

**Annual Key Assessment Findings and Curricular Improvements
University Honors Program
2015-2016**

Key Assessment Findings

Track Completion Data, 2008-15

Track completion in the Honors Program has varied over the past seven academic years, but there was a dramatic increase in 2014, due largely to a substantial increase in the number of students completing the Philosophy and Theology tracks, a result that is no doubt due in large part to the incorporation of these two tracks into the First Year Experience. These gains held steady in 2015, but they fell back slightly in 2016, possibly due to the increasing numbers of students in the Honors Program from schools such as Engineering and Business and Economics whose curricula make it difficult to complete the traditional tracks, even ones that every student begins in the Learning Communities. The tracks are still out of balance: In 2014, Theology and Philosophy represented 71% of the total number of tracks completed. This imbalance was slightly smaller in 2015 (64%), but still notable, and it held steady at 64% in 2016. Humanities rebounded slightly in 2016 as Theology fell off. The total number of Humanities, Philosophy, and Theology tracks completed (64) represented 86% of the total tracks completed. While the number of students who completed the Social Science track in 2015 had increased over prior years, it declined again in 2016, and poor results in Environmental Studies remain a cause for concern. However, both the Environmental Studies and Social Science tracks provided a significant number of courses for the students who completed the Liberal Studies track. Liberal Studies has the potential to grow substantially in future years, so it may make sense to judge the Environmental Studies and Social Science tracks in terms of course enrollment rather than track completion.

Honors Tracks Completed	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Humanities	3	12	6	18	5	7	16	13	16
Social Sciences	2	8	6	4	2	6	3	11	4
Theology and Religious Studies	n/a	3	6	20	6	8	24	22	16
Media Studies	2	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Environmental Studies	1	4	4	3	4	5	4	1	2
Philosophy	26	32	28	29	19	32	41	34	32
Liberal Studies	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	3	7	4
<i>Total Tracks Completed</i>	34	61	53	64	36	58	91	88	74
Honors Earned by Students	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016

University Scholars	12	8	7	17	7	4	15	15	12
Completed Two Tracks	7	6	8	8	1	7	6	5*	2
Completed One Track	23	26	14	10	14	33	32	35	34
<i>Total Completing One Track or More</i>	42	40	29	35	22	44	53	54	48

*Includes one university scholar. The requirements for university scholar in the professional schools have been changed to the completion of two tracks (rather than three) plus the Capstone seminar or a substantial research project.

Curricular Improvements

In 2015-16 we inaugurated an undergraduate research journal titled *Inventio*. The journal is edited by a student board who take a class in the spring semester (HSLs 328) focused on the editorial process and journal layout and design. The first issue of the journal appeared in April, and the second issue is in preparation.

In spring 2016 we also reintroduced ECON 104, an Honors section of microeconomics. This initiative grew out of discussions with the School of Business and Economics about how best to serve the needs of students in their majors who had previously taken HSSS 102 with a population of Honors students from diverse majors. It was felt that HSSS 102 needed to provide a broader approach to economics, whereas the Economics and Finance majors would benefit from a course that contained more theoretical content. The first iteration of ECON 104 enrolled 15 students, of whom 4 were from Arts and Sciences and 11 from Business and Economics. The enrollment in HSSS 102 fell to 9, compared to 17 the previous spring. Overall, there was an increase of 7 students studying Economics, but we will have to monitor how the bifurcation between ECON 104 and HSSS 102 affects course enrollments in the future.

In fall 2014, as part of a continuing effort to broaden participation in the Honors Program by students in the professional schools and STEM fields, we offered an honors section of CHEM 103 and an honors contract option for Music 325. Both courses were offered again in fall 2015, and we were also able to offer an honors section of CHEM 104 in the spring. In addition, we continued our practice of offering Honors contracts in 300-level Scripture courses to allow students who join the Honors Program after arrival at CUA to complete the Theology track. We expect this effort to result in an increase in Theology track completions in the future.

Student Learning Assessment Rubric University Honors Program Rubric HSCP 490: Honors Capstone Spring 2016

Trait	Number of students Exceeding Expectations (%)	Number of students Meeting Expectations (%)	Number of students Acquiring Skill (%)	Total number of students
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<i>Critical Thinking</i>	13	4	0	17
<i>Creativity</i>	12	5	0	17
<i>Oral Communication</i>	10	7	0	17
<i>Written Communication</i>	15	2	0	17
<i>Personal and Intellectual Engagement</i>	14	3	0	17

The above rubric represents students who took the Honors Capstone Seminar. Seniors wishing to graduate from The Catholic University of America as University Scholars are required to complete a senior Honors capstone course, taught by the Director of the UHP. This year, the majority of students met expectations in all areas, and this cohort fared extremely well in the category of "Personal and Intellectual Engagement."