

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Department of English
201 Morrill Hall

East Lansing, Michigan 48824
FAX: 517-353-3755

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TO: University Committee on Academic Policy

FROM: Tess Tavormina, Faculty Coordinator, Academic Scholars Program

ABOUT: Interim Report on Academic Scholars Program (Summary)

General Information:

The Fall 2001 cohort of Academic Scholars (invited in March 2001) was 114 students, of approximately 800 eligible and invited. Another 120 students invited to the program came to MSU, but chose not to join the program. The Fall 2002 cohort of Scholars is 171, of approximately 1250-1300 invited; about 250 accepted the invitation, but a number of those canceled their MSU admission before AOP or during the summer. We do not yet have the OPB report on which of those invitees came to MSU but chose not to join the program.

On-line information for current and prospective Scholars, as well as academic advisors and faculty, is available at <http://www.msu.edu/~tavrmina/ASP/> >. In addition to offering Scholars supplementary academic advising, largely but not entirely about the program proper, I send the Scholars an electronic Newsletter at various points through the year, also accessible through the website. I've developed a Freshman Seminar for interested first-year Scholars, focusing on finding on- and off-campus resources to help achieve their educational, career, and personal goals. I've also arranged some social and academically-related extracurricular activities during the year as well (dinners with fellow Scholars or 'pizza with profs,' tickets to selected campus lectures/events, and so on).

Academic Performance:

The first of the two attached Excel workbooks provides the detailed figures of an initial analysis of the academic performance of students in the Academic Scholars Program (ASPPProgRptFS02-UCAP.xls). The key points that I would note about these figures are as follows:

GPA: The FS01 cohort of Academic Scholars trailed their Honors College peers, but only slightly, in their academic performance: the Fall gpa difference between Scholars and Honors freshmen was a tenth of a point (3.5/3.6), and any Spring difference was invisible at the single decimal-point precision in the analysis done for us by OPB (3.5/3.5). Scholars took an average of 29.8 credits their first year to the Honors freshman average of 29.1, though Honors students had a strikingly higher average number of AP credits coming in (11.8 vs. 4.1 for Scholars). [See Worksheet GPA-ACT-Credits.xls]

Dean's List: 67% of the Scholars were on the Fall Dean's List, 63% on the Spring list (cf. 68% and 66% for Fall/Spring Honors freshmen who achieved the Dean's List). The comparative figures for the number of Scholars/Honors freshmen earning grades between 3.0-3.5, 3.0-3.2, and below 3.0 are even closer. The only noticeable difference between grades for Scholars and Honors freshmen last year was at the very high-end, straight-A level – 18% and 7% of Scholars earned all 4.0s in Fall and Spring, while 22% and 12% of Honors freshmen did so. Again, we see performance by Scholars that only slightly trails the Honors freshmen, perhaps mainly by not including as many super-star performers. [See Worksheet AcPerf-Prog.xls]

HC Application/Admission: 84% of Scholars were either clearly eligible for Honors College application in their first year (3.5+ Fall gpa, 67%) or borderline-eligible (Fall gpa of 3.2-3.5 with Honors coursework in their first year, equivalent to expectations of HC members; 17%). 50% of the total cohort actually applied to HC, and 42% were

admitted. Of the 1214 non-ASP freshmen invited to apply to HC, 17% applied and 14% were admitted. (For both ASP and non-ASP applicants, approximately 83% were admitted; the big difference is in the percentage of Scholars who chose to apply to HC, compared to non-ASP freshmen eligible to apply.) [Worksheet AcPerf-Prog.xls]

Completion of Requirements: Progress toward completion of ASP requirements seems reasonable, though not all Scholars seem likely to complete the 4-course requirement in their first two years. 66% are on track to complete all requirements with current enrollments and some use of Honors Options; another 18% (including some HC members who may prefer HC options to finishing ASP reqs) could complete if they adjust their schedule to include an IS-Honors course in Spring; 15% seem likely not to finish, though most of them have enriched their curriculum by at least one Honors course. For comparison, note that the percentage of entering Honors freshmen from 1992-96 who graduated as members of Honors College averages about 67% (though again, many more have enriched curricula thanks to their erstwhile HC membership). [Worksheet AcPerf-Prog.xls]

Distribution by College: The most common major is LBS, though its proportion of the whole dropped in FS02, while BUS and EGR expanded their share of the total ASP population. The program may become attractive to high-achieving students (and their advisors) in colleges where upper-division Honors work is not as useful for post-graduation plans, but where access to Honors Tier I and Integrative Studies courses and selected other introductory H-courses is desirable. Some attention needs to be paid to advising LBS and JM students on how and when to take their Honors IS required course in their second year, since it is difficult for them to incorporate such courses in their first year. [Worksheet MajorsByColl.xls]

Course Usage (esp. IS H-sections and other H-courses):

The details of ASP and Honors enrollments in the Honors sections open to Scholars are probably of most interest to the IS directors, as they schedule courses for next year, but the general trends appear to me to be pretty good, with some room for further refinement in scheduling, advertising, and advising to improve accessibility and yield. [See Workbook ASP-COURSE-USE, esp. Worksheet Summary.xls]

It is also clear that support for the Scholars program is also support for Honors students, and is drawing a significantly larger number of Honors students into Honors Integrative Studies courses. Many of the Scholars, however, also still take non-H Integrative Studies classes as well as Honors sections of those classes.

Since 2000-01 (the year before ASP began), the number of H-sections in courses approved for ASP use has increased, with some assistance from the Provost and several deans, as has ASP participation in H-sections open to them (from 01-02 to 02-03):

	#Sections	#Seats	#Taken	Yield	#ASP	#HC (and overrides)
00-01	24 (6 IS; 10 TierI)	726	595 (118/218 IS/T-I)	82%	0	595
01-02	43 (17 IS; 15 TierI)	1411	1090 (413/313 IS/T-I)	77%	171 (16%)*	919
02-03	51 (20 IS; 16 TierI)	1703	1381 (522/371 IS/T-I)	81%	340 (25%)**	1041

*Scholars also took 16 seats in non-ASP H-courses and 21 H-Options in 01-02, plus 16 non-H ASP subs for I.S.

**Scholars also took 62 seats in non-ASP H-courses, 25 non-H ASP subs for I.S., and an as yet indeterminate number of H-Options in 02-03, as of quarter-semester Fall 02.

These figures do not include H-courses taken by Scholars beyond their 4-course ASP requirements.