



April 4, 2016

Andrew Hippisley
Chair, University of Kentucky Senate Council

Dear Dr. Hippisley,

The Senate Committee on Academic Organization and Structure (SAOSC) met on March 23, 2016, from 3-5 at 118 MH Gluck Equine Research Center, to discuss the proposal for establishment of the Lewis Honors College. While only 6 of the 10 committee members were in attendance, conversations were conducted before and after the meeting using email. The primary authors of the proposal were: the Honors Faculty of Record, the Honors Faculty, Dr. Ben Withers (Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education), Dr. Diane Snow, Director (Interim), and members of an ad hoc committee created by then Vice Provost for Undergraduate Success, Dr. Charley Carlson. Drs. Withers and Snow were in attendance at the March 23 meeting to provide background and answer questions.

The University of Kentucky has had an Honors Program since 1961 currently operating out of the Division of Undergraduate Education in the Provost's office. In October 22, 2015 a donation of \$23 million was offered by the Lewis Foundation to transform the UK Honors Program into the Lewis Honors College. The proposal identifies the advantages of a college over a program and suggests approaches to achieving this goal.

In addition to the proposal, we had the Charitable Grant Agreement from donors Tom and Jan Lewis, to establish the college, letters with comments and suggestions from the Deans of most colleges, letters from the Chairs of each Faculty Council (or equivalent), plus an addendum, which Drs. Withers and Snow composed in response to suggestions from the deans and committees.

Overall, the SAOSC recognized that the Honors College has the potential to benefit the educational activities of all colleges, contribute significantly to recruitment and retention of top students, as well as provide unique opportunities for students seeking this type of academic environment.

The proposal asks the Senate to recommend the following:

1. Establishment of the Lewis Honors College, including leadership by a dean and governance by a faculty of the college.
2. Establishment of an Honors Transition Committee, which will be charged with creating the specific structure for the Honors College

Item 1 is subject of the proposed GR VII change. How this will be accomplished remains the subject of a future proposal by the Honors Transition Committee. Overall, this item was not controversial.

Item 2 is the main point for us to address. We need to 1) determine the general composition of the committee, and 2) give the committee members a specific charge.

Summary of Comments from Deans and Colleges

All responders supported the idea of creating a College; there were no objections. Many responders, however, were concerned about financial sustainability beyond the 10-year gift horizon. Some expressed concern about the possible impact of the Honors College on activities of other colleges, especially recruitment of high-achieving students. There was widespread agreement that the proposed College can only succeed if it is embraced by existing Colleges.

The Composition of the Honors Transition Committee was regarded as key for success and recommendations included that the committee should a) be appointed by the Provost with strong input from the Honors Director (or Acting Dean), the University Senate Council, Faculty Council members, and the Deans, b) take extensive advantage of the expertise of the current Honors Faculty of Record and Honors Faculty, c) be broadly representative of the colleges that will contribute to the college, d) include chairs from departments that will be involved in the program, e) include at least one student, and f) include representation from the Provost's Office.

SAOSC Proposes the Following Recommendation from the Senate

The SAOSC moves that that University Senate endorse the following recommendations based on the proposal, the comments from the various contingencies and the addendum to the proposal (elements of the proposal are in bold, below):

- 1. Recommend the creation of the Lewis Honors College, including leadership by a dean and governance by faculty of the College.**
- 2. Create an Honors Transition Committee to design a precise structure for subsequent review by the Senate in the Fall of 2016.**

The Honors Transition Committee should be appointed by the Provost in consultation with the University Senate Council and College Deans. The recommended composition is 14 members (6 from the current Honors Faculty of Record, 4 Department Chairs, 1 student, 1 University Senator, and 2 representatives of the Provost). The committee should consult with the entire Honors Faculty of Record, and with the chairs of the following Senate Committees: Academic Organization and Structure, Academic Programs, and Academic Planning and Priorities

A recommended charge to this committee could be:

- 1. Assist in recruitment of new dean for the Lewis Honors College**
- 2. Determine the overall composition of the faculty for the Honors College and a regulatory structure to govern faculty eligibility and involvement**
- 3. Consider the appropriate staffing for the Honors College**
- 4. Determine the criteria for participating in faculty governance in the Honors College.**
- 5. Determine how to ensure diversity of both faculty and students in the Honors College as well as access for students of diverse economic and social backgrounds.**
- 6. Recommend how to ensure effective consultation of the Honors College Dean and Faculty with the Deans of other colleges, faculty participating in the program (associate faculty), and the External Advisory Committee.**
- 7. Assess the plans for economic sustainability of the Honors College**
- 8. Recommend an initial Honors Faculty of Record for the Honors College and develop a governance for membership terms and renewals.**
- 9. Identify how the proposal will ensure success for other colleges as well as provide unique educational opportunities to students.**

Respectfully and on behalf of the SAOSC,

Ernest Bailey, PhD
Professor
Chair of SAOC