

Far Too Valuable to Lose:
Honors Program Sabbatical Report
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Photo of Sarah Alto at University of California Berkeley

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Introduction

A problem at the heart of every California Community College is a systemic crisis in which four of every five students fail to transfer to a four-year school, complete an associate of arts or science degree or complete a certificate of some sort. As alumni of the Honors Program report and current students demonstrate, the program offers irrefutable data that the odds for graduating from College of the Redwoods and transferring to a university are greatly increased if a student joins—and stays—in the Honors Program.

College of the Redwoods has a unique and powerful recruitment tool with the Honors Program. However, the program's potential to serve the college by attracting serious students from within the state and across the nation has barely been tapped. Furthermore, the program cannot be maintained at its present level of success without an Honors Director and increased institutional support. It is my hope that the District continues to fund and support this valuable and life changing program. The report which follows provides evidence of the benefits the program provides students' and the potential profit the program could provide the District.

Program Background

College of the Redwoods Honors Program was established in 1984 and has grown significantly in number of offerings and number of successful graduates. The program was created to foster the growth of dedicated students who are excited about learning and desire to be challenged. It is a selective, intensely concentrated program designed for successful transfer to a competitive four-year college. CR's Honors Program offers qualified students advanced academic preparation beyond regular courses, as well as formal recognition of their academic abilities and advancements. Such recognition includes Honors designation on the student's transcript for each course completed and enhanced possibilities for substantial scholarships. Honors transfer alliances with prestigious four-year universities broaden the horizons of our strongest students and opens educational possibilities for them that might not otherwise be available in our rural, isolated community. Over the year's faculty program members have seen the changes Honors made in their students' lives, but no objective data was maintained to record these achievements.

The first Program Review of Honors was completed in Spring 2008. It yielded valuable confirmation of our empirical experience and clear recommendations for needed changes. It confirmed in 2007 student and faculty surveys:

- 100% of the alumni respondents were “very satisfied” with the connection with honors students and faculty.
- 80% identified the small class sizes and demanding curriculum as primary reasons they chose Honors and helped them meet their educational goals.
- 75% would have taken more Honors courses if they were available.
- 50% believed that CR Honors course work enhanced their chances for admission to the university of their choice.
- More than 90% would recommend the program to other students.
- Honors faculty are given no stipend or release time for the more rigorous preparation and one-on-one counseling, but for 91% of them the “opportunity to work with students who are

excited about learning” and “to try our innovative approaches to teaching” led them to teach in the program.

- 91% of faculty respondents have observed considerable differences between Honors students and their students in non-honors sections of the same course.
- 100% of faculty have invited more students to apply to the program since they have been teaching Honors.

A. What are the Honors Program strengths?

- Alumni of the Honors Program transfer successfully, often to highly competitive universities such as Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Columbia University.
- In contrast to the four out of five community college students who fail to transfer statewide, nine out of ten CR Honors students transfer.
- The program has grown despite steep declines in overall CR enrollment and funding.
- Honors students earn a large percentage of the scholarships offered by CR. Honors students have been awarded extraordinary scholarships and grants, ranging from \$7,000-\$70,000, and including the Jack Kent Cooke Scholarship (the largest community college award available) as well as awards from George Washington University and Reed College.
- CR is the only community college in Northern California with a program that offers a competitive edge to qualifying transfer students. Of the 110 community colleges, only 52 are members of the Honors Transfer Council of California offering students who complete their requirements significant transfer advantages to competitive four-year universities. College of the Redwoods has been a member since 2001.
- Our website receives requests for information and applications from not only California, but also from other states scattered across the nation.

B. What are the challenges for the Honors Program?

- Recent changes in the priority registration benefit for Honors students make trying to schedule Honors classes and major requirements close to impossible.
- Honors is not incorporated into institutional outreach as a whole, i.e. not included in Redwood Days or in student and faculty orientations, nor mentioned in the CR Orientation brochure.
- The current Honors Office is not ADA compliant.
- While the agreement to offer only 2 classes for 08-09 helps to alleviate the institution’s financial emergency, it curtails the possibility for many students to meet their intended academic goals, i.e. completion of 15 Honors units to qualify for the Transfer Alliance Program benefits. A number of students have postponed taking non-honors sections of the courses in anticipation of taking the more rigorous Honors version. Please view the appendix for a review of Honors enrollments over the last five years.
- Students who place in English 1A are not regularly informed about the Honors Program. Other Honors Programs, such as Mira Costa Community College, automatically send application materials to all students who place in 1A.

Where the Honors would like to be:

- The Honors Program needs a clear mandate from the administration stating the objectives and responsibilities of the program and defining its place in both the administrative and academic structure of the institution. This mandate should assure the permanence and stability of the program by guaranteeing an adequate budget and ensuring a program not dependent on

temporary dedication of particular faculty members or administrators.

- The program seeks to be both visible and highly reputed throughout the institution so that it is perceived as providing standards and models of excellence for students and faculty across the campus.
- The program will occupy suitable quarters readily available to students constituting an honors center with such facilities as an honors library, lounge, personal computers, and study area.
- There will be provisions for special academic counseling of honor students by appropriately qualified counselors.
- The program will emphasize the participatory nature of the honors educational process by offering opportunities for students to participate in regional and national conferences, institutional governance, community service, and other forms of experiential education.
- Every qualified student will be made aware of the opportunities offered by the Honors program no later than the end of his/her first semester enrolled in CR.

Significant budget changes or variances from year to year:

The annual budget for the program remained relatively constant at \$4,000 per academic year until 2001. The District's across-the-board cuts starting in 2001 has impacted the Honors Program, the budget has steadily decreased from \$2,547.00 in 2006 to \$2,047 in 2007.

With the current budget, a decrease of 51.1% from the 1994 budget, the program is:

- Unable to keep up with the rising costs of printing and mailing, Honors promotional materials and applications can only be produced in small batches.
- Cultural trips that used to occur each semester have been cut in half and are paid for in large part by students.
- Donations are sought to cover the cost of Honors medallions and awards.
- Fundraising is required to subsidize students' trips to conferences.
- Director's time is increasingly spent soliciting donations and organizing fundraisers.

Summary of discussion and findings relating to this program review:

A CR student schedule survey completed by 243 students in May 2007 found transferring to a four-year school was the educational goal for 48.8 percent of respondents. To live up to the College's Mission Statement and serve students whose goal is to transfer, more must be done to expand the visibility of the Honors Program and to let these students know the benefits it offers them.

As stated previously, the fundamental change required for the Honors Program is a clear mandate from the College of the Redwoods administration addressing the objectives and responsibilities of the program and defining its place in both the administrative and academic structure of the institution.

Without that fundamental change, telling examples like the following will continue to undermine the program: Recently, the District revised its "Orientation Packet" full of valuable information to help students make "informed choices" and "take advantage of the support services available at CR." The Honors Program is not mentioned in this brochure that is presumably distributed to all entering students. While programs such as DSPS, EOPS, Financial Aid, the Academic Support Center, Counseling and the Learning Resource Center are succinctly described, yet there is no brief description of the Honors Program. Nor are students who place in English 1A advised to consider the Honors Program. After a cover to cover reading of this Orientation Packet,

a fully qualified student would have no way of knowing College of the Redwoods has an Honors Program.

Conclusion

The past few years have been extremely difficult for the District with a downward spiral in enrollment, statewide reductions in funding, and urgent requirements in order to maintain accreditation. These difficulties have taken their toll on CR's Honors Program as well, in the form of cuts in budget, loss of faculty, and increasing demands on faculty above and beyond their regular loads. Despite surprising increases in Honors enrollment during these challenging times, reassigned time, already at a minimum, was decreased by one-third, and this semester course offering for 2008-2009 were cut in half.

The following report reviews three types of data: in-depth interviews with Honors alumni, an Institutional Research alumni email survey, and a comparison of Honors and non-Honors alumni based on National Student Clearinghouse data. (The National Student Clearinghouse tracks students' progress and degree attainment after CR transfer).

Ironically, as the three methodologies of this report confirm the profound impact the Honors Program has had on students' lives, the program itself hovers on extinction. Three Honors classes are scheduled for Fall 2009, but release time for an Honors Director has been denied and no budget has been allocated. The CR Honors Program is adrift without a rudder while its graduates succeed. It is my hope that the District recognizes the value and opportunity the program provides to students and faculty currently and the prospect for future growth over the years to come.

Honors Alumni Interviews

Methods

The objective data that forms the bulk of this report confirms Honors faculty's first-hand experience; Honors students have higher transfer rates and transfer to more prestigious universities. To supplement the findings of the IR survey and National Student Clearinghouse cohort comparison, in-depth interviews were conducted in person at the university the student was attending or by phone if that contact was not feasible.

In August of 2008 I worked with Roxanne Metz of Institutional Research to develop an interview instrument to use with each of the students contacted. Our goal was to learn what they did after transfer and to gain a broader view of the program's affect on their lives. Included in the interview questions were ones put forward by current Honors students, such as "Have the instructors at these prestigious schools met your expectations? Is their primary focus on teaching or research?" The program also needed to know how well prepared they felt compared to their classmates; the interviews revealed that often they were better prepared and more successful than non-transfer students. Sarah Alto, in her second year at Cal, said, "I'm getting the best education available from people at the top of their field, many of them Nobel laureates, and I know I earned the right to be here. I can do this!"

During September and October, 2008, I spoke with Honors alumni at UC Berkeley, near Notre Dame De Namur University, at work places in San Francisco, by phone with alumni in Oregon, Florida, Washington, D.C., and in Southern California. I spoke with students beginning their second semester at their university, with alumni who had graduated with their baccalaureate

degree, alumni attending graduate programs and others on the job. In April of 2009 I interviewed students preparing to graduate with their degree. Excerpts from seven of those interviews are included chronologically here.

TABITHA SISSON was a first semester EOPS student in English 150--College Composition in 1998. She had been a lackluster student before college, bored by school before then. However, because of her outstanding performance in class, she was encouraged to apply to College of the Redwoods' Honors Program, even though very few students are ever recommended to Honors from a pre-transfer level course such as English 150. Tabitha comes from a very large family, one with no expectations of education. Her mother is from Taiwan and does not speak English. At a recent family reunion of over 75 members, Tabitha learned she was only the second to graduate from a 4 year college and the only female to achieve this. "The Honors Program drastically changed the way I saw myself as a student and helped me to believe that I could pursue higher education." Tabitha was inspired in a CR Honors Psychology class to become a psychologist. She completed a total of 4 Honors courses and says, "Without Honors, I definitely would not have had the confidence to apply to a 4-year school." She went on to graduate from San Francisco State University. When I interviewed Tabitha in September 2008, she was pursuing her love of both dance and psychology through the Masters in Marriage and Family Therapy Program, with an emphasis on Art Therapy, at Notre Dame De Namur, one of only 2 accredited art therapy programs in the nation and the only one in California.

ANDY LOSH had never imagined himself going to college. With a history of Driving Under the Influence (DUI's), mandatory community service, and not enough units to graduate with his high school class, he had a very grave picture of himself. When he took a good look at that picture, he determined to change it. One of his first accomplishments was the completion of his GED and signing up for a summer school course at CR. From his noteworthy performance in that first class, he was recommended for the Honors Program. There was no turning back. He "wanted to get the most out of 'his' time at CR and wanted all the help 'he' could get to improve 'his' chances of transferring to a good university." Andy took a total of three Honors courses, graduated from CR in 2002, was accepted at UC Berkeley, and graduated in 2004 with an interdisciplinary degree with an emphasis on law and social control. He identifies "the biggest impact of the program on me was the close bond that I formed with my fellow students, especially when we would have get-togethers or field trips. When we were together outside of school, I would connect with people in my classes that I would have never connected with otherwise." When I interviewed Andy in August 2008, he had risen through the ranks since his graduation working for the law firm of Pillsbury, Winthrop, Shaw, and Pittman.

SAGE MATTHEWS began at CR as a single mom taking one elective class, Women in Literature. When she returned to take GE classes, she was clearly Honors caliber, although she remembers, "I had never considered myself Honors material before then." Sage cites the most valuable aspect of the program from her perspective was "the difference in communication between teachers and students and the ability to challenge yourself as much as you wanted." In 2004 Sage was CR's first winner of the Jack Kent Cooke Scholarship; up to \$30,000 a year for up to three years or until the student earns a baccalaureate degree. "It paid for me to attend one of the best private arts institutions on the West Coast, I am recognized professionally for the numerous awards I have received, and it has allowed me to be a priority candidate when applying for jobs." In 2008 Sage and her son moved to Montrose, California to be closer to her expanding job opportunities in her field of Fashion Design. Although excited by her work, she is considering returning for graduate work in order to pursue her own innovative lines. Additional scholarships are available for graduate studies through her original Jack Kent Cooke award.

JENNIFER SMITH was the college's second Jack Kent Cooke Scholarship winner in 2005, making CR the only school to have won the award two years in a row. Approximately 22 of these highly competitive scholarships are awarded annually. The first person in her family to attend college, Jennifer was raised by her mother, a single parent, who was unable to provide any financial support. Jennifer decided she wanted to go to college enough to quit her full-time job and make it on financial aid and working 25 hours a week. When she saw that her rural education had left gaps in her skills, she was resolute to master them with alacrity, which attests to her significant academic potential. Her determination to succeed was amply rewarded with the prestigious national scholarship which led to her graduation from UC Berkeley in Comparative Languages, including further study and teaching in Argentina. In spring of 2009 she returned to the Bay Area to pursue her career as a writer.

GREG HEDLUND graduated in 2004 and credits his Honors courses at CR with earning him scholarships to attend George Washington University in Washington, D.C.; the second most expensive university in the nation. Greg chose this school because of his passionate interest in international affairs. After graduating, Greg continued his education with intense language studies in the Mideast and as of January 2009 was preparing for a competitive selection program in International Service.

ROBERT BEHNEY graduated in 2007, having taken 21 units (six courses) in Honors. He credits Honors with "giving 'him' skills to participate in the classroom community, as in the larger class sizes standard in most university settings. It's easy to get lost in a class of 70 people, but the confidence and attention that go along with being in a smaller class, such as the Honors courses, helped me to be assertive and get what I needed out of larger classes at HSU." As of Spring 2009 Robert was fully employed in his own successful executive recruitment service.

TERRY LINGREY as a child had a pronounced stutter and was relegated to classes for disabled children. She was tracked for vocational rather than academic classes and told she would never go to college. At CR she was determinedly taking one class a semester and working full-time when she was first recognized in a Creative Writing course for the exceptional student she is. Presented with an invitation to join the Honors Program, she was excited to challenge herself with more difficult courses, altered her hours at work so she could become a full-time student as required, and began her exceptional career as an Honors student. She notes that the five Honors courses she took "were inspiring and created long-term changes in 'her' thinking. They gave 'her' the taste for challenging work." She goes on to say that, "without a doubt, Honors course work definitely enhanced my chances for admission. Reed College is a tough school with a low admission rate. The Honors Program was invaluable and opened the door to academic awards and funding I would not have received. Without the funding, I would not be here." Furthermore, "the Honors courses denser more philosophical readings challenged me. At Reed, every class is about making arguments. The readings in most classes are dense and voluminous, and it was the skills I developed in those Honors classes that prepared me to handle them. Also, by working with and for instructors who cared about scholarship, I learned to not be intimidated among my very intelligent and opinionated fellow students. Accepted in 2006, Terry received approximately \$70,000 in grants and scholarships from Reed her first year. The summer between her first and second years, she received a fellowship to travel to England to research and work on her novel. May 2009 she graduated from Reed College and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. She's on her way to an MFA program and teaching fellowship in Idaho.

Interviews Summary

A number of common themes emerged from the interviews and are synthesized as follows:

- A majority of alumni were first generation college students and worked to support themselves while maintaining strong GPAs. A number of them are single parents and receive no family support. Although this is true of many community college students, it contradicts the stereotype we tend to have of students who achieve exceptional academic success.
- Many alumni not only doubt their own academic gifts, they downright deny them; “I’m not that smart. I could never keep up.” These students like almost every Honors student, had to be coaxed and encouraged to make the leap in self-confidence and academic success.
- In contrast, for Honors faculty, potential Honors students are easy to spot in a mainstream classroom. They turn in work several notches above the norm; they read the assignments conscientiously, and, sometimes self-consciously, ask insightful questions. They don’t, as these interviewees have suggested, seem to notice that they are in effect doing an Honors version of this regular course.
- Interviewees repeatedly acknowledged the importance of close interaction with Honors faculty and of the expectations they had for their fellow classmates.
- Students reiterated frustration over the limited number of Honors course offerings. Many said, “I would have taken all my GE in Honors if I could have.” Another frustration was the lack of Honors science and math courses, especially for students majoring in engineering.
- Sam Hedlund, 2007 graduate of Pepperdine University with a B.A. in International Studies and Spanish, articulates another theme frequently expressed. “Honors put me in contact with a higher, more imaginative and interdisciplinary level of liberal arts writing and discussion. What honors did was to not just be hard, but rich. That’s what makes it great.”
- Many interviews noted the value of field trips and cultural events. Many of our students had never attended a play or visited a museum before.
- Almost all reiterated the need for greater endorsement of the program at orientations, through counselors, and through high school outreach.
- But overwhelmingly, the theme that comes up again and again is the experience from program participation which results in the raised self esteems of alumni. They found the confidence to challenge themselves and discovered when the “bar was raised” they were able to meet it. Interview after interview credited the program’s encouragement to motivate and challenge oneself as much as one wanted with the on-going outcome of intellectual enlightenment and self-assurance.

Honors Program Survey and Cohort Comparison

Introduction

The Honors Program survey was designed to better understand program alumni and their experiences at the College of the Redwoods. The survey was also constructed to follow up with alumni on their educational and career goals in addition to their experiences after transferring from College of the Redwoods.

The purpose of the College of the Redwoods Honors Program survey is to measure the effectiveness of the Honors Program from the perspective of program alumni. A second objective of the survey is to measure the components and benefits of the Honors Program from the viewpoint of alumni. A third objective of the survey is to evaluate alumni’s experiences with the program and how it affected their futures academically, professionally and independently.

The data from the survey is intended to inform program review, program components, program recruitment, program student satisfaction, and program improvement. The survey focused on key characteristics of Honors Program alumni that included:

- Factors leading to the decision to attend CR
- Factors leading to the decision to enroll in the Honors Program
- Courses taken within program
- Transfer colleges alumni applied to and attended
- Level of transfer preparation provided from program
- Expectations and outcomes of CR experience and Honors Program experience
- Academic goals
- Valuable Program elements
- How the Honors Program impacted alumni's lives
- Satisfaction with program benefits
- Basic demographic information

Construction and Administration

The Honors survey was constructed by the chief stake holders from the Honors Program in conjunction with the survey manager from the Institutional Research Department. The survey went through a number of drafts before a satisfactory draft was completed in mid-January of 2009. Changes were made to the survey based on stake holder feedback and the completed survey instrument was printed on January 21, 2009.

The Honors Program survey was administered starting on January 23, 2009 and continued through February 13, 2009 allotting alumni three weeks to provide input and feedback regarding the Honors Program. The survey was announced by email to all alumni on the Honors Program distribution list. The survey included a cover letter and an attached Microsoft Word file of the survey. Follow up emails were sent at weekly intervals to all alumni reminding them to participate.

Sample Size

One limitation of the findings is the relatively small number of alumni with viable contact information for the e-mail survey. CR's student records on Datatel are reliable only as far back as 2004 while data collected for this report goes as far as back 1998. Contact information for students prior to 2004 was garnered from Honors files, student referrals, and fortuitous contacts. The unusually high response rate of 52.4% of those the survey did reach suggests alumni's continuing interest in the Honors Program.

The Honors Program survey was emailed to a total of 53 alumni. Immediately 11 email addresses were inactive or faulty, reducing the total sample population to 42. There were a total of 22 completed 2009 Honors Program surveys. One survey was received via email after the survey end date but was added to the sample to increase the total sample population.

Methods Discussion

The Honors Program survey utilized a single mode method which included an email and a survey formatted in Microsoft Word as an attachment. This single mode method was chosen due to prior in depth interview work completed by the Honors Program.

The email survey method for the Honors Program survey was chosen for ease of use, transferability of data to SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences), cost, flexibility and

reliability. Email surveys are simple to use and allow the respondent to provide data with the touch of a mouse and keyboard. Email surveys provide an effortless data transfer; the email surveys were easily exported and all data was simply imported into SPSS instantaneously. Paper surveys require data to be coded and entered by hand which takes time, money and employee resources; all of these issues are eliminated with an electronic email survey. The cost of email surveys is nonexistent and saves time, paper and mailing expenses. Allowing respondents to fill out the survey when they have time displays the flexibility of the email survey. Finally the reliability of the email survey ensures no duplicate surveys or manipulated data were collected which provided validity to the survey results.

The surveys were coded, analyzed and entered in SPSS by Karen Nelson, the survey manager for the IR department. Qualitative and quantitative analyses were conducted on the survey data. Quantitative data was coded and analyzed by basic frequency distributions and simple crosstabulations using SPSS. Quantitative results are reported in numeric and percentage form from respondents. Qualitative data was coded by basic frequencies and basic themes. Basic frequencies were quantified by SPSS and basic themes were hand coded by the survey manager. Basic frequencies are reported in numeric and percentage format by respondents. Due to multiple themes and comments made by individual respondents, qualitative basic theme results cannot be reported by individual respondent format. Basic theme comments may be numerically represented but the results cannot be equally weighted across the survey population.

The Honors Program survey was a non-probability sample of all College of the Redwoods Honors Program alumni identified by the programs distribution list. From the total survey sample (N=22) out of the total Honors Program distribution list (T=42), it is evident survey coverage error, sampling error and sample bias will not exceedingly affect survey results. However, the sample size was small and only so much evidence can be extrapolated from the survey results. Coverage error highlights areas in which the survey did not include certain elements of the population. Sampling error denotes the information obtained from the sample may vary from the information provided from the whole population if it were surveyed. Sampling bias notes the under and/or over representation of certain populations within the sample. Coverage error, sampling error and sample bias are reduced because the sample population only includes honors program alumni; and coverage error is the only statistically significant factor associated with the survey results.

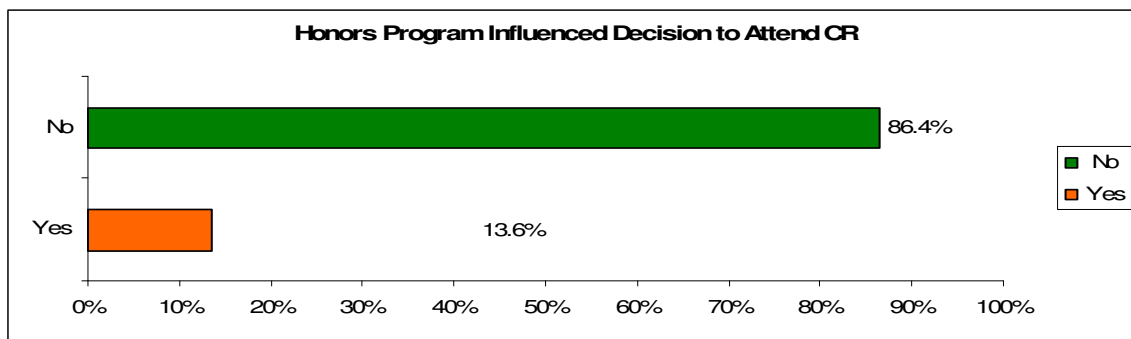
Due to the simplicity of the survey instrument, measurement error and the non-response rate were almost zero due to the high level of completion rates by respondents. Since the Honors Program survey was a non-probability sample, tests of statistical significance are impractical and inappropriate. The response rate for the Honors Program survey is high compared to standard survey values. An average acceptable response rate for online surveys is approximately 30%-35%. The Honors Program survey had a response rate of 52.4%, reaching more than half of all alumni respondents identified on the Honors Program distribution list. The only limitation of the survey is the lack of email addresses from alumni. If more alumni email addresses were available sampling error would be almost eliminated.

Results

Alumni were asked to provide the primary reasons for applying to the Honors Program. The most mentioned reason for enrolling in the Honors Program by alumni was to increase their acceptance chances to the school of their choice. Getting into the transfer school of the alumni's choice was noted seven times (31.8%) by respondents. The second most mentioned reason for alumni enrolling in the program was being asked by a professor such as Pat McCutcheon or Barbara Morrison. Being asked to be in program by a professor was indicated six times by alumni. The

third most mentioned reason for enrolling in the program was the academic challenge the program offered. The academic challenge of the program was stated four times by respondents. Alumni also expressed the program's quality curriculum, and advanced courses as primary reasons for enrolling in the program. The quality curriculum and advanced courses were noted three times by respondents. Other primary reasons, each indicated twice by respondents included an enhanced education, to improve their résumé and transcript, the small class size, the quality of students and to be more prepared to transfer. Other primary reasons for enrolling in the Honors program expressed only once by respondents included graduating with honors, quality instructors, priority registration, to increase self confidence and self esteem, career goals and educational goals, the cohort component, intellectual growth, program quality, staying focused in school, financial reasons and the influence of one mother.

Alumni were questioned if the Honors Program influenced their decision to attend College of the Redwoods. Of the respondents, more than four fifths (86.4%) of the survey population asserted they did not attend CR because of Honors Program influence as demonstrated in Graph 1. Of the alumni who did not attend CR for the program, the most mentioned reason included a lack of awareness regarding the Honors Program.



Graph 1

Not knowing about the Honors Program was mentioned seven times by respondents. Other respondents answered the question in a more straightforward manner, noting a simple yes or no answer without justification. The answer of no was mentioned six times. The fact that College of the Redwoods is the only junior college in the area affected alumni's decision to attend CR but not because of the Honors Program influence. The fact that CR is the only junior college in the immediate area was mentioned twice by respondents. Other comments made by alumni who attended CR without the influence of the program included they were in the first cohort, they stayed at CR because of the program and they were glad the program existed.

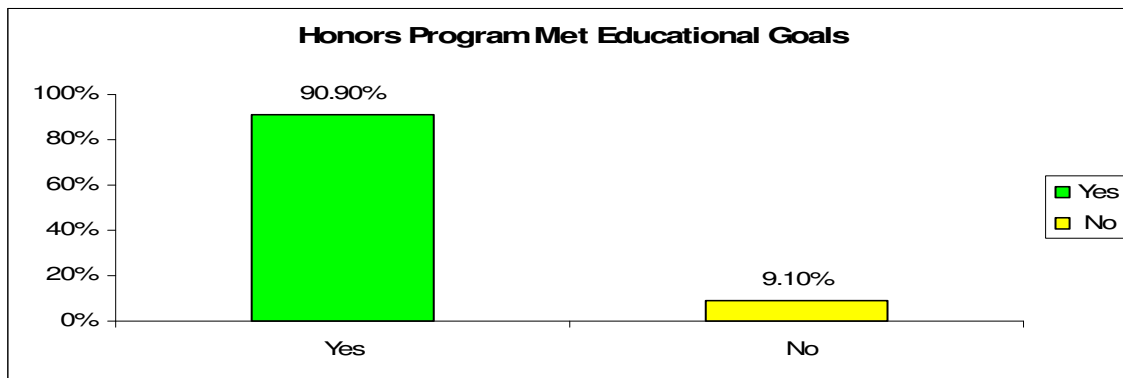
Of the respondents, more than one tenth (13.6%) of respondents did attend College of the Redwoods because of Honors Program influence. The three reasons indicated by respondents, each mentioned once, included a friend recommended the program, wanting a good transcript application and may not have attended CR if the Honors Program was not available.

Alumni were asked to recall the Honors courses they took while in the Honors Program. Many alumni could not recall the courses they took within the Honors program; more than 12 courses of unknown classes were reported from respondents. Of the respondents who could remember, alumni enrolled and passed the following courses, 14 (63.6%) alumni for Greek Mythology, 11 (50%) alumni for Public Speaking, 7 (31.8%) alumni for Introduction to Psychology, 6 (27.2%) alumni for Introduction to Literature, 4 alumni for Cultural Anthropology, 4 alumni for American Institutions, 4 alumni for Art Appreciation, and 3 alumni for Introduction to

Astronomy. The following courses were mentioned twice by alumni: Introduction to Biology, Cinema History, Introduction to Race and Ethnic Relations, Art History, and English 1B. The following courses were mentioned once by respondents Macroeconomics, Elementary Statistics, Introduction to Chemistry, Introduction to British Literature, and Native American Studies.

There were also courses people remembered taking but could not remember more than the subject area. This included three English courses, two history classes, and two art classes.

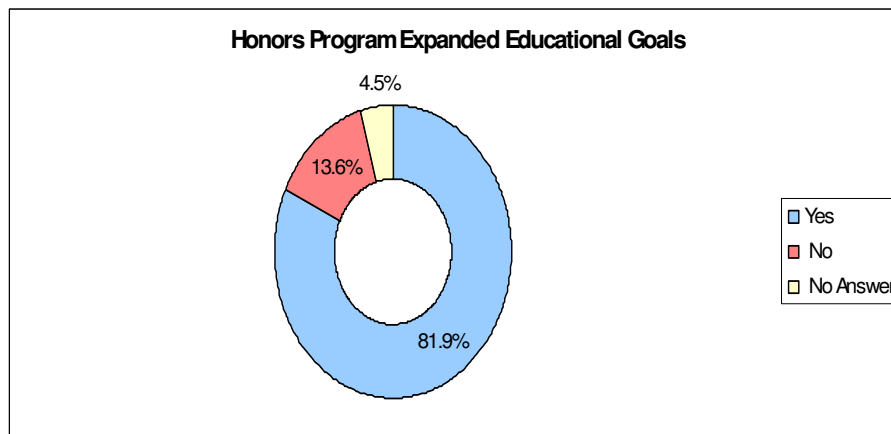
When questioned if honors courses helped to meet alumni’s educational goals more than 90.9% indicated yes as noted in Graph 2. Only two respondents did not agree that honors courses helped to meet their education needs. Of the alumni who did not feel their educational goals were met, the reasons provided included the class sizes being too large and the courses did not vary enough from regular CR courses.



Graph 2

Of the alumni who did feel honors courses helped to meet their educational needs, the most mentioned response included meeting IGETC/GE/transfer requirements. Meeting IGETC/GE/transfer requirements was mentioned nine times by alumni. The second most mentioned response highlighted the challenging courses offered in the honors program. Challenging courses was mentioned six times by respondents. The third most mentioned response included meeting educational needs, educational experiences/goals and career goals. These three themes also highlight how several alumni alluded to expanding these needs and goals. Meeting educational/career needs and goals was mentioned four times by alumni. Alumni mentioned the following reasons three times each and included advanced readings, learning advanced concepts, skills and ideas and preparing respondents to transfer. Respondents mentioned the following comments two times each regarding the honors program meeting alumni’s educational needs and included gaining self esteem, gaining self confidence, the serious students within the program, the academic environment provided by the program, and the amount of knowledge alumni gained. Finally alumni made comments that were only mentioned once and include the varied pedagogy, the accelerated learning pace, field trips, challenging and inspiring faculty, the Honors Society and the scholarship opportunities.

Alumni were asked if the Honors Program expanded their educational goals. Of the respondents 81.9% agreed that the program did expand their educational goals as illustrated in Graph 3. Only three respondents did not feel that the program expanded their educational goals and they did not provide further explanations for their opinions.



Graph 3

Of the alumni who did feel their educational goals were expanded from their involvement in the Honors Program, the most mentioned response consisted of increased career and educational goals beyond their potential. Of these students, six alumni specifically expressed they were being pushed, tested and challenged to limits they did not know they possessed. Increasing career and education goals was noted nine times by respondents. The second most mentioned response included alumni transferring to prestigious colleges or colleges of their choice. Attending a prestigious college or the college of their choice was noted four times by respondents. Alumni mentioned the following two responses three times each and included exploring majors and/or class variety, and building self confidence. Respondents mentioned the following responses two times each and included the motivation they received from program involvement and the extra curricular activities provided by the program. Other responses noted by respondents once included improving self esteem, expanding horizons, taking a leadership role, scholarship opportunities, the personal attention given, the quality students, an expanded worldview and redefining their self concept.

Alumni were asked to provide their transfer date and the degree(s) they received from College of the Redwoods. Of the respondents, the vast majority (95.5%) received an Associate of Arts or an Associate of Science degree. Almost three quarters (72.7%) of alumni received singular degrees with one area of emphasis and 18.3% received singular degrees with multiple areas of emphasis or double Associate of Arts degrees.

Of the respondents, four alumni graduated from CR in 2007 and four alumni graduated in 2005. In the years of 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2004 a total of ten alumni graduated from CR, two alumni per year. The following years denote the remaining alumni's graduation years, in which one alumnus graduated each year 1996, 1998, 2007, and 2008.

Alumni were asked to provide the names of all the colleges and universities they applied to. Almost all alumni applied to multiple universities and colleges. Respondents applied to a variety of universities across the west coast and a vast majority of alumni were accepted to the college of their choice. The most frequent university alumni applied to was the University of California Berkeley (Cal Berkeley) in which slightly less than half (45.5%) of alumni applied to Cal Berkeley. The second and third most frequent universities alumni applied to included Humboldt State University (HSU) and University of California Los Angeles (UCLA). Both HSU and UCLA were each applied to by almost one third (31.8 %) of alumni. The fourth and fifth most frequent universities alumni applied to included the University of California Santa Cruz (UCSC) and University of California Santa Barbara (UCSB). Both UCSC and UCSB were each applied to by slightly less than one quarter (22.7%) of alumni. The sixth most frequent university alumni applied to was the

University of California Davis (UC Davis) in which less than one fifth (18.2%) of alumni applied to UC Davis. Two alumni applied to both San Francisco State University and Stanford University. Both SFSU and Stanford were each applied to by less than one tenth (9.1%) of alumni. The following colleges were only applied to by alumnus and include Hawaii Pacific, Sacramento State University, University of California Long Beach, Sonoma State University, California Polytechnic University-Pomona, Reed College-Oregon, Lewis and Clark College- Oregon, Whitman College-Washington, Southern Oregon University, Portland State University, California College of the Arts, University of California San Diego, Pepperdine University-Hawaii and Chapman University.

Alumni were also asked to disclose which colleges and universities they were accepted by. All colleges and universities accepted Honors alumni applications except for the following six: University of California Los Angeles, San Francisco State University, California Polytechnic University-Pomona, Whitman College-Washington, Stanford University and Portland State University. Although this may be true, three of the six colleges were from one alumnus, two of the six from another alumnus and the remaining two alumni each were not accepted by one college each.

There are many university and college websites which rank the top fifty most prestigious/top ranked/best US schools. Conducting a random web search of top colleges and universities, an average of five (between five and eight) of the colleges and universities in which honors alumni received acceptance were distinguished amongst these top fifty schools.

Alumni were asked to provide the year they graduated, what degree they received and from what university. Of the respondents, five alumni graduated in 2006, four alumni graduated in 2007, and three alumni graduated in 2004 with a Bachelor's degree. The following years denote the remaining alumni's graduation years for a Bachelor's degree, in which one alumnus graduated each year 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2005, and 2008. In 2009 and 2010 two alumni will graduate each year with a Bachelor's degree.

Of the respondents, four alumni have and three alumni will receive a Bachelor's degree from Cal Berkeley, which equates to slightly less than one third (31.9%) of all respondents. Of the respondents, three alumni have and three alumni will receive a Bachelor's degree from HSU, which equates to more than one quarter (27.3%) of all respondents. The remaining universities alumni received Bachelor's degrees from included Southern Oregon University, Pepperdine University, SFSU, Chapman University, California College of the Arts, Sonoma State University, UCLA and alumni will receive a Bachelor's degree from UCSC and Reed College.

College of the Redwoods alumni obtained or will obtain a variety of degrees. Two alumni obtained a degree in Social Work, one alumnus obtained and two alumni will receive a degree in Psychology, one alumnus obtained a degree in English with a Spanish minor and one alumnus will obtain a degree in English, one alumnus obtained and one alumnus will obtain a Bachelor's of Science degree in Biology, one alumnus obtained and one alumnus will obtain a degree in Interdisciplinary Studies and one alumnus will obtain a degree in Mathematics. The remainder of respondents obtained degrees in the following subjects: Comparative Literature, Classical Civilizations, Art History, Philosophy, Liberal Studies and one alumnus obtained a double major in International Studies and Spanish. Other alumni who have yet to obtain their degrees double majored in the following subjects: Biology and Art, and Geography and Atmospheric Science.

Some alumni obtained a Bachelor of Fine Arts versus a Bachelor of Arts or Science; one alumnus obtained a fine arts degree in Fashion Design and one alumnus obtained a fine arts degree in Film and Television.

A few alumni continued their education to reach more advanced degrees as well. One alumnus obtained a Master of Arts in Social Work, one alumnus obtained a Juris degree, one alumnus obtained a Teaching Credential, one alumnus obtained a Master of Fine Art in Production Design and Manufacturing and one alumnus is working to obtain a Master's of Arts in Marriage and Family Therapy.

Alumni's admissions chances may have been increased due to their involvement with the Honors Program. Alumni were asked to evaluate this claim and more than three quarters (81.8%) of respondents agreed that their Honors program participation enhanced their chances for transfer admission. Three respondents disagreed with this claim and one respondent did not answer the question. Of the respondents who disagreed, two provided no more support for their claim and one disagreed for the reason that they received instant admissions from College of the Redwoods to Humboldt State University.

Of the respondents who did agree with the claim, more than one quarter (27.3%) indicated the Honors courses showed academic dedication, educational motivation and accomplishment of completing difficult or more challenging courses. More than one fifth (22.7%) of the respondents expressed the Honors courses helped their transfer transcripts or made their transcripts look good. Four alumni noted the Honors courses plainly helped and two alumni felt Honors courses helped prepare them for transferring. Other reasons noted by respondents included the enhanced opportunity the Honors courses provided, the awards obtained from Honors courses and the pre-established relationship between College of the Redwoods and Humboldt State University.

Alumni were questioned if they ever changed their major throughout their education career. Most respondents did not indicate when these changes transpired, just that they did occur throughout their educational career. Of the respondents less than half (45.5%) did change their major and more than half (54.5%) did not change their academic major. Of the alumni who did not change their academic major, more than two thirds (66.7%) did not provide justification. Two alumni expressed they had adequate time to explore majors while at College of the Redwoods and changing majors was unnecessary. One alumnus stated it took them awhile to decide on an academic major; but once they decided they never changed their mind. Of the respondents who did change their academic major two alumni changed from single to double majors. The following major changes are noted below, with the last listed academic major as the subject area in which alumni obtained or will obtain a degree.

- Explored Creative writing, History, English, Humanities, Art History and Performance Studies to English
- Political Science to Atmospheric Science
- Math to Math and Music and back to only Math
- Music to Nursing to Biology with Marine Biology emphasis
- Nursing to psychology to Social Work
- English to International Studies to double major of International Studies and Spanish
- Spanish to Spanish and French to Interdisciplinary Studies
- English to Philosophy
- English to Spanish to English with a Spanish minor

Alumni were asked to explain the difference, if any, between Honors courses and regular College of the Redwoods courses. All alumni expressed honors courses varied from regular CR courses. The most mentioned statement was noted by every respondent and focused on the students

involved in the program. These comments included student aspects such as camaraderie, focus, interest, motivation, and excitement of the students, the peer pressure to perform from fellow honors students, and the relationships established with other honors students. Slightly less than three quarters (72.7%) of respondents indicated coursework as the second most mentioned difference and included the following adjectives to describe the coursework: challenging, engaging, stimulating, unique and interesting. More than one third (36.4%) of respondents stated the professors as the third most mentioned difference between Honors courses and regular CR courses. Some alumni described the honors professors as exciting, motivating, caring, challenging and exciting. More than one fifth (22.7%) of respondents indicated educational goals as the fourth most mentioned difference. The following two comments were noted four times each by alumni: honors courses had small class sizes and honors courses had good class discussions. Three alumni indicated regular courses contained a lot of busy work. Alumni indicated the following two comments each two times regarding honors courses: course participation was higher and provided a better learning environment compared to regular courses. The following comments were noted once by alumni regarding honors courses: academic isolation from other students (mainly non-honors students), “snubbing” of non-honors students, the self confidence gained from honors program, the field trips and the networks created from the honors program.

Alumni were posed a variety of questions regarding their transfer education. Respondents were asked if transfer courses were challenging, if the transfer courses were more challenging than honors courses and if transfer courses were more challenging than regular CR courses. Of the respondents, slightly less than half (45.5%) expressed transfer courses were academically challenging. 40.9% of alumni expressed transfer courses were similar to honors courses. A little less than one fifth (18.2) of respondents noted the following three comments regarding the challenging aspects of transfer courses: alumni were prepared for the challenging transfer courses; alumni indicated transfer courses required more coursework, and alumni noted transfer courses were more difficult. Three alumni stated honors courses were more difficult than transfer courses. Two respondents indicated there was no difference and comparison between transfer courses and honors courses. Two respondents expressed their transfer schools had larger classes, in which some alumni noted the class size influenced the challenging aspects of their transfer courses. Other comments noted once by alumni include transfer courses required more study time, transfer schools had teachers with varying pedagogical styles, students at their transfer schools were less focused than honors students and challenging professors and courses exist everywhere.

Alumni were questioned how *prepared* they felt to transfer compared to other students at their transfer schools. Of the respondents, 90.9% felt *prepared* to transfer. More than one third (36.4%) of alumni felt *very prepared* to transfer and slightly less than one fifth (18.2%) of alumni felt *more prepared to transfer than other students*. Three alumni felt the *honors program had prepared them to transfer*. Two alumni felt *equally prepared as other students* as well as two alumni *did not feel prepared to transfer*. Two respondents felt *well prepared* to transfer and two alumni noted they were *academically prepared* but not prepared for the city lifestyle where their college was located. Other remarks expressed once by alumni regarding their level of preparedness included feeling *over prepared* and feeling *disadvantaged as a transfer student*.

Respondents were asked to elaborate, specifically, how the honors program impacted their lives after leaving CR. Of the respondents, more than three quarters (81.8%) agreed the honors program did impact their life. Two respondents expressed the honors program did not impact their life after they left CR and two respondents did not answer the question. More than one third (36.4%) of respondents expressed the relationships established with students and faculty had the largest impact on their lives. More than one quarter (31.8%) of alumni indicated the honors

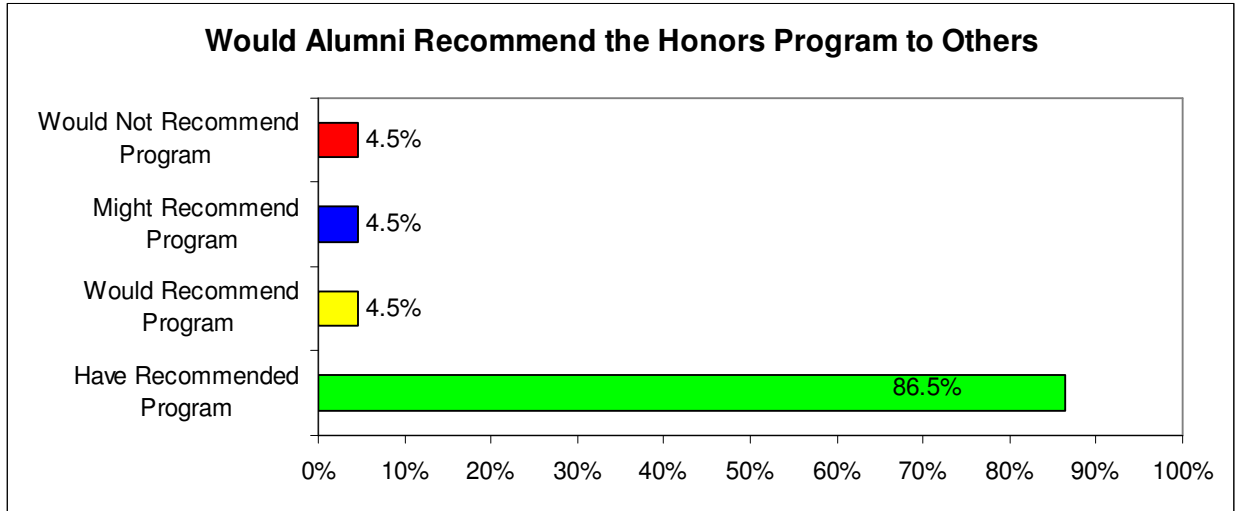
program provided them with self-efficacy, self-esteem and self-confidence; and gaining these specific attributes impacted their lives. More than one fifth (22.7%) of respondents noted the honors program impacted their lives by inspiring them to succeed and feeling success in the honors program and after transferring. Related to success and succeeding, more than one fifth (22.7%) of alumni stated the honors program impacted their lives by encouraging them to dream as well as to have high goals and aspirations. Three respondents expressed the honors program impacted their lives because they were accepted to the college of their choice, California State Berkeley. Two alumni noted the honors program was encouraging, and encouragement was the impact on their lives. The following comments were noted once by alumni regarding the impact the honors program had on their life: improved resume and transcript, viewed as intelligent by others, honors program changed their life, honors program motivated alumnus to enroll and receive a Masters degree, honors program motivated alumnus to become involved in volunteer work and community events, that the honors program was motivating and one alumnus was grateful for the program.

Alumni were questioned what aspects of the honors program were valuable. Of the respondents almost two thirds (63.6%) expressed the students were valuable. Of the respondents more than half (54.5%) indicated the faculty were valuable. Less than half (45.4%) of alumni noted the coursework was valuable and more than one quarter (27.3%) of alumni stated the general education transferable units were valuable. More than one fifth (22.7%) of respondents expressed the field trips were valuable. Three respondents noted each of the following aspects of the honors program as valuable: the class size, the priority registration and the “H” on their transcripts. Two alumni indicated Pat McCutcheon was a valuable aspect of the honors program. The following remarks were noted once each by alumni in regards to the valuable aspects of the honors program: gaining self-efficacy, succeeding and having high educational goals, attending the college of their choice, speaking to incoming honors students, financial assistance for tuition expenses and organizing honors award ceremonies.

Conversely, alumni were questioned what aspects of the honors program were less than valuable and asked how the honors program could be improved. Of the respondents, more than one third (36.4%) indicated the honors program should offer more courses. Many alumni expressed they would have taken more or all of their general education transfer requirements from the honors program if they were available. In relation to course offerings, more than one quarter (27.3%) of respondents noted the rotation, frequency and types of courses was limiting, and thus less valuable. Again, respondents expressed more alumni would have enrolled in more courses if they were offered. It should also be noted that more than one quarter (27.3%) of alumni stated the honors program is valuable, has no non-valuable aspects and does not need to be improved. Two respondents commented on each of the following comments in regards to less than valuable aspects of the honors program: the honors program has a snobby image and the honors program should have more difficult coursework. The following remarks were noted once each by alumni regarding the less than valuable aspects of the honors program: alienation from non-honors students, disliking the cohort element of the honors program, the competitive nature of the honors program, the program availability to all students, and the lack of transfer alumni feedback. The following comments were noted by alumni to improve the honors program: offering more honors courses more often, more funding for the honors program, more field trips, wanting the community feel of the honors program to be spread abroad, and improving the honors program recruitment efforts.

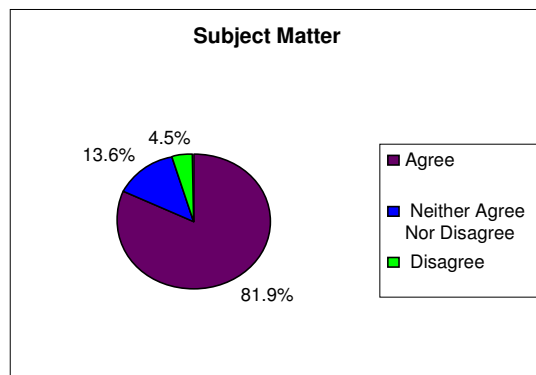
Alumni were asked questions about recommending the honors program to other students. Of the respondents, more than three quarters (86.5%) have recommended the honors program to other students. The remaining three alumni each had a different answer, one alumnus would recommend the honors program to other students but to date has not, one alumnus might

recommend the honors program to other students and one alumnus would not recommend the honors program to other students. Graph 4 shows the views of alumni recommending the honors program to other students.



Graph 4

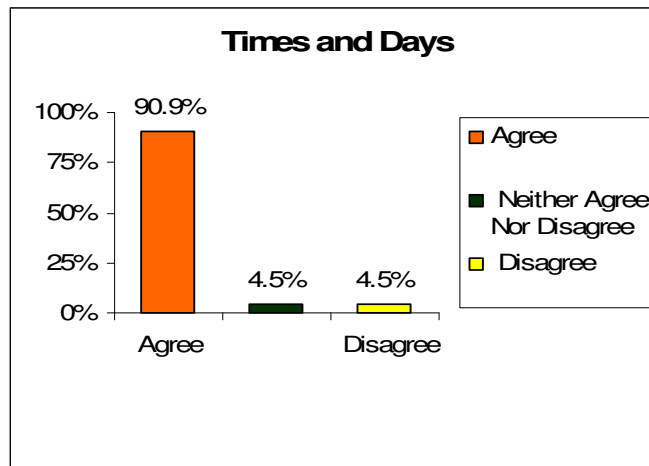
Respondents were posed a variety of statements regarding the honors program based on a standard Likert scale. The Likert scale varies from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Respondents were questioned if the subject matter of honors course offerings met their needs. Half (50.1%) of alumni strongly agreed the subject matter met their needs and almost one third (31.8%) agreed the subject matter met their needs. More than a tenth (13.6%) of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed the subject matter met their needs, one respondent (4.5%) strongly disagreed the subject matter met their needs and no respondents disagreed the subject matter met their needs. Graph 5 displays a simplified version of the Likert scale based on alumni’s responses to the subject matter of the honors program.



Graph 5

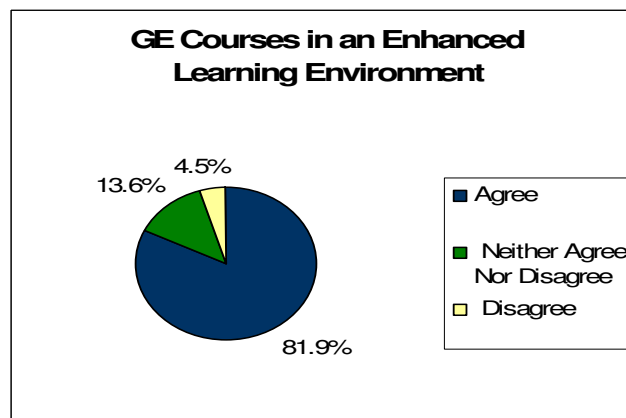
Alumni were asked if the times and days of honors course offerings met their needs. More than one third (40.9%) of alumni strongly agreed the times and days of course offerings met their needs and half (50%) of alumni agreed the times and days of course offerings met their needs. Only one respondent (4.5%) neither agreed nor disagreed the times and days of course offerings met their needs, only one respondent (4.5%) disagreed the times and days of course offerings met their needs

and no respondents strongly disagreed the times and days of course offerings met their needs. Graph 6 displays a simplified version of the Likert scale based on alumni's responses to the time and days of the honors course offerings.



Graph 6

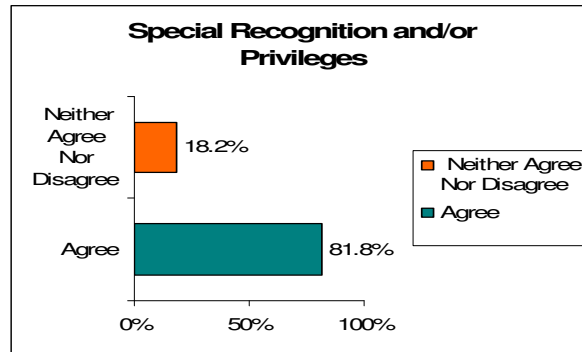
Alumni were asked if completion of general education courses in an enhanced learning environment prepared them for upper division classes. Of the respondents, more than half (59.2%) strongly agreed the completion of general education courses in an enhanced learning environment prepared them for upper division classes. More than one fifth (22.7%) of respondents agreed the completion of general education courses in an enhanced learning environment prepared them for upper division classes. More than one tenth (13.6%) of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed the completion of general education courses in an enhanced learning environment prepared them for upper division classes. Only one respondent (4.5%) disagreed that the completion of general education courses in an enhanced learning environment prepared them for upper division classes and no alumni strongly disagreed. Graph 7 displays a simplified version of the Likert scale based on alumni's responses to the completion of general education courses in an enhanced learning environment prepared them for upper division classes.



Graph 7

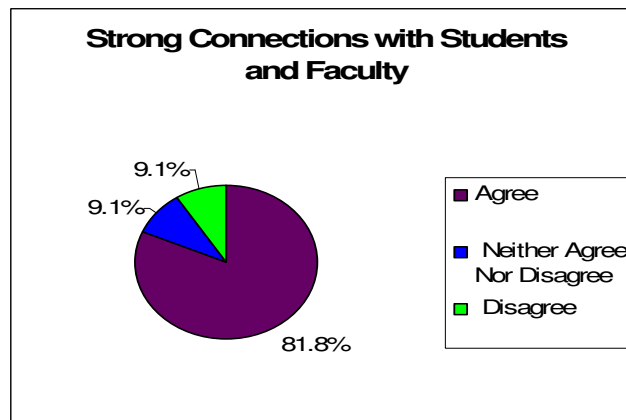
Alumni were questioned if special recognition and/or privileges upon graduation or transfer were important. Of the respondents, more than half (59.1%) strongly agreed special recognition and/or privileges were important, followed by one fifth (22.7%) of alumni who agreed. Less than one fifth (18.2%) of alumni neither agreed nor disagreed special recognition and/or privileges were

important and no alumni disagreed or strongly disagreed. Graph 8 displays a simplified version of the Likert scale based on alumni's responses to the importance of special recognition and/or privileges upon graduation or transfer.



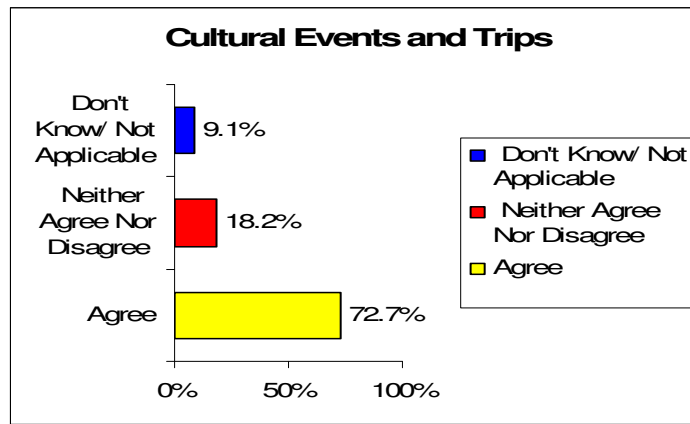
Graph 8

Alumni were posed the following claim, did strong personal connections with honors students and faculty make a significant difference in their educational goals, and asked to answer if they agreed or disagreed with the claim. Of the respondents, almost two thirds (63.6%) strongly agreed and almost one fifth (18.2%) agreed with the claim. Less than one tenth (9.1%) of alumni neither agreed nor disagreed with the claim, one alumnus (4.5%) disagreed with the claim and one alumnus (4.5%) strongly disagreed with the claim. Graph 9 displays a simplified version of the Likert scale based on alumni's responses to the claim that strong personal connections with honors students and faculty make a significant difference in their educational goals.



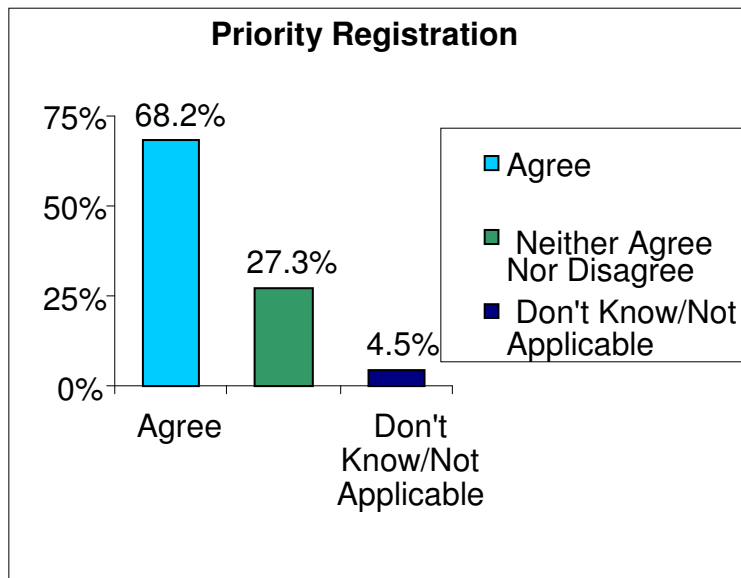
Graph 9

Alumni were asked if the cultural events and field trips offered by the honors program enhanced their lower division education. Of the respondents, exactly half (50.0%) strongly agreed and more than one fifth (22.7%) agreed cultural events and field trips offered by the honors program enhanced their lower division education. Less than one fifth (18.2%) of alumni neither agreed nor disagreed the cultural events and field trips offered by the honors program enhanced their lower division education. No alumni disagreed or strongly disagreed, however, two alumni (9.1%) noted they did not know or this opportunity was not provided when they were in the honors program. Graph 10 displays a simplified version of the Likert scale based on alumni's responses to the claim that cultural events and field trips offered by the honors program enhanced their lower division education.



Graph 10

Alumni were asked if priority registration was a valuable benefit of the honors program. Of the respondents more than half (54.5%) strongly agreed and more than one tenth (13.6%) agreed priority registration was a valuable honors program benefit. More than one quarter (27.3%) of alumni neither agreed nor disagreed and no alumni disagreed or strongly disagreed regarding this valuable benefit of the honors program, although one alumni (4.5%) noted they did not know/or this benefit was not offered when they were enrolled in the program. Graph 11 displays a simplified version of the Likert scale based on alumni’s responses to the claim that priority registration was a valuable benefit of the honors program.

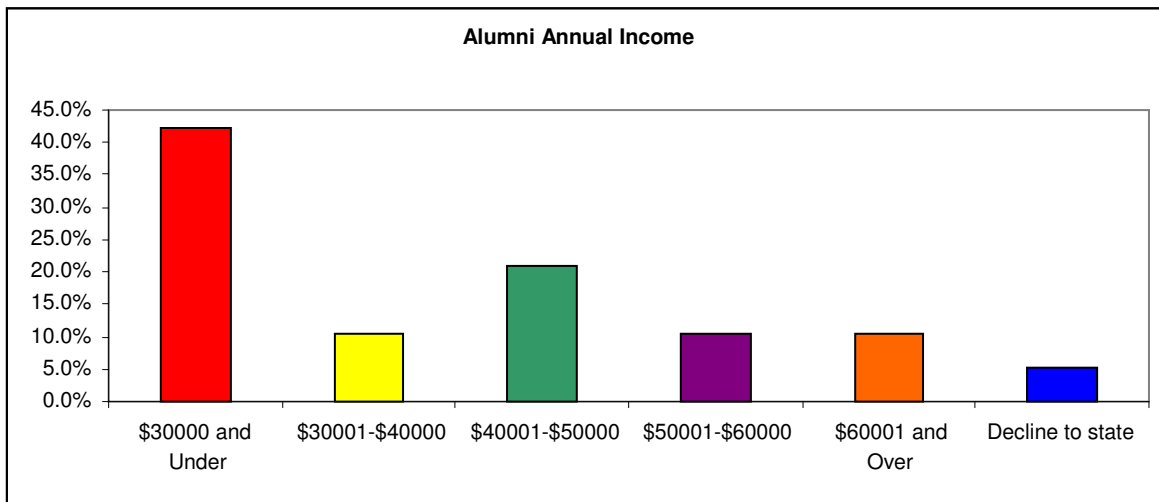


Graph 11

Alumni were asked to provide their current job title, and the name and location of their employer. Of the alumni, two alumni left the question unanswered, one alumnus wrote not available, one alumnus wrote none, one alumnus wrote retired, one alumnus wrote they owned their own business and provided no details and two alumni noted they were still in school. The remaining alumni provided the following information: (note person X is anonymously identified only to note they hold two jobs from two different employers)

- **5th grade teacher** Lodi Unified School District Lodi, CA
- **Associate Designer** Modern Amusement Santa Monica, CA
- **Clinician 1** Sempervirens Psychiatric Hospital Eureka, CA
- **Director of Sales and Marketing** Waterford Group FL, MI, TX, CA
- **Human Resources Office Assistant** College of the Redwoods Eureka, CA
- **LVN** St. Joseph Hospital Eureka, CA
- **Senior Program Analyst** Academy for Educational Development Washington DC
- **Story Assistant** FOX Kitchen Nightmares unknown
- **Tax Counsel** CA Board of Equalization Sacramento, CA
- **Director of Community Development & Outreach** Dell'Arte International Blue Lake, CA
- **Executive Search Consultant** Leadership Consultants unknown
- **Server (in school)** Citron Restaurant Oakland, CA
- **Cage Cashier (in school)** Bear River Casino Loleta, CA
- **No title (person X)** City of Arcata Arcata, CA
- **No title (person X)** Humboldt State University Arcata, CA

Alumni were asked to disclose their current annual income. Of the respondents three alumni did not answer and one alumna declined to state. More than one third (42.1%) of alumni earned less than \$30,000 annually. One tenth (10.5%) of alumni earned between \$30,001 - \$40,000 annually as well as one fifth (21.1%) of alumni earned between \$40,001 - \$50,000 annually. One tenth (10.5%) of alumni earned between \$50,001 - \$60,000 and one tenth (10.5%) earned more than \$60,001. The annual income data for alumni is represented in Graph 12.



Graph 12

Alumni were also asked to provide additional comments regarding the honors program at the end of the survey. Of the respondents, more than half (59.1%) did not provide additional comments. Three alumni noted yet again that the program should offer more courses, more GE/IGETC courses and more courses more often. The remaining comments were expressed one time each: to continue the program, to continue to inspire students, to enhance the programs website, to create an online component to the program, to keep in contact with alumni and professors, to have a honors program specific counselor and advisor, to add a community development element to the program such as internships or workshops, to redefine the programs purpose, to be a more student friendly program for more students and to obtain a new cultural anthropology professor.

Cohort Comparison

Part of the honors program research involved a cohort comparison by the IR department comparing cohorts of honors students and non honors students after they left College of the Redwoods. Due to the quantity of students served over the years, the researchers only reviewed 1998-2005; not going too far back where records are inaccurate or unreliable and not too soon, allowing students enough time to complete four year college degrees. It must be noted that an equal sample was not available due to the small numbers of honors students. Only so much validity and reliability can be applied to the following cohort comparisons. The cohorts were selected to match on the basis of when they entered College of the Redwoods, when they graduated, equal gender representation, and their final GPA.

The IR Department calculated the honors program had a total of 71 students between the years of 1998-2005 that had an educational goal of transferring and finished CR with a GPA of 3.2 or higher. Of these 71 students more than one half (61.9%, 44 students) actually transferred to another college. Of these transfer students, more than one third (43.2%, 19 students) graduated with a four year degree or better. This accounts for one quarter (26.7%) of all students who had an educational goal of transferring and finished CR with a GPA of 3.2 or higher. Of the transfer students who graduated, almost three quarters (73.7%, 14 students) received a Bachelor's of Arts or a Bachelor's of Science degree and the remaining five students earned unknown degrees.

The IR Department calculated the CR cohort had a total of 2055 students who had an educational goal of transferring and finished CR with a GPA of 3.2 or higher between the years of 1998-2005. Of these students, one fifth (19.9%, 408 students) actually transferred to another college. Of these transfer students, more than one third (39.7%, 162 students) graduated with a four year college degree or better. This accounts for less than one tenth (7.9%) of all students who had an educational goal of transferring and finished CR with a GPA of 3.2 or higher. Of the students who graduated, more than three quarters (77.8%, 126 students) received a Bachelor's of Arts or a Bachelor's of Science degree.

Comparing the two cohorts, honors students had a higher rate of transfer, 61.9% contrasted to non-honors students (19.9%). Although transfer honors students had a lower rate of degree earners, 73.7% compared to transfer non-honors students (77.8%). So even though transfer honors students had a higher rate of transfer, they had a lower rate of degrees earned. Honors students did, however, on average, transfer less often (not switching around from one college to another) and did attend more non-state universities and/or prestige schools.

Conclusion

Program Review results, in-depth interview findings, empirical observations of Honors Program members, Institutional Research's survey and Cohort Comparison all confirm the same outcomes. All three data sources tell us the following:

- Alumni identified the program's demanding curriculum, the caliber of other students, and strengthening their transcripts as primary reasons for choosing the program.
- Ignorance of the program's existence was cited repeatedly as the reason for not applying or not applying sooner.
- Honors students believed the challenging courses helped to meet their educational goals, especially IGETC/GE requirements, and to expand their educational and career goals.
- Alumni claimed their self-concept was redefined as they were pushed to achieve limits they did not know they possessed and were accepted by prestigious colleges that exceeded their previous expectations.

- Universities accepting Honors alumni were among the fifty most top ranked U.S. schools, and students' admissions chances appear to be increased by their involvement with the program.
- Alumni credit the difference in Honors courses to the camaraderie, focus and motivation of the students in the program, to the challenging and stimulating coursework, and to caring and exciting professors.
- Alumni felt prepared to transfer to the competitive universities that accepted them.
- Alumni agreed the program had impacted their lives through relationships established with faculty and other students, through inspiration to succeed, and by increased self-esteem.
- The majority of alumni identified the special recognition and cultural events offered by the program as enhancing their lower division education

Recommendations

Program Review, the alumni interviews, the Institutional Research survey and the National Student Clearinghouse cohort comparison all validate that the Honors Program has been very effective and significantly enhanced the academic and personal futures of many students. The data from all three modalities reflects the potential of Honors alumni to expand the image of CR as a college that serves students with a very wide range of abilities and promote the reputation of the District in the local community and beyond. However, alumni responses in each of the research modalities strongly suggest the following recommendations:

- More Honors course offerings are needed, especially more IGETC/GE classes.
- The rotation, frequency and types of courses are limiting and needs to be expanded.
- Lack of awareness and promotion of the program was a serious concern. Repeatedly, alumni said they would have taken more courses and taken them earlier if they had known about the program.
- To live up to the District's Mission Statement and serve students whose educational goal is to transfer, significantly more must be done to expand the visibility of the Honors Program and to let these students know the benefits it has to offer them. Specific recommendations include coverage of the Honors Program's opportunities at orientations and in CR promotional materials, briefing of counselors, and high school outreach programs about what Honors has to offer.
- The webpage could become a more powerful tool for realizing such promotion.
- Alumni profiles online could show future and current students where alumni have been and where they are going.
- More data is needed, such as annual surveys, collection of email addresses every semester and increased alumni connections.
- The fundamental change required for the Honors Program is a clear mandate from the College of the Redwoods administration addressing the objectives and responsibilities of the program and defining its place in both the administrative and academic structure of the institution.
- **Of most pressing concern is the lack of an Honors Director or budget for 2009-2010. The lack of an Honors Director could destroy this program that is far too good to lose. Membership in the Honors Transfer Council of California and the Transfer Alliance Program requires that the program have a director. Without a director we lose the valuable connections with many competitive universities our alliances provide.**

I conclude this report at the time of year when transferring Honors students are leaving, amid much excitement, where they've been accepted. Dreams of attending Cal, UCLA and Davis are being realized. As one final example I would like to share the educational success of one exceptional student. She has been very active in Honors since her first semester and she just got accepted to Massachusetts Institute of Technology at the young age of seventeen. She represents College of the Redwoods' Mission Statement to meet the differing needs of all our students, from the under-prepared to the approximately 10% who are very well-prepared to meet the challenges the Honors Program presents to them and deserve the District's wholehearted support.



Terry Lingrey submitting her final thesis at Reed College, smiling this big even though she doesn't yet know she's been elected to Phi Beta Kappa!

Appendix
Honors Program Enrollment Fall 2004-Spring 2009

Term	Section Name	Duplicated Headcount	Unduplicated Headcount
2004F	MATH-15-E9305	7	
2004F	PSYCH-1-E0280	22	
2004F	SPCH-1-E0281	13	
		42	36
2005S	ASTRO-10-E0930	16	
2005S	ENGL-22-E1488	21	
2005S	POLSC-10-E1499	14	
2005S	ART-4-E1605	17	
		68	43
2005F	HIST-9-E2852	15	
2005F	SPCH-1-E3036	26	
2005F	ENGL-10-E3100	0	
		41	34
2006S	SOC-5-E4244	26	
2006S	CINE-1-E4632	13	
2006S	ENGL-1B-E4883	17	
		56	44
2006F	SPCH-1-E5555	15	
2006F	BIOL-1-E5679	20	
2006F	PSYCH-1-E5803	16	
2006F	ENGL-10-E5944	0	
2006F	ENGL-18-E6916	9	
		60	45
2007S	POLSC-10-E7156	13	
2007S	ENGL-22-E7365	25	
2007S	ASTRO-10-E7379	15	
2007S	MATH-15-E7476	10	
		63	48
2007F	CINE-1-E8307	18	
2007F	ANTH-3-E8512	12	
2007F	SPCH-1-E8703	10	
2007F	ENGL-61-E8791	8	
		48	42
2008S	SOC-5-E9716	12	
2008S	ART-4-E9782	11	
2008S	ENGL-1B-E9994	10	
2008S	HIST-9-E0021	9	
		42	35
2008F	PSYCH-1-E1135	9	
2008F	BIOL-1-E2052	10	
2008F	ENVSC-11-E2608	8	
		27	19
2009S	ENGL-22-E1818	0	
2009S	MATH-15-E1990	12	
2009S	ASTRO-10-E3222	1	
2009S	ASTRO-10-E3223	1	
2009S	HIST-9-E3228	3	
2009S	ENGL-32-E3262	2	
2009S	ENGL-18-E3283	2	
2009S	ENGL-1A-T3298	1	
2009S	HIST-9-E3323	1	
2009S	ENVSC-11-E3326	2	
2009S	ASTRO-10-E3331	1	
2009S	PSYCH-1-E3378	0	
		26	24
2009F	CINE-1-E4345	4	
2009F	SPCH-1-E4405	2	
2009F	ENGL-22-E4433	3	
2009F	ENGL-1B-E4920	1	
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