

## **Blueprint for Academic Excellence, 2010**

South Carolina Honors College  
March 2010

Davis Baird, Dean

### **I. Vision, Mission, Goals**

#### **A. Executive Summary**

*Vision: The South Carolina Honors College provides unparalleled educational opportunities that will prepare graduates to become leaders in the non-profit, business, and governmental sectors, the professions, and the arts and sciences.*

The Honors College has long been concerned with leadership, and has been very successful in educating students who have gone onto leadership positions. This vision statement represents a shift from previous vision statements in making the development of future leaders the expressed aim of the College.

*Mission: The South Carolina Honors College provides superlative educational opportunities for high-ability, high-aspiration students. With a focus on the individual educational needs, abilities and aspirations of each of its students, the College draws on the full resources and academic depth of a comprehensive research university. Integral to this mission is developing innovative approaches to undergraduate education that serve all students at the University and beyond.*

The College's primary mission has been and continues to be providing superlative educational opportunities for students who apply, are admitted and matriculate into the College. We are in the process of developing ways to enlarge this mission to provide superlative educational opportunities to all high-ability, high-aspiration students at the University. We believe that the College is the best site at the University to develop, coordinate and administer the variety of undergraduate educational efforts focused on high-ability, high-aspiration students, whether or not these students are members of the College strictly speaking. In the same way that the College of Arts and Sciences provides service to all other colleges at the University through its support for the liberal arts "Carolina Core" required of all undergraduate majors, the Honors College can provide service to inspire, encourage and educate all high-ability, high-aspiration students at the University toward fulfilling their promise as future leaders.

*Goals:* The College's strategic goals have undergone modest change from last year:

- Goal 1 [carried forward]: Enhance the College's academic opportunities, most especially its curriculum, and where appropriate and possible, bring these innovations to the broader University.
- Goal 2 [new]: Create opportunities for students to understand and experience leadership beyond the academy.
- Goal 3 [carried forward]: Establish the South Carolina Honors College as an undergraduate "destination of choice" for academically gifted high school students.
- Goal 4 [carried forward]: Expand external support.
- Goal 5 [carried forward]: Enhance Honors College living-learning communities.
- Goal 6 [carried forward]: Improve Honors College advising.
- Goal 7 [carried forward]: Expand and improve the use of information technology for educational support.

While the goals have undergone only modest change, the specific initiatives have undergone more substantial change as detailed below.

We continue to look for ways to put Honors College students in direct contact with faculty members and other innovators at the University and beyond. We want the transition from the classroom to the community, the research bench and the workplace to be seamless. This, we believe, is at the heart of superlative honors education for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, and it is the core of our approach to training leaders.

*College Strengths and Peer and Aspirant Schools:* Honors colleges are unusual units in that there is no standard model for what an honors college should look like or accomplish, and there are many interrelated goals that honors colleges typically pursue. These include attracting high caliber students to campus, creating and supporting a space for undergraduate educational innovation, offering a sense of community for academically gifted students, providing a pool of students that are competitive for national fellowships, etc.

Because there is no standard model, and because each honors college has developed in its own unique context with its own unique geographic and institutional needs and resources, it is difficult to compare honors colleges. The area where the South Carolina Honors College has put in the greatest energy and innovation has been developing innovative educational opportunities for its students, and in this respect we are clearly one of the best honors colleges in the nation. If you rank colleges in terms of the number of honors courses per student we are in the top five. On the other hand, if one ranked honors colleges by the quality of their student bodies (e.g., average SAT), the South Carolina Honors College would be very good, but perhaps not exceptional.

However, our primary recruiting site—South Carolina—has a relatively smaller number of very highly qualified students (as compared with Georgia for example).

With all of this in mind, an admittedly subjective list of peer and aspirant honors colleges would include: Schreyer Honors College at Penn State; Barrett Honors College at Arizona State; Sally M. Barksdale Honors College at the University of Mississippi; McCauley Honors College at the City University of New York; Michigan State Honors College, University of Pittsburgh Honors College, University of Georgia Honors College, and the Honors College at the University of Arkansas. The South Carolina Honors College would certainly rank extremely well in most measures one would think to use in measuring an honors college among this group of excellent institutions.

There is ample evidence that the South Carolina Honors College is performing very well on a significant number of indicators (number of and quality of applications, quality of enrolling students, richness of academic opportunities, post-graduate success of its students). It is on these grounds that we judge the South Carolina Honors College one of the two or three very best honors colleges in the country.

*Important Accomplishments:* During my five years as Dean of the Honors College, the College has made significant progress in several areas. I would account the top ten accomplishments as these:

1. Opening the new Honors Residence Hall
2. Developing the Honors Beyond the Classroom requirement
3. Launching a Development Program for the College
4. Creating an Internship Program in the College
5. Growing the size of the College
6. Creating a Service Learning Initiative
7. Improving College diversity
8. Developing a better system for College course compensation
9. Beefing up the College's Alumni Relations
10. Developing a better brand for the College

*Weaknesses and Plans to Address Them:* The College benefits tremendously from the University it inhabits—indeed it would not exist at all on its own. But the College also is vulnerable to difficulties that the University faces. When faculty and courses are lost in colleges that contribute to the Honors College's educational efforts, the Honors College suffers. The biggest threat to the College is that the University will be hard pressed to provide the educational resources needed

by the College. To date, with a few exceptions, we have not had significant trouble getting the courses we need. However, this availability clearly could be threatened, particularly in key areas—Biology, Economics, Accounting, and Science for non-science majors. I believe that the best way to approach this problem would be through hiring selected “Honors Professors” to provide instruction in key areas where the need is greatest. This would be a joint project between the Honors College and the College where the professor would have his or her tenure home. However, prior to hiring there would have to be an agreement about handling the review, possible tenuring and promotion of the professors. Given the particular needs as we currently see them we would propose the following:

1. Tenure-track hire in Accounting
2. Tenure-track hire in Economics
3. Tenure-track hire in Biology
4. Non-tenure-track hire for Science for non-science majors

In addition, as part of our evolving Leadership Initiative, we would propose to bring to campus several people for varying periods of time as “Leaders-in-Residence.” These should be drawn from several fields, including the non-profit, business and governmental sectors, , the professions, and the arts and sciences.

5. Artist-in-Residence
6. Executive-in-Residence
7. Leader-in-Residence

This approach to both dealing with potential weaknesses and indeed enhancing the College will require significant funds. Some of these funds are built into the increasing fee structure that is detailed in Section II. However, the full version of the Leadership Initiative will ultimately require philanthropic contributions.

## **B. Goals, Initiatives and Action Plans**

*Goal 1: Enhance the College’s academic opportunities, most especially its curriculum, and where appropriate and possible, bring these innovations to the broader University.*

A central part of the College’s mission is to provide a superlative undergraduate education for academically gifted students, and where possible to export educational innovations developed in the Honors College to the broader University. This serves the teaching and

learning goals in Advance Carolina generally, and in particular initiatives 2, 3 and 4 from the Focus Carolina document.

Initiative 1(a) [new]: “SEC Honors Study Abroad:” Working with my fellow honors college/program deans/directors I have developed a study abroad opportunity in Italy for all SEC honors students. We will launch this initiative in May 2011.

*Action Plan:* We have already negotiated the site particulars. We now have to develop the curriculum, and we will do this by taking proposals from faculty members at participating SEC honors colleges/programs. We will then advertise and launch the program.

*Indicators:* The first indicator is the number of students who sign up for the program. The second indicator is how educationally valuable students find the program.

Initiative 1(b) [updated]: “Honors Away:” This initiative continues to develop. During the 2008/09 reporting year, the Honors College was responsible for 25% of all undergraduate students at the University studying abroad (192 of 775 total). This a small decrease from the previous year. The most recent four years of data are as follows: SCHC: 154; 191; 198; 192; USC total: 584; 734; 788; 775. SCHC’s percentage of the total has stayed pretty constant at about 25%, and given that the College comprises only 7% of the total undergraduate student body, we comprise a disproportionate share of undergraduate study abroad.

*Action Plan:* We will continue to develop ways for our students to take their education on the road. During the coming year, we will develop several more Maymester travel opportunities, and we will field for the first time the SEC Honors Study in Italy program.

*Indicators:* The primary indicator of success with this initiative is increased growth in the number of Honors College students who have at least one experience on the road while in the College. We remain committed to the goal that all Honors College students have a study abroad experience at some point. During the past two years for which we have data, 50% of all students graduating with honors in 2007 and 2008 studied abroad. There is room for growth, and we continue to seek ways to encourage this growth.

Initiative 1(c) [updated]: “Undergraduate Research:” The College would like to see more students engaged in undergraduate research. While differences in disciplinary cultures and approaches to undergraduate education remain, we have made progress in increasing

undergraduate participation in scholarship in underrepresented areas. A proposal to include undergraduate research as a recognized form of teaching has been incorporated into recent proposed revisions of the Faculty Manual. We have had a decline in non-science (ESP) projects (39% to 21%) and in inter-disciplinary projects (58% to 47%). We believe this is due to a reduction in the amount of effort made to engage in face-to-face conversations with non-science faculty around campus, and we will take steps to correct this. Our target goal is for 40% of SCHC undergraduate research to occur in the arts, humanities and business. Total expenditures were \$98,546 for the year (an increase from the previous year, \$83,500) with an average award size of \$2,300 (also up slightly over last year's \$2,200).

*Action Plan:* We will increase the number of face-to-face visits with faculty members in the humanities and arts to encourage them to take on students in their research efforts. We will also offer two 1-credit courses on research skills, one aimed at freshmen, the other at more advanced students.

*Indicators:* The number of students are engaged in undergraduate research is the primary indicator. We would like to see this number approach 75%. In particular, we would like to see an increase in the number of students in the humanities, arts and business that are engaged in undergraduate research grow; 40% of all undergraduate research efforts in the College is our target.

Initiative 1(d) [updated]: “Service Learning:” The College continues to develop and refine opportunities for service learning. During 2009 we offered eight service-learning courses enrolling 84 Honors College students—a 91% increase in our total enrollment and a 223% increase in SCHC enrollment (44 students enrolled in 2008, of which 26 were SCHC). Out of the eight service-learning courses offered in 2009 six were new. Several of these courses have led to continued and increased involvement in the Columbia community. For example: Amigos del Buen Samaritan, a new student organization grew out of the course Spanish for Healthcare Professionals, and has engaged over 60 student volunteers at the Good Samaritan Clinic in Columbia. We continue to provide support to faculty through small course development/support grants. We continue to support and contribute to University service-learning efforts as well, partnering with various offices around campus to provide faculty necessary support when creating these types of courses. In its 2<sup>nd</sup> year, the annual Community Partner Breakfast grew in participation by 39%, providing faculty, students, staff and community partners with the opportunity to network with each other and build new partnerships around the university and the local community. The College also paid for the University’s membership in Campus Compact,

and this allowed the University to hire an Americorps Vista volunteer, who has worked to develop the University's service learning capacity, including getting a \$10,000 grant from State Farm.

*Action Plan:* We will continue to work to develop the service learning effort in the College and at the University. We will offer at least 10 service learning courses during 2010/11. We will continue to help support the University's participation on Campus Compact. We will continue to work with the University's Office of Student Engagement to support other University-wide service learning initiatives, including the Community Partner Breakfast.

*Indicators:* We would like the number of service learning opportunities provided by the College increase. We aim to provide 5 service-learning courses per semester. We are confident that student interest will follow available opportunities, but, of course, an important second indicator is the number of students involved in these courses, which we hope to see grow to at least 150 per year.

Initiative 1(e) [updated]: "Honors beyond the classroom:" Students who entered the College after August 16, 2008 are now required to have at least three honors credit hours from one of following areas: (i) "Honors on the road," (ii) "Undergraduate research," (iii) "Service learning," and (iv) "Internship." We are continuing to monitor the impact and success of this requirement, and will only declare it fully successful after the first class graduates (2012).

*Action Plan:* Our advising staff is ensuring that students are aware of how to satisfy this requirement. Additionally, our website is being updated to clarify the methods of satisfying the requirement.

*Indicators:* The most important indicator is the rate at which students fulfill this requirement. We expect the rate at which students graduate with honors to remain approximately the same as now (70%).

Initiative 1(f) [updated]: "Addressing Specific Curricular Needs:" In many areas, the College is very fortunate to have a rich set of honors course offerings. However, there remain areas where supply is well short of demand. These include:

- i. Upper-level Chemistry (an on-going problem);
- ii. Laboratory science courses for non-science majors (considerable progress here with Rudy Mancke's re-hire and Chemistry's willingness to accept Chemistry of Food);

- iii. Fine arts courses to satisfy the fine arts general education requirement (no progress, and no courses, a serious problem);
- iv. Non-Western history courses to satisfy this general education requirement (no progress);
- v. Business courses for SCHC Business majors;

*Action Plan:* We continue to work with the relevant colleges and departments to address these shortages.

*Indicators:* Course offerings to meet demand from Honors College students.

Initiative 1(g) [done]: “Course Compensation:” After negotiations with the College of Arts and Sciences we have adopted and put into practice a new approach for compensating units that provide courses to the Honors College; For each course a unit provides, the Honors College will transfer funds equal to the average amount it costs that unit to hire an adjunct to teach a course.

*Goal 2: Create opportunities for students to understand and experience leadership beyond the academy.*

Central to the vision of the Honors College is creating tomorrow’s leaders, and a key element in accomplishing this is providing students with experiences that make clear to them what leadership entails. This serves the University’s Advance Carolina teaching and learning goal, and in particular initiatives 2 and 3 from Focus Carolina.

Initiative 2(a) [updated]: “Internship:” As part of the Honors Beyond the Classroom effort, the College has launched an Internship Program. The College was fortunate to be able to bring Beth Hutchison and the Washington Internship Semester program that she coordinates under College administration during the past year. Beth has now taken ownership of the broader Internship Program, and we are making good progress at getting the Program up and running. More than 10 students participated this year. Frequently, internship experiences are transformative in determining a student’s future career path.

*Action Plan:* We will have an internship appreciation luncheon, where we will invite both current internship providers and likely prospects to be future providers. We will establish procedures for paid and for credit internships. We will promote these opportunities to our students.



*Indicators:* We would like to see approximately 20-25 students in internship opportunities in the coming year, 2010/11. We would like to have a stable of approximately 15-20 internship providers by the end of 2011.

Initiative 2(b) [updated]: “Career and Profession Speaker Series:” As part of the College’s efforts to focus on leadership and career opportunities, we are developing a program to bring to campus people in significant leadership positions to speak their work, and to inspire Honors College seek leadership positions. Additional benefits to this speaker series are relationships between the speakers and the Honors College and possible internships and job opportunities for Honors College students.

*Action Plan:* We hope to bring the first such speaker in fall 2010, and steps have been taken to identify an appropriate person and make an invitation.

*Indicators:* The existence of the event is the primary indicator, followed by attendance by College students, and finally the reorienting of how these students think about their future (hard to measure).

Initiative 2(c) [updated]: “Ivory Tower to Marketplace:” Working in cooperation with the Moore School of Business and the colleges of Arts and Science and Engineering and Computing, the College is developing a course that gives Honors College students real world experience in moving intellectual property from the University into the marketplace. The course ran last May 2009 for the first time, and we will repeat it with some alterations this coming May 2010. We want to encourage an entrepreneurial spirit among our students.

*Action Plan:* We will be actively advertising this course to students, and working with the instructor to ensure a valuable experience for the students.

*Indicators:* We will use student satisfaction as an indicator—and last year 6 of the 8 students wrote senior theses based on the course and 4 of the students said that it was either the best or one of the best courses they had taken at USC. We aim for our students to leave with an understanding of how to move ideas into the marketplace.

Initiative 2(d) [done]: “Washington Semester:” Prior to last year’s financial unpleasantness the Institute for Public Service and Policy Research housed the “Washington Internship Semester.” This program takes students from honors colleges and programs throughout South Carolina and places them in internship positions in Washington DC. Students earn nine hours of honors credit for this experience. In addition, they take two honors courses, one on Contemporary American Politics and the other on Washington Theatre, for a total

of 15 honors credits. The Honors College has taken over the administration of the Washington Internship Semester program. We anticipate some significant synergies between this program and our internship effort (Initiative 2a).

Initiative 2(e) [done]: “SC Legislative Internship Program:” As with the Washington Internship Program, the Institute for Public Service and Policy Research also housed the SC Legislative Internship Program. This program places students in internship positions in the SC Legislature. The Honors College has taken over the administration of this program as well. Again we are seeing synergies between this program and our Internship Program (Initiative 2a).

*Goal 3: Establish the South Carolina Honors College as an undergraduate “destination of choice” for academically gifted high school students.*

The current financial climate provides an opportunity for the Honors College. We provide a prestige education at an affordable price. With the economy under stress, students who previously would have gone to more expensive private schools, will take the Honors College more seriously as an alternative. Applications were up modestly last year (approximately 1,673 compared to the previous year’s 1,405). They are up substantially this year (1,945). This is a 16% increase over last year, and a 38% increase over two years ago. Furthermore, the quality of the applicant pool increased. This goal directly supports the Advance Carolina initiative to recruit and retain a high quality student body.

Initiative 3(a) [new]: “Honors College Recruiter:” We have reassigned the duties of one of the Honors College staff members to serve as a primary recruiter for the College. His job, at this point, is to make good connections with AP teachers in South Carolina, and to use these connections to encourage high aspiration, high ability students to apply to the Honors College.

*Action Plan:* Our recruiter will be spending significant time visiting 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade high school AP English classes. He will give a sample Honors College course lecture, and will answer questions that students and teachers may have about opportunities for high ability students in the Honors College.

*Indicators:* We aim to increase the number of applications, and the yield of admitted students, from the schools that have been visited.

Initiative 3(b) [new]: “Redesigned Website:” The Honors College website is one of our primary recruiting tools. We have been hoping to update it in a way that does a better job of accentuating the many opportunities available to students in the Honors College. We are working with an external website developer—Cyberwoven, founded, as it happens, by an Honors College alumnus—and we hope to have a new site on line by the end of Spring 2010.

*Action Plan:* We are in the “nuts and bolts” stage of this effort, providing content—both visual and textual—to a design structure that has been vetted and approved.

*Indicators:* We aim to increase the number of visits to the website by potential applicants, and ultimately increase the number of well-qualified applicants to the College.

Initiative 3(c) [new]: “Rename College:” We believe that the name of the College—the South Carolina Honors College at the University of South Carolina—is both cumbersome and confusing for out-of-state students, who will wonder where the “South Carolina Honors College” resides. A simpler name that also more closely identifies the College with the University would simply be the University of South Carolina Honors College. The change is minimal—putting “University” in front of the existing name—but significantly simplifies and clarifies the nature of the College.

*Action Plan:* We approached the Board of Trustees with this proposal, and there were concerns expressed. We are now working with Board members to clarify the proposal and alleviate the concerns.

*Indicators:* A new name, and a clearer “brand identity.”

Initiative 3(d) [updated]: “Growth:” Since my appointment as Dean, I have been growing the size of the College modestly from incoming classes in the 280 range to last year’s 321. The current recruiting climate suggests that we can push further. However, there are multiple issues here that require careful handling or the quality of the College will significantly suffer. Some issues are beyond the control of the Honors College and are tied to the University’s capacity for undergraduate enrollment. Two areas are paramount: (1) We need sufficient faculty to teach undergraduate courses (for the University at large and for the Honors College in particular). (2) We need sufficient faculty to mentor undergraduate research and Honors College senior theses. There are warning signs in both areas. Introductory biology, for example, is over-full. The Moore School—to date—has been unable to provide additional needed sections of ECON 221/2. Other issues we

can control—with sufficient funding and resources. We will need to increase the number of opportunities to study abroad, to pursue service learning, etc. We will need to focus an effort on creating small communities within the Honors College that will preserve the “small feel” of the College. We will need to increase the College’s advising staff, and this increase will create a space problem for the College in Harper.

*Action Plan:* We have admitted the largest number of students in the history of the College this spring, slightly more than 900, and we are now working on yielding as many as 360 of these students. A series of specific yield events and efforts are now moving ahead (see also Initiative 3(d) on diversity).

*Indicators:* Fundamentally it is the number of students who matriculate next Fall that matters. We also are taking steps to insure that the quality of the entering class remains high.

Initiative 3(e) [updated]: “Improving Diversity:” Despite the small pool of minority students with the credentials for admissions to the Honors College (approximately 50 African-American high school seniors graduate each year State-wide with the credentials for admission to the Honors College), we remain committed to improving diversity in the college. We are working on all ends of this problem. We have efforts in place to increase the pool of qualified minority applicants, in part by seeking out-of-state applicants. We are also working to increase the yield of admitted minority applicants. Finally, we are working to provide better opportunities for transfer admission. Integral to our approach is our cooperative relationship with the Honors College Minority Student Union, an organization of minority students currently in the Honors College. This group is helping our effort in several ways. They are creating a community for minority students within the Honors College. They are also actively helping us recruit new minority students for the College, in particular through making telephone contact to admitted—but not yet enrolled—minority students and through recruiting internal transfers.

*Action Plan:* We will be making personal one-to-one contact with each admitted African-American student.

*Indicators:* The obvious indicators are tied to the number of applicants, the yield and finally the number of minority students we enroll. Currently there are 37 (of approximately 1250) African-American students in the Honors College. This is a slight increase from 31 last year. We have 23 Hispanic students and 62 Asian students, for a total of 122 minority students in the College. We have accepted 28 African-American and 27 Hispanic Students for the 2010-

2011 academic year. We will be working hard to yield as many of these as we can. We would like to see the number of African-American students reach 60 over the next three years with commensurate growth in our Hispanic student population.

Initiative 3(f) [updated]: “Alumni interviews:” Some schools arrange for students to interview with alumni as part of the application process. Appropriately chosen alumni can serve as the College’s best recruiters. Working with the College’s Alumni Affairs Coordinator and the Office of Admissions, we would like to establish the option for alumni interviews. No progress was made here for several years, and we hope to see progress in the coming year as we develop a better relationship with the Office of Admissions.

*Action Plan:* The College will meet with Admissions to see what steps can be taken to achieve this.

*Indicators:* The obvious indicator is the existence of these interviews. Then we will want to see if they help increase both applications and yield.

Initiative 3(g) [done]: “Better interaction with Undergraduate Admissions:” Coordinating our work with Undergraduate Admissions has been a struggle. However, I believe we have made significant progress on this. Admissions assigned a new staff member to serve as Honors College liaison, and I believe this change will significantly improve the situation.

*Goal 4: Expand external support.*

Many of the initiatives in this plan require significant additional resources. Given the current climate for state support, expanding external support for the College will be essential. At all levels, this goal provides fundamental support for the mission and vision for the College, and hence of the University, as articulated in Advance Carolina. I believe that the Honors College can serve as a powerful magnet for philanthropic giving, and the evidence gathered so far confirms this belief. We are now hard at work on a major multi-million dollar naming gift proposal that we believe will be transformative for the Honors College and the University.

Initiative 4(a) [new]: “Principal gift initiatives:” As mentioned in last year’s plan, the substantial growth we hope to achieve with scholarships and for the College in general will require principal gift funding. We have focused our efforts this year on several such

gifts. We spent a significant amount of time crafting the concept for the \$100,000,000 McNair leadership ask, while simultaneously soliciting Mack Whittle for \$1,200,000, paving the way for a \$2,500,000 ask for Larry Kellner and a \$2,000,000 ask for Jim Pearce, Sr. We are also working closely with the College of Arts and Sciences on a \$15,000,000 anonymous ask to benefit the Jewish Studies Initiative.

*Action Plan:* Each major gift requires its own action plan. We are currently hard at work on the McNair proposal. We have delivered the Jewish Studies proposal to our partnership board member, who is our connection to this anonymous potential donor. We have solicited Mack Whittle, and we are working on our proposal to Larry Kellner and Jim Pearce Sr.

*Indicators:* Ultimately we want to see major gifts made to the College. In the near term, we want to see significant progress towards securing these gifts.

Initiative 4(b) [new]: “Case Statement:” For several years the College has been working to develop a powerful and visually arresting development “case statement.” We now have such, and we intend to start using it to help generate philanthropic giving.

*Action Plan:* Distribution and use of the College’s case statement.

*Indicators:* Increased interest in giving and increased giving to the College.

Initiative 4(c) [new]: “Beyond the Classroom Growth:” We are seeking support for our “honors beyond the classroom” initiative. This year we have received a \$25,000 donation to support the internship program and a \$10,000 grant to support service learning. This initiative has a central place in the College’s Case Statement, and we hope to capitalize on this in our efforts to secure philanthropic funding.

*Action Plan:* We will continue to seek out potential donors to provide support for the collection of educational efforts embraced by the “beyond the classroom” initiative.

*Indicators:* We would like to see significant philanthropic growth in this area.

Initiative 4(d) [updated]: “Alumni Organization:” Continuing on the suggestion of our Partnership Board, we have been organizing College alumni by selecting “Class Captains” and creating a web presence for the alumni of the College. The goals are organizing the class, creating community, and ultimately raising money for the College. We also intend to engage our Class Captains to help us find missing contact information of other alumni, plan upcoming reunion events, and smaller local events, such as the Dean’s Receptions.

*Action Plan:* We will both build the web presence, and start to contact and use our Class Captains to help create an Honors College alumni community.

*Indicators:* We hope to increase the traffic on our website and the percentage of our alumni who have good contact information on file. We would like to see the rate of annual giving increase as a result of the website and Captain involvement.

Initiative 4(e) [updated]: “Alumni Events:” Engaging alumni with the Honors College continues to be an important goal. This year’s 15<sup>th</sup> annual Homecoming Brunch had the most attendees ever. Despite cold and rainy weather, over 120 people came to see the new Honors Residence Hall. A successful alumni reception was held in Washington, DC in the fall with 30 alumni in attendance. The alumni requested that we host regular alumni receptions in the DC area.

*Action Plan:* More alumni receptions will be planned for late spring and summer, possibly for the Charlotte, Aiken and Greenville areas. For the second year, the SCHC will host our alumni at an Honors College event in coordination with the University’s May Carolina Alumni Weekend. A small group of alumni met to discuss ideas for May Carolina and other alumni have been contacted by phone to get their ideas. Plans are underway for the creation of an alumni advisory committee that will work with the Alumni Relations Director to plan events for SCHC alumni.

*Indicators:* The clear indicator is the existence of the events, and alumni participation in these events. The secondary indicator is to involve alumni more actively with each other and with the College, and the ultimately to increase the rate of annual giving.

Initiative 4(f) [updated]: “Scholarship Growth:” In order to support both the overall growth of the College with improved diversity, and improved perception of the College, we need more full scholarships along the lines of the Carolina and McNair Scholar programs. While we still have our sights set on securing more gifts of this size, we also secured several smaller gifts for scholarships in the Honors College and for the Carolina Scholars Program including a new College scholarship endowment of \$167,000 and a Carolina Scholar pledge of \$250,000. There remains significant room for growth. This will be one of the primary target areas for enhanced external funding.

*Action Plan:* The College’s Director of Development will be spending significant energy seeking donors capable of and interested in supporting scholarships.

*Indicators:* This kind of scholarship growth will require major gifts. The 20 yearly McNair scholars and 20 McNair finalists are funded from an endowment of \$30,000,000. We should strive for funding to double this number of awards. These scholarships should be divided into differently named and programmed groups to help promote multiple scholar communities.

*Goal 5: Enhance Honors College living-learning communities.*

Central to the mission of the Honors College is creating a community—or multiple communities—of Honors College students within the larger University. This serves Advance Carolina’s Teaching and Learning goal, in particular initiative 2 from Focus Carolina.

Initiative 5(a) [updated]: “Communities:” We need to establish sub-communities within the Honors College. Already the College is big enough to require multiple sub-communities, and as we continue to grow, the need will be all the more pressing. I believe these can be established through a thoughtful combination of special housing opportunities and special scholarships, with programming along the lines of the Carolina and McNair Scholar programming. During the past year a staff member of the Honors College lived in the new Honors Residence. Her mission was to help create communities in the residence, and to help provide a smooth working relationship with Housing in this residence. Ultimately the scholarship end of this will require very substantial addition to our scholarship funds.

*Action Plan:* We will continue to have a staff member living in the new Honors Residence Hall, and she will continue to work with both the Honors Council and the Residence Hall government to promote community building. We also will continue to seek major scholarship funds.

*Indicators:* The success of this initiative depends on whether Honors College students feel part of a community within the larger University. We will regularly solicit feedback from students about this question, and make changes as appropriate.

Initiative 5(b) [updated]: “Honors College Faculty Fellows:” We have developed a model where USC faculty members could spend a year in the College developing innovative approaches to undergraduate education. These faculty fellows would be expected to “prototype” their innovations by teaching for the Honors College, and would be expected to participate in seminars on educational innovations with all Faculty Fellows. The



College would compensate departments for the loss of teaching personnel; although we do not anticipate that this compensation would need to be equal to the full faculty member's salary. This initiative continues to be "on hold" pending the resolution of space and funding issues.

*Action Plan:* This initiative requires both space and funds, and right now both are lacking. So the initiative has been put on the back burner. I remain convinced that this is a good idea, and will return to it when resources are available.

*Indicators:* The success of this initiative requires its launch and faculty members' participation. In the longer run, the success of the program will turn on the development of innovative new approaches to honors education by the faculty fellows.

Initiative 5(c) [done]: Honors Residence Hall: With the opening of the new Honors Residence Hall, this major initiative has been completed. Now we are working with Housing on a series of follow-up efforts to ensure that this new residence is a success.

*Goal 6: Improve Honors College advising.*

A key resource that the Honors College provides its students is individual one-on-one advising. Except for office staff, everyone in the College advises students. And we do a good job, indeed two Honors College advisors were finalists this year for the Ada Thomas Advising award; one won the award. This serves Advance Carolina's Teaching and Learning goal, in particular initiative 2 from Focus Carolina.

Initiative 6(a) [updated]: "Improving advising:" This is an on-going process. Students are assigned to advisors by discipline. This allows advisors to specialize—one advisor serves Business and another Engineering, another Liberal Arts, etc. Each advisor spends time meeting with their disciplinary counterparts, to improve their understanding of their disciplines, and to improve the disciplines' understanding of Honors College advising.

*Action Plan:* Advisors will be kept up-to-date in their areas of advising, and know their disciplinary counterparts.

*Indicators:* Fewer mistakes in advising; fewer complaints on the part of students or discipline-based advisors about Honors College advising.

Initiative 6(b) [done]: "Improving the senior thesis process:" We have learned that one of the primary reasons students fail to graduate with honors is failure to write a senior thesis.

Part of the problem is psychological; students do not think correctly about what it means to write a senior thesis, convincing themselves that it is an impossible task, certainly not worth the effort. Another part of the problem comes from confusion about the process: When should a student start? How? Working with whom? What paperwork is necessary? We are taking steps to solve these problems. I frequently talk to students about the senior thesis opportunity, reframing it as exactly that, an opportunity—to take a class with an enrollment of one on a topic of one's choice, taught by an expert. Concerning confusion, the College has revamped its thesis preparation class, SCHC 390z. Students are required to pass SCHC 390z prior to registering for the senior thesis course, SCHC 499. Previously, SCHC 390z was run along the lines of an independent study; a student working on his or her own would identify a faculty member to direct his or her thesis, and a topic. Now, to pass SCHC 390z, students are required to attend a workshop on the senior thesis process. Approximately 300 students have attended these sessions, which offer topic ideas, cover the steps of completing a thesis from beginning to end, and alert students to opportunities such as the Senior Thesis Grant. Students are also given a newly rewritten Senior Thesis Handbook and are repeatedly encouraged to contact the Honors College with ideas, questions, or concerns. Additionally, the Thesis Handbook for Directors and Second Readers has been rewritten and distributed to all faculty members who have agreed to serve as a Thesis Director.

*Goal 7: Expand and improve the use of information technology for educational support.*

The Honors College is very fortunate to have an extremely able IT Manager. With his support we are moving ahead on numerous fronts, which serve Advance Carolina Teaching and Learning goal, and in particular, our efforts at assessment serve the Focus Carolina initiative 6.

Initiative 7(a) [updated]: “Integrated Honors College Database:” In order to better facilitate greater financial efficiency, and to better understand how Honors College funds are tied to our services and courses, we are in the process of developing an integrated database that brings financial and course information into communication.

*Action Plan:* Presently we are using Filemaker for all of our database needs. In the next year we plan to upgrade to Filemaker 10 Server or MySQL. This upgrade is necessary because older versions of Filemaker are not compatible with new Java updates recommended by Apple. Once OneCarolina is in place, we plan to switch from SSN to VIP numbers for security reasons. When this

is complete SSN's will be purged from the system. This year the Honors College has audited about half of our databases. In the next year we plan to complete the audit. Also, Student Services plan to perform yearly audits of student records. Beyond the Classroom items, thesis, scholarship info, and extracurricular activities will be integrated into the student database. The Honors College will then be able to provide output of this data for students going to graduate school; in return the Honors College will learn what schools students are applying to.

*Indicators:* A more information-secure environment and better data about post-graduate student activities.

Initiative 7(b) [updated]: "Senior Exit Survey:" In order to better track how Honors College students feel about their education, we are developing a senior exit survey. Our first survey will be distributed in May 2010.

*Action Plan:* Working with UTS and the "Class Climate" survey system, we are in the process of developing the survey instrument; we will query all exiting seniors this year.

*Indicators:* Survey in place; valuable information from graduating seniors returned to the College.

Initiative 7(c) [updated]: "Sophomore Survey:" In order to better track how Honors College students feel about their education, we are developing a sophomore survey. Our first survey will be distributed in August 2010.

*Action Plan:* Working with UTS and the "Class Climate" survey system, we are in the process of developing the survey instrument; we will query all rising juniors at the beginning of the academic year in August.

*Indicators:* Survey in place; valuable information from current students returned to the College.

Initiative 7(d) [updated]: "Information to SCHC Students:" We have had continuing issues communicating with our students. In order to improve communication, and to enhance learning outcomes, the College is developing a better system to convey information to students.

*Action Plan:* The Honors College started sending weekly email newsletters to students this past February. In addition, this information has been made available on the digital message boards in the Honors Residence Hall. In the future, we plan to work with advisors to communicate with their students on a

one on one basis about important academic information. News items in the future will also appear on screen savers as well as a digital message board in the Honors College Computer Lab.

*Indicators:* The existence of an effective means to communicate with Honors College students, faculty and staff.

Initiative 7(e) [updated]: “Honors College Computing Center:” We are taking steps to provide an enhanced computer laboratory for students and faculty with the dual purpose of a smart classroom and a research lab. This would create additional resources for students and faculty members working on their senior theses and/or other research projects.

*Indicators:*

*Action Plan:* We currently have seven computers in the Computer Lab in Harper College. Four of these computers will be replaced; replacements will include one Macintosh computer and three Windows machines. For security reasons we are switching to network authentication for students.

*Indicators:* The existence of a space that different types of courses and research demands can support.

## **II. Funding**

During the next five years the Honors College expects to raise new funds in four ways:

Increased fees from increased student enrollment;

Increased fees from increased fee level;

Development efforts;

Grants aimed at supported educational innovation.

*Increased Enrollment:* We anticipate the overall enrollment in the Honors College to grow from its current level of 1,230 to 1,620 during the next five years:

|                | <b>Seniors</b> | <b>Juniors</b> | <b>Sophomores</b> | <b>Freshmen</b> | <b>Total</b> |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| <b>Current</b> | 312            | 288            | 310               | 321             | 1,230        |
| <b>2010/11</b> | 288            | 310            | 321               | 355             | 1,274        |
| <b>2011/12</b> | 310            | 321            | 355               | 380             | 1,366        |
| <b>2012/13</b> | 321            | 355            | 380               | 400             | 1,456        |
| <b>2013/14</b> | 355            | 380            | 400               | 420             | 1,555        |
| <b>2014/15</b> | 380            | 400            | 420               | 420             | 1,620        |

This plan aims to grow the College to approximately 10% of the Undergraduate student body over the next five years. Projections—being projections—may vary from reality, but given the current economic climate, this is a good time to aggressively seek students wanting a less expensive, but still prestigious, college experience. This model also assumes both no attrition, and no transfer admission. In practice we adjust transfer admission rates to balance attrition rates.

The increase in the size of the College will generate more revenue in two primary ways: (1) The College will achieve more credit hour production, and will take in more tuition revenue from this. (2) The College will take in more fee revenue, which coupled with fee increases (see below) will produce more revenue. Of course, in growing, the College will also incur more obligations to support students.

*Increased Fee:* We aim to increase the Honors College participation fee, currently \$300/semester, over the next five years to \$500/semester. I believe that the market will bear this fee increase, particularly since we will remain a much less expensive alternative to prestigious private schools, and for the vast majority of our students, the fees are covered in the various scholarships (State, and institutional) they bring with themselves to the College. We are considering two models to implement this fee increase. With one model will abruptly increase to \$500/semester from \$350/semester in 2011/12. With the other model we increment \$50/semester each year for four years:

**Model 1, Rapid Fee Increase**

|                | <b>Student Count</b> | <b>Fee/student/year</b> | <b>Fee Collection/year</b> | <b>Increased Income</b> |
|----------------|----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Current</b> | 1,230                | \$600                   | \$738,000                  |                         |
| <b>2010/11</b> | 1,274                | \$700                   | \$891,800                  | \$153,800               |
| <b>2011/12</b> | 1,366                | \$1,000                 | \$1,366,000                | \$474,200               |
| <b>2012/13</b> | 1,456                | \$1,000                 | \$1,456,000                | \$90,000                |
| <b>2013/14</b> | 1,555                | \$1,000                 | \$1,555,000                | \$99,000                |
| <b>2014/15</b> | 1,620                | \$1,000                 | \$1,620,000                | \$65,000                |

**Model 2, Gradual Fee Increase**

|                | <b>Student Count</b> | <b>Fee/student/year</b> | <b>Fee Collection/year</b> | <b>Increased Income</b> |
|----------------|----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Current</b> | 1,230                | \$600                   | \$738,000                  |                         |
| <b>2010/11</b> | 1,274                | \$700                   | \$891,800                  | \$153,800               |
| <b>2011/12</b> | 1,366                | \$800                   | \$1,092,800                | \$201,000               |
| <b>2012/13</b> | 1,456                | \$900                   | \$1,310,400                | \$217,600               |
| <b>2013/14</b> | 1,555                | \$1,000                 | \$1,555,000                | \$244,600               |
| <b>2014/15</b> | 1,620                | \$1,000                 | \$1,620,000                | \$65,000                |

*Development Efforts:* The Honors College remains a very an excellent development tool that we are only beginning to employ, in my view. Honors College students historically have given back to the University at double the rate of non-Honors College students. So while our numbers are small, our impact is significant in annual fund raising. I believe that various Honors College initiatives, in particular our initiatives involving internships, service learning, study abroad, undergraduate research (in short, “Honors Beyond the Classroom”) are appealing enough to serve as philanthropic magnets, and we have had some success in this regard. Finally, we are

actively in pursuit of several major gifts that would have the potential to transform the College and the University.

*Grants:* I am certain that grant funds exist to support the kinds of educational innovations that we are working on: study abroad, service learning, and undergraduate research. I would also suspect that we could get support for the Ivory Tower to Marketplace and leadership initiatives.

### **III. Resource Requirements**

The projected growth of the College will place demands on space needed by the College in two areas: (1) College staff; (2) Student housing.

*Space for College Staff:* We are looking to grow the College by approximately 400 students over the next five years. This will require hiring two additional advisors. Currently there is no space in Harper for two more staff members. One could contemplate splitting the staff of the College into two discontinuous buildings, but this poses serious problems for College operations. Given the manner in which we advise and in which we maintain student files, it is very difficult to have advisors in separate locations. We tried this experiment with advisors in the new Honors Residence Hall, and routinely student issues had to be postponed until a meeting could be set up in Harper.

The bottom line here is that serious thought needs to be given to relocating the College to larger quarters. There have been informal discussions to building the “annex” portion of the new Honors Residence Hall that was scraped to save money. Were we to do this, one could create adequate space for the Honors College and for the several supporting units (Office of Fellowships and Scholar Programs; Office of Undergraduate Research; Pre-professional Advising; Study Abroad etc.) to create a hub of student services aimed at high-ability, high-aspiration students. This would strongly support the College’s mission, and the University’s effort to create a strong focus on leadership development.

*Space for Students:* The new Honors Residence Hall is sufficiently large to house all the contemplated incoming freshmen classes. However, when we occupied this new building we “gave up” beds in the “Outer Horseshoe.” With a larger overall student body, I think it would make sense for the College to “reclaim” these beds in the “Outer Shoe” to provide beds for sophomores, juniors and seniors who desire housing in an honors community.

## IV. Unit Statistical Profile

### A. Instructional

Nearly all Honors College students also are students in other academic colleges. Thus, most of these questions do not apply. I can provide, on request, a variety of information about Honors College students (application/acceptance/enrollment information; distribution of majors; retention information; etc.)

1. Number of applications for Fall 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009.
2. Number of admissions for these same years, and as an added bonus to give an idea about yield from admissions, I include the number who enrolled.

|             | <b>Applied</b> | <b>Admitted</b> | <b>Enrolled</b> | <b>SAT average</b> | <b>Core GPA</b> |
|-------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| <b>2009</b> | 1,673          | 736             | 321             | 1404               | 4.50            |
| <b>2008</b> | 1,405          | 723             | 310             | 1401               | 4.47            |
| <b>2007</b> | 1,635          | 674             | 288             | 1403               | 4.49            |
| <b>2006</b> | 1,247          | 650             | 312             | 1398               | 4.47            |

3. Freshmen retention rate for classes entering Fall 2006, 2007 and 2008. I assume this means the percentage of freshmen enrolled into the Honors College in a given year that remain in the Honors College one year later.

|             | <b>Enrolled</b> | <b>Retained</b> | <b>Rate</b> |
|-------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------|
| <b>2008</b> | 321             | 315             | 98%         |
| <b>2007</b> | 288             | 268             | 93%         |
| <b>2006</b> | 312             | 296             | 95%         |
| <b>2005</b> | 308             | 296             | 96%         |



4. Number of majors for Fall 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009 by headcount. Here I assume this refers to the number of *Baccalaureus Artium et Scientiae* students.

|                                  |    |
|----------------------------------|----|
| Baccalaureus Students, Fall 2006 | 8  |
| Baccalaureus Students, Fall 2007 | 11 |
| Baccalaureus Students, Fall 2008 | 11 |
| Baccalaureus Students, Fall 2009 | 13 |

5. Number of graduates for Fall 2008, Spring 2009 and Summer 2009, by headcount. For the Honors College this could mean several different things:

|                    | <b>Graduates</b> | <b>Graduates with honors</b> | <b>BARSC graduates</b> |
|--------------------|------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Summer 2009</b> | 14               | 9                            | 1                      |
| <b>Spring 2009</b> | 244              | 157                          | 5                      |
| <b>Fall 2008</b>   | 25               | 16                           | 1                      |

6. Four-, Five- and Six-Year Graduation rates for the three most recent applicable classes (undergraduate only).

|                               | <b>4-year rate</b> | <b>5-year rate</b> | <b>6-year rate</b> |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Class enrolled fall 03</b> | 74.3%              | 87.2%              | 88.2%              |
| <b>Class enrolled fall 02</b> | 70.7%              | 82.7%              | 83.1%              |
| <b>Class enrolled fall 01</b> | 73.4%              | 85.5%              | 86.3%              |

7. Total credit hours generated by your unit (regardless of major) for Fall 2008, Spring 2009 and Summer 2009.

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| Total Honors Credit Hours, Fall 2008   | 7,411 |
| Total Honors Credit Hours, Spring 2009 | 6,358 |
| Total Honors Credit Hours, Summer 2009 | 240   |

Questions 8, 9 and 10 (“number of faculty by title” and “total continuing education units”) do not apply to the South Carolina Honors College.

**B. Research and Creative Accomplishments**

All of the research and creative activity by College administration, faculty, staff and students will be accounted for in other college reports.

**C. Faculty Hiring**

The Honors College does not hire faculty members.

**D. Funding Sources**

Unit budget as of October 31, 2009:

|      |             |
|------|-------------|
| A000 | \$2,339,256 |
| E150 | \$4,770     |
| E700 | (\$930)     |

Gifts and pledges received in FY 2009:      \$798,583.85.