

M E M O R A N D U M

To: Dr. Thomas Fallo, Dr. Francisco Arce, Dr. Jean Shankweiler

From: Joseph Holliday, Honors Transfer Program Director

Date: August 15, 2008

Subject: Annual Report for 2007-2008 Academic Year

General Information

I. Personnel

Administrators: Dr. Gloria Miranda, Dean of Social Science Division
Dr. Jean Shankweiler, Acting Dean of Natural Science

Director: Joseph Holliday, Professor of Earth Sciences

Secretary: Susan McLeod

Clerk: Donna Baldwin

Advisory Council Joe Holliday (Director, Natural Sciences Division), Jean Shankweiler (Dean), Angela Simon (Former Director, BSS), Connie Fitzsimons (Fine Arts), Tom Cody (Humanities), Jeff Cohen (Math)

II. Program Purpose. The Honors Transfer Program is the only program at El Camino College designed to assist the highly motivated students who are preparing to transfer to the most academically rigorous universities. Many of these students are first generation college students and most of them are from minority populations, which provides the UC's and private universities much of the diversity that they seek.

III. HTP Requirements. To be eligible for the Honors Transfer Program a student must have a minimum 3.0 GPA, write a two-page essay, be eligible for English 1A. To continue in HTP a student must maintain the minimum 3.0 GPA, take an HTP-designated course every semester, and attend a seminar or counseling appointment every semester. The requirements to complete the HTP are a minimum 3.0 GPA, complete five HTP-designated courses, attend four HTP seminars and have two counseling appointments.

IV. Honors Courses. The HTP has a wide variety of courses, all of which are UC-transferable. The courses are in five divisions and are offered during both semesters, as well as Summer and Winter sessions. The HTP-designated courses offered are Anthropology 1 and 2, Art 6, Astronomy 25, Biology 10, Economics 1, Geography 5, History 1A, 1B and 32, Music 12, Oceanography 10, Philosophy 23, Political Science 1, Psychology 5, Sociology 101, Speech 3, 4 and 12, and English 1A, 1B, and 1C. The courses that get HTP credit are Biology 1A and 1B, Chemistry 1A and 1B, Physics 1A and 1B, Math 190 and 191, and Computer Science 1.

V. Membership and Completion. The Honors Transfer Program currently has over 450 students, which is a 50% increase during the last few years. Each year there are approximately 200 new members, which include about 150 from high school and 50 as continuing students. Approximately 125 students transfer from the program every year, with about 50% transferring to UCLA and 15% transferring to UC Berkeley.

Honors Transfer Program Update and Statistics

During the 2007-2008 academic year, the Honors Transfer Program (HTP) underwent tremendous growth in both quality and quantity. It is now considered by the Honors Transfer Council of California one of the best honors programs in the state, and a role model for honors programs in other colleges.

I. Growth of the Honors Transfer Program. During the last few years the HTP has grown from a consistent 300 students to more than 450 students. This year it may even reach close to the 500 mark, because this fall it has over 130 students coming in from local high schools and over 60 new members from the sophomore class. This level of participation makes our HTP much larger than the average Honors program, which is approximately 200 in California community colleges. It is now the third largest honors program in the state, surpassed only by Mt. SAC and Santa Monica Colleges. On the other hand, the approximate sizes of honors programs from similar colleges are 350 in Cerritos College, 200 in Glendale College, 100 in Rio Hondo and Fullerton Colleges, and 150 in Long Beach, L.A. City, Saddleback, and Irvine Valley Colleges.

II. Increased transfers to universities. Over 50 percent of the HTP students transferred to UCLA, whereas 16 percent transferred to UC Berkeley. Most of the remainder transferred to other University of California campuses, with a few going to private universities and CSU campuses. We have a special agreement with UCLA called the Transfer Alliance Program. The number of students who were TAP certified and applied to UCLA increased by 8 percent during the past academic year, which amounted to a record total of 95 students (even with our increased GPA requirement). The number of students accepted to UCLA increased by 12 percent, totaling 87 students. This resulted in our biggest news of the year: ECC is now the number two TAP transfer college in the state! This UCLA admittance rate of 92 percent is essentially tied for first place among all community colleges. We also had a record number of transfer to UC Berkeley. Thus the quality of the HTP is on par with any other college in the state.

The high quality of the program is due to several factors. Besides a hard-working HTP staff, we had a half-time transfer counselor dedicated to our students. Rene Lozano counseled over 100 HTP students throughout the year, both as individuals and in groups. Workshops throughout the year were held on various topics pertaining to transfer, such as UC application tips, writing personal statements, and the appeals process.

III: Increased opportunities for Honors Transfer Program students. The quality of the HTP has also increased during the past year by offering students increased opportunities for other aspects of their academic careers. In particular, we have been

promoting the student research conferences. A record number of our HTP students were presenters at the Honors Student Research Conference sponsored by the Honors Transfer Council of California (HTCC), which is held at UC Irvine every spring. There were 13 students who gave oral presentations and/or poster presentations during this all-day symposium. A record number of three scholarships (out of a state-wide total of 20 scholarships) were awarded to El Camino students at the HTCC conference.

The HTP also has begun to participate in activities that help our students who want to transfer to UC Berkeley. The HTP has continued its cooperation with the Transfer Center by nominating students for the UC Berkeley TAP (Transfer Alliance Project) for disadvantaged students. The HTP director and a student participated in the first annual Bay Honors Consortium (BHC) student research conference which was held at Stanford University in April.

The Honors Transfer Club has been very active during the past year. This club gives honors students an opportunity to accomplish goals that enrich their academic lives. For instance, they published the HTP newsletters, sold HTP T-shirts, and sponsored a concert fund-raiser for African orphans.

The Honors Transfer Program has transfer agreements, through the Honors Transfer Council of California, with several academically rigorous universities. HTP students are all eligible for the UCLA Transfer Alliance Program. We also have agreements with UC Irvine, UC Riverside and UC Sta. Cruz, as well as admission consideration to UC Berkeley. Other universities include CSULB, CSUF, STSU, Chapman University, La Sierra University, Pitzer College, Occidental College, Pomona College, Azusa Pacific University, and Whitman College. The newest universities with agreements are Cal Poly Pomona and Loyola Marymount University.

Accomplished Goals of 2007-2008 Academic Year

During the past academic year, the HTP has strived to accomplish everything that the HTP Advisory Council has talked about over the years. We believe that all of the goals unrelated to inadequate staffing have been accomplished.

The HTP offered winter session courses for the first time, with two HTP-designated courses. Students have requested this ever since ECC instituted winter sessions. This is particularly important for sophomores who were trying to finish the HTP in one year. This summer session the HTP has offered a few courses for the second time, which is also highly popular with students trying to finish their five-course requirement before transfer.

This summer the college will begin adding a student transcript designation for each honors course completed by the student. This designation was long overdue, since EC.C was one of only two colleges in California known to be omitting it. The approval of this was made in July, 2008. The new transcripts will have a "T" next to every HTP course a student has successfully completed, which will enable transfer universities to use the data without getting individual letters from the HTP office for each student.

This year the college hired a new full-time transfer counselor, which has been ranked number one on the Counseling Division priority list for years. As already mentioned, a part-time counselor was handling the enormous volume of students requesting transfer specialist information during the previous years. The HTP worked very closely with Robin Dreizler, Director of Outreach and School Relations, to have a part-time outreach counselor for the HTP. Else Reinertsen visited approximately ten high schools and participated at Senior Day and other orientations. In addition to being very successful, this freed up many hours of time for the overworked director.

HTP director Joe Holliday was President of Honors Transfer Council of California for the past year, which gave ECC a lot of publicity across the state. This was particularly important during the HTCC student research conference at UCI and the BHC at Stanford University, as well as meetings at UCLA, LMU, Mills College, and other colleges.

Future Goals and Current Issues

During the coming academic year the HTP will continue to operate for the benefit of the students. The recent cooperation with transfer and outreach counselors is expected to continue as long as the funding is approved. The HTP director will continue to communicate with the HTP Advisory Council as the HTP works with a new dean, Dr. Jean Shankweiler of Natural Sciences Division. During the coming year, the HTP will continue to offer a high-quality environment for the honors students. We expect to participate in the HTCC Honors Student Research Conference on February 28, 2009. The HTP expects that there will be several students participating in the BHC Honors Research Symposium in April. Given the new counselor position, the TAP-transfer number to UCLA should continue to increase.

The new HTP course designation on student transcripts must be implemented this coming academic year. The director will be working with the Director of Admissions and records to assure a successful transition to this new version of the transcripts.

The biggest issue facing the HTP is the lack of a permanent secretary. Although the program is getting by with half-time secretary Susan McLeod, the 170-day limit on temporary employees is the single worst problem facing the HTP. During the past three years, There has been no progress toward solving this chronic problem

The augmentation budget funding for the temporary secretary makes the problem even worse. Because budget issues are not solved until early fall semester, the secretary must be paid from the HTP program assistant budget. This depletes the budget so that there is not enough funding for a badly needed program assistant throughout the year. For instance, we have a great program assistant, Donna Baldwin, but cannot use her as much as we need to. Given the 50 percent increase in the number of HTP students over the last few years, the HTP really needs both the secretary and the program assistant every month of the year.

The other budgetary and administrative limitation facing the HTP is the need to increase the HTP director release time back to the 80 percent level it was during the 1990s. Given

the 50 percent increase in HTP students during the last few years, the workload has increased proportionally. The current 60 percent release time is inadequate and makes finding a replacement director very difficult. This is particularly noticeable when compared to the other two large honors programs in the state. Santa Monica College has equivalent to 250 percent release time for their director and counselors, whereas Mt. SAC has 150 percent. If El Camino College wants to sustain the quality, quantity, and integrity of the program, it must commit more resources to the program.

cc: Dr. Jeanie Nishime
Dr. Regina Smith