

To: Ernie Bailey (Chair, SAOSC)
From: Phil Harling, Interim Dean, Lewis Honors College
Date: February 16, 2017
RE: Amendment of Governing Regulations to enable appointment of lecturers with primary appointments in the Lewis Honors College

On December 9, 2016, the Honors Transition Committee issued their report in response to the April 4, 2016 charge from SAOSC to consider an appropriate curriculum for the Honors College – most notably, how best to expand from a 21-hour to a 30-hour curriculum. Having briefed the full Senate on the Transition Committee report on December 12, 2016, I am now putting the relevant recommendations into the form of proposals to be vetted through the University Senate. The proposal I wish to submit for consideration in this memo is *an alteration of the University's Governing Regulations to make it possible for lecturers to hold primary appointments within the Lewis Honors College*. This proposal was discussed and unanimously endorsed by the Lewis Honors College Faculty of Record on February 15, 2017. Attendees included Kristin Ashford (Nursing), Lisa Blue (Arts & Sciences), Jonathan Glixon (Fine Arts), Vanessa Jackson (Agriculture, Food, and Environment), and Jane Jensen (Education). Two members who were unable to attend the meeting were separately consulted, and expressed their approval – Scott Kelley (Business & Economics), and John Balk (Engineering). Two other members are currently on sabbatical – Susan Barron (Arts & Sciences) and Gail Hoyt (Business & Economics).

Central to the new Honors curriculum will be a foundational seminar, “The Individual and Society,” that will be required of all Honors underclassmen. The purpose of this course is to build a sense of intellectual community among students in the Lewis Honors College by engaging them in a shared academic experience. A 3-credit, 1-semester course, it will emphasize the development of analytical reading and writing skills. The course will be writing-intensive, requiring students to produce 20-25 pages over the course of the semester and to complete at least one assignment that includes a formal revision process. The overarching theme of the course will address the relationship of the individual to society, and students will explore how the three main branches of academic inquiry—humanities, natural sciences, social sciences—address this topic. The course theme is intentionally broad, inviting periodic revision by the course instructors. It is nevertheless desirable that there be a substantial (approximately 75%) degree of standardization in texts and assignments each semester, and through successive iterations of the course, for the sake of establishing an Honors College tradition and building community across grade levels.

The Transition Committee has recommended that the best way of ensuring adequate instructional support for the proposed foundational seminar is to hire a modest cohort of lecturers whose instructional time will mostly be allocated to this course. Of course it is desirable for tenure-eligible faculty to be involved in the teaching of this seminar. However, given the historic difficulty in recruiting a critical mass of tenure-eligible faculty to teach Honors seminars and Honors sections of large 100- and 200-level courses, it is not realistic to think that many such faculty members would be able and willing to teach the foundational seminar on a predictable basis. Thus we anticipate the need to hire a small group of lecturers to do most of the foundational seminar teaching.

It needs to be pointed out here that the Transition Committee report envisions regular UK faculty members continuing to play the lead instructional role in the expanded Honors curriculum. Our fond hope is that faculty involvement in the Lewis Honors College will broaden and deepen as we move forward. The lion's share of this richer Honors curriculum should and will be the preserve of the established UK faculty. Regular faculty members will dominate in the provision of all other Honors course offerings, as they have done in the past. The Faculty Fellows program detailed in the Transition Committee report (and alluded to below) will also provide a core of faculty members who will contribute very significantly to Honors instruction on staggered terms. The Transition Committee expressed the imperative for greater diversity and variety among Honors seminars, with a significantly greater volume of UK faculty rotating in and out of them. The obvious goal should be to put more of UK's best teachers in front of UK's best undergraduates. This is an established Honors College goal on which the incoming permanent dean will be expected to work assiduously.

Let me now turn to how the Transition Committee envisioned the deployment of a small cohort of primary-appointment lecturers. These lecturers must in all cases possess a Ph.D. – or, where relevant, the terminal degree appropriate to the field of assignment as recognized by their home academic discipline. Their report stressed that these lecturers should be compensated at a competitive level. They should be given some measure of instructional guidance and support. Two-year renewable terms (with 3-year terms upon the attainment of Senior Lecturer rank, per UK's Governing regulations) would suggest a modicum of stability, and provide lecturers with a reasonably stable career path. We should hire the best people we can, which means there will be some measure of turnover. Lecturers should be expected to teach one course per year in their core discipline, and their DOE would need to reflect this. Their instructional service within their core disciplines can serve to broaden the participation of tenured and tenure-eligible faculty members in Honors – core disciplines can “lend” to Honors the instructional time of one of their faculty members, just as Honors is “lending” the lecturer's instructional time to her/his core discipline. Since the Transition Committee envisions an umbilical connection between lecturers housed in the Lewis Honors College and the core disciplines in which they hold their Ph.D.s, it is vitally important that the relevant core disciplines fully participate on lecturer search committees. Once a lecturer is hired, s/he should be assigned a faculty mentor within the core discipline, as a means of ensuring an ongoing connection with the relevant department. Since some proportion of lecturers' instructional time will regularly be assigned to their core discipline, there will be a mechanism to ensure that the relevant department will meaningfully participate in the merit evaluation and promotion review of lecturers. Opportunities to secure secondary appointments in the relevant core-discipline departments will strengthen that connection all the more.

With these safeguards built into their DOEs, the Transition Committee deemed it imperative that lecturers be granted primary appointments within the Lewis Honors College, where over 85 percent of their DOE will typically reside. While most of that percentage will be attached to instruction, Honors lecturers will also be expected to provide meaningful service to our 2,000 Honors students – through the review of applications, through informal mentorship, and through regular participation in extra- and co-curricular events.

UK's Governing Regulations will need to be amended to make it possible for lecturers' primary appointments to reside in the Honors College. The Transition Committee understood that it would be conceivable for their primary appointments to reside in their core-discipline college while the large majority of their DOE was assigned to Honors. But the Committee's fear was that, over time, such an arrangement would pose a real disadvantage to Honors. Possession tends to be nine-tenths of the law. Over time there would be strong centrifugal pressure for more of the lecturers' DOEs to shift to their core disciplines, thus eroding the instructional capacity for the Honors foundational seminar in the long run. Since the very point of hiring lecturers is to guarantee this capacity, the Transition Committee report declared that it is vitally important that their primary appointments reside within Honors.

Safeguards recommended by the Transition Committee

The Lewis Honors College is unusual in having no faculty members with primary appointments housed within the College. Indeed, UK's Governing Regulations explicitly state that "regular members of the Honors Faculty are tenured or tenure-eligible faculty members with primary appointment in another college who have a recurring, dedicated assignment in the Honors College, reflected in their Distribution of Effort" ([GR, Part VII.E.2.a-c](#)). Fortunately, for several years now the Honors Program/College has enjoyed the services of a Faculty of Record (FoR) comprised of 11 faculty members who are appointed through the University Senate. Moreover, the Transition Committee recommended the institution of a Faculty Fellows program in which as many as 9 faculty members at any one time would devote up to half of their DOE to the Honors College; a recurring line item of \$500,000 will be built into the Honors budget by the Provost Budget Office in order to buy out Faculty Fellows' time for this purpose. Faculty Fellows will serve as *ex-officio* members of the FoR during their terms of service. Taken together, regular and *ex-officio* members of the FoR should amount to some 20 faculty members – thus providing a substantial cohort that will function as the faculty of the Lewis Honors College. This sizable cohort of faculty will be big enough to command the large majority of votes on specific curricular or other matters, even on occasions when they agree to assign voting rights to lecturers. Thus far the FoR has chiefly assisted in the vetting of Honors course proposals. The Transition Committee has proposed a significant expansion of their role, so that in governance matters they behave like the tenured faculty within a department. *Most importantly, they will serve as a body that can safeguard the lecturers (appointed to Honors chiefly to teach the foundational seminar) from the untrammelled will of the Honors Dean.* In addition to vetting course proposals and advising the Dean on budgetary matters, the FoR will be required to express their judgments to the Dean on annual merit review of lecturers, and on the question of promotion from the rank of Lecturer to that of Senior Lecturer (with *written* judgments required in promotion cases, in line with UK's Administrative Regulations). Members of the Thus the FoR will provide lecturers with the sort of protection from the Dean that lecturers enjoy in other UK colleges, while providing the Dean with the regular faculty counsel that deans enjoy in other colleges. Members of the FoR will also be asked to serve as informal mentors for Honors College lecturers, along the lines that one typically finds in academic departments who routinely provide senior mentors for tenure-eligible faculty members. Each member of the FoR would need to have some reasonable percentage of their DOE (perhaps 5 percent) assigned to Honors. Members should also be placed on staggered fixed terms (perhaps of 3 or 4 years).

Suggested Revisions to the Governing Regulations

GR VII.D

1. Academic ranks in the University consist of lecturer and senior lecturer in the lecturer series, and of instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, professor or the equivalent to these recognized in the librarian title series of librarian IV, librarian III, librarian II and librarian I, respectively.

GR VII. E.2. The Honors Faculty

a. Membership

The membership of the Honors Faculty shall consist of the Dean of the College, associate or assistant deans holding professorial faculty rank (i.e. assistant, associate, or full professor) and who have assignment in the College, and regular and associate faculty members.

Regular members of the Honors Faculty are tenured or tenure-eligible faculty members with primary appointment in another college who have a recurring, dedicated assignment in the Honors College, reflected in their Distribution of Effort (DOE).

Associate members of the Honors Faculty are those with primary appointment in another college who have an occasional assignment to provide instruction in the Honors curriculum, and lecturers with primary appointment in the Honors College and a regular assignment to provide instruction in the Honors curriculum.

The above members of the Honors Faculty shall possess the following qualifications:

A doctoral degree or its equivalent in scholarly reputation;

The rank of assistant professor (or equivalent) or higher in one of the professorial titles, or the rank of lecturer or senior lecturer in the Lecturer Series;

Demonstrated excellence in teaching and mentoring of undergraduate students; and

Demonstrated interest in honors students and the willingness to participate in the Honors College.

The Dean of the Honors College confers membership in the Honors Faculty. The appointments of regular members are made upon recommendation of Regular Honors Faculty after review of the qualifications of the persons proposed for membership by the dean of the college of primary appointment. The Dean of the Honors College may appoint, with appropriate duties and privileges, associate members in the Honors College Faculty in accordance with the Rules of the Honors College approved by the University Senate.

b. Officers, Committees and Councils

The Honors Faculty may perform its functions directly or through the Honors College Council, as prescribed by the Rules of the Honors College Faculty and as approved by the University Senate. The Dean of the Honors College shall preside over meetings of the Honors Faculty, except as the Dean may delegate that function. Copies of minutes of Honors Faculty meetings and of meetings of Honors Faculty committees and councils shall be made available to all members of the Honors Faculty.

c. Honors Faculty Functions

Within the limits established by the University regulations and the University Senate Rules, the regular members of the Honors Faculty shall have jurisdiction over the curricular requirements leading to the Honors credential, and within those limits shall establish Rules of the Honors Faculty necessary for the performance of its educational policymaking functions. For these purposes, voting privileges may be extended or withdrawn by the regular members to the associate members, or to other persons assigned to the college for administrative, instruction, research, extension, clinical or librarian work. Copies of these Rules shall be made available to Honors Faculty members and filed with the Dean of the Honors College, the Provost, and the University Senate Council.

It is the responsibility of the Honors Faculty to promote the academic achievements of Honors students and to assist the colleges in the development of undergraduate excellence in all fields. In accordance with procedures established in its approved Rules, the Honors Faculty shall make recommendations to the University Senate on academic matters that require University Senate approval. The Honors Faculty may make recommendations on matters related to honors education to the University Senate, to college or department faculties, to the President or to other administrative officers.

The Honors Faculty/Council shall have the authority and responsibilities delegated to it by the Dean of the Honors College and the University Senate.