarships. Honors students tend to graduate at much higher rates than others. Many have been admitted to prestigious professional and graduate programs. Evidence from other institutions suggests that Honors students are more likely to maintain ties with, and contribute to, the institutions from which they graduate than other alumni.

Future success of the Honors College will require continuing alumni support. It will also require the same kind of commitment, promotion, University support, and long-range vision that fueled past achievements.

Part III: Current Status of MTSU's Honors College: NCHC Standards

The National Collegiate Honors Council publishes "Basic Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors College," which also encapsulates criteria for fully developed honors programs. These guidelines have been published in Appendix B of the NCHC Monograph entitled *The Honors College Phenomenon* edited by Peter C. Sederberg in 2008.

The section below states the eleven basic standards (these have been numbered for convenience) that NCHC has established and describes how MTSU currently meets them.

Standard # 1

"A fully developed Honors college should exist as an equal collegiate unit within a multi-collegiate university structure."

Compliance # 1

The College is considered to be equal with others in the University, and the Dean meets regularly with other Deans and Directors.

Standard # 2

"The head of a fully developed Honors college should be a dean reporting directly to the chief academic officer of the institution and serving as a full member of the Council of Deans, if one exists. The dean should be a full-time, 12-month appointment."

Compliance # 2

The Honors College at MTSU is headed by a dean who reports directly to the University Provost. The Dean sits on the Council of Deans and is a full-time, 12-month appointment.

Standard # 3

"The operational and staff budgets of fully developed Honors colleges should provide resources at least comparable to other collegiate units of equivalent size."

Compliance # 3

The College has a Dean, an Associate Dean, two administrative assistants, and three individuals with special assignments within the college. The University has actually shielded the College from some of the budget cuts that other university colleges have faced. The University's continuing commitment to the Buchanan Fellows Program has been especially heartening.

Standard # 4

"A fully developed Honors college should exercise increased coordination and control of departmental Honors where the college has emerged out of such a decentralized system."

Compliance # 4

The Honors College continues to depend on Departments to supply its faculty, but believes that it has established good relations with most such Departments and coordinates well with them."

Standard # 5

"A fully developed Honors college should exercise considerable control over Honors recruitment and admissions, including the appropriate size of the incoming class. Admission to the Honors college should be by separate application."

Compliance # 5

The Honors College has been able to set its own criteria for admission. The College does not require a separate application per se, but the admission standards are higher than those for the University as a whole. The College selects its Buchanan Scholars who do apply separately for admission to the program.

Standard # 6

"An Honors college should exercise considerable control over its policies, curriculum, and selection of faculty."

Compliance # 6

The College has its own council that approves all new courses, faculty members, and thesis proposals.

Standard # 7

“The curriculum of a fully developed Honors college should offer significant course opportunities across all four years of study.”

Compliance # 7

The College offers more lower-division classes than upper-division classes but has designed an H-option for classes in majors that have more limited upper-division offerings. The College is beginning to partner with other colleges, departments, and programs to offer additional study-abroad opportunities.

Standard # 8

“The curriculum of the fully developed Honors college should constitute at least 20% of a student’s degree program. An Honors thesis or project should be required.”

Compliance # 8

Students must complete 120 hours to graduate from MTSU, and an Honors degree requires 31 hours (or just over 25% of all classes), 4 of which are devoted to an Honors thesis or project.

Standard # 9

“Where the home university has a significant residential component, the fully developed Honors college should offer substantial Honors residential opportunities.”

Compliance # 9

MTSU only houses about 3,500 of 24,000 students. One residence hall has been designated specifically for Honors students (it can house about 250) and has been recently refurbished. The College eventually hopes to have an exclusive multifunctional complex closer to the current Honors building.

Standard # 10

“The distinction awarded by a fully developed Honors college should be announced at commencement, noted on the diploma, and featured on the student’s final transcript.”

Compliance # 10

The University currently meets each of these criteria. In addition, the President has formally recognized incoming Buchanan Scholars at the freshman convocation and at an early football game each of the last two years.

Standard # 11

“Like other colleges within the university, a fully developed Honors college should be involved in alumni affairs and development and should have an external advisory board.”

Compliance # 11

The current dean recently sat on a search committee for the new University Director of Development. The Development Office sends monthly reports of contributions. The College has had an Advisory Board for the past two years.

Coda:

By present criteria, MTSU has a mature Honors Program. Both the Dean and the Associate Dean are members of the National Collegiate Honors Council and remain committed to keeping pace with any new standards that might be formulated. The College hopes to lead in Honors education and not simply to follow standards that others have established.

Part IV: The University and the Honors College

Reasons for Optimism

MTSU is strategically situated not only in the geographical center of the state but also in one of its fastest growing regions. This report is being written at a time when financial uncertainty surrounds the entire state, but if patterns from the past two decades continue, MTSU will continue to draw a growing number of students from a growing population.

Since Dr. Sidney McPhee has assumed the presidency of the University, it has twice raised admission standards, and yet it has also continued to grow. The Honors College probably benefits even more than the rest of the university when the University raises its standards.

In relation to the rest of the campus, the Honors Building is currently the farthest academic building on the East side of the campus. The University will soon be building a new student center nearby and is also planning to build a new Education Building in the vicinity. This and other construction will move the center of campus closer to the Honors Building and bring more students to the area.

The addition of a multi-functional housing addition would vastly expand student involvement and program opportunities

A Reciprocal Relationship

Honors students and members of the Board of Visitors report that the Honors College and the opportunities it offers are not as well known outside the campus as they should be. As an institution that has concentrated on meeting the general needs of the Middle Tennessee area, individuals may simply be surprised to find a vibrant Honors College within such an environment.

The current University Administration is clearly committed to the Honors College, and the College is featured in major recruiting events. The College seeks additional publicity through publication of an award-winning newsletter and its award-winning *Collage* magazine, as well as through mailings throughout the state and through the promotion of its many events and programs through news releases in regional media. The College has hosted an increasing number of visiting groups of students and high school counselors.

Students who apply for Buchanan Fellowships (especially those from out of state) often consider MTSU because of other high-profile programs on campus with good reputations. The Aerospace Program, the Pre-Med Program, the Pre-law emphasis within Political Science, and the College of Mass Communications

are all good examples. The University clearly has the potential to increase the quality of the students who attend by stressing its honors college. Likewise, the Honors College has an interest in stressing high-quality programs within the University as a way to attracting more and better students.

The University and the Honors College need to continue to formulate ways to work together on this relationship. A rising tide promises to raise both ships.

Part V: The Road Ahead

Evolution of this Report

This report emerged from two meetings of the Honors College Board of Visitors in the fall of 2008. In both, Board members asked the incoming Dean to outline a set of short-term and long-term goals for the college. University President, Dr. Sidney McPhee, asked that this be done by March, 2009.

In formulating this plan, the College has sought data on the students it is presently attracting and enrolling and on the priorities of various groups within the college. The College has sent surveys to:

- current students;
- current staff members;
- members of the honors faculty;
- honors alumni;
- past Honors administrators;
- members of the Honors Student Association; and
- high school guidance counselors.

The College has also examined exit surveys that graduating honors students have completed over the last five years, and has incorporated these responses into this report.

This report was sent to members of the Honors Council, the Honors Staff, and the Dean's Student Advisory Committee for comments, all of which have been considered, and many of which have been incorporated into this report. The following sections cover current goals for the next two years, five years, and ten years.

Years 1 and 2: 2009-2011

Increase Off-Campus Publicity about the Honors College

The College has recently expanded its newsletter, the *Honors Edition*, which it mails to alumni and members of the Board of Visitors. It works specifically with the Department of News and Public Affairs to publicize its events throughout the campus and community. The most immediate need in the Honors College may be to increase positive information about the College in high schools and other off-campus venues. The College no longer wants to be a "hidden treasure" but a vibrant beacon that continues to draw Tennessee's best students to the University of which it is a part.

The College has already begun to look for local events where local alumni and members of the Board of Visitors can help with recruiting. The College has attended recruiting forums throughout the state. The College is currently investigating places where it might place advertisements that appeal to Tennessee's best students.

The current Honors website contains lots of information but has few of the "bells and whistles" that appeal to modern, technologically-savvy students. It would help if the University could designate a person in IT who could deal with such matters, or allow the Honors College to hire an individual, specifically to help with them.

Raise Monies for Scholarship Shortfall in 2009-2010

Eighty percent of 70 respondents (many of whom were students) who answered this part of the Honors Survey identified increasing the number of Honors scholarships as a high priority, and another 12 thought it was a medium priority.

As the economy has declined, the MTSU Foundation has lost from 20 to 25% of its investments. The University has warned that foundation accounts will make no payouts for scholarships in the 2009-2010 school year. The Honors College is committed to seeking to raise some one-time monies to make up this short-fall so that students who are eligible for scholarships and awards in this school year will continue to receive them. If the College attempts to match last year's awards, it will need \$18,078.72. If the College receives less than this, it could, of course, continue the awards, but at a lesser amount.

Increase the Number of Honors Graduates

Seventy four percent of respondents to this question on the Honors survey identified increasing the number of Honors graduates as a high priority and another 23% saw this as a medium priority. As satisfying as it is to offer broad opportunities for students to take individual Honors classes, the College continues to be committed to increasing the number of students who complete the complete 31-hours program including the Honors thesis.

The next two years will witness the admission of two more cohorts of Buchanan students. Moreover, in the year that the fourth incoming class enrolls, members of the first class will be graduating. Since Buchanan students are admitted with the understanding that they will complete an honors degree (including a thesis), the College anticipates that this will significantly increase the current number of honors graduates.

As the number of graduates continues to increase, the College may need to streamline procedures to see that there are adequate numbers of faculty sponsors to read and supervise their theses.

Implement a Top Transfer Program to Increase Honors Transfers from Community Colleges

MTSU's Honors College has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Cleveland State, Columbia State, Motlow State, Nashville State, and Volunteer State Community Colleges to facilitate "programmatically articulation, institutional communication, and transfer of credits earned through honors programs at the Community Colleges into the Honors College." Those who participate fully in honors programs at these colleges typically come to MTSU with the necessary credits to continue in pursuit of an Honors degree.

In conjunction with the Vice President for Student Affairs and Vice Provost for Enrollment and Academic Services, the previous dean had proposed a T² (Top Transfers) program that would award scholarships to students coming to MTSU from these programs. To implement the Top Transfers program, the Honors College proposes that the University award \$2,000 each to the top one or two students from each of these community colleges who enroll as juniors at MTSU with an associate degree from these programs and commit themselves to completing the requirements for an Honors degree at MTSU. This should further help to increase the total number of Honors graduates.

Strengthen Emphasis on Leadership

The University devotes considerable resources to Honors students. The Honors College recognizes the need for such students to give back to the University not only through exemplary academic achievements but also through the energy that they devote to campus and community organizations.

The Honors College currently sponsors a summer leadership institute, the Institute of Leadership Excellence (ILE), which has been generously funded by a member of the Board of Visitors, and which has been well received by students. The existing funding for this program is only adequate to cover one additional class in the summer of 2008. If this program is to continue, it will require additional funding either from the University or from private donors.

The College recently helped inaugurate a campus chapter of Roteract and currently sponsors the Phi Kappa Phi honorary. The College is initiating an MTSU Leaders Circle that it hopes can apply for membership as a chapter of Omicron Delta Kappa in the fall of 2009 and that will further emphasize the connection between academic achievements and obligations of leadership. The College will continue to encourage the Honors Student Association (HSA) to engage in leadership projects as well.

Hire a Fund-Raising Coordinator

Dr. Phil Mathis, a former Honors dean, will complete his second year of post-retirement in 2009-2010. An important part of his responsibility involves maintaining contacts with the Board of Visitors and with fundraising.

Upon his retirement, the Honors College should seek a full-time person who can continue this work. If a full-time hire is not initially feasible, the College might seek to pair with a similar College or entity at the University to hire an individual to accomplish these goals.

Assist in Publication of Books Related to Honors College

Nobel laureate James M. Buchanan has been especially associated with the Honors College, and the College hopes to have a major part in the publication of a book on the Buchanan Family on or before the University Centennial in 2011. A former dean of the college is also preparing a history of the honors college that is scheduled to be included in a larger book being prepared for the Centennial celebrations.

The Honors College has devoted its Fall 2009 Lecture Series to the History of MTSU. This will not only boost the latter project but will also serve to encourage further student research in this area.

Obtain Better Information about the Success of Honors Graduates

There is evidence that a high number of Honors students are obtaining graduate degrees, but the College currently has inconclusive data on the subject. The Honors College will revise its current exit survey to ascertain more clearly what its graduates are doing in the years immediately after they graduate.

Examine the Creation of Language Hallways in Lyon Hall

One opportunity that the refurbished living-learning center at Lyon Hall presents is the possibility of language halls or buildings where students would commit to speak such languages during their times of residence. A resident faculty member in the Honors College is especially interested in pursuing this idea as are the Deans of the College of Liberal Arts and Continuing Studies. The latter College is currently teaching English as a second language to a large number of foreign students, some of whom might be available in due course to anchor individual language hallways.

Implement an Additional Scholarship Program

The College would like to initiate a program, described in an accompanying appendix, which would increase scholarship support for an additional 20 to 40 students who commit themselves to graduating with honors. Each would be eligible to receive an extra \$500 or \$1000 per semester. The funds could be used in conjunction with all other scholarships other than the Buchanan scholarships.

The University might decide to allocate such funding from current sources. Alternatively, individuals could be solicited for contributions of approximately \$20,000 or \$40,000 each, which would generate the requisite \$500 or \$1,000 each semester.

Years 3 through 5: 2011- 2014

Continue Implementation of Additional Scholarship Program

Year three would mark the second year of implementation of the Additional Scholarship Program described above. The program will be fully implemented (one cohort for each class) by 2014.

Continue to Increase the Number of Honors Graduates

In part because of the implementation of additional scholarship programs like that described above, the College hopes to continue to raise the number of Honors graduates until it reaches a plateau near the end of the next five years or shortly thereafter. This will require the continuing dissemination of information about the Honors Thesis and recruiting students from a variety of majors.

Hire Additional Coordinator

The most obvious way for the University to increase its current visibility is to increase the number of students who win high-profile scholarships and to increase the prestige of these scholarships. The College currently hires one individual to do advising, help with recruiting, and work with scholarship applicants. Some comparable colleges have four or five people working on scholarships alone. The Honors College needs to add at least one full-time staff member within the next five years.

The College should consider hiring, or borrowing, a faculty member from an existing university department who could teach honors classes half time and advise and give scholarship advice with the remainder. Such a hire would increase the Honors College's control over its own course offerings.

Expand *Collage* Literary Magazine

The Honors College currently produces a bi-annual literary magazine. The College has already opened the magazine to submissions by alumni; it will seek funding so that it can double the size of this magazine to accept submissions from throughout the Southeast region.

Establish Endowed Professorships and/or Joint Faculty Appointments

The Honors College currently houses, but does not supplement the pay of, its residential faculty. This could be addressed in either of two ways. First the University could seek donors who desire to contribute both to the Honors College and to the College in which they majored. MTSU can seek donors who would like to endow professorships from individuals who could teach in both.

Second, the University could enter into contracts with specific members of the honors faculty who would receive a yearly honorarium or bonus (\$5000 being the initial recommendation) in return for specified tasks. It is possible that some faculty members could help with the paperwork for student scholarships within their fields.

Establish Exchanges with other Honors Colleges

The Honors College will seek to find another school within the state where we can participate in student exchanges. Students would pay tuition to the school in which they are currently enrolled but would trade places for a semester or year.

With the technology currently available in the AT&T room of the Honors College, it might alternatively be possible for the College to offer a Webcam class that it could make available to honors students from throughout the state. In the spring of 2009, Dr. Lee Martin offered a class on Techonomics in which he sometimes interacted with students from off-campus sites. This class might be especially amenable to a multi-campus format. If the College could expand such Honors offerings to other campuses, it might simultaneously expand its prestige among other Honors programs and colleges.

Years 6 through 10: 2014-2019

Reconsider Honors Baselines for Admission

Honors Colleges, like the wider colleges and universities of which they are a part, can enhance their reputation by increasing standards. Indeed, there are some honors colleges at public universities that are apparently more competitive than Ivy League schools.

At a time when MTSU is attempting to increase its overall rankings, it makes sense to set standards for the Honors College where they will attract students with a 25 ACT (higher than the university's overall average admission) who are interested in an honors education but might not be able to get one elsewhere. If MTSU continues to raise its overall standards for admission, however, the Honors College will probably want to raise its own standards accordingly. Alternatively, the College might focus on raising the standards for Buchanan Fellows or equivalent programs, and devote increased attention to them.

Reconsider Staffing Needs

Consistent with the review in the previous period, in years six through ten, it will again be necessary to reconsider whether staffing is adequate to deal with student recruiting, student advising, and student scholarship support. If needs continue to grow in this area, they might be filled either by new full-time staff members or by faculty members who supplement their teaching with such tasks.

Establish Sister Institution for Foreign Exchange

Ninety nine percent of respondents to the Honors survey indicated that creating a study-abroad partnership with a foreign university was a high or medium priority.

MTSU is increasingly emphasizing the importance of study abroad, and the Honors College has already appropriated some money to support Honors students engaged in such study. There is general consensus that the next step is for the College to begin gradually increasing the number of students going abroad and then formalize one or more specific foreign sites where students can go. Ideally, MTSU will be able to host an equivalent number of students as it sends, possibly at the same tuition rates.

Note: If the number of Honors students enrolled in study abroad classes continues to increase, it might be possible to accomplish this goal within the next three to five years rather than in the next six through ten.

Construct a New Living-Learning Center Adjacent to the College

The priciest item on the Honors College's horizon is the construction of a new living-learning center that would be much closer to the Honors building than the existing facility in Lyon, which, while commodious and newly renovated, is on the other side of campus. The new living-learning center has already been added to the campus master plan of the University. Dr. Michelle Arnold, a former Honors advisor at MTSU, has published a dissertation that reported that living on campus is one of the key predictors of involvement in the University both by students in Honors and those who are not. Increased options for Honors student housing are thus likely to pay dividends beyond the creature comforts they provide.

The University Master Plan envisions an Honors living-learning center that would be connected to the current building by corridors and walkways and that would be sufficient to house some residential faculty. This might be an appropriate site for the McNair Program and other programs designed to enhance scholarship that are now scattered throughout the campus. If donors see this project as a priority, it could be moved to the period from 2011-2014. A sizeable donation might also come with naming rights.

A new living-learning center would probably present renewed opportunities for reconsideration and reconfiguration of language halls where at least one native speaker would be available to help students progress with their knowledge and fluency in foreign languages.

Additional Project (No Specific Target Date)

Naming of Honors College

The Honors Building is proudly named the Paul W. Martin, Sr. Building after the father of its two most generous donors. The College itself remains to be named. The University is willing to work with donors who might be interested in such an opportunity. Like the project above, this could be accomplished at any time a donor wished.

Appendices

Proposal for New Patrons Scholarship

MTSU currently accepts many students who qualify to take honors classes but who do not do so. Even fewer of those who take honors classes complete 31 hours, including the honors thesis. The result is that relatively few students currently graduate with Honors degrees. About a third of the 60 graduates who responded in exit surveys from 2003 through 2008 indicated that they worked 21 or more hours a week. Of students who worked, 34% said they did so to meet basic survival needs and another 14.9% responded that they did so to meet academic expenses. Such workloads could be one reason that students are so reluctant to take on a challenging project like a thesis.

The Buchanan Fellows program looks to be the current best single response to this problem. This program brings in 20 incoming students each year and promises to pay full tuition and fees for eight semesters as long as they continue to qualify academically and as long as they continue to complete requisite honors classes. This year almost 250 students applied for these 20 slots.

University administrators have talked about doubling this program, but costs would be quite high (about \$600,000), and are somewhat unpredictable in an era of rising tuition and fees; because out-of-state tuition is higher, the program can only accept a limited number of such students. An alternative would be to offer twenty additional students from both in and out of state \$500 a semester as long as they pledge to work toward an honors degree. If a single donor were to provide the money, we could name them after the donor or a designee; alternatively, we might call all the scholars Patrons Scholars and allow individuals to sponsor one or more). The Honors College should consider having a special inauguration for them similar to that which we now have for the Buchanan Fellows.

One advantage of this program is that the Honors College could choose recipients from students who currently apply to be Buchanan Fellows. Another benefit is that the costs are predictable. They would be as follows [double if the amounts are doubled]:

- \$20,000 a year for the first year;
- \$40,000 a year for the second year;
- \$60,000 a year for the third year;
- \$80,000 a year for the fourth and following years.

Because students will not be taking a cohort of classes together like the current Buchanan fellows, we could replace students who dropped out of the program with others (including transfer students), thus rewarding those students who persist on the honors track in their junior and senior years.

If the program works, we could expand it either by doubling the amount offered to \$1,000 per semester or more OR by extending it to more students. Alternatively, MTSU could formulate another application process and make such scholarships available exclusively to transfer students and/or to out-of-state students who pay higher tuition.

BOARD OF VISITORS
The University Honors College

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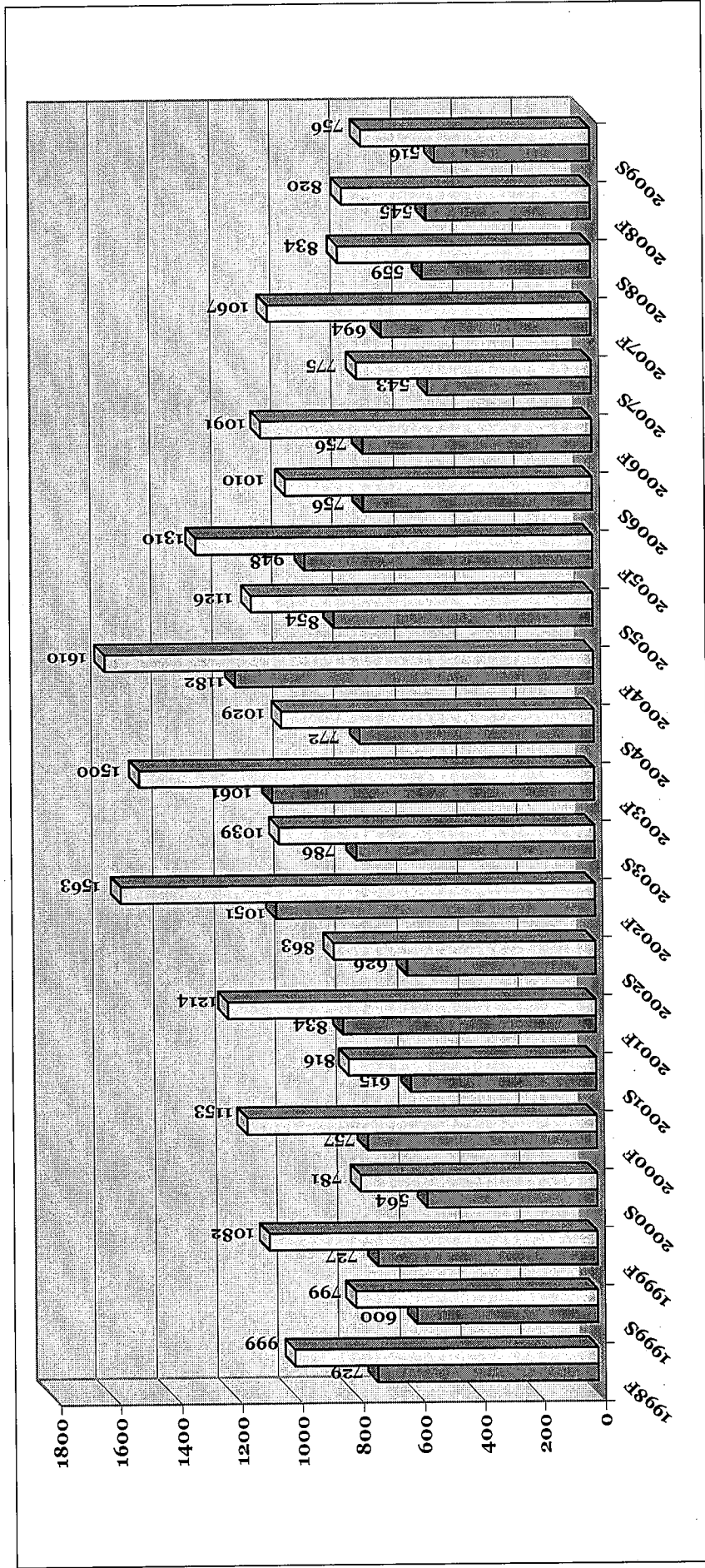
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HONORS COLLEGE ENROLLMENT

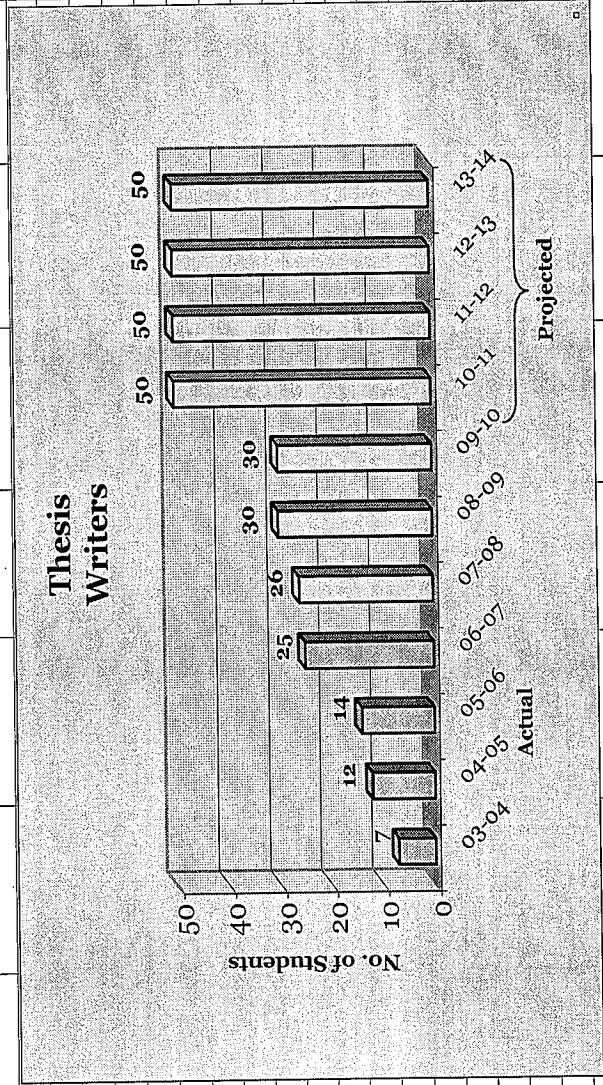
Semester	1998F	1999S	1999F	2000S	2000F	2001S	2001F	2002S	2002F	2003S	2003F	2004S	2004F	2005S	2005F	2006S	2006F	2007S	2007F	2008S	2008F	2009S
Headcount	729	600	727	564	757	615	834	626	1051	786	1061	772	1182	894	948	756	756	543	694	559	545	516
Seatcount	999	799	1082	781	1153	816	1214	863	1563	1039	1500	1029	1610	1126	1310	1010	1091	775	1067	834	820	756



**Honors College Thesis Writers/Graduates
Fall 2003 - Spring 2014**

Academic Year	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14
Thesis Writers	7	12	14	25	26	30	30	50	50	50	50

Buchanan Fellows



SURVEY FOR PLANNING FOR THE MTSU HONORS COLLEGE:

Dear Friend of the Honors College:

After meeting with members of the Board of Visitors, President McPhee has asked the College to develop a Master Plan that will establish goals over the next ten years. The following survey is designed to allow you to participate in this process. We welcome your suggestions and thank you in advance for your help.

1. I am:

- (a) A current honors student
- (b) An honors alum
- (c) A member of the honors faculty
- (d) A member of the Honors Board of Visitors
- (e) A past honors administrator
- (f) A high school counselor
- (g) Other _____

2. In my judgment, the greatest strengths of the MTSU Honors College are:

3. In my judgment, the greatest weaknesses of the MTSU Honors College are:

4. I think the most **immediate** priority of the Honors College should be:

5. I think the most important **long-term goal** of the Honors College should be:

6. I think the most obvious measures of progress in the Honors College are:

7. Below is a list of projects that have been suggested for the honors college. Please indicate by circling one of the responses whether you think each is a low-priority goal, a medium-priority goal, or a high-priority goal.

Low, medium, high. Constructing a new honors residence hall near the honors college.

Low, medium, high. Creating a study-abroad partnership with a foreign university.

Low, medium, high. Creating a university press.

Low, medium, high. Expanding the current literary magazine, *Collage*.

Low, medium, high. Increasing the number of honors scholarships.

Low, medium, high. Increasing the number of honors graduates

Low, medium, high. Creating endowed professorships within the Honors College.

Low, medium, high. Hiring additional staff to help with advising and scholarships.

Low, medium, high. Providing for future summer leadership institutes for MTSU honors students.

Low, medium, high. Providing leadership institutes for high school students.

Low, medium, high. Increasing the visibility of the Honors College.

Low, medium, high. Successfully nominating a student for a Rhodes Scholarship.

Low, medium, high. Establishing more partnerships with other universities and the community to expand opportunities for honors students.

8. The goals that I would most like to be added to the above list are:

9. Some of the goals listed above are relatively expensive. Please list any individual, agency, or organization that you think might be particularly interested in one or more of these projects and might be willing and able to contribute to it.

10. Do you have anything else that you would like to convey about the current status or the future direction of the Honors College? If you need more space, please continue on the back of this form.

Thanks so much for your help. We will keep you apprised of progress in developing a Master Plan for the Honors College.

**HONORS SURVEY - COMPILED
RADIO BUTTON COUNTER**

	Low	Medium	High
Constructing a new Honors residence hall near the Honors College	32	28	8
Creating a study-abroad partnership with a foreign university	1	25	43
Creating a university press	27	29	10
Expanding the current literary magazine, <i>Collage</i>	29	30	9
Increasing the number of Honors scholarships	2	12	56
Increasing the number of Honors graduates	2	16	51
Creating endowed professorships within the Honors College	13	26	26
Hiring additional staff to help with advising the scholarships	14	33	22
Providing for future summer leadership institutes for MTSU Honors Students	15	33	22
Establishing more partnerships with other universities and the community to expand opportunities for Honors students	5	23	41
Providing leadership institutes for high school students	19	38	12
Increasing the visibility of the Honors College	8	21	40
Successfully nominating a student for a Rhodes Scholarship	8	34	27



UNIVERSITY HONORS COLLEGE EXIT SURVEY FOR THESIS WRITERS

**AY 03-04 - Fall 08
60 Respondents**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

NOTE: The numbering is erratic, but we purposefully planned it this way to extract questions out of the MTSU general exit survey that would still apply for the Honors College statistical data collection.

- | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------|---|---|----------|---|--|----------|-------|-----------------|-------|----------|-------|---------|-------|-----------------|-------|
| <p>5. While pursuing this degree, did you:</p> <table border="0"> <tr><td>A. Originally enroll (and remain) at MTSU</td><td style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">90.0%</td></tr> <tr><td>B. Transfer from a 2-year institution</td><td style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">8.3%</td></tr> <tr><td>C. Transfer from a 4-year institution</td><td style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">1.7%</td></tr> <tr><td>D. Other</td><td style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">0.0%</td></tr> </table> | A. Originally enroll (and remain) at MTSU | 90.0% | B. Transfer from a 2-year institution | 8.3% | C. Transfer from a 4-year institution | 1.7% | D. Other | 0.0% | <p>6. Number of years you will attend MTSU</p> <table border="0"> <tr><td>A. One</td><td style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">0.0%</td></tr> <tr><td>B. Two</td><td style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">6.7%</td></tr> <tr><td>C. Three</td><td style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">8.3%</td></tr> <tr><td>D. Four</td><td style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">73.3%</td></tr> <tr><td>E. Five or more</td><td style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">11.7%</td></tr> </table> | A. One | 0.0% | B. Two | 6.7% | C. Three | 8.3% | D. Four | 73.3% | E. Five or more | 11.7% |
| A. Originally enroll (and remain) at MTSU | 90.0% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| B. Transfer from a 2-year institution | 8.3% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| C. Transfer from a 4-year institution | 1.7% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| D. Other | 0.0% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| A. One | 0.0% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| B. Two | 6.7% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| C. Three | 8.3% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| D. Four | 73.3% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| E. Five or more | 11.7% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>7. Please estimate your cumulative GPA upon completion of your degree</p> <table border="0"> <tr><td>A. 3.25 - 3.64</td><td style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">25.0%</td></tr> <tr><td>B. 3.65 - 4.00</td><td style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">75.0%</td></tr> </table> | A. 3.25 - 3.64 | 25.0% | B. 3.65 - 4.00 | 75.0% | <p>8. Number of semesters you have lived in an MTSU residence hall</p> <table border="0"> <tr><td>A. One</td><td style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">5.0%</td></tr> <tr><td>B. Two</td><td style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">16.7%</td></tr> <tr><td>C. Three</td><td style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">3.3%</td></tr> <tr><td>D. Four or more</td><td style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">26.7%</td></tr> <tr><td>E. None</td><td style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">48.3%</td></tr> </table> | A. One | 5.0% | B. Two | 16.7% | C. Three | 3.3% | D. Four or more | 26.7% | E. None | 48.3% | | | | |
| A. 3.25 - 3.64 | 25.0% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| B. 3.65 - 4.00 | 75.0% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| A. One | 5.0% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| B. Two | 16.7% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| C. Three | 3.3% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| D. Four or more | 26.7% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| E. None | 48.3% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>9. Have you participated in any of these extracurricular activities? (Mark all that apply)</p> <table border="0"> <tr><td>A. Fraternity/Sorority</td><td style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">23.3%</td></tr> <tr><td>B. Athletics</td><td style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">5.0%</td></tr> <tr><td>C. Student Government Association (SGA)</td><td style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">5.0%</td></tr> <tr><td>D. Other service organizations or clubs</td><td style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">83.3%</td></tr> <tr><td>E. None</td><td style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">13.3%</td></tr> </table> | | A. Fraternity/Sorority | 23.3% | B. Athletics | 5.0% | C. Student Government Association (SGA) | 5.0% | D. Other service organizations or clubs | 83.3% | E. None | 13.3% | | | | | | | | |
| A. Fraternity/Sorority | 23.3% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| B. Athletics | 5.0% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| C. Student Government Association (SGA) | 5.0% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| D. Other service organizations or clubs | 83.3% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| E. None | 13.3% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

EMPLOYMENT DATA

- | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---------|-------|------------|-------|-------------|-------|---------------|------|---|---|-------|---|-------|---|-------|--|-------|
| <p>10. Average number of hours employed (on/off campus) per week during past year</p> <table border="0"> <tr><td>A. None</td><td style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">15.3%</td></tr> <tr><td>B. 1 to 20</td><td style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">50.8%</td></tr> <tr><td>C. 21 to 34</td><td style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">32.2%</td></tr> <tr><td>D. 35 or more</td><td style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">1.7%</td></tr> </table> | A. None | 15.3% | B. 1 to 20 | 50.8% | C. 21 to 34 | 32.2% | D. 35 or more | 1.7% | <p>11. If you worked during the academic year while at MTSU, what was your primary reason?</p> <table border="0"> <tr><td>A. Basic survival needs (food, shelter, etc.)</td><td style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">34.0%</td></tr> <tr><td>B. Academic expenses (tuition, books, fees)</td><td style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">14.9%</td></tr> <tr><td>C. Personal needs and desires (clothing, car)</td><td style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">36.2%</td></tr> <tr><td>D. Lifestyle enhancement (travel, entertainment)</td><td style="text-align: right; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">14.9%</td></tr> </table> | A. Basic survival needs (food, shelter, etc.) | 34.0% | B. Academic expenses (tuition, books, fees) | 14.9% | C. Personal needs and desires (clothing, car) | 36.2% | D. Lifestyle enhancement (travel, entertainment) | 14.9% |
| A. None | 15.3% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| B. 1 to 20 | 50.8% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| C. 21 to 34 | 32.2% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| D. 35 or more | 1.7% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| A. Basic survival needs (food, shelter, etc.) | 34.0% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| B. Academic expenses (tuition, books, fees) | 14.9% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| C. Personal needs and desires (clothing, car) | 36.2% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| D. Lifestyle enhancement (travel, entertainment) | 14.9% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

PLANS FOLLOWING GRADUATION

12. What are your immediate employment plans? (Fill in only one of the following.)
- | | |
|---|-------|
| A. I don't know yet | 16.9% |
| B. I have accepted a job | 8.5% |
| C. I will be going to graduate school full-time next year | 52.5% |
| D. I will be going to graduate school part-time and working part-time next year | 1.7% |
| E. I am still seeking employment | 20.3% |

13. If you currently have or will be starting a new job, to what extent is your new job related to your area of study at MTSU?

A. Directly related	12.1%
B. Somewhat related	10.3%
C. Not related	13.8%
D. N/A - do not have a job	63.8%

14. If you plan to continue your education, what is the highest degree you plan to earn?

A. Master's degree	16.9%
B. Specialist degree (Ed.S.)	1.7%
C. Professional degree (medicine, law, theology)	23.7%
D. Doctoral degree (Ph.D., Ed.D. DA.)	47.5%
E. N/A - not continuing my education	10.2%

GENERAL LEVEL OF SATISFACTION WITH THE UNIVERSITY HONORS COLLEGE

To what extent do you think your Honors college experience contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the areas below?

15. Writing Skills

A. Very much	63%
B. Somewhat	34%
C. Very little	3%
D. Not at all	0%

16. Speaking Skills

A. Very much	30.5%
B. Somewhat	59.3%
C. Very little	10.2%
D. Not at all	0.0%

17. Using mathematical concepts

A. Very much	8.5%
B. Somewhat	32.2%
C. Very little	28.8%
D. Not at all	30.5%

18. Applying scientific methods of inquiry

A. Very much	42.4%
B. Somewhat	27.1%
C. Very little	18.6%
D. Not at all	11.9%

19. Enhancing analytical skills

A. Very much	69%
B. Somewhat	29%
C. Very little	2%
D. Not at all	0%

20. Developing computer skills

A. Very much	20.3%
B. Somewhat	30.5%
C. Very little	33.9%
D. Not at all	15.3%

21. Developing tolerance for divergent views

A. Very much	40.7%
B. Somewhat	47.5%
C. Very little	8.5%
D. Not at all	3.4%

22. Understanding diverse cultures and values

A. Very much	50.8%
B. Somewhat	44.1%
C. Very little	5.1%
D. Not at all	0.0%

23. Recognizing and acting upon ethical principles

A. Very much	30.5%
B. Somewhat	44.1%
C. Very little	18.6%
D. Not at all	6.8%

24. Exercising public responsibility and community service

A. Very much	23.7%
B. Somewhat	40.7%
C. Very little	20.3%
D. Not at all	15.3%

25. Appreciating racial and sexual equality

A. Very much	27.1%
B. Somewhat	50.8%
C. Very little	11.9%
D. Not at all	10.2%

26. Advancing your appreciation of the arts

A. Very much	39.0%
B. Somewhat	44.1%
C. Very little	11.9%
D. Not at all	5.1%

27. Understanding how the natural universe operates

A. Very much	22.0%
B. Somewhat	35.6%
C. Very little	28.8%
D. Not at all	13.6%

28. Understanding issues and problems facing the world

A. Very much	54.2%
B. Somewhat	33.9%
C. Very little	10.2%
D. Not at all	1.7%

29. Understanding the present as it relates to historical events and processes

A. Very much	49.2%
B. Somewhat	45.8%
C. Very little	3.4%
D. Not at all	1.7%

30. Understanding how science and technology influence everyday life

A. Very much	37.3%
B. Somewhat	37.3%
C. Very little	18.6%
D. Not at all	6.8%

31. Ability to critically analyze ideas and information

A. Very much	67.8%
B. Somewhat	28.8%
C. Very little	3.4%
D. Not at all	0.0%

32. Ability to lead or guide others

A. Very much	28.8%
B. Somewhat	54.2%
C. Very little	15.3%
D. Not at all	1.7%

33. Ability to function as part of a team

A. Very much	30.5%
B. Somewhat	42.4%
C. Very little	23.7%
D. Not at all	3.4%

34. Ability to plan and carry out projects independently

A. Very much	76.3%
B. Somewhat	23.7%
C. Very little	0.0%
D. Not at all	0.0%

35. Valuing learning as a lifelong process

A. Very much	78.0%
B. Somewhat	20.3%
C. Very little	0.0%
D. Not at all	1.7%

36. Commitment to personal health and fitness

A. Very much	5.1%
B. Somewhat	22.0%
C. Very little	37.3%
D. Not at all	35.6%

HONORS COLLEGE PROGRAM

Please rate the quality of each item and its importance to you

59. Content of courses in the Honors College

A. Excellent	74.6%
B. Good	20.3%
C. Fair	5.1%
D. Poor	0.0%

60. Availability of courses in the Honors College

A. Excellent	16.9%
B. Good	52.5%
C. Fair	27.1%
D. Poor	3.4%

61. Diversity of courses in the Honors College

A. Excellent	18.6%
B. Good	47.5%
C. Fair	28.8%
D. Poor	5.1%

62. Quality of instruction in the Honors College

A. Excellent	76.3%
B. Good	23.7%
C. Fair	0.0%
D. Poor	0.0%

63. Opportunities for formal student evaluation of Honors instruction

A. Excellent	40.7%
B. Good	44.1%
C. Fair	10.2%
D. Poor	5.1%

65. Academic advising by Honors College academic advisor

A. Excellent	57.9%
B. Good	24.6%
C. Fair	10.5%
D. Poor	7.0%

66. Availability of Honors faculty to help students outside of class

A. Excellent	72.9%
B. Good	27.1%
C. Fair	0.0%
D. Poor	0.0%

68. Availability of Honors College academic advisor (or substitute in her absence)

A. Excellent	59.6%
B. Good	29.8%
C. Fair	8.8%
D. Poor	1.8%

70. Willingness of Honors College academic advisor to help

A. Excellent	73.2%
B. Good	16.1%
C. Fair	7.1%
D. Poor	3.6%

71. Adequacy of student computers in our building

A. Excellent	36.4%
B. Good	49.1%
C. Fair	12.7%
D. Poor	1.8%

72. Adequacy of classroom facilities and equipment

A. Excellent	69.5%
B. Good	27.1%
C. Fair	3.4%
D. Poor	0.0%

73. Adequacy of science laboratory facilities and equipment

A. Excellent	43.6%
B. Good	40.0%
C. Fair	12.7%
D. Poor	3.6%
E. Not applicable	

74. Opportunity to apply what was learned in the Honors classroom

A. Excellent	40.7%
B. Good	52.5%
C. Fair	6.8%
D. Poor	0.0%

77. Opportunities to express ideas in writing or presentations in the Honors courses

A. Excellent	78.0%
B. Good	20.3%
C. Fair	1.7%
D. Poor	0.0%

79. Experience in the Honors Learning Community (Lyon or Wood/Felder Hall)

A. Excellent	22.2%
B. Good	16.7%
C. Fair	8.3%
D. Poor	2.8%
E. Not applicable	50.0%

81. How important were the class sizes?

A. Extremely important	59.3%
B. Important	32.2%
C. Somewhat important	8.5%
D. Of little importance	0.0%
E. Of no importance	0.0%

83. How would you rate the perceived quality of an Honors College education by....

(grad school, future employers)

A. Outstanding	45.8%
B. Very good	45.8%
C. Adequate	8.5%
D. Poor	0.0%
E. Unacceptable	0.0%

85. What grade would you give your thesis advisor?

A. A	89.7%
B. B	5.2%
C. C	3.4%
D. D	1.7%
E. F	0.0%

76. Quality of Honors courses in preparing you for employment

A. Excellent	36.2%
B. Good	50.0%
C. Fair	12.1%
D. Poor	1.7%

78. If you could start college again, would you enroll in the Honors College?

A. Absolutely	88.1%
B. Probably	8.5%
C. Maybe	3.4%
D. No	0.0%

80. How would you rank the breadth and depth of material covered in each Honors class?

A. Excellent	70.7%
B. Good	27.6%
C. Fair	1.7%
D. Poor	0.0%

82. How would you rank the level of difficulty and rigor in Honors classes?

A. Extremely difficult	0.0%
B. Moderately difficult	76.3%
C. Somewhat difficult	18.6%
D. Not difficult	5.1%
E. Not difficult enough	0.0%

84. How would you rank the Honors Thesis as preparation for grad school/career?

A. Outstanding	66.7%
B. Very good	33.3%
C. Adequate	0.0%
D. Poor	0.0%
E. Unacceptable	0.0%

86. What grade would you give your thesis committee?

A. A	89.7%
B. B	6.9%
C. C	3.4%
D. D	0.0%
E. F	0.0%

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

NOTE: Some of the survey questions were provided with permission from the University of Mississippi, North Carolina State University, and the MTSU College of Graduate Studies.

Analysis of Exit Survey for Theses Writers

Since the fall of 2003, the Honors College has been asking individuals who complete theses to fill out and return an exit survey. Sixty of them have done so. The results are instructive.

According to responses to question five, 90% of the students spent their entire time at MTSU; 8.3% transferred from 2-years institutions, and 1.7% transferred from 4-year colleges.

In answering question eight, 48.3% of students reported never living in an MTSU residence hall. Only 26.7% had stayed in a dorm for four or more semesters.

All but 13.3% reported participating in some extracurricular activities.

Employment data indicates that 33.9% of students worked 21 or more hours a week over the previous year. Almost fifty one percent (50.98%) reported working from 1-20 hours and only 15.3% reported that they had not worked at all. Of those who did work, more than a third (34.0%) reported that they did so for "basic survival needs." Almost fifteen percent (14.9%) reported working for academic expenses, 36.2% for personal needs and desires, and 14.9% for lifestyle enhancement.

Students are not always in their last semester when they defend their thesis and complete the exit survey, but 52.5% anticipated going to graduate school full-time in the next year, 8.5% reported having accepted a job, 20.3% said they were seeking employment, and 16.9% were still uncertain of their plans. Of those who planned to continue their educations, 16.9% were planning to stop at a Master's degree, 1.7% at a specialist degree, 23.7% with a professional degree, and 47.5% with a doctoral degree. Only 10.2% said they were not continuing their educations, but students may have misinterpreted the question.

Most respondents were positive about their honors experience. Close to 95% ranked the "content of courses in the Honors College" as Excellent or Good, and 100% ranked the "quality of instruction" and the "availability of Honors faculty to help students out of class" in similar fashion. By contrast, just over 30% of students thought the "availability of courses in the Honors College" was fair (27.1%) or poor (3.4%), suggesting an area of possible improvement. None of the 60 respondents ranked the difficulty and rigor of Honors classes as extremely difficult, but 76.3% thought they were moderately difficult and another 18.6% thought they were somewhat difficult.

All respondents thought that class sizes had been important, suggesting that this is a component of the program that they really like.