

Western Illinois University
Academic Affairs, Annual Reporting Documents — Deans
Academic Year 2023–2024

Due to Provost's Office: **May 17, 2024**

Centennial Honors College

The Purpose of These Documents

With this annual report, Deans and Chairpersons/Directors will align past and future work in their programs and in the colleges as a whole with wider planning in the Division of Academic Affairs, as well as with the University's larger Strategic Plan, *Higher Values in Higher Education, 2017-2027 (HVHE)*. Among other things, in the report Deans will describe what is unique about their College, document progress on enrollment, program development, and faculty development; document and develop recruitment and retention initiatives; and, finally, record and celebrate faculty, staff, and student successes and achievements.

In order to understand the context for these documents, please review the current version of the University's strategic planning document, as well as the supplemental planning documents on recruitment, retention, University distinctiveness, QC planning, and so on. All of these documents can be found at http://www.wiu.edu/aasp/university_planning/. Also, when reading the University's planning documents, please note the following vision, mission, and core values of the institution:

WIU Vision

Western Illinois University will be the leader in educational quality, opportunity, and affordability among regional public universities.

WIU Mission

Western Illinois University empowers students, faculty, and staff to lead dynamic and diverse communities. We provide student-centered undergraduate and graduate programs characterized by innovative teaching, research, and service, grounded in interdisciplinary, regional and global perspectives. We engage our students in educational opportunities guided by a professional and diverse faculty and staff in collaboration with alumni and community partners.

WIU Core Values

Academic Excellence

Central to our history and tradition is the commitment to teaching, to the individual learner, and to active involvement in the teaching-learning process. WIU's highly qualified, diverse faculty promotes critical thinking, engaged learning, research, and creativity in a challenging, supportive learning community. Western is committed to an academic environment that encourages lifelong development as learners, scholars, teachers, and mentors.

Educational Opportunity

Western values educational opportunity and welcomes those who show promise and a willingness to work toward achieving shared educational goals. WIU is committed to providing accessible, high quality educational programs and financial support for our students.

Personal Growth

Because Western values the development of the whole person, WIU is committed to providing opportunities for personal growth in an environment that supports the development of wellness, ethical decision making, and personal responsibility.

Social Responsibility

Western is committed to equity, social justice, and diversity, and will maintain the highest standards of integrity in our work with others. WIU serves as a resource for and stimulus to economic, educational, cultural, environmental, and community development in our region and well beyond.

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1. What is unique and special about your College?

The Honors College serves academically talented and motivated students who engage in specially designed honors programs in their specific disciplines of study. Students from all majors and colleges on both campuses and online are welcome and have the opportunity to enroll in the Honors College. Transfer students who meet the criteria are also granted the same opportunities to enroll in the Honors College. The Honors College offers courses with unique course titles and content for students enrolled in the Honors College. The class sizes are smaller than most class sizes. This provides students with opportunities to work one-on-one with faculty on research and/or creative projects, for which they receive honors course credit upon successful completion. The College has also partnered with local and area vendors in Macomb and the Quad Cities to provide discounts to students enrolled in the College. The discount program was paused during the height of the COVID pandemic, but has recently been revived. This is an added benefit of being in the Honors College. The College also has an Honors Council consisting of honors student representatives, and faculty representatives from each of the colleges and the library, who role is to advise the Dean of the Honors College. There is also a QC representative on the Council. The academic honors advisors also serve as Ex-officio members on the Council. The Dean serves as the Chair of the Council. The Council reviews and approves general honors courses, seminars, departmental honors requirements, honors program initiatives, honors research grants and awards, and Honors College policies and procedures.

2. Enrollment growth possibilities in your College

Include in this description, where possible, market data, audience profiles, national trends, employment data, and other indicators of market potential.

As the number of students entering four-year institutions have decreased, so too has the number of students entering the university who are eligible to enroll in an honors curriculum. Typically, the College sees approximately 9.5% of the entering class elect to join the Honors College. Although the overall number of students enrolling at the university has decreased, there is a potential for growth within the College. Some potential markets for honors students include, but are not limited to:

- a. High schools, both local and those targeted by the Office of Admissions
- b. Home schooled students
- c. Community Colleges that are feeders to WIU. Recruitment and marketing to the high achieving students in those colleges could be very beneficial to the Honors College.

The College can also develop a mentorship program that pairs incoming students (first year and/or transfer students) with second year and older students. Such a mentorship program could lead to students' sense of belongingness at the university and the College. It may also enhance retention of students at WIU and within the College.

3. Barriers to growth in your College

The Honors College typically enrolls approximately 9.5% to 10% of the incoming class. As enrollment declines at the university, this is reflected in the Honors College. Another barrier to enrollment growth in the college is the limited number of personnel to recruit. The college relies on the recruitment efforts of the Office of Admissions and the efforts during Discover Western. The College would like to go on some of the school visits with the Office of Admissions to share more information about the college, if and when possible. There is also a barrier in terms of lack of scholarships to offer students. Many honors programs offer some level of scholarships to students in the college. We do not have many scholarships to offer to honors students. This is something that the college would like to explore.

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4. Enrollment

Institutional Research will create a “College Profile” for Deans and Chairpersons/Directors. Please note that most information can be found in the Fact Book. Include the following:

- a. 5 years of headcount enrollment by new freshmen, new transfer, new graduate, and continuing undergraduate and graduate students in your College*
- b. 5 years of headcount enrollment by race/ethnicity, gender, and country of origin*
- c. 5 years total credit hour production by Department/School*
- d. Identify faculty-student ratio by College and Department/School, with explanation of disciplinary norms*

4. Enrollment

a.

	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	Fall 2023
New Freshmen	169	132	73	93	114
New Transfers	61	49	46	18	21
Continuing	603	583	489	350	268

b.

	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	Fall 2023
American Indian	2	3	2	2	1
Asian	19	14	14	13	7
Black	101	92	77	49	51
Foreign	--	--	--	13	19
Hispanic	86	87	74	45	43
Other/Unknown	19	20	19	9	7
Pacific Islander	1	1	0	0	1
Two or More	24	18	10	17	13
White	581	529	383	312	260

5. Degrees conferred

Include the following:

- a. Total number of degrees conferred for most recent academic year*
- b. Total number of degrees conferred for most recent academic year per department and/or program*
- c. Number of degrees conferred for most recent academic year per race/ethnicity, gender, country of origin*

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- a. Total number of degrees conferred for most recent academic year, AY 2023-2024: 88 degrees conferred
- b. Total number of degrees conferred for most recent academic year per department and/or program

	Fall 2023	Spring 2024
General Honors	12	36
Honors in the Major	2	13

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University Honors	5	16
Pre-Law Honors Minor	1	3

6. Retention of students

List retention initiatives for the following:

- a. Current students*
- b. Transfer students*

Current and transfer students are encouraged to meet with their honors academic advisors regularly to ensure they remain on track toward their degree completion. Regular meetings with their honors advisors is essential for students to successfully enroll in courses that will count toward their degree requirements, while still satisfying requirements for honors.

Honors students are informed of the housing option to reside on the honors floor in Thompson. Residing with this LLC provides opportunities for students to interact with like minded, focused students. Students in such an environment not only develop interpersonal skills, but they can also develop time management and study skills. Students enrolled in similar programs or courses can assist each other with course work. They can also motivate each other to excel in their courses.

The Honors College recently collaborated with the University Libraries to form the Center for Undergraduate Research. This Center is designed for all students to utilize to plan, design and conduct research with the assistance of library staff. The Center also initiated a scholarship for students conducting research during summer 2024. Due to the generosity of a donor, the Center was able to offer two scholarships to students who met the criteria. We are hoping to continue to develop this Center during the next academic year.

The College and the library also collaborated to create the Honors Thesis Guidelines. The guidelines will assist students completing honors theses to do so successfully. Although each department and field of study may be different, the students will be better informed of the items to consider when completing an honors thesis.

The Honors College also encourages students to participate in the Student Honors Association (SHA). The SHA meets regularly within the Honors College. There is also space within the College that is designated for the SHA and other honors students to utilize for meetings and study purposes.

This past year, the Honors College started a t-shirt design contest for honors students. This was an opportunity for students to showcase their creative design skills.

The Honors College continues to host annual programs for the College and university community. The programs are as follows:

- U.S. Constitution Day – hosted with the Department of Political Science
- Pre-Law Symposium
- Pre-Med Symposium
- Thomas E. Helm Undergraduate Research Day
- Academic Honors Convocation

The Honors College also hosted its annual Ice Cream Social at the beginning of the Fall 2023 semester. This was an opportunity to welcome students and to share information about the Honors College. Incoming students also had an opportunity to interact with returning students,

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their advisors, and staff.

7. Recruitment of students

List recruitment initiatives for the following:

- a. *First-year students*
- b. *Graduate students*

The Honors College participates in all of the Discover Western events, both during the morning and afternoon sessions. Honors Student Ambassadors assist during these events. They share information about honors and their personal experiences with honors. Such information from the student ambassadors is usually appreciated by prospective students.

The College also works with the Office of Admissions to send promotional materials and invitations to prospective students. Those meeting the criteria for Honors are encourage to apply to the Honors College.

The College also met on several occasions with the Office of Admissions to identify additional strategies to reach prospective students and to encourage better visibility of the College at the university.

Student Ambassadors were also identified and asked to participate in short video clips for use on social media.

8. Recruitment and retention of faculty and staff

Describe the following:

- a. *Initiatives to retain faculty and staff*
- b. *Plans to hire faculty and staff*

The Honors College does not have its own faculty.

9. Courses

Include the following:

- a. *Total number of general education courses*
- b. *Total number of FYE courses*
- c. *Total number of major courses*
- d. *Total number of independent study, internship, and other courses*
- e. *Total number of graduate courses*
- f. *Number of courses offered through Macomb campus*
- g. *Number of courses offered through QC campus*
- h. *Number of courses offered through Online campus*

Courses

		FALL 2023
GH 101	FILM POP CULTUR (ENG 180/280)	12
GH 101	ENVIRON LIT (ENG 180/280)	13
GH 101	UTOPIA/DYSTOPIA (ENG 180/280)	17
GH 299	MIND FUN (COLLOQUIUM)	7
GH 299	WEALTH MGMT (COLLOQUIUM)	18
GH 299	WEALTH MGMT (COLLOQUIUM)	19

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GH 299	COFAC HON SEM (COLLOQUIUM)	9
GH 333	INDEP STUDY	0
GH 444	IND SR RESEARCH	0
	TOTAL GENERAL HONORS ENROLLMENT	102
		Spring 2024
GH 101	HORROR FICTION (ENG 180/280)	16
GH 275	DESIGN THINKING	0
GH 299	CYBER BAGGAGE (COLLOQUIUM)	20
GH 299	WEALTH MGMT (COLLOQUIUM)	18
GH 299	WEALTH MGMT (COLLOQUIUM)	11
GH 299S	SCAND TODAY (COLLOQUIUM)	11
GH 301	GAMING THE PAST (HUMANITIES)	15
GH 302	DEMOCRACY GAMES (SOCIAL SCIENCE)	13
GH 333	INDEP STUDY	0
GH 444	IND SR RESEARCH	0
	TOTAL GENERAL HONORS ENROLLMENT	104

Fall 2023-Two sections of GH 299 were online and one was livestreamed.
 Spring 2024. Three sections of GH 299 were online. One section of GH 299 was the study abroad section.

10. Number of new and revised academic programs

Include the following:

- a. *New major options (include audience for the program and aspect of mission served by the program)*
- b. *New minors (include audience for the program and aspect of mission served by the program)*
- c. *New certificates, emphases, or other (include audience and aspect of mission served)*

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11. Eliminated academic programs

List eliminated majors, minors, other

Click or tap here to enter text.

12. Faculty activities

Include the following:

- a. *Achievements*
- b. *Professional development*
- c. *Outreach and significant service*
- d. *Research (books, articles, conference presentations, other)*

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13. Grant activities and external funding

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Click or tap here to enter text.

14. Value of programming

Explain how departments, programs, and other aspects of your College add value to the educational experiences of Western's students.

The Honors College supports all academic disciplines. Students from any major field of study have the opportunity to join the College. The Honors Academic Advisors will work with all students to help them register for courses that will count towards their degree requirements, while still meeting the criteria to graduate as an honors student. Students also have an opportunity to reside on the Honors Floors in the LLC.

The programs offered by the College are often beneficial for the entire university community. The annual programs are listed above. The College also hosts the Academic Honors Convocation for all honors students and students who have earned academic distinctions. Students are awarded medallions for their academic achievements.

15. Student success

List the following:

- a. *Student clubs and organizations in the College*
 - b. *Results of any student surveys in your College, including surveys on student success, program development, student satisfaction, etc.*
 - c. *All new initiatives in the College regarding student success*
 - d. *All initiatives to support underrepresented student populations in your College*
- a. The Student Honors Association (SHA) on the Macomb and QC campuses were active this year. They hosted blood drives; a warm clothing drive; assisted with serving hot chocolate; hosted trivia night; participated in the annual Fall Fling; among other activities.
 - b. Student surveys were not conducted this year.
 - c. The College is focused on providing the support and resources needed for students to succeed in their respective disciplines. The College collaborated with the library to create the Center for Undergraduate Research. This is an attempt to offer students additional resources to support their research endeavors. The College also collaborated with library to develop Honors Thesis Guidelines. The guidelines will assist students and faculty as they prepare their thesis. The library will also assist by having a repository for all of the honors theses. Students will be able to access the theses as needed.
 - d. The Center for Undergraduate Research not only benefits honors students, but also all students conducting research. The Thomas E. Helm Undergraduate Day is also open to all undergraduate student at WIU, both in person and online.

16. Alumni highlights

List notable highlights from College alumni.

Honors College alumni are invited to attend and serve as panelists for events hosted by the college.

17. Community and/or regional engagement from College:

List notable community and regional engagement activities.

The Honors College hosts several events throughout the academic year. The Mayor of the City of Macomb is usually invited to attend and participate in the events. The community is also invited

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to attend events hosted by the Honors College.

Events include:

1. U.S. Constitution Day – The Mayor, the Regional Superintendent of Schools and the area high schools were invited to the event.
2. Pre-Law Symposium
3. Jill M. Brody Pre-Med Symposium
4. Thomas E. Helm Undergraduate Research Day
5. Academic Honors Convocation

18. Conclusion

The mission and values of the Honors College are in line with those of the University. All academic programs are reflected in the Honors College. Faculty and students from all disciplines support the mission of the Honors College. We are honored to serve and provide the best experiences possible to students. The College has outstanding supporters who enable us to offer the outstanding programs that we do.