I. Welcome and Introduction of Committee Members
   A. Staff
   B. Faculty Members
   C. Student Members

II. Election of the Committee’s Faculty Chair

III. Approval of Agenda

IV. Approval of Minutes from May 1, 2015

V. Staff Reports
   A. Acting Director
   B. Assistant Director of Academics and Advising
   C. Acting Assistant Director of Programming and Communication
   D. Assistant to the Associate Vice Provost for University Honors

VI. Additional Reports & Updates

VII. Old Business (addressed in Director’s report)
   A. Student Handbook
   B. Honors Faculty status
   C. Website and communication
   D. Program requirements
   E. Program Prioritization

VIII. New Business
   A. Walk-on items

IX. Adjourn

The next meeting is Friday, October 2, 2015
UNIVERSITY HONORS PROGRAM
Honors Committee Meeting
339th Meeting
September 4, 2015
1:30-3:30 PM, CLB 110

(APPROVED)

Voting members present: Tim Crowley (LAS), Veysel Demir (EET), David Hedin (LAS), Rebecca Houze (VPA), Leila Porter (LAS), Bart Sharp (BUS), John Evar Strid (EDUC), Masih Shokrani (UCC/HHS), and Honors students Jasmine Hernandez, Sarah Moudy, John Stavropolous, and Amir Toghraee.

Voting members absent: Sarah McHone-Chase (LIB) and Honors student Jesse Laseman.

Ex-officio members present: Joel Stafstrom (Honors)

Ex-officio members absent: Ed Klonoski (Vice Provost)

Other: Honors staff members Jes Cisneros and Joanne Ganshirt (Recording Clerk), and Elizabeth Denius (The Luminary advisor)

I. Welcome and Introduction of Committee Members
Stafstrom welcomed the committee. Committee members and others present introduced themselves.

II. Election of the Committee’s Faculty Chair
Shokrani/Strid moved to elect Sharp as chair. There were no other nominations. The motion passed, with one abstention.

III. Approval of Agenda
Houze/Strid moved to approve the agenda as presented. The motion passed.

IV. Approval of Minutes from May 1, 2015
Houze/Shokrani moved to approve the minutes as presented. The motion passed.

V. Staff Reports
A. Acting Director
Stafstrom presented the following report:

Update Items
1. Program Enrollment Update: new students in the program (freshmen and transfers) up > 26% from last year! This is good news. Since the Taft Retreat, more transfer students have joined the Honors Program so
enrollment is now up 31% from last year. Numbers overall are way up for engineering, but still have the Colleges of Education and Visual and Performing Arts as underserved units. Stafstrom said the Program needs to try to be creative and flexible to serve these students.

2. Presidential Scholars: 17 of 22 enrolled; 77% yield (in JD’s words “phenomenal”)

3. Budget: Stafstrom said this is an area of concern. A budget exercise was undertaken to remove 10% of the Honors Program budget or about $52,000. If personnel is preserved, there is not much left with which to work. A reduction of 15% was also done. The current plan is to eliminate food and catering, travel for students and staff, and Honors scholars will be cut to one from three. The Honors Program will start to lose part of heart and soul as the cuts are made. These are suggested cuts and are not set in stone. Every effort will be made to maintain the quality of the program. Courses for next semester will be requested. Courses are a big expense but Stafstrom hopes to fund them at same level as before. Courses are a high priority. The budget cuts may be a little less than anticipated. Nothing will be known until the state to acts on a budget.

4. Program Prioritization: Task forces will review all units on campus. Honors is administrative office. The required questions will be answered in the fall and the evaluation done in spring.

5. Foundation, Rachowicz Challenge Funds: Stafstrom has been meeting with people from Foundation, Alumni, Scholarship, and others for those involved with giving. This is the last year for the Rachowicz Challenge. The money has been used well to support study abroad, research, and other experiences for Honors students. As a group, we need to find new donors to address the needs of students.

6. Honors Study Abroad, summer 2015: Montreal, China, The Hague, Tanzania, Argentina. We will need to see how these will develop in the future.

7. Chinese scholars at NIU, summer 2015: 15 students and faculty attended the program in July. There should have been more but several had trouble obtaining visas. Seminars for participants included culture, language, and other topics on the United States. The program ended with three days in Chicago. The program was well received, but much smaller than expected.

8. The Luminary: This is an online journal for Honors students. Denius told the committee she met with Maggie Miller, editor, to discuss the format. They will look at what other Honors Programs do with their communications. These include traditional newsletters, e-newsletters and blogs. The Luminary is currently a blog but it is limited. She said she thinks it needs to do a better job of describing the Honors Program. It needs to tell the story of Honors through student and faculty activities.
Miller and Denius are focused on upping the profile of the Honors Program. Originally this had been an art-type of publication but she would now like to see it be a must read for students. She would like to integrate it better into website itself and make The Luminary a centerpiece. Denius will recruit volunteers and bloggers. She is excited about this.

9. *Excellence* magazine: This is an alumni newsletter which has been issued twice a year. Stafstrom would like to get a good issue out in the fall incorporating the items from spring 2015 and the current semester. He would like to post it online and possibly increase to mailing to non-Honors alumni.

Develop Sub-Committees

1. Website and publicity:
   a. Update to new NIU “image” is imminent; strive to be clear, complete, current and attractive
   b. Parents’ page: program FAQs; safety; scholarship info; FAFSA; financial literacy. What else should be on it?

   Committee members who will work on this are Jason Goode, Denius, Hernandez, Stavropolous, and Moudy.

2. Student Handbook: A draft has been done and is in a nearly finished form. Sharp volunteered to work on this. Laseman will be asked to give student input.

3. Honors Faculty status: Sharp told the committee the reason for this is to get as many faculty involved in the Honors Program as possible and the best faculty possible while building a sense of community. This formal status would be similar to graduate faculty status. This status would make faculty qualified for honors instruction. The process was started three years ago. There have been some roadblocks from governance process. A proposal is done and need to get it moving forward. Shokrani said members of UCC had questions which were brought to committee but he does not know the current status. He said he would like to have some answers this semester so that it might be possible to have the status in place for next semester in place. This is important for those teaching the honors courses who deserve the status. Stafstrom said the proposal got off on a bad foot with UCC. There were a lot of questions. How it was presented is not the only consideration. One of the long term goals is to elevate the program status to an Honors College. There is criteria from NCHC for Honors programs and Honors colleges. Honors faculty status is one of the steps to becoming an Honors College. Stafstrom asked if that was the correct reason for the faculty status. Sharp said that was not the motivation. At the time there was no talk about an Honors College. The committee wanted to do it to make the best program possible. At the time funding issues preventing the program from becoming a college. Shokrani
asked what needs to be done to set the process in motion again. Stafstrom would like to form a subcommittee. Sharp, Houze, and Shokrani volunteered to work with Stafstrom on this.

4. Benchmarking: Who is our competition? What are they doing right or wrong? How can we enhance our profile and reputation, and attract more high-achieving students? Stafstrom, Houze, and Porter will work on this.

HC guidance and advice

1. Honors Engaged: Sharp said this is a great concept, but it is hard to create a variety of program and track attendance. Demir asked if outreach activities are included. Stafstrom said all activities are being looked at for this. Toghraee said more varied events are needed and suggested working with the Honors Student Association on this. Stafstrom said feedback was received from students at the end of last semester and all issues are trying to be addressed. Sharp said the committee found that students want events they are interested in when it is convenient for them. Houze asked if students could seminars the School of Art offers for their students. Stafstrom said the engaged events should be more hands on for students. Sharp said to expect over 1100 students to be hands on is unrealistic. Stafstrom said from a student, perspective art seminars would be good because of the varied topics. Sharp agreed this would be a good option to increase the number of engaged events. He suggested getting all colleges involved in this. Porter said the Graduate Colloquium would also be a good option. Stafstrom said criteria for engaged needs to be created before decisions can be made on what will count.

2. Policies regarding In-Course Contracts (e.g., late transfers): Cisneros explained the contract process that was implemented last year. He has allowed some new transfer students to do contracts even though they did not have a chance to attend a workshop. Shokrani said from his personal experience, students more from mini-sections than contracts. He said there should be more mini-sections and only use contracts in very rare cases.

3. Resume requirement: Stafstrom asked for committee feedback on this. It was noted that it was very time consuming last year to get them all evaluated. Committee members agreed the submission should be encouraged. To that end, workshops be offered by the Honors Program and Career Services. Porter said students should be encouraged to attend a workshop, then create the resume before submitting it to the Honors Program. Hedin suggested having the students ask a colleague within the major show them a resume to see what one in that discipline actually looks like. He added that suggesting submission of the resume would be good but not requiring it. Crowley add it would be good to see a resume showing what a person in the particular discipline does. It could be
helpful for getting students into the interest they want. Sharp asked if this is too onerous a task if it should be an Honors-engaged type activity rather than a requirement. Toghraee said it should not be a requirement but students should be told it could be scholarship driven. Strid added it should be a positive. Any vote was tabled to a later meeting.

4. Enhance disciplinary diversity: flexible programming for EDU, BUS, VPA, athletes, etc.

5. Student research programs
   a. Honors Scholars (summer; few; large stipend)
   b. HRAA (Honors Research and Artistry Awards; academic year, 20 weeks; possibly several; $500)

6. China program

7. Externships

Activities Report

1. Meetings (partial list, heads, directors and major parties)
   a. Earl and Cindi Rachowicz, donors
   b. Anne Hardy, Scholarships
   c. Joe Matty, Alumni Association, University Advancement
   d. Christine Radtke, Foundation
   e. Catherine Squires, VP for Advancement
   f. Harlan Teller and Abby Dean, Marketing and Communication
   g. Dana Gautcher, OSAS
   h. Bobbie Cole, Housing
   i. Jill Zambito, SILD
   j. Jeanne Meyer, Student Conduct
   k. Joe Lovelace, Students’ Legal Assistance

2. McKearn Fellows: first 4-year cohort
   a. Working with OSEEL and Renique Kersh
   b. Summer activities
   c. 4-year plan and 2nd year activities
   d. Additional 4-year cohorts

John and Sandra McKearn have made a large contribution for Fellows. Two summer cohorts received $5000 for research, etc. to build a whole student. This past year was 10 years for a four-year program. Students did summer research and other activities. Will continue for the next three academic years. Freeman, Birberick, J.D., Julia. J.D. and Julia have left so Joel and Renique. They with Jason, Brittany and other grad have put together activities for current cohort and recruiting a new cohort.

3. Leadership Retreat (August 7)

4. President’s Communication Roundtable (August 13)

5. Taft retreats

6. EOC, Enrollment Operations Committee
7. Scholarship Committee
8. HCIR
9. NCHC
10. Move-in day (August 21)
11. Possible reception/open house for Honors students’ parents; Kesha Williams, Orientation and Family Connections
12. Teaching UNIV 101 with Sandi Yandle, and BIOS 208H Honors discussion section

B. Assistant Director of Academics and Advising
Cisneros presented the following report:

- Met with new and continuing students in the program
- Participated in training for new NIU Orientation Leaders
- Worked orientation all summer and covered University Honors table daily as well as making presentations to parents. This is the first time freshman orientation was held over two days.
- Helped plan and participate in Honors Taft Retreat for new students—Excellent student leader, particularly Lexie. Too big for two sessions. If continue to grow may need to increase to three sessions. Best Taft since he’s been here.
- Led training of new and continuing Honors Fellows and Taft training
- Met with and taught unit to visiting cohort of students from China
- Continued work with NIU colleagues on Honors assessment work—got feedback from the assessment panel. May need to change the instrumentation.
- Represented University Honors with parent presentations at NIU Summer Open House
- Represented University Honors at Summer Open House
- Participated in the processing and finalization of Honors Capstones for spring and summer graduates.
- Represented University Honors at Advising Deans group meetings

C. Acting Assistant Director of Programming and Communication
The following written report was presented in the absence of Steve Uhren:

Event programming:
1. Career Services Workshops: Together with Jocelyn Santana of NIU Career Services, we will be hosting 8 workshops for students. Topics to be covered are:
   a. Resume Writing/Internship Search (Honors Specific Times)
b. Know your Skills
c. Networking 101
d. Interview Prep
e. Success during your Externship/Internship

2. Mindfulness Monday’s starting September 14 from 8:10-8:40AM

3. The Millennial Dilemma: Succeeding in an Economy Stacked Against You
   a. Host: Megan Geyer
   b. September 10 from 5-6PM

4. Make a Difference Day
   a. October 3
   b. There will be Honors Team Groups organized for the DeKalb community

5. Dennis Barsema’s Social Entrepreneurship Series
   a. October 7, 14, and 21 from 5-7:30PM

6. Social Justice Conference which has been the main priority since starting. Nothing was started for the conference. Since I started, I had developed the theme and outline of the panel, then met with and recruited all of our guest speakers for the event.
   a. October 10th from 9-2:30
   b. Keynote: Greg Long
   c. Environmental Panel
   d. Activism Lecture: Mark Schuller
   e. Bystander Training: Andrea Drott
   f. Ethics Lecture: Bill McCoy
   g. Ethic Competition amongst 10 selected teams of students
   h. Catering: Hy-Vee? Still deciding
   i. Still working on co-sponsors

7. Honors STEM-Fest Table
   a. Student’s will be performing their generated experiment’s at STEM-Fest
   b. October 17

8. Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week
   a. November 14-22
   b. We are organizing a sleep out
   c. Included within the sleep out will be charity &/or fundraising events

D. Assistant to the Associate Vice Provost for University Honors
   In Jason Goode’s absence the following written report was presented:

❖ McKearn Program
   ➢ Created, organized, and maintained the summer calendar that included:
- Presidents BBQ, Vice Provosts BBQ picnic, meeting with the mayor, Camp Power volunteer time, library research session, Responsible Conduct in Research with Shannon Wapole
- Lead administrator working with the students over the summer along with the Graduate Assistant Brittany Warner
- Planned and hosted the mentor training workshop
- Organized the McKearn and SROP summer research collaboration dinners with Lauren Boddy and Lauren Angling from OSEEL
- Planned, hosted, and coordinated weekly McKearn Fellow lunch meetings on Monday and Wednesday to do peer review of projects, guest speakers, excursions, current events, and etc.
- One-on-one bi-weekly meetings with McKearn Fellows
- Coordinated delivery of all lunch meals at the beginning of the program through Hy-Vee
- Planned and hosted the McKearn Fellows orientation meeting
- McKearn Fellow St. Louis trip
  - Paperwork for the vans to travel and drove one van of students to and around St. Louis
  - Sent Alumni association the list of students for Cardinals games tickets and hotel reservations
- Worked with housing to coordinate Move-in/move-out, meal plans, roommate selection, and replacement of meal cards
- National Scholarships and Fellowships
  - Attended Mary Denyer's information session about the Marshall scholarship at the British Consulate in Chicago, IL
  - Met with Anna Quidar about the Marshall scholarship to discuss other ways to encourage students to apply. She wants to help NIU buildup the existing process for recruiting applicants
- Honors Scholars
  - Met with Marissa DeVlieger, Ashley Kyle, and Charles Moore to plan out their summer as Honors Scholars
  - Reviewed the program guide and provided them with details of their summer blogging that is required
    - Posted all blogs to a site maintained by University Honors.
  - Viewed multiple versions of the 2014 Honors Scholars video that was submitted to our marketing team before the final versions were uploaded to YouTube in late summer 2015
- Honors Scholarship tuition waiver/scholarship recipient service announcement
  - Assigned all students a service area for honors
Website
- Took over as the lead planner for the Honors Website redesign working with Jeanine East and Holly Nicholson
- Make changes to the website as necessary and providing content as requested

Mortar Board co-advisor
- Helped switch the old administration over to the new administration at binder swap
- Went to the NTB bank to get a treasurer added to the account so that national fees could be paid and chapter business can get taken care of

VI. Additional Reports & Updates
There were no additional reports or updates. Sharp informed the committee that at this time the students will be asked to give any reports, requests, concerns, or comments they may have received from other students.

VII. Old Business
All of these items were addressed in Stafstrom’s report:
A. Student Handbook
B. Honors Faculty status
C. Website and communication
D. Program requirements
E. Program Prioritization

VIII. New Business
A. Walk-on items
   There were no walk-on items.

IX. Adjourn
Strid/Houze moved to adjourn the meeting at 3:15 p.m. The motion passed. The next meeting will be Friday, October 2 at 1:30 p.m. in Campus Life 110.