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Honors Ambassadors: A Framework for Enhancing Student and Program Development

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Many honors programs struggle with how to attract the best and brightest students, primarily because the students we seek often have multiple lucrative offers from highly rated institutions. At Miami University, we found ourselves in the unfortunate position of losing top-tier students to competitor programs in the region and state and thus needing to take action. Our first step was to take a critical look at the scope and type of communication we were having with prospective students. What we found was that although we offer an excellent honors program with learning opportunities that are equivalent to or perhaps better than those of our competitors, we were not doing an adequate job of communicating our strengths to prospective students. In our quest to attract top scholars to our institution, we determined that the answer to staying competitive would be drastic expansion of our marketing and communication efforts.

The decision to increase the scope of our recruitment plan immediately presented a new challenge: resources. Any new recruitment initiatives would have to draw from the resources currently available to our program. With an inflexible budget, we had to look beyond the dollar signs. Ultimately, our sights landed on our greatest untapped resource: the students who are currently in our honors program. Involving a greater number of current students in the program would serve the dual purpose of affording us a large recruitment base to support our new efforts and providing students with opportunities to develop their cognitive, interpersonal, and intrapersonal capacities through a variety of experiences and interactions.

As a recruitment base, we found no better entity to serve as a liaison between the university and prospective students than our current students who already made the choice to attend our institution. Reputation is built on experience, so those who have had experience have an effective voice in any recruitment efforts (Schultz, 2008). In addition, the first question high school students ask themselves when making their college decision is "Will I fit in at this school?" (Geyer, 2007). Who better to give a prospective student a glimpse

into what life will be like for the next four years than current honors students? Our own research (Burton, 2008) as well as that done by others suggests that students who make a personal connection with someone on campus are much more likely to enroll at that institution. These data prompted us to rethink and expand our definition of our honors community so that it now included students who were seriously considering our program. We decided to begin forging an integrated honors community at the point of acceptance into the program rather than at summer orientation or after move-in day; to make this happen, we would need to mobilize a sizeable number of current honors students.

At this point, we could have followed the formula of setting up a volunteer ambassador program as many honors programs and admission offices across the country do. We could attempt to lure current students into becoming volunteers for various events or communication venues. But we decided to aim higher and construct with our students a mutually beneficial relationship that would promote development on the part of the students involved and the program itself. Not only would our students help to advance and develop our program, but we would also help them develop as students and individuals through a series of purposefully planned experiences, reflections, and interactions. Because the mission of our program focuses on the holistic development of our students and is founded on the research of adult development by Marcia Baxter Magolda (Taylor & Haynes, 2008; Baxter Magolda, 2004), we decided to transform the traditional ambassadors model from one that strictly focused on completing service hours to a comprehensive, developmental, and multi-year learning experience that would promote students' capacity for research, leadership, ethical reasoning, collaboration, community service, and ultimately self-understanding in increasingly sophisticated ways.

Grand ideas often yield grand dilemmas. As we began to envision this new model, we wondered how we would be able to involve a sufficient number of our current honors students with the depth needed for this plan to come to fruition. The traditional volunteer ambassador model, which we had attempted to use in the past, had always posed a common set of problems for us, including:

1. difficulty securing a large number of students to volunteer on a sustained and reliable basis;
2. inability to encourage students to donate a significant amount of time to the ambassadors program; and
3. lack of a measurable learning component.

Because our former ambassador initiative offered little incentive for participation, it only attracted about ten students per year, with each student donating about five hours of time at various admission and recruitment events. In our conversations about how to address these issues, an epiphany of sorts occurred: we could address most of the problems by offering Honors Ambassadors as a non-graded, credit-bearing course rather than as a solely volunteer opportunity.

Shortly thereafter, the first incarnation of the Honors Ambassadors course was created. The course was a year-long, one-credit course that featured a

series of activities and assignments designed to prompt students to reflect on their college choices, conduct first-hand research on our recruitment efforts, and engage authentically in recruitment activities with their peers. For participating in this course, students would receive a total of two university credit hours and credit for one honors experience. To design the curriculum, we relied upon Marcia Baxter Magolda's Learning Partnerships Model (2004), which emphasizes three guiding principles to help students gain greater intellectual, personal, and relational maturity: (1) acknowledging students as constructors of knowledge; (2) situating learning in the learner's experience; and (3) offering opportunities for the mutual construction of ideas.

As we created assignments and activities for this new course, we purposefully incorporated the Learning Partnerships Model into all components of the design. Honors ambassadors were no longer "volunteers" for the honors program. They were now researchers, leaders, project managers, and co-instructors. They became the driving force behind all new recruitment efforts, and they were able to see proposals based on their own original research come to life in the course of a semester. Their ideas were not only respected, but they were implemented by staff in both the honors program and in other offices in the larger university community. They were encouraged to reflect on and define their past and future experience at Miami and were encouraged to share the vision of their experiences with others. By offering them an appropriate mix of responsibility, autonomy, challenge, and support, we transformed a lack-luster volunteer effort into a dynamic and transformative learning experience for them and for us. The Honors Ambassadors Program was a concept conceived out of necessity, but it has since grown into a robust curricular and co-curricular model that promotes student learning and development; provides opportunities for student involvement and service to both the honors program and larger university community; and acts as a support structure for a complex personalized recruitment plan for prospective students.

FRAMEWORK FOR STUDENT INVOLVEMENT IN RECRUITMENT

Honors Ambassadors was originally conceived as a single year-long course, which honors students at any level could take once while at Miami. However, after our first year offering the class, many students who had completed the course were looking for a way to continue their involvement. Asking to them to re-enroll in a course they had just successfully completed did not seem an appealing option. If we wanted these students to continue to develop, we needed to create options that would enable them to advance their knowledge and skills. Our solution was a three-tiered framework that students can move through as previous levels are completed. The first tier, Honors Ambassadors, is open to all honors students while the second and third tiers are restricted to students who have completed the previous tier(s).

TIER I: HONORS AMBASSADOR (APPENDIX A)

As noted earlier, students enter the recruitment framework through Honors Ambassadors and are required to complete the one credit-hour course during the fall and spring semesters. Assignments include producing a learning-competency-based resumé, researching different data collection methods, and exploring student-development theory through self-reflection and interviews of others.

After completing these assignments, ambassadors then embark on a comprehensive recruitment project that incorporates many elements of previous assignments. The goal of the recruitment project is to produce a detailed proposal for a new recruitment initiative for the honors program that addresses a current programmatic need or substantially improves a current recruitment effort. These projects require students to conduct research using various methods such as benchmarking against peer or aspirant institutions, expert interviews, and online surveys. After proposals are completed, those deemed likely to succeed are approved, revised (based on the instructors', peers' and other experts' feedback), and implemented in the second semester.

In addition to implementing new recruitment initiatives, ambassadors participate in every aspect of the program's spring recruitment efforts. These tasks include planning and overseeing overnight visits for prospective students, conducting information sessions, serving on student panels, and completing a communication series for an assigned caseload of prospective students.

TIER II: UNDERGRADUATE ASSOCIATE (APPENDIX B)

Once students complete a full year as an honors ambassador, they have the opportunity to apply for an undergraduate associateship. Undergraduate associates (UAs) serve as assistants in the Honors Ambassador (Tier 1) course. Among their principal duties is to help facilitate the research and design projects the ambassadors conduct in groups during the first semester. Having completed similar projects themselves, UAs provide ambassadors with a unique perspective on a more intimate level than a course instructor can. UAs attend training seminars prior to their being assigned to a group to learn about effective context-specific leadership styles, identify their own leadership strengths and weaknesses, and explore group dynamics.

Undergraduate associates complete weekly reflections to assess their progress in developing as better leaders. The weekly reflections also serve as assessment tools for course instructors to evaluate the learning experience provided to UAs. During the second semester, UAs assist in the implementation of ambassadors' recruitment projects by serving as a guide or consultant for the teams. Additionally, UAs participate in recruitment events and complete a comprehensive reflection on their learning as well as that of the other students in the course.

Tier III: Student Recruitment Coordinator (Appendix C)

After successful completion of the second tier as an undergraduate associate, students are then presented with a culminating opportunity to apply for a student recruitment coordinator (SRC) position. This position is considered a professional internship in the honors program, and SRCs collaborate directly with honors recruitment staff to enhance every component of the program's recruitment efforts. Based on their individual strengths and interests, SRCs are given specific responsibilities within different functional areas of recruitment work. They attend and participate actively in staff meetings and instructional design sessions for the Honors Ambassadors course. They assist with assessment and evaluation efforts and offer suggestions for program improvement.

Previous divisions of responsibility have included student development, outreach, and event-planning. The SRC for Student Development assists honors staff in all aspects of running the class, which include creating course assignments and grading students' work. Additionally, this SRC is charged with organizing and supervising the UAs throughout the academic year. The SRC for Outreach serves on the Honors Program Recruitment Committee and also coordinates and runs daily information sessions for prospective students. Finally, the SRC for Event-Planning coordinates recruitment events in addition to developing brochures and marketing materials.

CONCLUSION

The Honors Ambassador Program at Miami University has multiple benefits. First, on the administrative level it helps alleviate the time constraints of the honors program faculty and staff, allowing for the implementation and assessment of more ambitious admission and recruitment projects. Second, the admission and recruitment work carried out by the honors program has been transformed into an ongoing experiential-learning and development opportunity for those involved at every level. Additionally, as a result of the program's success, it will serve as a model for similar programs in other realms of the honors program such as student advising and service learning.

An in-house benchmark survey conducted in 2006 found that, "when comparing our staff size to other honors programs or colleges of similar size and complexity, we have the fewest number of staff of all the benchmark institutions" (Haynes et al., 2006). As is the case for other honors programs and colleges across the country, the University of Miami Honors Program competes for the best high school seniors—for the betterment not only of the honors program itself but also of the greater Miami University community. Despite our small staff size and a decreasing operations budget, we have been able to greatly increase recruitment and admission efforts since the conception of the Honors Ambassador Program in 2004.

In the first Ambassador Program configuration, we had approximately fifty student hours available for recruitment projects for the entire year. Since the creation of our three-tiered framework, we benefit from approximately 1,125

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student hours to achieve a more complete and simultaneously more individualized annual communication plan. Other outcomes of this new framework include a 300% increase in phone calls to prospective and accepted students (increasing from 467 calls in 2004–05 to over 1,200 in 2008–09). We now have been able to send personalized emails to our 1,200 accepted students in the first months of 2009. The honors ambassadors have researched, designed and implemented accepted student honors overnights, which have quickly become our most successful yield effort. With the assessment, research, planning, and participation of our fifty-five honors ambassadors, seven undergraduate assistants, four student recruitment coordinators, and two staff members, we are now able to offer six honors overnight programs for accepted students each spring, communicate with all admitted students, and revise all of our promotional print and electronic materials.

Although the honors ambassadors are recompensed for their recruitment work in the form of honors course credits, the more consequential gains are in line with our program's student development goals. As part of their training, ambassadors research the underlying student development theory of the honors program, reflect on the motives behind their own college search choices, research current recruitment practices, propose improvements to the MU Honors Program's recruitment methods, and learn to convey messages and engage in meaningful dialogue with prospective students and their parents. Furthermore, because the framework is founded upon Baxter Magolda's Learning Partnerships Model, students have a unique opportunity to develop personally and academically as a result of their engagement with authentic inquiry-based projects; close collaboration with peers, instructors, and professionals across the university; and in-depth critical reflection.

With the success of the Honors Ambassador Program, plans are underway to use a similar three-tiered framework in all components of the honors program. For example, the MU Honors Program is committed to an ambitious individualized student advising agenda. However, with one of the country's largest honors constituents (as a percentage of overall university enrollment) and a small staff, the Honors Academic Advising Team faces similar constraints. By following the Learning Partnerships Model, the advising team envisions a team of peer advisors who will help with their mission and who, in turn, will gain valuable knowledge, training, and experiences.

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APPENDIX A

SYLLABUS TIER 1

HONORS AMBASSADORS: HON 180Z

Course Description

In this course, students will enhance their scholarly, leadership, and service skills through the process of recruiting prospective students to the Honors community and serving as Honors Ambassadors. The fall semester will consist of personal development, team-building, Ambassador training, and unique research geared towards Honors recruitment; students will enhance previous recruitment techniques and implement new recruitment strategies through comparative researching and surveying of other similar institutes. The spring semester will focus on developing leadership and service skills by participating in recruitment events and program development. Students will actively engage in virtual recruitment techniques; interact individually with prospective and accepted students in face-to-face recruitment practices; interact individually and as a team member with prospective and accepted students in large-scale events and overnight visits; plan and implement presentations or small events within the structure of a larger program; and implement research-based initiatives proposed during first semester.

Course Structure and Philosophy

The framework for this course is based upon the philosophy that knowledge is not something that can be collected or imparted, but rather something that is created by individuals in collaboration with others, based upon their varied experiences and viewpoints. Therefore, you will not find the traditional teacher (as source of all knowledge)-student (as absorber of all knowledge) model in this course. We will all be learning from each other as the course progresses. The instructors have put together activities and assignments designed to move you forward in your intellectual and personal development, but much of what you take away from this class will depend on what you put into it. Therefore we encourage active participation and value your opinions and input throughout the year.

Honors Credit

This particular section of HON 180Z requires participation in both semesters of the academic school year. Completing an entire year of the course will give you a total of two credit hours (one for each semester), and credit for one Honors Experience.

Learning Goals

- Communicate by presenting a main point and supporting evidence
- Explore a contemporary or enduring question about society
- Think critically by identifying multiple perspectives on an issue
- Identify one's strengths and areas for improvement
- Interact with others to engage with provocative or complex ideas, disciplines, or cultures

Requirements

HON 180Z requires highly motivated and enthusiastic University Honors students who are willing to become familiar with Miami's undergraduate mission as well as the Honors Program's tenets and goals.

Students may miss NO MORE THAN ONE class meeting in order to receive course credit. If a class is missed, the student is responsible for obtaining information distributed during that class. A student who misses more than one class without prior approval will be automatically dropped from the course. Course requirements include:

First Semester

- Complete all assignments as outlined on the course calendar.
- Actively participate in group assignments and activities.
- Attend all scheduled group meetings.
- Attend one Honors Information Session for prospective students.
- Participate in two hours of prospective student tele-recruiting.

Second Semester

Complete 30 Recruitment Points throughout the semester as follows:

- EVERYONE must sign up to help run ONE Accepted Honors Student Overnight (6 pts).
- EVERYONE must complete a communications series with their assigned caseload of 30 students (this responsibility includes tele-recruiting, sending emails and responding to any questions you receive, and sending hand-written postcards) (6 pts).
- EVERYONE must work to complete an accepted project proposal from first semester (10 pts).
- You may sign up to serve on student panels for various admission events (1 pt./hour).

You may sign up to conduct an Honors information session (1 pt./hour).

You may sign up to help with additional Accepted Honors Student Overnights (2–10 pts).

You will be informed of other opportunities as they become available (in general, 1 hour = 1 point).

Grading

This is a credit/no credit course. You will not receive a regular letter grade on your transcript. Students must complete all assignments with a passing grade. Assignments that do not receive a passing grade will be returned to you for revision. You can revise any assignment as many times as necessary to meet the minimum requirements to pass.

FALL Assignments

Personal Profile

All students will reflect on their personal experience in choosing or attending college and develop an on-line profile which will include answers to the following questions: What are the top three reasons you chose to attend Miami? When you arrived at Miami, what surprised you most about college life? What is the most important piece of advice you would give to a high school senior going through the college decision-making process? What has been your most significant in-class or out-of-class learning experience at Miami? These profiles will be posted on the Honors web site, so that high school students can learn more about current Miami students.

Paper and Presentation on the Honors Framework

This project is as much about how you can learn about the new framework on your own as it is about what you can learn. Using any sources of information available to a high school student, put together a written summary of the Honors Program Three-Tiered Framework. Your potential source list is vast, so comprehensive research is expected for this project. Your summary must include the following components: Admission (the selection process and how to apply), Requirements, Benefits, Honors Community, Merit Scholarships (including the Harrison full-ride scholarship), Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), the source list from which you retrieved your information. Also, please identify which source would be most helpful from the perspective of a high school student. Each group will be required to lead a class discussion on one section of their summary.

G.O.A.L.S. Program and Reflection

All students will participate in a group initiatives program which will help your group explore group dynamics by developing communication, leadership, problem solving, strategic planning and trust through a number of team-based challenges. This program will be led by trained staff from Miami's Outdoor Pursuit Center. Team work and collaboration is a central theme of this class throughout the year, so after the program we would like for you to take some time to reflect on how your group operates, your group dynamics, and your role on the team. Then write a reflection paper which addresses the following questions:

- What was your overall impression of the GOAL Program?
- Describe a time during the GOAL Program when your team was functioning well together. Describe a time during the GOAL Program when your team was having difficulty. Comparing those two instances, what major factors contributed to how well your team functioned?
- Describe your typical personality or role in group situations. Identify one strength that made you a good team member during GOAL. Identify one thing you could have done to be a better team member during the GOAL program process.
- Describe your group's dynamics. What do you feel are your group's greatest strengths? What do you feel may be areas that your group needs to address?
- Imagine that you are in the ultimate group to work with in this course. In fact, you enjoy working with this group so much that every other group you have ever worked throughout your education pales in comparison to this group. How would you describe this group? What makes this group better than other groups you have worked with in the past? What are the main characteristics of this group?

Student Development Project

As Ambassadors for the Miami University Honors Program you will be interacting with prospective students and their parents, so it is essential that you have an understanding of student development theory upon which the new Honors framework is based. In this assignment, you will be gaining valuable first-hand evidence for a the typical developmental process that occurs for most students at a four-year, liberal arts college. For this project, you will: 1) research proper interview and question-formation techniques; 2) use this knowledge to develop appropriate questions and conduct a proper interview with either a first-year student, middle-years student or a college graduate; 3) transcribe and post your information on the class Blackboard site; 4) review the posted interviews for the cohort you were assigned, and identify typical traits for individuals within that cohort; 5) participate in class discussions and sharing of ideas; and 6) write a final paper with your work group. The final paper should include:

- An introduction summarizing your understanding of student development theory;
- A section describing what you see as typical traits of first-year students, and a rationale for how you came to that conclusion. Include at least one trait from each developmental foundation (i.e., view of knowledge, view of self, and view of others);
- A section describing what you see as typical traits for sophomore and junior students, and a rationale for how you came to that conclusion. Include at least one trait from each developmental foundation (i.e., view of knowledge, view of self, and view of others);
- A section describing what you see as typical college graduate traits, and your rationalization for coming to that conclusion. Include at least one trait from

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each developmental foundation (i.e., view of knowledge, view of self, and view of others); and

- A concluding section on the transitions that students typically undergo throughout college and after graduation. In the concluding section, you might hypothesize about the causes of the development you witnessed (or lack of development, if this is the case).

Investigating Research and Data Collection Methods

The purpose of this assignment is to introduce you to various research or data collection methods that can or will be used during your final class project and which are valuable for you to know as you become independent researchers. For this assignment, each group will be assigned a particular method (e.g., survey, interview, participant observation, competitor analysis/benchmarking, case study, focus group, questionnaire) to investigate. You will then use the information that you gather to create a one-page hand-out on this method to be distributed to the entire class. The handout should include an introduction, a description of common uses or situations when that method is commonly used, a description of best practices or how best to use the method, and a list of resources your fellow students could reference for more information. In addition to the handout, each group should be prepared to present and discuss their assigned method in class.

Re-writing the Traditional Resume

For this individual assignment, you will create a resume that showcases your skills and abilities in areas that employers have identified as crucial to success: communication, inquiry and problem solving, critical thinking, collaboration and team-work and self-understanding and that are the learning outcomes of the Honors Program. Unlike a traditional resume, which is often a chronological list of activities, this resume will feature your learning competencies and personal strengths, as exemplified by your past and current performances on specific jobs, projects, responsibilities, and education achievements. Although you will be employing an atypical resume format, you should strive for a professional appearance and grammatical perfection.

Marketing Research/Recruitment Project

Using your research skills, knowledge of the Honors Program, and familiarity with our program's student demographics, each group will develop and present a proposal for an innovative recruitment project which can realistically be implemented by the Honors Program. Both the written proposal and presentation must achieve the following aims: 1) identify and describe the new recruitment initiative you are suggesting; 2) discuss the rationale behind your selection of that initiative; 3) identify data you have collected which support implementation of your proposed initiative; 4) describe how this initiative will be implemented, including (but not limited to) projected cost and necessary resources; and 5) discuss why your topic should be selected for implementation. All groups will be required to conduct research to support the ideas put

forth in their proposal. At a minimum, each group must: interview an expert; conduct consumer research (including developing questions related to your topic, collecting relevant data, and then analyze your results) using two of the data collection methods discussed in class; and benchmark against other similar institutions. A committee of Honors students and staff will select proposals at the end of fall semester for implementation during spring semester and possibly beyond. Not all proposals will be selected for implementation. When selecting proposals for implementation, we will consider the following criteria: originality, practicality, degree to which proposal is supported by data, affordability, and availability of necessary resources.

Final Reflection Paper

In addition to a regular course evaluation, each student will complete a reflection paper describing their experience in the course. This paper should go beyond your likes and dislikes and delve into subjects such as what you have learned throughout the semester in the various assignments and activities, what your goals and expectations were for the class (and for yourself) and how the class did or did not meet those, and what your own strengths and weaknesses are (which can be gleaned from reflecting on assignments where you shined and when you struggled).

SPRING Assignments

“Why Miami?” Reflection Paper

To be prepared to interact with prospective students and their parents—who will be asking themselves, “Why Miami?”—you must first answer that question for yourself. For this paper, explore the various factors that went into making your college decision and evaluate the significance of each; reflect on your goals for college as an incoming student and evaluate the degree to which your goals and expectations were met; reflect on how your goals and expectations have changed and what has influenced that change; and list both positive and negative experiences at Miami and reflect on your role in those experiences.

Preferencing Your Project Group via a Personal Assessment Inventory

All students will be required to work in groups to implement a new recruitment project that has been selected to be utilized by the Honors Program. The topics of these projects will vary based on the proposals presented and selected during first semester. Because we want this to be a rewarding experience for every student in class, you will be assigned a topic as well as an identifiable role which complements your strengths, develops those areas where you need challenge, and advances your personal goals. To identify this role you will complete a personal assessment in which you identify your personal strengths and challenges, articulate your personal and professional goals, and reflect on how the various projects might provide an avenue for you to learn, to develop, and to refine your interests.

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Create an E-mail, Tele-recruiting Script and Postcard for Your Accepted Student Caseload

The key to successful recruiting is effective communication. This group of assignments is designed to develop your communication skills and to involve you in service to the university. Each Ambassador will be assigned a group of 30–50 high school students who have been accepted into the Honors Program. This group will be referred to as your “caseload.” You will complete a personal communication sequence with these students, which requires you to initiate contact via a personalized e-mail, respond to their replies, call each student at least one time during spring semester, and send a hand-written postcard to their home. For these students, you will be the “face” of the Honors Program at Miami University, so it is important that your communication with them is clear and accurate, employs an appropriate tone, vocabulary and organizational structure, and authentically draws upon your personal experiences as a student.

Re-writing the Traditional Resume

For this individual assignment, you will update the resume created last semester, which showcases your skills and abilities in areas that employers have identified as crucial to success: communication, inquiry and problem solving, critical thinking, *collaboration* and team-work and self-understanding. Using the same resume format, revise your resume to include both in-class and out-of-class learning experiences from the spring semester. Although, we cannot legislate your actions once you leave our class, updating this resume at the end of each subsequent semester may prove to be a rewarding experience and a valuable tool when you attempt to gain employment or acceptance into professional or graduate schools.

Marketing Research/Recruitment Project

You will work in groups to create and implement an innovative recruitment project for the Honors Program which was selected from last semester’s proposals. The work you do as part of this assignment will actually be used by the Honors Program when recruiting the next incoming class. Therefore, a high-quality professional product is expected. Using the research and information provided by the selected group, each implementation group will: 1) design a prototype of their product or service; 2) test their prototype with their target audience; 3) revise and refine their prototype based upon feedback; and 4) produce and present a final product for implementation.

Final Reflection Paper

In addition to a regular course evaluation, each student will complete a reflection paper describing their experience in this course. This paper will go beyond your likes and dislikes and delve into subjects such as what you have learned throughout the semester through the various assignments and activities and how those activities and assignments could be improved.

APPENDIX B

SYLLABUS TIER 2

HONORS AMBASSADOR UNDERGRADUATE ASSOCIATES (UA)

Experience Description

During this experience, students will continue to enhance their personal, academic, and collaborative skills by leading students in the Honors Ambassadors course through the process of recruiting prospective students to the Honors community. During the first semester, you will act as group facilitators and discussion leaders for groups of 7–10 students enrolled in the Ambassadors class. In this role, you will serve as a sort of consultant—that is, helping to facilitate students and projects without inserting your own perspective into the mix, giving students in your groups the answers, or solving the problem for them. This will allow you to observe group dynamics, distinguish similarities and differences among individuals, and learn about negotiating roles and motivating people from a different vantage point than you typically experience in a traditional classroom setting.

During the second semester, UAs take a more active role in the group project by serving as project managers rather than group facilitators. You will each be responsible for implementing a particular recruitment initiative with the assistance of your group members. Drawing from your first semester experience, you will be required to ensure that all students in the group are engaged and working productively with each other; negotiating time and responsibilities appropriately; organizing tasks, process and team members productively; and resolving conflicts and troubleshooting challenges as they arise.

Learning Goals

- Communicate using appropriate tone and organizational structure and advancing a compelling message or argument
- Assess and refine your educational goals
- Discover nuanced similarities and differences between one's own beliefs and values and those of diverse others; connect these comparisons to cultural contexts

Requirements

Undergraduate Associates requires highly motivated and enthusiastic University Honors students who are familiar with Miami's undergraduate mission as well as the Honors Program's tenets and goals. UA's may miss NO MORE THAN ONE class meeting, UA meeting, or group meeting in order to receive credit.

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UA responsibilities include:

First Semester

Complete all assignments as outlined below:

- Actively facilitate group assignments and activities.
- Attend all scheduled group meetings.

Second Semester

- Attend all scheduled group meetings.
- Actively participate in group projects and activities

Assignments

1. Complete a weekly written reflection on the topics provided (due weekly, throughout semester).
2. Participate in a preparatory leadership retreat (due first week of class).
3. Read appropriate articles on professional learning communities and organizations, student development theory (specifically the Learning Partnerships Model), and the community standards model (assigned throughout first semester).
4. Specifically define, assess, and refine educational goals through a three-part reflection paper which spans both semesters (due second semester upon application for position, end of first semester, and end of second semester).
5. Take a leadership role in completing a group project (achieved throughout second semester).
6. Update and revise outcomes based resume (due at end of first semester and end of second semester)

APPENDIX C

SYLLABUS TIER 3

HONORS AMBASSADORS STUDENT RECRUITMENT COORDINATOR POSITION (SRC)

Experience Description

Students will collaborate, as professional interns in the Honors Program, with Honors staff to serve the recruitment needs of the program. While individual responsibilities vary by functional area of recruitment work, each SRC has a vital role within the team. The success of recruitment events, as well as the educational and development value for Ambassadors and UAs, depends on the competence and enthusiasm of each SRC in carrying out his or her duties. SRCs are expected to act as a professional staff member in the Honors Program.

Experience Structure and Philosophy

This Honors experience is designed as the culmination of students' recruitment work. Having completed a year as Ambassador and then another as Undergraduate Associate, students have gained an intimate understanding of the complex intricacies that constitute the process of recruitment. As such, students are expected to assist in defining their responsibilities, proactively perform those responsibilities, and then assess and reflect on their strengths and weaknesses of their performance. Just as the leadership responsibilities increased as students moved from Ambassador to UA. SRCs are expected to undertake even more ambitious responsibilities, including guiding their own experience and development as leaders. Thus the value derived from this experience depends wholly on the student's attitude and perspective towards it.

Learning Goals

- Develop leadership abilities through self-guided work.
- Enhance critical thinking abilities.
- Improve teamwork abilities in a professional setting.
- Assess and refine educational goals.

Requirements

Each SRC will be required to do the following:

- Update the Outcomes Based Résumé created as an Ambassador and refined as an UA;
- Reflect upon and redefine learning goals;
- Complete quarterly self-evaluation and performance review with supervisor.

HONORS AMBASSADORS

Additionally, individual responsibilities are as follows:

Student Recruitment Coordinator: Student Development

- Assist course instructors in designing and implementing class assignments.
- Coordinate Ambassador involvement in recruitment events.
- Lead UAs through all aspects of class work, student development, and project implementation.
- Assist SRC: Events and SRC: Outreach as needed.

Student Recruitment Coordinator: Events

- Analyze and improve current marketing efforts and materials.
- Design, plan, and execute second semester recruitment events.
- Assist SRC: Student Development & SRC: Outreach as needed.

Student Recruitment Coordinator: Outreach

- Serve on HSPARC (the program's admission and recruitment committee).
- Coordinate and hold information sessions; perform related logistical duties.
- Assist SRC: Student Development & SRC: Events as needed.