

***Task Force Summary:
Radford University Honors Academy
Faculty Forum
18 September 2012***

- Directive
- Task Force Membership
- Timeline
- National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC) Standards
- Program History at Radford University
- Mission, Vision, and Goals
- Strategic Plan
- Enrollment and Demographics
- Personnel and Organizational Structure
- Current Course Offerings
- Relations with Academic Affairs
- Financial History
- Admissions Requirements and Financial Assistance
- Student Retention
- Enrollment History
- Graduation Rate
- Student Scholarship
- Conversation with ASU Director
- Surveys: Student, Faculty, and Alumni
- Focus Groups: Student and Faculty
- Facilities
- Student Organization: Honors Academy Student Organization (HASO)
- Regional and National Honors Programs and Colleges
- External Consultant's Report
- Executive Summary and Recommendations

Executive Summary*

During the Task Force meeting on February 28, 2012 it was unanimously recommended to include an executive summary of the five most critical areas for enhancement. They are listed (unranked) as follows.

- Resources - The program has insufficient staff (especially academic advisers and support personnel), funding, and facilities to manage its current student enrollment. It is recommended that the available resources be increased to match the needs, or that enrollment be decreased consonant with available funding in efforts to significantly improve quality (Specific Recommendations 1-18).
- Communication - The program has inconsistent patterns of communication with other academic departments and schools, campus offices, and within the honors program itself. It is recommended that a comprehensive and strategic communications plan be developed in conjunction with qualified campus individuals (e.g., School of Communication and Office of University Relations) or external consultants to best convey information about the honors programs (Specific Recommendations 19-34).
- Operational Policies and Procedures - The Honors Academy is not operationally well defined in terms of faculty and student expectations, qualifications, and training. It is recommended that student and faculty requirements for honors classes, grading, capstone projects, course contract proposals, research, and financial aid be clearly defined through sequential orientations (e.g., New Faculty Orientation) and on-going classes designed to best inform all parties (Specific Recommendations 35-45).
- Organizational Structure - The Honors Academy has a reported history of autonomous organization. It is recommended that the Honors Academy develop and implement a detailed business plan for transitioning to an Honors Program, and later to an Honors College, in accordance with the National Collegiate Honors Council. Dr. Spurrier (external consultant) is highly recommended to assist in developing a new organizational plan (Specific Recommendations 46-49).
- Curriculum - The curriculum for honors students is not well coordinated across academic disciplines or within some core courses. While some students have had truly exceptional experiences, a significant number of faculty and students have reported a lack of rigor and depth concurrent with advanced study. It is recommended that as an initial phase for improving the overall quality that all academic experiences, especially contracted classes and academic advising, be reviewed in terms of achieving the rigor, depth of knowledge, and skills expected for our best and brightest students (Specific Recommendations 50-64).

From: *Radford University Honors Academy: Task Force Report and Recommendations* (2012). The Honors Academy Task Force Committee, Radford University, pp. 61-62.

*Sixty-four (64) specific recommendations were made based upon a comprehensive review of both internal and external constituents.