Honors College

Jill Nelson Granger

Presented at Academic Affairs Council
August 2015
Honors Colleges, generalities

- **Value-Added**: cost-conscious families see these as a lower cost alternative with an “Ivy-League” experience.

- **Rising Tide**: programs that attract the best students, and raise the prestige of the school will have overall positive effects on ALL students.

- **Contribute to the College’s existing mission**
Honors Colleges, generalities

- View Honors College as an instrument for helping faculty to develop new modes of instruction, opportunities for ALL students based on engagement, forum for larger picture issues such as globalization, technology, and civic engagement.

- Opportunity to “focus on the imperatives”
  - Fluency in oral & written communication
  - Maintain Diversity
  - Numeric literacy and competency
  - Global experience & perspective
  - Critical thinking
  - Internships, Service-Learning
  - Moral and ethical decision making
  - Experience citizenship in action

- Value Added
- Rising Tide
- Modeling Best Practice
- Assessment

Assessment

- There is very little in the literature to show what the actual outcomes of Honors programs are.
  - Tend to be situational reports, not across institutions, which look at global effects and trends rather than specific outcomes
  - Confounding factors are not well considered

- More pressure than ever to demonstrate outcomes and show proof of accountability
The Future

- Our Challenges:
  - Articulating what those benefits are
  - Communicating value
  - Focusing on the higher-level learning and educational “imperatives” of a 21st Century Education
  - Deliver on excellence consistently

- Maintain and INCREASE inclusivity and diversity
- Increase opportunities for engagement broadly
- Focus on Student Initiative as a entry point into Honors
- Assure that students have exposure to opportunities in Honors and support from the program to succeed
The Future

Our Challenges:

- Technology as it supports teaching and learning
- Internships and Service-Learning that are integrated into the academic program
- Global experiences
- Responding to the needs of non-traditional students
- Supporting Faculty in technology and innovation; providing learning spaces and resources

- Measuring the impact of our programming. Are we serving the student well? Are we serving ALL our students well?
- Communicating outcomes to stake-holders in ways that are meaningful.
- Using our assessment to make decisions about future directions.
Questions for YOU!

- What are the key values of Honors and how do we maintain our distinctiveness while recognizing that we have increasing competition and pressure in higher education?

- What are the future directions of WCU’s Honors College for serving students in the 21st-Century University?