

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS REPORT

5.16.20 rev

Name of Program/Department:	FMU Honors Program
Year:	2020-2021
Name of Preparer:	Dr. Jon Tuttle

PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT

FMU Honors exists to provide the university's highest-performing and most motivated students with a unique curriculum and enhanced educational opportunities that reward inquiry, stimulate learning and promote community outreach initiatives. FMU Honors reflects the university's commitment to innovative instruction, a low student-to-faculty ratio, and out-of-classroom service and experience.

There are, at present, 210 students in FMU Honors.

PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES (PLOs)

FMU Honors will:

- PLO 1:** Identify, recruit, retain and graduate high-performing, highly motivated students.
- PLO 2:** Promote opportunities for stimulating service learning and volunteerism.
- PLO 3:** Provide Honors students with opportunities for conference and/or exposition participation.
- PLO 4:** Provide Honors students with non-traditional curricular opportunities and small student: instructor ratios in order to better prepare Honors graduates for professional/graduate schools or career opportunities.
- PLO 5:** Provide Honors students with opportunities for socializing and community building.
- PLO 6:** To provide an environment conducive to personal growth, intellectual inquiry and community.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (SLOs)

SLO 1: FMU Honors students graduating With University Honors will be able to conduct and synthesize sophisticated and applicable research in their disciplines. This SLO falls under PLO #4.

SLO 2: FMU Honors students graduating With University Honors will be able to clearly articulate ideas and concepts in writing. This SLO falls under PLO #4.

SLO 3: FMU Honors students graduating With University Honors will be able to clearly articulate ideas and concepts via graphics or visual aids, as applicable. This SLO falls under PLO #4.

SLO 4: FMU Honors students graduating With University Honors will be able to contribute knowledge to their discipline. This SLO falls under PLO #4.

SLO 5: FMU Honors students graduating With University Honors will be able to integrate knowledge and perspectives from different disciplines. This SLO falls under PLO #4.

SLO 6: FMU Honors students graduating With University Honors will be engaged and empowered as critical and creative thinkers. This SLO falls under PLO #4.

PLO METHODS

PLO 1: The Honors director will track and chart enrollment and graduation rates.

PLO 2 will be assessed with an exit survey administered to all graduating Honors students (and not just those graduating With University Honors). The target for the outcome is 80% positive endorsement.

PLO 3 will be assessed with an exit survey administered to all graduating Honors students (and not just those graduating With University Honors). The target for the outcome is 80% positive endorsement.

PLO 4 will be assessed with an exit survey administered to all graduating Honors students (and not just those graduating With University Honors). The target for the outcome is 80% positive endorsement.

PLO 5 will be assessed with an exit survey administered to all graduating Honors students (and not just those graduating With University Honors). The target for the outcome is 80% positive endorsement.

PLO 6 will be assessed with an exit survey administered to all graduating Honors students (and not just those graduating With University Honors). The target for the outcome is 80% positive endorsement.

SLO METHODS

Baselines and Benchmarks are indicated in table #2 below.

SLO 1: be able to conduct and synthesize sophisticated and applicable research in their disciplines. A scoring rubric distributed to faculty readers of Honors theses (typically three per thesis) at the end of each semester will assess the extent to which writers of Honors theses meet this SLO. This is a direct measure. The benchmark for the outcome is 80% positive endorsement (score points 4 or 5 on rubric).

SLO 2: be able to clearly articulate ideas and concepts in writing. A scoring rubric distributed to faculty readers of Honors theses (typically three per thesis) at the end of each semester will assess the extent to which writers of Honors theses meet this SLO. This is a direct measure. The benchmark for the outcome is 80% positive endorsement (score points 4 or 5 on rubric).

SLO 3: be able to clearly articulate ideas and concepts vis graphics or visual aids, as applicable. A scoring rubric distributed to faculty readers of Honors theses (typically three per thesis) at the end of each semester will assess the extent to which writers of Honors

theses meet this SLO. This is a direct measure. The benchmark for the outcome is 80% positive endorsement (score points 4 or 5 on rubric).

SLO 4: be able to contribute knowledge to their discipline. A scoring rubric distributed to faculty readers of Honors theses (typically three per thesis) at the end of each semester will assess the extent to which writers of Honors theses meet this SLO. This is a direct measure. The benchmark for the outcome is 80% positive endorsement (score points 4 or 5 on rubric).

SLO 5: be able to integrate knowledge and perspectives from different disciplines. A question on the Honors Senior Exit Survey* will assess graduate's self-perceived ability to meet this SLO. This is an indirect measure. The benchmark for the outcome is 80% Positive Endorsement, as indicated by responses of "agree" or "strongly agree." This is an indirect measure.

SLO 6: be engaged and empowered as critical and creative thinkers. A question on the Honors Senior Exit Survey* will assess graduate's self-perceived ability to meet this SLO. This is an indirect measure. The benchmark for the outcome is 80% Positive Endorsement, as indicated by responses of "agree" or "strongly agree." This is an indirect measure.

**All FMU Honors seniors graduating with or without University Honors are sent the Senior Exit Survey and encouraged to submit it. Typically, about 40-60% of the 25 or so graduating seniors do so.*

PLO RESULTS

PLO I:

- Admission thresholds to FMU Honors have changed this academic year owing to COVID-related problems administering SAT/ACT tests and in keeping with changing trends in university admissions. Students are now invited but not required to send test scores; SAT scores of 1160 and SAT scores of 24 are still automatic admission thresholds. But students are also invited to send GPA's, class ranks, resumes, whatever they feel best describes them as worthy of FMU Honors. Admission decisions are now therefore made more holistically.
- The 2014 Honors freshman cohort consisted of 88 students; the 2015 Honors freshman cohort consisted of 79 students; the 2016 Honors freshman cohort consisted of 78 students. The 2017 Honors freshman cohort consisted of 71 students. The 2018 Honors freshman cohort consisted of 65 students. The 2019 Honors freshman cohort consisted of 54 students, though this number excluded, for the first time, those who were accepted but did not enroll at FMU. The 2020 Honors freshman cohort consisted of 48 students (again, not counting those who were accepted but did not enroll.)
- The numbers of Graduates "With University Honors" each semester since Spring, 2015 are as follows:

Spring 2015:	8	Fall 2015:	2
Spring 2016:	10	Fall 2016:	4
Spring 2017:	16	Fall 2017:	3
Spring 2018:	13	Fall 2018:	0
Spring 2019:	9	Fall 2019:	3
Spring 2020:	11	Fall 2020:	2
Spring 2021:	11		

PLO 2-6:

The exit survey was administered following Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 to graduating Honors seniors. The benchmark for each item is 80% positive endorsement, as indicated by responses of A/Strongly Agree or B/Agree. The results were as follows (questions and rubric are attached in Appendix I).

Of the 20 responses collected in 2020-2021, 16 positive endorsements were necessary to reach the 80% benchmark.

SCORE POINT	A strongly agree	B agree	C no opinion	D disagree	E strongly disagree
PLO 2	11	5	1	0	0
PLO 3	15	3	2	0	0
PLO 4	13	5	2	0	0
PLO 5	16	3	1	0	0
PLO 6	14	5	1	0	0

PLO 2-6 BASELINE AND BENCHMARK PERCENTAGES

PLO	2018-2019	2019-2020	BASELINE Avg. 2018-19 and 2019-20 Academic years	BENCHMARK 2020-21	LONG TERM TARGET 2023	Results 2020-21
2	100%	77.7%	88.5%	80%	85%	80%
3	100%	55.5%	77.75%	80%	85%	90%
4	100%	88.8%	94.4%	80%	90%	90%
5	100%	88.8%	94.4%	80%	90%	95%
6	100%	88.8%	94.4%	80%	90%	95%

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Generally, the data suggest that FMU Honors continues to fulfill its mission. Students again report that participating in FMU Honors has prepared them for professional or graduate education, enhanced their awareness of the value of their education beyond own career path, and provided them with significant research opportunities. It has also presented opportunities for socializing and community building and provided a physical and intellectual environment conducive to personal growth, safety and intellectual inquiry.

Certainly the opening of the new Honors Center has improved Honors' resources and facilities and likely impacted its recruitment, which is well up this summer over last. For this reason, apparently, the downward trends in freshman cohorts have been reversed.

COVID-19 looms still, of course, over the fall semester, though the university intends to open again for business as usual. This will allow—as the previous year did not—for more Honors trips and service opportunities.

SLO RESULTS

ASSESSMENT RESULTS SLO 1-4

The scoring rubric was administered following Fall, 2020 and Spring, 2021 among readers of Honors theses. The results were as follows (questions and rubric are attached in Appendix II):

SCORE POINT	1 poor	2 minimally acceptable	3 satisfactory	4 good	5 excellent
SLO 1	0	0	4	10	9
SLO 2	0	0	3	9	11
SLO 3	0	2	3	8	10
SLO 4	0	0	8	5	10

Of the 23 responses recorded as of May 25, 2021, 18 positive endorsements (score points of 4 or 5) were necessary to reach the 80% target.

ASSESSMENT RESULTS SLO 5-6

The results for 2020-21 were as follows (questions and rubric are attached in Appendix II):

SCORE POINT	A strongly agree	B agree	C no opinion	D disagree	E strongly disagree
SLO 5	14	5	1	0	0
SLO 6	15	4	1	0	0

Of the 20 responses collected in 2020-21, 16 positive endorsements (score points of A/Strongly Agree or B/Agree) were necessary to reach the 80% target.

SLO BASELINE AND BENCHMARK PERCENTAGES

SLO	2018-2019	2019-2020	BASELINE Avg. 2018-19 and 2019-20 Academic years	BENCHMARK 2020-21	LONG TERM TARGET 2023	Results 2020-21
1	100%	73.9%	86.95%	80%	90%	82.6%
2	100%	91.3%	95.65%	80%	90%	86.9%
3	100%	86.9%	93.45%	80%	90%	82.6%

4	100%	65.2%	82.6%	80%	90%	75%
5	100%	88.9%	94.45%	80%	95%	95%
6	100%	88.9%	94.45%	80%	95%	95%

ACTION ITEMS

SLO 1 (82.6%): This item met the benchmark of 80%, up from 73.9% from the previous year. As was true the previous year, students anecdotally reported difficult pursuing/completing Honors theses during the 2020-21 academic year, owing to the COVID-19 measures. The average on this item this year fell short of the 86.95 baseline average for the previous two academic years. The Honors Director will include the wording for SLO 1 and indeed all the SLO’s in his instructions for students starting their Honors theses, the idea being to heighten their awareness of the criteria being assessed.

SLO 2 (86.9%): Faculty readers of theses reported other problems in Honors theses, but clearly articulating ideas and concepts in theses appears not to among them. The average on this item this year exceeded the 80% benchmark though fell short of our 95.65 baseline average for the previous two academic years. The Honors Director will include the wording for all the SLO’s in his instructions for students starting their Honors theses, the idea being to heighten their awareness of the criteria being assessed

SLO 3 (82.6%) Though the average for this item was below the baseline for the previous two academic years (93.45), it did exceed the 80% benchmark. The Honors Director will include the wording for all the SLO’s in his instructions for students starting their Honors theses, the idea being to heighten their awareness of the criteria being assessed

SLO 4 (75%): This item fell short of the 80% benchmark and our baseline average from previous years (82.6). As before, COVID-19 appears to have negatively affected some students ability to achieve this threshold. The Honors Director intended to distribute SLO’s to students beginning their Honors thesis during 2020-21, but owing to the bizarre circumstances over the past year, which included Zoom class meetings, forgot. Henceforth, as indicated in previous SLO Action Items, the Honors Director will include the wording for all the SLO’s in his instructions for students starting their Honors theses, the idea being to heighten their awareness of the criteria being assessed

SLO 5 (95%): Student responses to the Senior Exit Survey indicated positive endorsement of their ability to integrate knowledge from different disciplines. The average on this item this year exceeded the 80% benchmark and the previous two years’ baseline average (94.45%). No action anticipated beyond monitoring future responses.

SLO 6 (95%): Student responses to the Senior Exit Survey indicated positive endorsement of

their engagement and empowerment as critical/creative thinkers. The average on this item this year exceeded the 80% benchmark and the previous two years' baseline average (94.45%). No action anticipated beyond monitoring future responses.

PLO 1: Each year's cohort size has declined somewhat (from 88 in 2014 to 48 in 2020, though the latter number was calculated differently), while the number of students graduating With University Honors has zig-zagged a bit—almost always higher in the spring than in the fall, owing to the traditional academic annual cycle. Certainly, the program remains more robust than before it was overhauled in 2014, when 4-6 students per year graduated With University Honors. In 2020-21, for instance, 13 students graduated WUH, which is just one less than the previous year. To facilitate recruitment and retention, we continue to circulate an updated Honors brochure and, recently an Honors *Handbook* stipulating policies and procedures; these are included in acceptance packets sent to incoming Honors freshmen. Also, the opening of the new Honors Center in January 2021 has already contributed to a spike in enrollment for academic year 2021-22: to date, the fall 21 cohort stands at 70 incoming freshmen.

PLO 2: This PLO was improved upon (from 77% to 80%) thanks in part to the spring 2021 Honors 203 Service Symposium, but was hindered by the program's inability to engage in other service opportunities, owing to COVID. The pandemic having apparently lifted enough to allow it, the HSAC will plan more in-person service opportunities for academic year 2021-22.

PLO 3: This PLO was well up from the previous year (55% to 90%) owing apparently to opportunities actually created by COVID for online conference participation. The RED exposition day, for instance, was one such opportunity. It is likely that COVID has changed the conference "attendance" landscape in significant ways, and that more virtual participation will continue to affect this PLO.

PLO's 4, 5 and 6 all surpassed benchmarks and the baseline averages for the previous two years. No action anticipated beyond monitoring future responses.

APPENDICES

I: Honors Graduate exit survey

II: Rubric for Honors thesis committee

APPENDIX I: PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

FMU HONORS EXIT SURVEY 7.17

Congratulations, Honors graduate! Please complete the survey below by circling the answer you think most appropriate, and return this form to Dr. Jon Tuttle at your earliest convenience; it is important to our (required) Institutional Effectiveness reports. You may bring it in person (FH 146), email it as a PDF to jtuttle@fmarion.edu, or mail it to the address above.

NAME: _____ **DATE OF GRADUATION** _____

1: SERVICE LEARNING & VOLUNTEERISM: to what extent do you agree that participating in FMU Honors has enhanced the value of your education as it impacts the community and culture beyond your own career path?

A: *strongly agree* B: *agree* C: *no opinion* D: *disagree* E: *strongly disagree*

2: EXPOSITION OPPORTUNITIES: to what extent do you agree that participating in FMU Honors has provided you with research opportunities such as participating/presenting in local, regional or national conferences?

A: *strongly agree* B: *agree* C: *no opinion* D: *disagree* E: *strongly disagree*

3: CURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES: to what extent do you agree that FMU Honors has provided you with non-traditional curricular opportunities and smaller student/instructor ratios in order to better prepare you for professional/graduate schools or career opportunities?

A: *strongly agree* B: *agree* C: *no opinion* D: *disagree* E: *strongly disagree*

4 EXTRA-CURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES: to what extent do you agree that the number and variety of social or cultural events sponsored by Honors was appropriate to its goals of community-building?

A: *strongly agree* B: *agree* C: *no opinion* D: *disagree* E: *strongly disagree*

5 ENVIRONMENT: to what extent do you agree that FMU Honors has provided you with an environment conducive to personal growth, safety, intellectual inquiry and community? You may include, in your answer, considerations of student housing/living space, the Honors room and other classrooms.

A: *strongly agree* B: *agree* C: *no opinion* D: *disagree* E: *strongly disagree*

6: CROSS-DISCIPLINE LEARNING: To what extent do you agree that participating Honors has enhanced your ability to integrate knowledge and perspectives from different disciplines?

A: *strongly agree* B: *agree* C: *no opinion* D: *disagree* E: *strongly disagree*

7: CRITICAL/CREATIVE THINKING: To what extent do you agree that participating in Honors has engaged and empowered you as critical and creative thinker?

A: *strongly agree* B: *agree* C: *no opinion* D: *disagree* E: *strongly disagree*

APPENDIX II: RUBRIC FOR HONORS THESIS COMMITTEE

HONORS INDEPENDENT STUDY THESIS ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

Thank you for serving as study director or secondary reader on an Honors Independent Study thesis. Please complete the following rubric, which will be used for Honors program assessment as one measure of program effectiveness after having removed any personal information (your name, the student's name) from the final assessment report. Please return this rubric to Jon Tuttle (FH 146/ jtuttle@fmarion.edu) as soon as convenient. Check the boxes that correspond with your assessment below.

STUDENT'S NAME _____

SEMESTER _____

YOUR NAME _____

Category	Excellent (5)	Very Good (4)	Satisfactory (3)	Minimally Acceptable (2)	Poor (1)
Ability to conduct and synthesize sophisticated and applicable research in discipline	Writer performs thorough, perhaps exhaustive research, incorporates authoritative sources meaningfully and gracefully; bibliographical format is perfect.	Research component is impressive and clearly demonstrates aptitude for conciliating various reliable sources; bibliographical format is almost perfect.	Research component demonstrates diligence and competence; integration of sources is occasionally problematic but not prohibitively so; format is acceptable.	Research component exists, but seems cursory or rushed; ability to conciliate/integrate sources is spotty at best; bibliographical format includes some errors.	Research component is unimpressive, even lazy; sources are integrated clumsily or are underutilized; format is marred by thoughtless errors.
Ability to clearly articulate ideas and concepts in writing	Writing is elegant, incisive, economical, and conveys content in professional manner; writer understands appropriate tone and ethos.	Writing is clear and almost never impedes conveyance of content; most sentences are perfectly comprehensible on the first read.	The writing is adequate to the task of conveying sometimes complex material; the writer seems only rarely to struggle with clarity or concision.	Extracting meaning from the writing sometimes proves problematic; writer sometimes struggles for clarity or commits distracting grammatical errors.	Writing actually impedes content and impacts writer's credibility; grammatical errors or clarity problems recur throughout.
Ability to clearly articulate ideas and concepts via graphics or visual aids, as applicable	Presentation is aided significantly by appropriate reliance on graphics/visual aids; writer is very adept at reinforcing ideas/content with graphics.	Presentation is reasonably aided by well-presented graphics/visual aids, as applicable.	Presentation under-utilizes graphics/visual aids, or they facilitate only minimally the conveyance of content.	Utilization of graphics/visual aids is either so minimal or unhelpful as to be unnecessary or it neither impedes nor contributes to conveyance of content.	Presentation is actually marred by under or over-utilization of visual aids; they contribute nothing of substance and even occasionally detract.
Extent to which thesis contributes to knowledge in discipline	Thesis ably joins conversation in applicable discipline and meaningfully contributes original knowledge or ideas.	Thesis synthesizes relevant ideas in useful manner and contributes somewhat to the conversation in the discipline.	Thesis evinces an awareness of relevant issues in discipline and makes an attempt to address those issues through synthesis or original analysis.	Thesis evinces only some awareness of issues/ developments in discipline and makes only a meager attempt to contribute original ideas or knowledge.	Thesis makes no attempt to contribute original ideas or knowledge to discipline.

