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# HONORS NEWSLETTER

## FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

There is today much discussion of curricular reform across the nation and at all levels of education. The three Rs have been rehabilitated at the primary and secondary levels and reign in schools most often labeled "fundamental." The fashion of curricular reform is not unlike our winter flu epidemics. Every year brings a new variety, labeled according to provenance—Hong Kong, Russian, and so on—and each springs up almost simultaneously in the same form across the country.

This year's academic concern is the "core curriculum." The news media have devoted some attention to Harvard University's recent debates and its decision to return to such a core curriculum. Several years ago Dean Henry Rosovsky of Harvard reported to the faculty his belief that undergraduates should be taught to think in the widest sense, that they should be able to manipulate with ease those mathematical and linguistic systems most fundamental to our understanding of the world around us. In addition, students should be conversant with the major ethical systems that attempt to clarify our modes of action within that world. In short, Dean Rosovsky called for a return to what has traditionally been the liberal arts curriculum. The word revolution seems always to be invested with such desire for difference, for scission from an immediate past, that we often forget its meaning. Harvard has but come full circle, returning to principles it long held and only temporarily abandoned in the last decade.

The news media have treated this reconversion as an important event, signaling a new era for higher education. What they have not seen is that Harvard essentially has decided to rejoin a group of institutions that have never abandoned the concept of a core curriculum and that have insisted upon its validity through any number of attempts to abolish it.

One such institution is our own. The Council on Liberal Education for the University at large and the faculty of the College of Liberal Arts have steadfastly maintained faith in the goals outlined in Dean Rosovsky's report. We have never abolished our distributional requirements, although some may argue that we have weakened a few. Nonetheless, the ap-

paratus is intact and to improve it we need do nothing as drastic as Harvard has done. To be sure we can improve our core curriculum. We have filled our distributional requirements with many introductory courses that do little to further student understanding of the intellectual premises upon which the disciplines are based. Courses on the philosophies of the natural sciences, the social sciences, and the humanities and fine arts might well be more useful as introductory intellectual exercises than most of the courses now offered. Indeed, the college is currently considering a number of changes; none, however, dismantle the basic system that has worked so well for so many institutions for so long a time.

Honors programs across the nation have not been immune to these various educational epidemics. Many have seen their role as that of "innovators" whose charge it was to foster individually elaborated self-study programs, vaguely defined cross-disciplinary efforts, and, it has seemed at times, anything that was different. Often forgotten in these forays into differences is the fact that, although honors students may well be brighter and more highly motivated than the average college student, they nonetheless are also lacking precisely that breadth of exposure to fundamental premises that is necessary for the full appreciation of cross-disciplinary efforts and for the proper elaboration of self-study programs.

The Honors Division of the College of Liberal Arts has thus stressed the idea of a core curriculum over the past several years. It has been our goal to provide such programs and advising as to lead our students to an understanding of the mathematical, linguistic, and ethical systems that inform our world. We have not always been successful, but we remain confident that our goal is the right one. We are thus happy to welcome Harvard back home.

Peter H. Robinson

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## COLLEGE HONORS SEMINARS: 1978-79

For the coming year juniors and seniors in the Honors program will be offered a series of interesting and challenging courses covering a wide variety of topics. College Honors Seminars augment departmental honors courses by introducing advanced students to subjects outside their specialties. Students may not take seminars in their major area of concentration.

Seminars may be taken either A/N or S/N and will count as Honors opportunities. Registration procedures remain substantially the same. In order to draw a class card from the Class Reservations Office, students must first obtain a clearance card from the Honors office. Once the registration limit for a seminar has been reached, no additional students will be admitted. There is no entry by special permission and no possibility of auditing. Waiting lists, however, are maintained in the Honors office.

The schedule of College Honors Seminars for 1978-79 is listed below. Final listings, including times and places, are published each quarter in the *Class Schedule*. Course descriptions and scheduling information are provided with registration materials.

### Fall Quarter

- Intelligent Behavior in Everyday Life*  
Professor William Charlesworth  
Institute of Child Development
- Energy: An Eternal Delight?*  
Professor Richard J. Goldstein  
Department of Mechanical Engineering
- Fractals: Form, Chance, and Dimension*  
Professor J. W. Halley  
Department of Physics
- Saints and Victims: Women in German Literature*  
Professor Ruth-Ellen Boetcher Joeres  
Department of German
- Traditional English Grammar*  
Professor J. Lawrence Mitchell  
Department of English
- Purity and Pollution: An Anthropological Perspective*  
Dr. Judith Modell  
Humanities Program
- Portugal Past: What is the Future?*  
Professor Ronald Sousa  
Department of Spanish and Portuguese

### Winter Quarter

- Sociobiology*  
Dr. Donna Baird  
Department of Ecology
- Gandhi: Saint or Revolutionary?*  
Dr. Stephen P. Blake  
Honors Division
- The Country House in English Society*  
Professor Stanford E. Lehmborg  
Department of History

*Politics of the Seas*  
Professor Joseph Schwartzberg  
Department of Geography

*A History of Metallurgy*  
Professor John P. Wallace  
Department of Chemical Engineering

*Musical Perception and the Auditory System*  
Professor W. Dixon Ward  
Department of Communication Disorders

### Spring Quarter

*Matter and Force in the Physical Universe*  
Professor Benjamin Bayman  
Department of Physics

*The State in Postindustrial Societies*  
Professor Roger Benjamin  
Department of Political Science

*Semiotics of Film: Around Metz*  
Professor Ton Conley  
Department of French and Italian

*Ezra Pound's Cantos*  
Professor Philip Furia  
Department of English

*The Historiography of East-West Encounter in American Novels*  
Professor David Kopf  
Department of History

*Hume's Philosophy of Religion*  
Professor Douglas Lewis  
Department of Philosophy

*Medieval Iconography*  
Professor M. Alison Stones  
Department of Art History

*Current Economic Issues*  
Professor John Turnbull  
Department of Economics

## SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

For the second year in a row a student in the Honors Division has won the Harry S. Truman Scholarship for the state of Minnesota. Annamarie A. Daley, a College of Liberal Arts sophomore, bested a field of candidates from other colleges and universities within the state and will receive, along with 52 others from across the United States, an award of up to \$5,000 annually for tuition, fees, books, and room and board. The scholarship is renewable for four years: two years of college and two years of graduate school. The successful candidate must demonstrate outstanding potential for public service as well as evidence of academic achievement. Ms. Daley is considering a career with the federal government as an agricultural economist. This is the second year of the Truman competition and the second year that an Honors student from the College of Liberal Arts has won the award for the state of Minnesota.

## FRESHMAN-SOPHOMORE COLLOQUIA

During 1977-78 a major reorganization took place in the offerings of the Honors Division for freshmen and sophomores. For the first time Honors underclassmen received credit (two credits) for taking colloquia. And also for the first time teachers of colloquia came exclusively from the ranks of advanced graduate students and faculty. Twenty-three courses on a wide variety of topics from the sciences, humanities, fine arts, and social sciences were offered this first year. Colloquia stressed careful reading, class discussion and debate, and analytical writing. Courses from the humanities and fine arts included *The Artist and the Photograph*, *The Critics' Dilemma: The Search for a Valid Approach to Twentieth Century Drama and Theater*, and *Close Encounters of an Eastern Kind: Modernism in Japanese Literature*. Courses from the sciences included *Hormones, Animals, and Man* and *Are There Lichens on Mars?* And, finally, the social sciences were represented by *Life, Death, and the Power of the State: Some Contemporary Moral and Legal Dilemmas*, *Man's Language*, *Women's Speech*, *Exploratory Data Analysis*, and *Early Minnesota History*.

## FINANCIAL AID FOR GRADUATE STUDY

Students who plan to begin graduate school in September of 1979 should visit the Fellowship Office of the Graduate School (422 Johnston Hall) as soon as possible. Many national scholarships require essays, letters of recommendation, and up-to-date transcripts and have early fall deadlines. To win one of these grants a student must begin planning and preparation before the start of the 1978-79 school year. Listed below are approximate deadlines for a few of the major fellowships:

Fulbright: early October  
Marshall: early October  
Rhodes: middle October  
Danforth: late October  
National Science Foundation: middle November  
Churchill: middle November  
U of M Endowed Fellowships: early February

## NEW DEVELOPMENTS

The governing structure of the Honors Division has changed under the new College of Liberal Arts constitution. Approved by the Board of Regents on June 10, 1977, the new constitution replaces the Honors Council (composed of all Honors representatives) and the Honors Executive Committee (the smaller, decision-making body) with the Honors Committee. The Dean of the College, in consulta-

tion with the Director of Honors, appoints a chairman, three students, eight faculty members chosen from the list of Honors representatives, and up to five other members to serve two-year terms on the Honors Committee. The Committee is responsible for approving honors courses in the College and for overseeing the program. Changes in policies for honors work in the College are recommended to the Council for Curriculum, Instruction, and Advising by the Committee.

The introduction of a new medium of communication between students and staff is a second development worthy of mention. A brief one-page newsletter called "Program Notes" goes out to all students in the Division twice a term. The newsletter includes deadlines of various kinds, information about scholarships and fellowships, times and dates of special programs and events, and notices of activities within the Division. The aim is to make students more aware of the intellectual and cultural opportunities open to them. The Honors Program wants to encourage students to utilize to the fullest the resources of the Division and the University.

## HONORS SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

Thirty persons from the 1977-78 freshmen class of the College of Liberal Arts received scholarships from the Honors Division last fall. Four people received awards from the Century Fund. Established by CLA Dean Frank Sorauf, this fund distributed monies solely on the basis of merit. Twenty-six persons were awarded grants from the Charles and Elora Allis Educational Foundation fund. Recipients of these awards had to show evidence of financial need in addition to promise of academic achievement. The following is a list of the top nine scholarship winners for 1977-78:

### Century Fund

John Ahlquist, Kirkwood High School, Kirkwood, Mo.  
Thomas Carlson, Robbinsdale High School, Crystal, Minn.  
George Csathy, Robbinsdale High School, Golden Valley, Minn.  
Mimi Kim, Duluth East High School, Duluth, Minn.

### Allis Foundation

William Braun, Columbia Heights High School, Columbia Heights, Minn.  
Julie Challman, Robbinsdale High School, Crystal, Minn.  
Lynn K. Olson, Orono-Lake High School, Long Lake, Minn.  
Christopher Ruhl, Mayo High School, Rochester, Minn.  
Ann Sather, Eau Claire High School, Eau Claire, Wisc.

## COLLEGE HONORS SEMINARS: 1966-79

The Division recently completed a study of the origin by collegiate unit, department, and director of all College Honors Seminars. Here are some of the results.

By the end of spring quarter 1979 there will have been 227 College Honors Seminars offered by the Honors Division. The College of Liberal Arts faculty taught 66 percent of the total, the Institute of Technology 16 percent, the College of Biological Sciences 6 percent, the Medical School 4 percent, and others 8 percent.

Within CLA the following departments have contributed the largest number of seminars: English, 16 seminars (11 percent of the total); History, 15.75 seminars (10 percent); Economics, 9 seminars (6 percent); Music, 8.5 seminars (6 percent); Geography, 8.25 seminars (6 percent); Political Science, 8 seminars (6 percent); Philosophy, 7.5 seminars (5 percent); and Art History, 7 seminars (5 percent).

Here is the breakdown by director and collegiate unit.

- William McDonald (1966-67): 12 seminars; 66 percent from CLA, 17 percent from IT, and 17 percent from CBS.
- Burnham Terrell (1967-71): 54 seminars; 73 percent from CLA, 17 percent from IT, 8 percent from CBS, and 2 percent from the Medical School.
- Frank Hirschbach (1971-74): 47 seminars; 74 percent from CLA, 16 percent from IT, 4 percent from CBS, and 6 percent from other units.
- Peter H. Robinson (1974-79): 113 seminars; 59 percent from CLA, 17 percent from IT, 4 percent from the Medical School, 4 percent from CBS, 4 percent from the College of Agriculture, and 12 percent from other units.

## HONORS STUDENT SENATE ACTIVITIES

Honors student senators haven't yet decided whether the name Student Senate is too forbidding or evokes memories of do-nothing high school days. At any rate, the name doesn't fit. Proposals for changes in honors policy go through the Honors Committee (betcha don't know what that is, either), which has three student members. From time to time we've mulled over new names for this organization which refuses to die, but nothing has stuck yet.

In a survey conducted last year (very cleverly too we might add—students had to fill out questionnaires before they received registration materials), half of those questioned thought we should plan social activities. An excellent idea, we believe. Honors students, particularly freshmen, have little contact with each other as a rule.

Ideas the senators (or whatever they choose to call themselves) should consider next year include:

1. Arranging transportation for cultural event ticket-holders. Too often tickets aren't used either because the student doesn't want to pay for another ticket, which he must do if he doesn't want to go alone, or the student can't find anyone who is also "culturally inclined." Honors students should be able to go together.

2. Arranging trips to foreign countries through the International Student Exchange (ISE).

3. Getting people from various disciplines and fields to speak to *small* groups of interested students. Discussions, not lectures, for seeking advice and information about others' outlooks could be arranged. Several of these were planned this year, but none of the requested speakers were available.

4. Arranging get-togethers: picnics, parties, etc. Once upon a time this was a common honors student practice.

Next year's officers will be chosen during the summer.

Lisa M. Schroepfer  
Student Newsletter Editor

### HONORS NEWSLETTER

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