

**UNIVERSITY SENATE**  
**UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY**  
**STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK**

Introduced by: Undergraduate Academic Council

Date: November 29, 2006

**PROPOSED REVISION OF MEMBERSHIP OF**  
**THE HONORS COLLEGE GOVERNING BOARD**

IT IS HEREBY PROPOSED THAT THE FOLLOWING BE ADOPTED:

1. That the attached proposed revision of the Honors College Governing Board be approved by the University Senate.
2. That this proposal be forwarded to the President for approval.
3. That the revision take effect upon the President's approval.

**Rationale:**

When the Honors College was approved a year ago, the six deans (or their designees) of colleges and schools that offered undergraduate major programs were included on the Governing Board, along with six members of the teaching faculty.

Since then, it has been pointed out that this omitted the School of Education, which has substantial undergraduate enrollments and a minor frequently chosen by undergraduates, several of whom continue on to graduate study in that school. Also omitted were the College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering and the School of Public Health, the latter already having a minor and both of which are likely soon to propose undergraduate majors. Both of these programs also continue to offer expanding research opportunities for undergraduates in subjects and facilities not generally available at most universities. Should a new college or school be created, the UAC believes there would also be no reason to exclude that academic unit from a truly "University-wide" Honors College. The UAC therefore recommends that each college and school dean (or designee) be a member of the Governing Board, and the number of additional teaching faculty be increased to equal that number.

In discussions in both the University Senate's Executive Committee and the Governance Council, the heavy concentrations of deans (or their designee) was questioned. One solution would be to make the number of other teaching faculty one more than the number or deans (or their designees), but in the UAC discussion it was noted that no student membership was required in the original legislation.

Although not a body of the University Senate, many of the Governing Board's recommendations on policies, requirements, courses and the like are subject to UAC approval and/or review. Since student membership with full voting rights characterizes the University Senate and its Councils and their Committees, including CPCA and various appellate bodies, the UAC further recommended at least two undergraduate students from the Honors College be included with full voting rights. The Assistant Vice Provost for Honors Programs subsequently recommended this be changed to three students, to be elected by students in the Honors College. The UAC believes the addition of these students sufficiently addresses the concern of the decanal percentage that currently characterizes the Governing Board.

Finally, in working with the Provost and Vice Provost on a list of mutually acceptable members of the teaching faculty for the current six positions on the Governing Board, the Governance Council questioned the exclusion of recipients of the Excellence in Research awards, given the objectives of the Honors College. The Governance Council was also concerned that faculty from some of the newer or interdisciplinary academic areas could be excluded if the choice of teaching faculty were rigidly limited to Distinguished and Excellence winners. Further, and in the same spirit of inclusion, that Council recommends term limits be established for the teaching faculty members of the Governing Board but notes that, while in theory there may always be enough faculty recognized by Distinguished or Excellence awards to allow this rotation, it is not surprising that many of those individuals are engaged in other activities that would limit their full participation in the Honors College.

Based on the preceding feedback and considerations, the Undergraduate Academic Council therefore recommends the following revisions (tracked).

## **University-wide Honors College Proposal**

### **Structure**

The University-wide Honors College will be housed in the Office of Undergraduate Studies Education. It will be administered by the Assistant Vice Provost for Honors, who reports to the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education, and the Honors College Governing Board. Members of the Governing Board include the deans of each of the University's colleges and schools~~the College of Arts and Sciences, School of Business, College of Computing and Information, Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy, School of Criminal Justice, School of Social Welfare~~, or their designees, and six additional teaching faculty equal in number to the number of college and school deans, and a sophomore, a junior, and a senior who are current members of the Honors College and who were elected by students in the Honors College.

~~who hold the rank of Distinguished Professor, Distinguish Service Professor, Distinguished Teaching Professor, or hold University awards for excellence in teaching.~~ The six additional members of the teaching faculty will be appointed by the Provost in consultation with the University Senate's Governance Council, with a view to broadly representing the academic disciplines of the University. The Governance Council will submit the initial slate of faculty. These faculty will serve for three-year terms, which may be renewed once, but initially some members will be appointed on a one- and two-year basis to allow for continuity as well as rotation. Although it is anticipated that the majority of these faculty will hold the rank of Distinguished Professor, Distinguished Service Professor, and Distinguished Teaching Professor or will have received University awards for Excellence in Teaching or Excellence in Research, the Provost and the Governance Council may agree on other teaching faculty for the sake of representation and balance.

The Governing Board may create subcommittees for specific purposes, such as curriculum, admission, and standards for "Honors Standing" to be met by Honors College students. The Governing Board will submit an annual report to the University Senate's Undergraduate Academic and University Planning and Policy Councils.

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