

**Committee on Honors and Interdisciplinary Studies
2014-2015. Report to the Arts and Sciences Faculty**

2014-2015 committee members included: faculty members Catherine Forestell, Psychology, Christopher Freiman, Philosophy, Greg Hancock, Geology, Richard Lowry, English/American Studies, Jeremy Pope, History, Carol Sheriff, History, Gene Tracy, Physics, Elizabeth Wiley, Theatre, Speech, Dance, Lisa Grimes, Charles Center, Joel Schwartz, Charles Center; and student members Shannon Callahan, Sarah Kinniburgh, Jackson Stone, and Sruveera Sathi.

The Committee met twice in the fall term and will meet twice in the spring term (with one meeting still to go). Primary items of business have included:

(1) Monroe Scholars

150 Monroe Scholars were admitted as new freshmen in fall, 2014. Since the target was 120, this was far more than we anticipated – the result of an unexpectedly high yield.. Our plan has been to graduate 150 Monroes each year, with about 120 of these admitted as entering freshmen and 30 as rising sophomores. We didn't want to go a year without admitting any rising sophomores, so we negotiated an arrangement with Sam Jones whereby we will admit just 20 rising sophomores each in fall 2015 and 2016, after which we will return to the 120/30 ratio.

110 Monroe Scholars have been approved to do their upper-division projects (\$3,000) in summer, 2015.

In addition, 43 freshman Monroes have been provided with funding to do freshman projects (\$1,000) in summer 2015. Unlike the upper-division grants, freshman grants are not guaranteed.

We anticipate that 125 Monroe Scholars will graduate in either fall, 2014 or spring, 2015. (The growth of the program to a total of 150 happened in fall, 2013, the year after the matriculation of this year's graduating class.)

(2) The Committee discussed of possible recommendation that it might make concerning the departmental honors program. Specifically, it discussed proposing the standardization of a 1-level ("honors") honors system, which has become the practice of a growing number (about half, now) of departments. The committee, like the faculty as a whole, is divided on this topic, and it decided to not make a recommendation at this time..

(3) The Committee conducted a study of "self-designed majors." There had been about 15 students graduating with self-designed majors each year until 2011-12, when this number jumped to 28. The number seems to have roughly remained at that level. Because of the breadth of many of these majors, it is difficult to categorize them into (for instance) science, social science, and humanities/arts areas.

Historically, it is not uncommon for self-designed majors to be incubators for the development of new degree programs. Following this pattern, it is clear that the recent jump in the number of self-designed majors was the result of proposals in a small number of areas – e.g., public health, in 2010-14, and Asian American Studies, more recently. The creation of a Minor in Public Health led to a significant decrease in self-designed majors, and a possible degree program in

Asian American Studies, if one is developed and approved, would certainly have the same impact.

(4) The committee and will receive and referee May Seminar proposals soon.

(5) 145 students will complete honors in their majors this spring. Forty-five of these received at least full summer funding from the Honors Fellowships “Kickstarter” web site.

Department	Number
Africana Studies	1
American Studies	1
Anthropology	5
Applied Science	2
Art and Art History	1
Biology	17
Chemistry	17
Classical Civ.	2
Computer Science	1
Economics	3
English	12
ENSP	0
Film and Media Studies	1
Gender, Sexuality, and Women’s Studies	0
Geology	3
Global Studies	2 (one each in AMES and EURS)
Government	4
History	10
Interdisciplinary Studies	14
International Relations	8
Kinesiology and Health Sciences	1
Mathematics	3

Department	Number
Modern Languages and Literatures	3 (one each in HISP,, FREN, and CHIN)
Music	1
Neuroscience	6
Philosophy	2
Physics	12
Psychology	8
Public Policy	0
Religious Studies	1
Sociology	1
Theatre, Speech, and Dance	3