



Honors Transfer Program Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

April 7 in person and zoom and April 8 zoom only: 2:00-3:00

1. Welcome and Overview

- **In attendance on either or both dates:** Rebekah Taveau, Michael Stanford, Salumeh Eslamieh, Frederico Costa, Gustavo Costa, Howard Qin, Ray Lapuz, Julie Luu, Sarah Harmon, Soraya Sohrabi, Ray Lapuz, Sarah Harmon, Ameer Thompson, Paul Roscelli
- **Absent:** John Perez April 7 and 8
- **Note taker:** Julie Luu April 7 and Zoom transcripts April 8 summarized by Rebekah

2. Approval of Agenda

- Agenda Approved

3. Approval of [Minutes from Feb. 11](#)

- Moved to be approved by Salumeh Eslamieh
- Seconded by Julie Luu
- “Minutes from Feb. 11” Approved

Business: HTP Successes

[Four Students funded and went to WRHC!](#)

[WRHC Photo Album Highlights](#)

[We are beating many Honors Records!!!](#)

- 78 Honors Contract Proposals this year
- 76% completion (80% in IDST) in fall
- 17 BHC proposals. 8 accepted-11 students
- 20 Honors Grads
- 13 UCLA Certifications
- 8 UCI Certifications including 6 H2H

Notes:

- WRHC:
 - Four students and Rebekah Taveau attended
 - Honors Program house there has a kitchen. Maybe work to get something like this for our Honors Program with PTK.
- Enrollment has been going up
- There are many benefits to joining Honors Program

- Priority Transfer Opportunities have expanded (e.g., Scripps, Swathmore)
- HTP student membership is growing
- Number of Honors graduates is increasing
- Number of Honors contracts applications have increased and also the number of Honors Contracts completed have increased
- IDST 150 was voted in the last committee meeting after careful consideration to be required and can be completed any semester
- Number of BHC students accepted have increased
- Honors Course Flyer drafts have been made for Fall 2025
 - Waiting for information from admin and confirmation from faculty
 - Discussion about how to manage Honors class size
 - Shared that some interested faculty had questions and/or concerns (e.g., faculty desire reduced class size for Honors classes but needs to be balanced with enough student enrollment in Honors classes to not be canceled). Some interested faculty may not want to plan/develop Honors courses if they are canceled due to low enrollment.
 - Are certain areas more desirable?
 - Entry-level courses that satisfy GE may be more interesting for students.

Business: HTP Doings and updates

- BHC needs faculty moderators. If you are interested in being a BHC faculty moderator, please let Rebekah Taveau know.
 - BHC Info: UC Berkeley on April 26! You can register if you are interested in attending. If you are an Honors faculty supporting honors students, you can select "My college will pay." Then it will be billed to HTP and Rebekah will send you a pre-filled conference advance form.
 - 90 accepted out 298 applications for BHC
- Honors Pods
 - There was a Q&A about logistics (e.g., how are classes and/or contracts going)
 - Info about we do as faculty was shared
 - In the last Honors Pod, Ray interviewed Sarah Harmon and Rebekah Taveau interviewed Julie Luu to share their experiences mentoring Honors students either as a course, section, or contracts. These interviews were recorded and will be added to an Honors Pod ePortfolio.
 - Honors Pod E-Portfolio Link:
<https://sites.google.com/my.smccd.edu/flphonorspods/home>
 - In the next Honors Pod on April 24 (Thursday) 3-5pm in FTLPL, Professor Michael Stanford will share their Honors experience.

Business: Showcase Planning

- Please RSVP if you will attend the Honors Research Showcase ([Honors Research Showcase](#))

- Attend when you can and you can pick up lunch
- Need [Faculty Evaluators](#) – please sign up if you are interested. Paper rubrics will be printed and student ambassadors will pass them out.
- Reviewed Showcase agenda
- [Volunteer Sign up](#) – please sign up. Especially request 2 volunteers each day to be IT contacts if issue arises

Replacement Position Request for Full Time Counselor

The below minutes were compiled from combination of notes on April 7 and meeting transcripts from April 7 and 8:

The following events were recounted between April 7 and 8:

- **September-October 2024:** The Honors committee wrote in Program Review about the importance of replacing our full time honors counselor with another full time counselor and the growing importance of this role. Former full time Counselor Gloria Darafshi helped us write the description and 18-20 hour needs for the essential duties.
- **Sept. 17:** Rebekah (R), Honors Coordinator, communicated with the Dean of Counseling, Max Hartman (M) via email about the importance of replacing our full time Honors counselor and about the requirement from TAP to have a designated Honors Counselor.
- **Sept. 20:** R and met with M to review what the committee had written in program review about the need to replace our Honors Counselor upon Gloria's retirement.
- **Nov., 2024:** R reminded M during a meeting that HTP committee wants to be involved in supporting the full time counselor replacement position to replace Gloria, former full time Honors Counselor
- **Dec. 2024:** We were informed that James Aganon (J), the part time counselor temporarily replacing Gloria Darafshi (G) would be replaced with part time counselor Soraya Sohrabi. They each had about 10 hours for Honors and were very busy. Despite asking for the time, there was barely time to train, communicate, and get them into the confidential portals needed.
- **Dec.** R emailed M and the supervising Dean for HTP to ask if he was aware of the Honors counselor duties and could he give the part time counselor more hours for honors including for J to transition to S. There was no response.
- **Jan. 2025-** R reminded M via email that the HTP committee wants to be involved in supporting the full time counselor replacement position. She listed the duties and explained how essential they were.
- **March 5:** Five months after our initial requests, M invited R to a meeting on March 11 at noon (during R's break blocked on her calendar in a 9 hour back to back day)
- **March 8:** We received a record number of Honors contracts (78!) all of which the Honors Counselor had to review/coordinate co-reviews for asap within two weeks.
- **March 11:** M met with R and two counselors. M explained that they had a group working on the full time counselor replacement which had decided they would not include Honors in the new position. R voiced many concerns. M asked on the spot if it would work to have S be the part time Honors counselor. R agreed she was a very strong

counselor but explained again why they needed a full time counselor. M reassured her that the needs would be met. R didn't hear she had a choice. M asked all to go to the Academic Senate on March 13. No one could go, so R said she would.

- **March 12:** After a full day of classes and meetings, around 4pm VP Chailin let Rebekah know the funding for Honors students presenting at WRHC in April fell through and to have students apply to Student Affairs. R spent the evening emailing student affairs and reading their website for information and emailing students and contacted them on our what's app group to get organized fast. She also worked on the 78 contract proposal reviews and grading. There was no time to process or consult with HTP committee members about the Honors Counselor replacement issue, so she wrote this [Safeguards for Honors Needs](#) and got a zoom meeting with Dean Ameer Thompson to run it by him.
- **March 13** Academic Senate meeting.
 - At the Academic Senate meeting, there were two surprises for the participants: 1) M presented the counselor replacement position proposal without including Honors, and 2) The Dean's slides said, "Supported by Dr. Taveau, Honors Coordinator." R was surprised to see her name promoting the proposal. People were confused and did not realize what was going on-some missed the detail about honors not being included.
 - R read the "[Safeguards for Honors Needs](#)" document at the meeting.
 - There was a lot of discussion and finally a vote was held.
 - The Academic Senate vote on the new Counselor position was one of the most contentious ever. There were two dissents and some abstinences which is unusual, especially for a replacement counseling/faculty position.
 - After the meeting, the Academic Senate President Gampi Shankar and R received dozens of messages, calls, and meeting requests from others in and outside the Senate and counseling that were unhappy and dissatisfied about the proposed counselor position without honors and process that had occurred. The messages from them expressed surprise, confusion, and disagreement with the proposed position not having Honors and with the way this was carried out without general counseling and HTP committee involvement.
 - The Academic Senate President and R have been listening carefully to all sides and are seeking a solution.
 - **Oct-April:** Many problems occurred due to the transitions between part time Honors counselors due to limited time even though they are strong counselors. Some of the issues that the Honors coordinator then had to resolve included:
 - Incomplete certification process btw part time counselor transition (R fixed but took many hours and days and students were distressed)
 - Lack of Honors counselor at Honors transfer workshop
 - Last minute Honors counselor certification
 - Lack of coordination within general counseling about honors events
 - Lack of co-chair of HTP committee meetings
 - Student confusion about who the counselor was and how to reach them
 - Honors Counselor not in the system for students to make an appt. directly. The Honors Coordinator had to constantly announce changes.

The below discussion occurred during the April 7 Committee meeting

- R explained that M had offered the temporary solution of part time experienced and dedicated Honors Counselor Soraya Sohrabi being the counselor in the fall.
- Soraya is currently doing a fantastic job supporting Honors while also balancing her work in transfers and more, but the Honors Counselor position is FT: 18-20 hour position.
- Soraya said previous FT Honors Counselor put in 15 hours and that she was able to do Honors Counselor duties in less than FT hours, while balancing transfers.
- R explained:
 - former longtime full time Honors Counselor, Gloria Darafshi (G), said her position was 50% and should be in the future. G helped us write the Program Review which outlined the position duties and indicated that it was a 18-20 hour position.
 - R spoke with G following the Academic Senate meeting. G encouraged us to ask for a full time counselor with 50% for Honors.
 - Our advisory committee members and faculty at Academic Senate said they wanted a more permanent solution and not to lose our chance for a full time Honors counselor longterm
- The committee discussed that Honors needs a regular full-time Honors counselor for availability, training, portal access, and consistency (as required by TAP). One possibility is that a current FT counselor be designated to Honors, and then the proposed FT counselor position can go forward without being Honors.
- Committee discussed and shared that consistency of an Honors Counselor is important
 - “I think the main concern with whomever is in the role of honors counselor is maintaining consistency so that if it can stay the same person, the program will not suffer.”
 - The many reasons for the need of a full time honors counselor were shared and can be [found in this linked document](#).
 - Transitions between three counselors over this past year have been confusing for students. They say they are unsure of who to meet when. The transitions also required significant time from the Honors Coordinator for training counselors, getting them enrolled in the three portals, setting up tracking, compensating for the confusion (e.g. constant newsletters and emails to explain changes and hours), filling in for counselor meetings and events the counselors could not attend, and repair of things that fell through the cracks.
 - The Honors Program is growing and needs the support from a full time counselor more than ever
 - Meeting adjourned

