The Davidson Honors College
Strategic Plan
2007-2012
Approved by the DHC Faculty Advisory Board, October 19, 2007

INTRODUCTION

The Davidson Honors College Strategic Plan was drafted in consultation with Davidson Honors College faculty, students, alumni, and community members. The Strategic Plan will advance the mission of the Davidson Honors College within the larger framework of the Strategic Directions for The University of Montana (revised 2006). This plan will be implemented over the five-year period 2007-2012, with annual assessment of progress toward strategic goals. External review of strategic planning outcomes will occur during the next regular program review of the Davidson Honors College, scheduled in academic year 2010-11.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Davidson Honors College serves as a center and symbol of the University’s commitment to excellence in undergraduate education. As part of its mission, the DHC:

- fosters intellectual and civic values: inquiry, discovery, knowledge, and imagination, as well as responsibility, community, leadership, communication, and service;
- provides support for instructional experimentation and renewal, and for the best possible teaching and learning circumstances for participating faculty and students; and
- serves the entire campus, with participation in the DHC widely available to those qualified students wishing to take advantage of it.
VISION STATEMENT

The Davidson Honors College aspires to become nationally recognized as a distinctive undergraduate Honors program that enables highly motivated students of all majors to acquire an enhanced liberal education and become campus and community leaders.

CORE VALUES

- **Academic Excellence** – We seek excellence in all of our educational endeavors, both inside and outside the classroom.
- **Intellectual Freedom** – We recognize and protect full freedom of inquiry, teaching, research, discussion, study, publication, and, for artists, the creation and exhibition of works of art.
- **Integrity** – We adhere to principles of truth and honesty, and we resolve to act in an honorable, ethical, and professional manner.
- **Diversity** – We support diversity, tolerance, and community among students, faculty, and staff.
- **Leadership** – We encourage the development of moral and responsible leadership.
- **Civic Engagement** – We strive to serve as citizens of our local, regional, state, national, and global communities.
- **Stewardship of Resources** – We make effective and efficient use of resources. Our programs and activities promote the conservation of natural resources, social justice, and sustainable economic development.

STRATEGIC GOALS

*Note:* Concrete and quantifiable goals have been provided (wherever possible) for each of the following strategic initiatives. Unless otherwise stated, the target date for accomplishment of each goal is June 2012, with annual assessment of progress in each area.
1. **Academic Excellence** – The Davidson Honors College will give its students a liberal education that enables them to understand the compass and diversity of the world, the gifts and burdens of culture, and the glories and limits of the sciences. We will become a nationally recognized model for academic excellence through student engagement, classroom instruction, and undergraduate research and creative activity.

   a. Recruit and retain well-prepared, highly motivated students. **Goals:** 
      
      Increase the number of DHC applicants to 600 per year. Improve first-year DHC student retention to 93%. Improve five-year DHC student graduation rate to 77%.  

   b. Recruit and engage with outstanding UM faculty. **Goal:** 
      
      Appoint a Faculty Advisory Board representative from each of the professional schools, and from a wide range of disciplines in the College of Arts and Sciences.

   c. Enhance the Honors curriculum in consultation with the DHC Faculty Advisory Board and the DHC Student Advisory Council. **Goal:** 
      
      Continue to develop a comprehensive program of liberal education for Honors students of all majors.

   d. Improve the assessment of Honors student engagement and student learning outcomes. **Goal:** 
      
      In harmony with campus-wide and departmental assessment initiatives, develop qualitative and quantitative assessment procedures for all Honors courses.

   e. Provide accessible and effective advising and mentoring for Honors students, and support the development of an Honors student peer mentoring program. **Goal:** 
      
      Create a cadre of well-trained DHC student peer mentors by Spring 2008.

   f. Increase access and provide financial support for internships. **Goal:** 
      
      In collaboration with Internship Services, the Washington Center for Internships, and the Student Conservation Association, enhance internship opportunities for DHC students and seek private, corporate, and state funding support for internships.

   g. Enhance opportunities for Study Abroad, in collaboration with the Office of International Programs. **Goal:** 
      
      Enhance and diversify financial support for study abroad. Increase participation in study abroad to 25% of DHC students in each graduating cohort.

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1 These goals for DHC retention and graduation rates are consistent with national norms for highly selective four-year public colleges; see **Appendix A: ACT Data on Retention and Graduation Rates.**
h. Encourage student participation in undergraduate research and creative activity.  
   **Goal:** Seek enhanced funding for Undergraduate Research Scholarships. Create incentives (such as faculty development awards) for faculty to serve as mentors for undergraduate research.

i. Assess and improve the Davidson Honors College program completion rate (that is, the percentage of DHC students in each freshman cohort who successfully graduate as University Scholars). **Goal:** Compile reliable data on the DHC program completion rate. Increase the DHC program completion rate to 50% of DHC students in each freshman cohort.

j. Promote and evaluate student success in post-graduate employment and admission to graduate and professional schools. **Goal:** Compile reliable data on post-graduate employment and graduate/professional school admissions for DHC graduates.

k. Meet characteristics of a fully-developed Honors College as defined by the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC) – see Appendix B (below). **Goal:** Consult with NCHC site visitors during external program review in AY 2010-11 to assess compliance with national standards of excellence in Honors education.

2. **Leadership Development** – Encourage the development of moral and responsible leadership through Honors courses and applied learning experiences.

   a. Create and develop “Introduction to Student Leadership” course (HC 202) in collaboration with the Center for Leadership Development. **Goal:** Offer HC 202 each spring semester; seek ASCRC approval for General Education “Ethics and Human Values” designation for HC 202 in Spring 2008.

   b. Enhance leadership development in “Introduction to Honors” Seminar (HC 120). **Goal:** Provide leadership training for HC 120 student mentors, and engage HC 120 faculty in the development of leadership curriculum.

   c. Promote student leadership opportunities through the Honors Student Association, the DHC Student Advisory Council, national Honors societies, ASUM, and other student organizations. **Goal:** Document and assess student participation in leadership activities.
d. Support development of Honors curriculum in ethics and leadership. **Goal:** Offer at least one Honors course with “Ethics and Human Values” General Education designation per semester.

e. Include ethical reflection as an essential component of all Honors courses. **Goal:** In collaboration with the DHC Faculty Advisory Board, revise the DHC Faculty Handbook to encourage ethical reflection in every Honors course.

3. **Diversity and Access** – Engage an ethnically, culturally, and geographically diverse student body and offer Honors courses that promote cultural awareness and intercultural communication.

a. Recruit and retain ethnically, culturally, and geographically diverse students.  
   **Goal:** Compile reliable data on diversity of DHC student population; increase diversity of student population through affirmative action and targeted recruitment.

b. Raise private funds (in collaboration with UM Foundation) to create scholarships and awards for students of diverse heritage, such as the Native American Honors Scholarship.  
   **Goal:** Create at least one additional Honors scholarship for students of diverse heritage.

c. Collaborate with American Indian Student Services, UC Multicultural Alliance, and other UM diversity programs. **Goal:** Enhance DHC commitment to diversity through participation in campus-wide diversity initiatives.

d. Engage with ASUM student groups (international student association, AIBL, etc.)  
   **Goal:** Enhance DHC commitment to diversity through sponsorship of cultural events.

e. Design facility upgrades to assure that the DHC building is fully ADA-accessible.  
   **Goal:** Assess ADA compliance and seek university funding for facility upgrades.
4. **Civic Engagement** – Provide opportunities and encourage student participation in community service.

   a. Enhance existing programs in the Office for Civic Engagement (OCE). **Goal:** Document and assess the quality of OCE programs, and target additional resources to the development of community service opportunities for all UM students.

   b. Create a Presidential-appointed Service Learning Advisory Board to develop and implement programs and procedures to further institutionalize service learning on campus. **Goal:** Design and implement a campus-wide Service Learning course designation by September 2008.

   c. Offer professional development opportunities for UM faculty and staff, such as the annual Service Learning Colloquium on campus. **Goal:** Organize and recruit faculty to participate in an annual Service Learning Colloquium through OCE.


   e. Encourage and recognize DHC student participation in community service. **Goal:** Increase participation in service learning courses to 25% of DHC students in each graduating cohort.

   f. Integrate service learning and civic engagement opportunities into Honors seminars and freshman interest groups. **Goal:** Compile reliable data on service learning and civic engagement in all Honors courses.

   g. Support and encourage student and campus-wide involvement in National Service programs. **Goal:** Compile reliable data on student participation in National Service.

   h. Educate and prepare students for careers in the non-profit sector. **Goal:** In collaboration with the Department of Political Science, assess and evaluate the minor program in non-profit management.

5. **Communication and Outreach** – Advocate for Honors education and publicize the quality of the Davidson Honors College at the local, state, and national levels.

   a. Become recognized as a leader in the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC) and the Western Regional Honors Council (WRHC) through student and faculty conference
presentations, committee membership, and service by DHC faculty in peer Honors program review. **Goals:** At least two student presentations at each annual NCHC and WRHC conference; at least one DHC faculty or staff presentation per year at the NCHC or WRHC conference. At least one DHC faculty member certified by NCHC to serve as peer Honors program reviewer by December 2008.

b. Publicize the success of the Davidson Honors College and its outstanding students, faculty, and staff through DHC publications and website development. **Goal:** Publish three DHC newsletters per year; update DHC website annually.

c. Provide timely information for University Relations to create press releases when DHC students earn prestigious scholarships and awards. **Goal:** Notify University Relations within one week of receiving formal notification of each scholarship and award.

d. Collaborate with Admissions Office to feature the Davidson Honors College in University recruitment materials and outreach events. **Goal:** By Autumn 2007, create new Admissions publication on the DHC and merit scholarship opportunities at UM.

e. Communicate with Davidson Honors College students, faculty, donors, parents, and alumni through DHC newsletters, targeted mailings, e-mail, and website development. **Goal:** Upgrade the DHC Director of Development to a full-time position with broad responsibility for communication with external constituents.

6. **Stewardship of Resources** – Make effective and efficient use of resources entrusted to the Davidson Honors College. Develop programs and activities that promote the conservation of natural resources, social justice, and sustainable economic development.


b. Engage DHC students in concrete initiatives to improve energy efficiency in the DHC Building, Knowles Hall, and elsewhere on the UM campus. **Goal:** Collaborate with DHC Student Advisory Council to build bike racks near the DHC Building by Summer 2008.
c. Create a DHC Operating Plan to allocate university budgetary resources effectively and project future funding needs. **Goal:** Seek enhanced support from both state and private funding sources for DHC strategic initiatives outlined above.

d. Leverage DHC funds by seeking commitment from academic departments to offer Honors courses and faculty mentoring of Honors students. **Goal:** Increase range of Honors courses offered by departments in the College of Arts and Sciences; offer at least one Honors course per semester in each of the professional schools.

e. Seek cost-sharing from Student Affairs to construct and equip an Honors classroom to deliver first-year Honors courses in a residential setting. **Goal:** New Honors classroom established in Knowles Hall; offer at least ten first-year Honors courses in this classroom during Autumn 2007 and subsequent semesters.

f. Continue long-range development activities with the UM Foundation and the DHC External Advisory Board to raise private funds in support of DHC scholarships, programs, and initiatives. Promote the existing UM Campaign priorities for the DHC:

- Presidential Scholarships: $2.5 million goal
- Internships: $25,000 goal
- DHC Honors Scholarships: $100,000 goal
- Opportunity Funds: $150,000 goal
- Study Abroad: $65,000 goal
- Forensics: $100,000 goal
- Undergraduate Research: $15,000 goal
- Student Civic Engagement: $25,000 goal
Appendix A

ACT Data on Retention and Graduation Rates for Four-Year Public Colleges


NOTE: DHC admissions standards are generally consistent with those of a “highly selective” four-year public college. In 2006, an ACT composite score of 27 or SAT combined score of 1200 or higher was the minimum required for admission to the DHC.

### Table 3

First to Second Year Retention Rates for Four-Year Public Colleges by Admission Selectivity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Admission Selectivity</th>
<th>Offering Only Bachelors</th>
<th>Offering Bachelors and Masters</th>
<th>Offering Bachelors, Masters and Doctoral</th>
<th>All Institutions in Row</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean % =</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highly Selective</td>
<td>93.0</td>
<td>91.5</td>
<td>92.6</td>
<td>92.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N = 2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD** = 1.4</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selective</td>
<td>87.7</td>
<td>81.0</td>
<td>81.7</td>
<td>81.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N = 3</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>93</td>
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<td></td>
<td>SD** = 4.0</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>72.7</td>
<td>71.3</td>
<td>73.4</td>
<td>72.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N = 26</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>182</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD** = 9.0</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal</td>
<td>64.7</td>
<td>63.9</td>
<td>69.2</td>
<td>66.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N = 6</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD** = 7.7</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>59.2</td>
<td>67.3</td>
<td>68.8</td>
<td>66.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N = 13</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD** = 13.4</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Institutions in Column</td>
<td>Mean % =</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>69.9</td>
<td></td>
<td>77.3</td>
<td>74.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N = 50</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>409</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD** = 13.1</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* See Table 2
** Standard Deviation

* Highly Selective = ACT Score Range 27-31, SAT Score Range 1220-1380
Selective = ACT Score Range 22-27, SAT Score Range 1030-1220
Traditional = ACT Score Range 20-23, SAT Score Range 950-1070
Liberal = ACT Score Range 18-21, SAT Score Range 870-990
Open = ACT Score Range 17-20, SAT Score Range 830-950
### Table 7

**Persistence to Degree* Rates for Four-year Public Colleges by Admission Selectivity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Admission Selectivity**</th>
<th>Offering Only Bachelors</th>
<th>Offering Bachelors and Masters</th>
<th>Offering Bachelors, Masters and Doctoral</th>
<th>All Institutions in Row</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highly Selective</td>
<td>Mean % = 74.5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>76.4</td>
<td>76.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N = 2</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD*** = 3.5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selective</td>
<td>Mean % = N/A</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>53.6</td>
<td>52.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N = N/A</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD*** = N/A</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>Mean % = 41.1</td>
<td>37.2</td>
<td>39.9</td>
<td>38.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N = 24</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD*** = 12.6</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal</td>
<td>Mean % = 31.0</td>
<td>31.2</td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td>30.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N = 3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD*** = 3.0</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Mean % = 27.5</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>39.2</td>
<td>34.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N = 8</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD*** = 25.4</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Completion in 5 years for BA/BS

**Highly Selective = ACT Score Range 27-31, SAT Score Range 1220-1380
Selective = ACT Score Range 22-26, SAT Score Range 1090-1220
Traditional = ACT Score Range 20-23, SAT Score Range 950-1070
Liberal = ACT Score Range 18-21, SAT Score Range 870-990
Open = ACT Score Range 17-20, SAT Score Range 830-950

***Standard Deviation

Source: ACT Institutional Data File, 2006
Appendix B

Basic Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors College


An honors educational experience can occur in a wide variety of institutional settings. When institutions establish an honors college or embark upon a transition from an honors program to an honors college, they face a transformational moment. No one model defines this transformation. Although not all of the following characteristics are necessary to be considered a successful or fully developed honors college, the National Collegiate Honors Council recognizes these as representative:

1. A fully developed honors college should incorporate the relevant characteristics of a fully developed honors program.
2. A fully developed honors college should exist as an equal collegiate unit within a multi-collegiate university structure.
3. The head of a fully developed honors college should be a dean reporting directly to the chief academic officer of the institution and serving as a full member of the Council of Deans, if one exists. The dean should be a full-time, 12-month appointment.
4. The operational and staff budgets of fully developed honors colleges should provide resources at least comparable to other collegiate units of equivalent size.
5. A fully developed honors college should exercise increased coordination and control of departmental honors where the college has emerged out of such a decentralized system.
6. A fully developed honors college should exercise considerable control over honors recruitment and admissions, including the appropriate size of the incoming class.
7. Admission to the honors college should be by separate application.
8. An honors college should exercise considerable control over its policies, curriculum, and selection of faculty.
9. The curriculum of a fully developed honors college should offer significant course opportunities across all four years of study.
10. The curriculum of the fully developed honors college should constitute at least 20% of a student's degree program. An honors thesis or project should be required.
11. Where the home university has a significant residential component, the fully developed honors college should offer substantial honors residential opportunities.
12. The distinction awarded by a fully developed honors college should be announced at commencement, noted on the diploma, and featured on the student's final transcript.
13. Like other colleges within the university, a fully developed honors college should be involved in alumni affairs and development and should have an external advisory board.

Approved by the NCHC Executive Committee (6/25/05)