New Faculty Involvement in the University Honors Program

The University Honors Program offers many academic and leadership opportunities for high-ability (ACT composite average >30) undergraduates at Iowa State. A major part of the program is First-Year Honors, a large (~450 student) learning community; more than half of these students plan to major in a STEM discipline. In all, well over 1000 Honors students are enrolled at Iowa State.

Faculty work with Honors students in many ways:

- Teaching Honors-designated courses, for example Math 166H, Physics 221H, English 250H
- Overseeing Honors-designated lab, discussion, or recitation sections
- Working with individual students in regular courses to create a “contract” of in-depth work for Honors credit
- Teaching interdisciplinary Honors seminars, 1- or 2-credit courses that allow experimentation and innovation in teaching
- Advising students in capstone experiences
- Mentoring students who participate in undergraduate research (see below).

First-Year and University Honors Contacts:

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First-Year Honors Mentor Program

Each spring term, First-Year Honors students have the option of participating in undergraduate research. This program offers an immediate way for new faculty to interact with Honors students, as students are paired with faculty for research that ranges from creative to technical, from fieldwork to materials preparation to editing.

Both faculty and students profit from the partnership: students gain hands-on experience in research and insight into possible majors and career paths. Faculty enhance their productivity and stretch their time, grants, or startup funding by working with bright and able students.

Students report that Mentor Program helps them confirm their choice of major or career, and understand the meaning and significance of research in academia and industry. One student reported “I learned things I would not have learned in my classes. More than this, research gives the opportunity to learn things nobody has learned before, and there is a very cool feeling about that.”

For more on the Mentor Program, see: http://www.honors.iastate.edu/faculty/mentor.php

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