

# **SAS Honors Implementation Committee Report**

as amended and approved by the FAS on May 8, 2006

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# Background of the Implementation Proposals

The SAS Honors Implementation Committee was established by Dean Holly Smith in April, 2006. We were charged with proposing ways to implement the Honors Proposal that was approved by the FAS in the Spring 2005. Our first meeting was on April 7, 2006. We have had three subsequent meetings.

The FAS must have the general outlines of the program in place by early summer, since promotional and admissions materials must be ready for the prospective students whom we hope to enroll in Fall 2007. In particular, four aspects of the SAS-Honors Program (hereafter the SAS-HP) must be in place:

- I. The Curriculum and Scholastic Standing
- II. Admissions, Recruitment and Scholarships
- III. Co-curricular Activities
- IV. Administration and Structure

Thus, our report is divided into four subsections.

The controlling document is the Honors Proposal that was adopted last spring by the FAS. Each subsection of our report begins with the relevant quotations from that Proposal. Most of our proposals concern the new SAS Honors Program that fall within the jurisdiction of the current FAS since we are the only faculty body that can reasonably be acting on behalf of the new School of Art and Sciences (SAS). Those proposals are listed as "Motions for the FAS." We are also making some recommendations to the New Brunswick-wide Implementation Committees and the Central Administration. They are appropriately labeled and, if approved, they will be forwarded to the bodies that have jurisdiction over them.

We are an *ad hoc* committee and will cease to exist once a Standing Honors Committee of the SAS is in place. Wherever possible, we tried not to bind the hands of that standing committee.

Finally, although we believe that the implementation proposals suggested in our report will result in an excellent SAS Honors Program, it is highly likely that as we gain knowledge and experience with the program, some modifications to our suggestions will become necessary. Therefore, our first recommendation is:

- 1) During the early stages of the implementation of the SAS-Honors Program, the Implementation Committee will have the authority to modify the implementation proposals as passed by the FAS in May, 2006, as long as the modifications are consistent with the Honors Program approved by the FAS in the Spring 2005 and with the spirit of the implementation proposals approved in May, 2006.
- 2) Students who are members of the College honors programs prior to Fall 2007 and who are in good standing in the programs will have the choice to complete the requirements of their current program or to complete the requirements of the SAS-HP.

# I. Curriculum and Scholastic Standing

Quotations from the FAS Honors Task Force Report (as approved, Spring 2005)

3. The Honors Program committee (HPC) will specify a number of credits a student must obtain in order to graduate with general honors. (In other words, the committee recommends a “requirements” model rather than an “opportunities model.”) These requirements will include some form of a capstone project in the senior year. The capstone experience will be a six (6) credit thesis or other significant, independent scholarly and/or creative accomplishment. For example, suppose that the total number of required credits is eighteen (18). The remaining twelve (12) credits could be obtained in a variety of ways; by taking honors courses developed by departments/programs and approved by the HPC under guidelines adopted by the Faculty; by taking designated advanced courses approved by the departments, HPC and/or the Dean/Director of the GHP; by taking a course that has not been designated as an honors course but in which the instructor has agreed to award “honors credit” to the student upon successful completion of additional work for the course. Arrangements for “enhancing” a non-honors course require approval of the department, HPC, and/or the Dean/Director of the GHP. The HPC will also support the development of, and seek approval from the Faculty for, other academic opportunities that will be available only to general honors students. For instance, honors minors (such as one in intellectual history) could be developed for GHP students who complete an interdisciplinary set of honors courses in addition to those required to graduate with general honors.

8. Upon the recommendation of the HPC, the Faculty will set the guidelines for a student remaining in good standing in the GHP. These guidelines may require a suitable distribution of GHP credits through a student’s academic career.

## Scholastic Standing

### Motions for the FAS:

3) In order to remain in good standing in the SAS Honors Program, students must maintain a minimum term GPA of 3.250 in the first year, and 3.500 in every following academic semester (Summer and Winter sessions excluded). Students who fall below the stipulated minimum GPA will be put on probation from the SAS-HP in a manner consistent with SAS guidelines. In particular: SAS Honors Program students who fail to meet the term average requirements for three semesters in a row will be dismissed from the program.

4) Students will be permitted to remain in the Honors Program regardless of the progress they are making towards completion of a certain number of “honors credits” as long as they satisfy the scholastic standing requirements of the Honors Program.

## Types of Honors Courses and Related Matters

### Motion for the FAS:

5) The following types of honors courses and activities will be available:

- Departmental Honors Courses: These courses are designed by departments, and at the introductory level, provide a more personal, more rigorous experience for students in their first two years of college, when the students would otherwise typically be enrolled in large lecture courses. Honors courses at the 200-400 level will typically also serve as courses in a departmental honors program.
- Interdisciplinary Seminars: Interdisciplinary seminars invite students and faculty to think about complex problems and issues across disciplinary boundaries. Following all of its customary approval processes, the SAS will continue to offer interdisciplinary seminars as part of the honors curriculum. These seminars may be campus or residential college based, reflecting the emphasis of the residential learning community of that campus/residential college. However, the seminars will be open to SAS Honors Program students from outside of that campus/residential college.
- One Credit Colloquia: One credit colloquia, modeled on the colloquia currently offered in the Livingston College honors program, will be developed by the HPC. The colloquia are intended to stimulate intellectual discourse through an interdisciplinary approach to learning, in which students explore topics of social, scientific, and philosophical interest through a series of performances, lectures, art exhibitions, film screenings, poetry readings, etc.
- Capstone Project: A “capstone” project will earn all honors students a minimum of 3 credits per semester, typically in the senior year, totaling at least 6 credits. Departments may add up to another 3 additional honors thesis credits per semester. In every case the capstone project will involve a substantial writing or research component consistent with the norms of the discipline. It is important to note that independent research does not equally “fit” all high achieving students; therefore, the criteria should be as flexible as possible while encouraging students to challenge themselves academically and personally.
- Thesis Symposia: Thesis symposia will be retained and enhanced, as one way of continuing to build a community of scholars. Furthermore, students will also be encouraged to apply to present their work at the Aresty Research Center’s annual Symposium/Celebration of Undergraduate Research, which represents the work of students across the university at all levels and in all disciplines.

## Honors Courses/Credits Required

### Motions for the FAS:

6) All SAS Honors Program students will be required to complete a minimum of four courses totaling 12 or more credits that are designated as honors courses. Whenever possible, these courses/credits will be

designed to fulfill the SAS distribution requirements. Honors students will be encouraged to distribute those courses among departmental honors offerings and interdisciplinary seminars offered by the Honors Program with the assistance of the SAS and professional schools.

7) All SAS Honors Program students will be required to complete a minimum of two colloquia, in addition to the 12 course credits, to be completed by the end of their second year. It is highly recommended that students take at least one colloquium in their first year of the program.

8) All SAS Honors Program students must complete a capstone project of at least 6 credits in addition to the 12 course credits and the 2 colloquia credits.

## **Departmental Honors Programs**

### **Motion for the FAS:**

9) The Honors Program Committee will review the current departmental honors programs and will recommend general standards for these programs to the faculty of the SAS. These standards will be aimed at insuring that departmental programs meet a uniformly high standard of quality, but will be designed so as not to impact programs that currently meet high standards.

## **Research Prior to Capstone Projects**

### **Motion for the FAS:**

10) Departments will be encouraged to further develop research projects/opportunities available to students prior to the capstone projects. These could carry anywhere from 1 to 3 credits per semester. Such projects provide honors students with the opportunity to better prepare for the capstone project.

## **Current College-Based Senior Thesis Projects**

**Comment:** The current college senior thesis projects (e.g., the Henry Rutgers, Paul Robeson, Mabel Smith Douglass and the Senior Honors Thesis at UC) do not fall within the purview of the SAS-Honors Program. Nevertheless, such thesis projects can continue as either departmentally-based senior thesis projects, as interdisciplinary SAS senior thesis projects, or residential college-based senior thesis projects, if approved as an SAS Thesis Project.

## **II. Admissions, Recruitment and Scholarships**

The overall goals are a) to admit and recruit the very best students to come to Rutgers University, through admission to the Honors Program and through an offer of scholarship funds; and b) to offer outstanding continuing students the opportunity to join the Honors Program.

Quotations from the FAS Honors Task Force Report (as approved, Spring 2005)

2. Upon the recommendation of the HPC, the Faculty will set common admissions criteria to the single

GHP, and students will be admitted into the GHP. Those criteria will have two components: an automatic admit component and one that is designed to promote diversity by recognizing talent in ways that might not be revealed by the automatic admit criteria. The Faculty will set the general guidelines for each component, and the HPC and the Dean/Director of the GHP will oversee the implementation of those guidelines.

- a. First year students will be admitted according to both the automatic admission criteria and the diversity criteria described above.
- b. Students beginning their college career in one of the liberal arts colleges or whatever college structure replaces the current one who did not join the GHP upon matriculation will be eligible to join the GHP after completion of a specified number of credits at Rutgers-NB generally after the first year. These students will be evaluated according to criteria established by the HPC.
- c. Transfer students should be admitted to the program for the first available Fall semester after the completion of 15 credits in RU-NB as long as they have at least 45 credits still required to be completed for graduation. Admission criteria for transfer students shall be established by the HPC.

12. All students in the GHP will be awarded a merit based scholarship. In addition, all GHP students, plus other students doing senior honors thesis, should have access to a general fund administered by the Dean/Director of the GHP that provides support for research expenses.

## **Recommendations to the NB Implementation Committee and Central Administration:**

1. Consistent with the practices of our peer institutions, the standard application materials for admission to SAS should include a challenging essay question.

## **Admission of First Year Applicants**

### **Motions for the FAS:**

- 11) There will be two pathways for admission of first year students to the SAS Honors Program: admission by nomination and automatic admission.

*Admission by nomination:* First year applicants may be nominated by a guidance counselor, high school teacher, or a member of the Rutgers faculty or staff for consideration for admission to the SAS Honors Program. Self-nominations are also accepted. All such nominations, including self-nominations, must be accompanied by a letter or letters of recommendation from teachers, guidance counselors, or others who can provide evidence of the applicant's scholarly accomplishments and potential.

*Automatic Admission:* Applicants to the SAS Honors Program who meet all of the criteria for automatic admission given below will be offered admission without nomination.

Automatic Selection Criteria: The criteria for automatic admission to the SAS Honors Program are: a minimum total combined Critical Reading and Math SAT score of 1350, with a minimum Critical Reading score of 650, and a minimum high school rank-in-class in the top 10 percent (90<sup>th</sup> percentile).

12). The records of all students offered a James Dickson Carr Scholarship who have not already been either offered admission to the SAS Honors Program or nominated for consideration for admission will be reviewed for possible admission.

## **Admission of Continuing Students**

### **Motions for the FAS:**

13). Continuing students who have completed a minimum of 15 credits at Rutgers University, who have a minimum of 45 credits to complete for graduation, and who have a cumulative GPA of 3.700 or above at the end of the academic year will be invited to apply to the Honors Program. In addition, a faculty member may nominate a student to be considered for admission to the Honors Program who does not meet the GPA requirements, provided the student has a minimum of 45 credits to complete for graduation. This admission process will take place at the end of each academic year, with applications reviewed early in the summer, for admission that will be activated for the next Fall semester.

14) The academic records of students enrolled in the Camden or Newark honors programs and who transfer to SAS will be reviewed for possible admission.

## **Admission of Transfer Students**

### **Motions for the FAS:**

15) Students transferring to the SAS from another institution will be considered for admission to the SAS Honors Program as follows:

- a. Transfer students with (i) a minimum of 30 or more credits and (ii) 45 credits to complete for graduation and (iii) a cumulative GPA of at least 3.700, averaged from all of the sending institutions, will be invited to apply to the SAS-HP.
- b. Transfer students with fewer than 30 credits will not be eligible to apply until they have completed 15 credits at Rutgers University. The continuing student policy in 13 (above) will apply.

## **Recruitment Events**

### **Motions for the FAS:**

16) Scholars Days will continue, and in a form that will include as many as possible of the students who have been offered admission to the SAS-HP.

17) The Honors Program Ambassadors Program (currently in place in the Rutgers College Honors Program) will be continued and expanded. HP Ambassadors make visits to their home high schools, participate in Scholars Days, and do an SAS-Honors Program Phonathon.

## Scholarships

### Recommendations to the NB Implementation Committee and Central Administration:

1. Consistent with the recruitment practices at our peer institutions, all incoming in-state first year students offered admission to the SAS-HP should also be offered full tuition scholarships. Out-of-state students should be offered a scholarship in the amount equal to in-state tuition.
2. All students admitted to the program at a later time should be considered for merit-based scholarships.
3. Receipt of this scholarship is not contingent upon membership in the Honors Program.

### Motion for the FAS:

18) A Scholarship Committee with faculty, staff, and student members will be established by the SAS and, acting under guidelines approved by the SAS<sub>2</sub>, will develop and implement all policies and procedures for all merit-based scholarships awarded through the SAS, including those policies pertaining to renewing merit-based scholarships offered to first year applicants, and those policies pertaining to awarding all other available scholarship funds. [Comment: This would be considered by the SAS when developing its By Laws.]

## III. Co-Curricular Activities

### Quotations from the FAS Honors Task Force (approved Spring, 2005)

4. Co-curricular activities and small learning communities are major features of all successful honors programs, and current Rutgers-New Brunswick college honors students consider them to be of the utmost importance in their overall honors experience. It is critical, whether or not the college honors programs continue to exist in their present form, that (a) the kind and variety of co-curricular experiences and opportunities presently available be maintained and enhanced, and (b) the personnel overseeing those co-curricular activities be academic staff, who report to an academic officer of the university -- the Dean of the GHP.

It is imperative, in honors learning communities, that academic and co-curricular activities remain inseparable. Again, whether or not the present college honors model is retained, the community-building that presently occurs within the college honors programs and which is vitally tied to the academic content of honors coursework and research must be preserved and enhanced. The key to building community in an honors program is the preservation and enhancement of the peer interaction that provides the bulk of a student's day-to-day college experience.

Co-curricular activities and opportunities that have been highly valued by honors students and need to be maintained include: special honors student housing; field trips to museums, plays and operas; film

screenings; visits to labs; outdoor gatherings (picnics, etc.); honors thesis and research colloquia, and the receptions and dinners tied to them; informal meals (pizza parties, etc.); social get-togethers located within honors student residence halls; information sessions on scholarships and other opportunities; Deans' receptions for new and/or continuing honors students; special summer orientations devoted to honors students; summer reading programs; special receptions, dinners, or chats introducing honors students to invited university speakers; faculty mentors (who are not necessarily a given student's thesis director); and peer mentors. Indeed, the range of these activities requires vital synergy between academic staff (located within the GHP administration and/or within the colleges) and their college/campus student and residential-life staff counterparts.

6. The academic staff resources needed to develop and administer the co-curricular activities will be substantial. Approximately the equivalent of five (5) full academic staff lines and three (3) full secretarial lines are now devoted to the honors programs at the various colleges. Given the estimated size of the General Honors Program these numbers must be maintained or, preferably, increased.

## **Motions for the FAS:**

**19)** Honors housing will be available for all students in the SAS-HP and on all campuses. First year students will be encouraged to consider selecting honors housing.

**20)** In conjunction with the SAS orientation for first year students, there will be a half-day orientation to the SAS-HP. A similar orientation will be provided for students joining the Honors Program in the second or third year, perhaps run in part, by Honors Students.

**21)** A diverse set of co-curricular activities will be located on every campus each semester and will involve faculty as volunteers. Advanced Honors Students and graduate students also can provide activities. Graduate students will be paid. All Honors students will be encouraged to participate in numerous, diverse activities.

**22)** Current co-curricular activities will include: films and discussions, plays, operas, concerts, dance events, museums, galleries, etc. in New Brunswick and elsewhere: lab tours; meals with faculty, pizza parties, picnics, receptions. The following should be added: outdoor activities (perhaps coordinated with Rutgers Recreation); events in which a faculty member and students meet around a common interest; activities in which students do something they ordinarily would not do [even would avoid] -- write poetry, draw, sing, make prints (e.g. sun prints), solve math puzzles, do lab experiments, make and fly kites, garden, improvisational dancing, etc.; book discussions; workshops organized through Mason Gross are another possibility.

**23)** Each year, the Honors Program will select a common book that newly-admitted Honors students will read the summer before their first year in the Honors Program. Early in the fall semester, they will discuss this book in a small group of new Honors Students. A faculty member or an advanced Honors student will lead each discussion.

**24)** A faculty mentoring program will be established so that students who request a faculty mentor will have one available. Department Chairpersons will assist the HP in locating suitable mentors. Faculty mentors should be provided some form of recognition or compensation.

**25)** Honors students will be encouraged to take part in internships in the public or private sector; and they will be encouraged to study abroad.

## IV Administration and Structure

### **Quotations from FAS Honors Task Force Report (as approved Spring, 2005)**

1. There will be i) a dean or director of the GHP who reports to the Dean of the Faculty and ii) a standing Honors Program Committee (HPC) of the Faculty.<sup>1</sup>

3. The HPC [Honors Program Committee] will specify a number of honors credits a student must obtain in order to graduate with general honors. Those requirements will include some form of a capstone project in the senior year. The capstone experience will be a six (6) credit thesis or other significant, independent scholarly and/or creative accomplishment.

4. Co-curricular activities and small learning communities are major features of all successful honors programs, and current Rutgers-New Brunswick college honors students consider them to be of the utmost importance in their overall honors experience. It is critical, whether or not the college honors programs continue to exist in their present form, that (a) the kind and variety of co-curricular experiences and opportunities presently available be maintained and enhanced, and (b) the personnel overseeing those co-curricular activities be academic staff, who report to an academic officer of the university -- the Dean of the GHP.

It is imperative, in honors learning communities, that academic and co-curricular activities remain inseparable. Again, whether or not the present college honors model is retained, the community-building that presently occurs within the college honors programs and which is vitally tied to the academic content of honors coursework and research must be preserved and enhanced. The key to building community in an honors program is the preservation and enhancement of the peer interaction that provides the bulk of a student's day-to-day college experience. . .

5. The faculty resources devoted to the new GHP in Arts and Sciences will be substantial, but to a first approximation will be similar to those currently devoted to the various existing programs.

6. The academic staff resources needed to develop and administer the co-curricular activities will be substantial. Approximately the equivalent of five (5) full academic staff lines and three (3) full secretarial lines are now devoted to the honors programs at the various colleges. These numbers must be maintained or, preferably, increased.

7. Students who satisfy the requirements of the GHP will graduate as "Honors Scholars" (or some such appellation). Students graduating with high GPA's should be designated as "graduating cum laude," etc.

9. Faculty members from the professional schools offering majors to liberal arts students should be involved in all aspects of the GHP.

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<sup>1</sup> We take "GHP" to refer to the SAS-HP, "Dean of the Faculty" to refer to the SAS-HP Dean, "Faculty" to refer to the SAS faculty, and the "Dean of the GHP" to be a dean in the SAS.

11. All students in the GHP will automatically be eligible to take all honors courses provided that they satisfy placement and prerequisite criteria developed by departments (for example in math, some of the sciences and language departments).

13. Department responsibilities:

a. All departments and programs in the Faculty will contribute to the GHP. The contributions required of departments will be appropriate to the number of faculty in the department, average teaching load in the department (number of courses and number of students), number of majors and other criteria as determined by the Dean of the Faculty.

b. All departments and programs in the Faculty that offer majors will develop an honors option within that major. A student completing the GHP does not necessarily have to complete a department honors option, and vice versa.

c. The supervision of a senior honors project in the GHP is primarily a departmental/program responsibility. Interdisciplinary projects should be approved and supervised by academically appropriate faculty groups.

16. A GHP alumni association should be established.

## **Overall Governing and Administrative Structure**

### **Motions for the FAS:**

**26)** The SAS Honors Program is under the overall jurisdiction and supervision of the faculty of the SAS. The Executive Dean of the SAS will appoint a Dean of the SAS-HP and an Administrative Director of the SAS-HP who will report to the Dean of the SAS-HP.

**27)** The SAS-HP will be governed by a SAS-HP Committee working under guidelines established by the faculty of the SAS. The new FAS/SAS by-laws should specify that the SAS Honors Committee be composed of 16 persons selected as follows and serving for staggered 3 year terms:

a) the Dean of the SAS-HP

b) the Administrative Director of the SAS-HP

c) Eight faculty members drawn from each of the four standard disciplinary areas (Humanities; Life Sciences; Physical and Mathematical Sciences; and Social and Behavioral Sciences), one in each area to be elected by the faculty of the SAS and one in each area to be appointed by the Executive Dean of SAS.

d) Two faculty members drawn from non-SAS (i.e. professional school) departments/programs that offer majors and departmental honors to SAS students.

e) Two faculty members from the SAS Standing Curriculum Committee appointed by the Executive Dean of the SAS.

f) Three Honors Program student representatives, one of whom will be a non-traditional student, appointed by the Executive Dean of the SAS.

### **Recommendation to the NB Implementation Committees:**

1. There should be a New Brunswick Honors Program Committee working with the Vice-President for Undergraduate Education. The SAS-HP should be represented on that committee by:

- a) the Dean of the SAS-HP
- b) the Administrative Director of the SAS-HP
- b) faculty representatives from the SAS-HP Committee

### **Motions for the FAS:**

28) There will be Honors Program Satellite Support Offices on each of the main residential campuses, i.e. Busch, CAC, Cook/Douglass and Livingston as well as one for University College housed with other University College academic services. The University College Honors Program Satellite Support Offices may remain on the CAC campus.

Each of these HP Satellite Support Offices should be staffed with a director and an administrative assistant. Some duties may be shared with other related offices administered at these sites. The Satellite Support Office directors, working under the leadership of the Administrative Director of the HP, will maintain primary responsibility for all honors co-curricular requirements and opportunities for the students associated with their campuses.

In general, these offices will (i) oversee the required and optional co-curricular and non-curricular activities of the HP, (ii) provide advice to students about the requirements and opportunities of the HP, (iii) maintain records of student progress in the HP -- which will be available to all Satellite Offices. The Offices will maintain a user-friendly lounge environment for Honors Scholars. Interface with residential life personnel should be significant.

## **Standards and Department<sup>2</sup> Duties**

The Implementation Committee was particularly concerned to address the relationship between department honors and SAS honors and eliminating the current confusion that results from students within the same department engaged in honors thesis work under a variety of different, and at times conflicting, program requirements (e.g., department honors thesis requirements versus the various colleges' honors theses programs). Also of note was the problem of students attempting to write a college-based honors thesis in a discipline in which they lacked the proper preparation.

### **Motions for the FAS:**

29) A uniform standard for the granting of degrees with the SAS Honors Scholar designation will be established by the SAS upon the recommendation of the HPC across all SAS departments/programs including a capstone experience, such as an original thesis project, invention, or artistic product as appropriate to the discipline of study. (See "THE CURRICULUM" for a more complete discussion.)

30) All departments will be required to contribute to the SAS-Honors Program course offerings at levels appropriate to the number of faculty, the standard teaching loads in the department and the number of students in the department. Departments will be encouraged to make honors course offerings available throughout all class periods (including evenings). Similarly, all departments will be expected to provide SAS-HP mentors in appropriate numbers. The SAS should develop some method of recognizing faculty members' contributions in these areas. A benefit for capstone mentoring should also be considered.

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<sup>2</sup> Throughout "department" is understood to include any department or program that offers a major.

In cases where the need for additional resources can be established, a percentage of the SAS Supplemental Instructional funds going to each department should be earmarked for replacing faculty teaching Department Honors courses and Interdisciplinary Honors Seminars. Failure to offer Honors Program courses would result in a forfeit of the earmarked funds.

**31)** All courses offered for department-granted honors will (i) be open to all SAS Honors Scholars meeting the course prerequisites and (ii) count toward fulfilling SAS-HP requirements.

**32)** The SAS faculty as represented by the Honors Program Committee (SAS-HPC), working with the SAS-HP Dean, will be responsible for soliciting, reviewing and approving courses or sections of courses as Honors Program courses, whether they be SAS-HP department-based courses or SAS-HP Interdisciplinary Honors Seminars. Courses or sections of courses could be approved for a one term designation as honors courses.

**33)** All SAS departments/programs will be required to develop a departmental honors option within the major and will be charged with creating clearly articulated requirements and standards for departmental honors. Each department will submit its plan to the SAS-HPC for review, and the SAS-HPC will forward its recommendations to the SAS Faculty unless the Faculty delegates this responsibility to the HPC.

**34)** Students completing the SAS-HP do not necessarily have to complete a department honors option; however, departmental honors capstone experiences will be open to SAS-HP Scholars who have satisfied the departmental prerequisites.

**35)** Each department will designate an Honors Director who will advise students about the standards for capstone SAS-HP experiences supervised by faculty in that department, as well as standards for departmental honors. The default for this position will be the undergraduate director, (or in departments without an undergraduate director, the chair); the chair may appoint another faculty member as honors director, but each department's Honors Director must be a faculty member.

Contact information for this Honors Director will be posted on the department web site as will requirements for Honors capstone experiences within the Department. Such information will also be available through the SAS-HP web site. Departments will also make available copies of previous capstone work so new honors students can get a clear picture of expectations for the capstone experience.

The department Honors Directors will also be responsible for all administrative matters related to offering SAS-HP courses within the department and will constitute the interface with the SAS Honors Program Committee.

The department Honors Directors will also constitute a subcommittee of the SAS Undergraduate Directors Council.

## **SAS Honors Program Capstone Experiences**

### **Motions for the FAS:**

**36)** In the semester prior to beginning the capstone experience, SAS-HP Scholars will be required to file a capstone plan that outlines the structure and topic of the capstone experience formulated in consultation

with a selected advisor and approved by the department Honors Director. Most often this advisor will be in the department of the student's major and the student will simply follow his/her major's departmental honors capstone experience requirements and standards.

In cases in which SAS-HP scholars elect to pursue a capstone experience outside their major, they must identify an appropriate faculty advisor and adopt the honors capstone experience standards and requirements of the faculty advisor's home department. Approval by the Honors Director in the faculty member's home department is required. Certain variations may be appropriate for projects and experiences with an interdisciplinary element. The SAS-HPC will specify the procedure for obtaining the requisite approval of the student's capstone plan.

Once the capstone plan is approved, it will be sent to the Dean of the SAS-HP. The SAS Honors Program Committee will review these plans to ensure that SAS-wide standards are maintained, particularly in cases in which students are pursuing a capstone experience outside their major. In special circumstances, the individual might work outside the university faculty (in industry; in an exchange program). In this case, a Rutgers faculty co-advisor must be identified and sign onto the abstract/proposal. The Rutgers co-advisor will be responsible for department liaisons and must check in monthly with the off-site advisor to track student progress, which will be reported to the SAS Honors Program Committee.

### **Recommendation to the NB Implementation Committees:**

1. Professional schools should be encouraged to employ a similar basic structure.

### **Motions for the FAS:**

37) A) SAS-HP Scholars will file with the SAS Honors Program Committee a short mid-year report on their progress in the capstone experience approved by the student's faculty advisor to help ensure that SAS Honors Scholars are on track for their capstone accomplishment. B) Final evaluation of the SAS-HP capstone experience project will be the responsibility of a three-member committee consisting of two faculty members with expertise in the area of the project in addition to the faculty advisor. C) The faculty advisor should take a proactive role in guidance required for accomplishment of the best possible capstone product, though independent work is required. D) Where appropriate given the norms of the discipline, in addition to an oral defense, a symposium of presentations to the SAS-HP Scholars, faculty advisors, and others will be required toward the end of the capstone project.

38) Students completing the SAS-HP Program may complete requirements for department honors in their major, but they are not required to do so.

### **Recommendation to the NB Implementation Committees:**

- 39) Professional schools should be encouraged to institute similar standards and a similar basic process.

## **Nomenclature**

### **Motions for the FAS:**

40) A special designation should be used to identify and distinguish SAS Honors Scholars. [Comment: For example, “Governor’s Honors Scholars” was one name suggested -- a better name might be applied and donor found, i.e., the Bill Gates Governor’s Honors Scholars. In this report we have simply used the name “SAS Honors Scholars.”]

This designation will be listed on the student’s transcript and will be distinguished from Departmental Honors designations that are awarded by departments. Official degree/commencement program, etc. terminology will clearly distinguish SAS Honors Scholars from those students graduating with “Highest/High/Honors in *department name*” (e.g., Chemistry, English, Political Science).” Students graduating with high GPA’s will be designated as graduating “cum laude,” etc.

## Miscellaneous

41) A GHP alumni association should be established.

42) The committee recommends to the subsequent SAS-HP committee to hold a university wide competition to create a motto for the SAS-HP.

**Comment:** There were concerns voiced that the new structure requires more hours devoted by faculty, without a clear benefit to the faculty member with regard to tenure, merit raises, etc. For example, the SAS- Honors Program Committee members will have a significant workload. Providing incentives or acknowledgments to contributing faculty may significantly enhance participation and foster a nurturing academic community. Faculty work as mentors and as capstone experience advisors should be recognized.