

**BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

**REQUEST FOR COMMITTEE AND BOARD ACTION**

**COMMITTEE:** Academic Affairs

**NO.:** AAC 17-25

**COMMITTEE DATE:** June 13, 2017

**BOARD DATE:** June 20, 2017

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**RENEWAL OF NORTH SHORE COMMUNITY COLLEGE MEMBERSHIP IN THE  
COMMONWEALTH HONORS PROGRAM**

**MOVED:** The Board of Higher Education accepts the report of the Commonwealth Honors Program Executive Committee and renews the membership of **North Shore Community College** in the **Commonwealth Honors Program** for six years, effective June 20, 2017.

**Authority:** Commonwealth Honors Program Approval Process Guidelines as Revised by the Board of Higher Education in November 2006; G.L. c. 15A, § 9.

**Contact:** Patricia A. Marshall, Ph.D., Deputy Commissioner for Academic Affairs and Student Success

## **BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

**June 2017**

### **North Shore Community College Renewal of Membership in Commonwealth Honors Program**

#### **BACKGROUND**

This motion concerns the continuation of North Shore Community College's membership in the Commonwealth Honors Program. According to the Commonwealth Honors Program Guidelines, once Commonwealth Honors Program approval has been obtained by an institution, the Program will be reviewed every six years by the Commonwealth Honors Executive Committee. The report of the Committee shall be forwarded to the Board of Higher Education for approval.

#### **REVIEW PROCESS**

North Shore Community College prepared a self-study document presenting its Honors Program structure and operation in terms of the Commonwealth Honors Program requirements. The report provided evidence documenting the fulfillment of the following criteria:

1. Alignment of the mission and goals
2. Organization and administration
3. Admissions criteria
4. Transfer criteria
5. Program curriculum
6. Graduation criteria
7. Program resources
8. Curriculum Review Process

#### **REVIEW TEAM FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

On February 8, 2017, the Commonwealth Honors Program (CHP) Review Committee conducted a day-long review of the Honors Program at North Shore Community College having previously received and studied North Shore Community College's application for approval. The site visit was hosted and organized by Honors Program Coordinator, Tiffany Magnolia and included meetings with Dr. Magnolia, faculty who taught honors courses, honors program students, and honors committee members. The visit included an interview with college President Patricia Gentile and college Vice President of Academic Affairs, Karen Hynick.

The Committee was impressed with the goals of the new honors coordinator, the enthusiasm of honors instructors and students and the commitment of the Vice President and President in support of further growth of the Honors Program. The committee was pleased to see the progress that NSCC made in recent years and applauded the strong curriculum, resources, and administrative support integral to a successful Commonwealth Honors Program.

Although the Committee found some areas where the program could improve, it found NSCC's CHP met the required criteria. The Committee recommends re-approval of the North Shore Community College Honors Program.

Recommendations from the visiting committee included the following:

1. Give one additional course reassignment (2/3) to give the coordinator time to highlight the Honors Program on the Danvers Campus;
2. Make the Honors Seminar a team-taught course;
3. Expand the role of the Honors Program committee by including them in the review of the Honors Contract proposals, and add a student to the committee;
4. Fund the institutional membership in the National Collegiate Honors Council and conference attendance for the Honors Coordinator;
5. Identify Honors Composition 1 and 2 students as member of the Honors Program;
6. Create honors social events and activities, including an Honors Showcase;
7. Pay faculty for mentoring Honors Contract students;
8. Increase the profile of the Commonwealth Honors Program: all signage, documentation, and marketing materials should clearly define the program as a Commonwealth Honors Program. The NSCC Marketing Office should produce a high-end, color, bi-fold brochure about the Program.

## **INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE**

North Shore Community College offered the following responses to the recommendations made by the visiting team:

1. Dr. Hynick is proposing adding on additional course reassignment in the spring semester of 2018 for Dr. Magnolia to promote recruitment into the Honors program.
2. Dr. Magnolia and the HPAC will discuss the opportunities to build team-taught Honors Seminar classes, which the administration supports.
3. HPAC will begin to review Honors Contract proposals and will be adding a student to the committee.
4. The college has added funding to support membership in the Regional Collegiate Honors Council and will support the coordinator's attendance at the regional conference in next year's budget.
5. The college will begin identifying and coding students in Honors Composition 1 and 2 as members of the Honors Program per the visiting committee's recommendation and the new admission standards by the HPAC. This should result in a doubling in the number of Honors students next year.
6. Plans are underway to launch an Honors Showcase for spring of 2018.
7. Dr. Hynick and Dr. Magnolia have created a stipend arrangement to compensate faculty mentors.
8. Dr. Magnolia contacted NSCC's marketing department asking to upgrade the promotional materials.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Department of Higher Education staff thoroughly reviewed all documentation received from the Commonwealth Honors Program Executive Committee and recommends that the Board

approve the renewal of the membership of **North Shore Community College** in the **Commonwealth Honors Program**.