NEW COLLEGE: A PROPOSAL

by

The Committee to Design the

University Honors Program

Boston University
Draft:  April 4, 2008
NEW COLLEGE: A PROPOSAL

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Committee to Design the University Honors Program appointed by President Robert A. Brown recommends the following:

1. We propose the establishment of a four-year university-wide honors program tentatively called New College. Its mission will be to provide an innovative model of undergraduate education by building and sustaining a community of students in close contact with scholars, researchers and artists all committed to a common ideal of creation and discovery through research and invention. New College will provide a testing ground for new ideas that will have a substantial effect on practice throughout Boston University.

2. We propose an integrated four-year curriculum for students in New College incorporating freshman seminars on engaging, timely issues; modular based lecture courses exploring the workings of a wide range of disciplines; a summer research experience or internship; and a keystone project. Students will pursue a concentration within Boston University’s existing Schools and Colleges in conjunction with involvement in New College. Distribution requirements in these Schools and Colleges may be satisfied by New College courses.

3. We propose the development of new, cross-School and College interdisciplinary concentrations under the aegis of New College.

4. We propose that New College be led by a Dean who will report directly to the Provost, have its own administration and staff, and have two advisory boards: an internal board consisting of New College faculty representing Boston University Schools and Colleges and other deans (or their representatives) serving ex officio; and an external board consisting of figures from the worlds of business, education, science/technology, politics and the arts.

5. We propose that prospective students apply for admission to a specific School or College while also indicating their interest in enrolling at New College. Students will be accepted into
New College based on guidelines established by the faculty of New College in collaboration with the Office of Admissions. New College will not grant degrees.

6. We propose providing the option of residential housing for New College students; establishing an extensive co-curricular plan that includes a series of seminars, master classes, and site visits focusing on metropolitan Boston’s cultural, social, political, scientific, and business institutions; and creating a physical setting that will provide a central gathering space for New College faculty, students, and staff.
MISSION AND RATIONALE

We propose the establishment of a four-year university-wide honors program tentatively entitled New College. Its mission will be to provide an innovative model of undergraduate education by building and sustaining a community of students in close contact with scholars, researchers, artists and professionals all committed to a common ideal of creation and discovery through research and invention. New College will provide a testing ground for new ideas that will have a substantial effect on educational practice throughout Boston University.

Our brief was to create an honors program that would replace the University Professors Program and, possibly, other existing honors programs. The committee began its work by surveying honors programs at public and private institutions throughout the United States to identify best practices. Such programs were uniformly characterized by lofty rhetoric, yet almost all can be summarized by a limited set of choices: Does the program have a segregated residential component? Does the program offer segregated small classes? Does the program have a separate faculty? Does the program require a senior thesis? More generally, the majority of these programs seem more closely geared to the training of academic specialists than to the intellectual and moral development of the self. And, in many cases, they function (explicitly or implicitly) as an attempt to create an elite program within the institution geared only towards providing the “exceptional” students with extra resources.

While recognizing the value of honors programs and many of the features incorporated therein, the Committee made a conscious decision to pursue a more ambitious goal, made possible by the distinctive character of Boston University. Hence, while recommending the adoption of some of the components of existing honors programs, the Committee intends them to serve a very different mission. We are seeking to create within Boston University a community of students, scholars, scientists, and artists engaged in a focused experience of discovery through research and invention. Our intent is to pursue the University Professors Program’s goal of finding ways of integrating knowledge, bridging the gaps between Schools and Colleges, and fostering close contact between students and faculty.

We propose the creation of a four-year, university-wide college, which, for the purposes of this proposal, we refer to as “New College.” The defining feature of the student in New College is a commitment to hands-on discovery, exploration, and learning through research and creation from matriculation to graduation (and hopefully beyond). Boston University is perfectly positioned to
combine the best features of research, liberal arts, and pre-professional training. As an academic “start-up,” New College will be relatively unhampered by the weight of existing practices, requirements, and interests that often impede innovation in well-established programs, departments, and colleges. Unlike most “start-ups,” however, it has the advantage of being able to leverage the rich resources of a major urban research University.

New College must draw on the resources of different Schools and Colleges to bring together a community of scholars, scientists, artists, and professionals, which includes faculty, researchers, graduate students, and undergraduates. The program must provide ways for these groups that do not normally come into contact with each other to do so.

The community the program creates must not turn in on itself. At every step of the way we need to ensure that what the program is doing has an impact on the University and, perhaps, the broader Boston community (e.g., lectures, symposia, cultural events). In turn, the program should provide a fertile venue for broad pedagogical experimentation. We fully expect the structure and offerings of New College to evolve in order to serve best the educational mission of the University.

We expect that excellent students will continue to flourish in all of the University’s existing undergraduate Schools and Colleges. One of the many advantages New College will offer students is an outstanding peer group of like-minded students who value both social community and intellectual discovery. Though our program will offer extensive opportunity for interdisciplinary exploration, it will be hospitable as well to those interested in pursuing their own academic specialties at the highest level. Indeed, it is our expectation that most of the students in New College will also pursue a traditional concentration through the University’s existing programs.

One aspect of academic life that is often underappreciated by undergraduates is the bicameral nature of the research university. For most students, the university is a repository of learning, made available to enquirers through classroom and co-curricular activities. But this exemplifies only one of the traditional aspects of a university. For most faculty, researchers, and graduate students, the university is a place of creation, where research, experimentation, and other creative work lead to an expansion of the boundaries of human understanding.

The model for undergraduate education that we propose places research and experimentation at its core. Our program seeks to:
1) focus on the broad philosophical and methodological foundations of a wide range of disciplines with particular emphasis on strengthening students’ understanding of how practitioners approach open questions in their respective fields;

2) provide students not only with the opportunity to address timely, engaging contemporary issues, but also with the necessary tools to do so;

3) integrate liberal education and pre-professional education by exposing students to the concepts and practices of management, communication, engineering, fine arts, medicine and law, as well as the arts and sciences.

We hope that this model will have a substantial influence on general practice at Boston University – and on other institutions as well.

**ARC AND ARCHITECTURE**

Recommendation: We propose an integrated four-year curriculum for students in New College incorporating freshman seminars on engaging, timely issues; modular based lecture courses exploring the workings of a wide range of disciplines; a summer research experience or internship; and a keystone project. Students will pursue a concentration within Boston University’s existing Schools and Colleges in conjunction with involvement in New College. Distribution requirements in these Schools and Colleges may be satisfied by New College courses.

Because the defining feature of the student in New College is a commitment to discovery, the curriculum will provide systematic opportunities for exploration and learning through research in a wide range of disciplines from the professions to the arts and sciences.

The curriculum for New College consists of both a sequence of courses that encompasses the full four years of a student’s time in the program and an extensive set of related co-curricular activities. Spreading the curriculum over a student’s entire career at the University encourages full engagement with research and invention while allowing students to complete the requirements of even the more demanding departmental majors. Linking the courses to co-curricular activities creates a context for education, research, and intellectual development beyond the classroom.
The four-year sequence of courses is as follows (all courses are four credits):

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Approaching the World: Freshman Seminars

The first year curriculum consists of a series of thematic seminars (with enrollment limited to 20 students). The seminars should be timely and provocative, focusing on engaging personal, ethical, social, political, economic, scientific, technological, and aesthetic issues in the modern world. For example, seminars could explore topics such as Life, Death, and Law; Genetics and Biological Ethics; Mind and Machines; Global Warming; Art and Memory; and Diversity and Justice. The seminars will provide students with the opportunity for an intensive immersion both with the subject matter and with the variety of approaches that scholars bring to bear on studying it. Courses will be designed to draw on the unique strengths and resources that can be found at the University and in the broader Boston community and will provide extensive opportunities for students to have their research and writing criticized by faculty. Students will be required to take at least one seminar during the first year that provides significant training in quantitative reasoning.

The seminars will introduce students to a diverse range of skills and methods that they can bring to bear on confronting the “big problems” under investigation. In addition to the approaches and topics specific to the seminars, all students in New College will be expected, as part of the requirements for the seminars, to demonstrate competence in a number of skills that will provide the basis for their subsequent work in the program. These skills will include:

1. understanding of the basic forms of making coherent arguments as well as an awareness of various bad practices in argumentation and how to avoid them;

2. knowledge of how to locate and use sources such as library catalogues, databases, archives, etc., as well as how to evaluate the reliability of these materials;

3. general understanding of the proper methodology for citation (relevant here is the important issue of how to avoid the subtler forms of plagiarism);
4. competence in quantitative reasoning;

5. ability to communicate ideas effectively through written, oral, and visual means.

The students we hope to recruit to the program will likely have already achieved a level of competence in some, though not all, of these areas. Instruction in the skills required will be carried out by means of a set of extra-classroom modules and in ongoing workshops offered by New College. Students will be required to complete the various modules by the end of their first year and faculty will be encouraged to incorporate relevant modules into their seminars (e.g., before writing a particular paper, students could be asked to complete the module on “Fallacious Arguments and How to Avoid Them”).

*Architecture of Discovery: Sophomore Lectures*

The second year sequence will consist of two large lecture courses (part I in the fall and part II in the spring), complemented by faculty-directed discussion sections that present students with a broad overview of differing modes of scientific, scholarly, aesthetic, and professional inquiry. The intention is to provide an integrated approach that acquaints students with the range of cognitive techniques used by researchers in a variety of disciplines. The course will draw on resources from across all the Schools and Colleges of the University and, as a side-effect, will provide students in New College with an understanding of the full range of academic resources available at Boston University.

Each course will be divided into a sequence of modules, with instruction organized by a team of faculty and supplemented by guest speakers. We anticipate substantial modules running from 4-7 weeks. Topics may vary from year to year, but would provide an exposure to the different modes of analysis employed in the natural sciences, the social sciences, the humanities, the arts, and the professions, as well as an analysis of a variety of different human “inventions” (i.e., works of art, significant technologies, complex social organizations, theoretical constructs, laws, etc.). We expect that faculty from the professional schools, including law and medicine, will make a substantial contribution to the “Architecture of Discovery” sequence.

Discussion sections will be directed by faculty members associated with New College and will be devoted to drawing together the various topics that will be presented over the course of the year. There will also be opportunity for first-hand experience of the disciplines under investigation.
**Sophomore Summer**

Having acquired basic tools for research and discovery, the sophomore summer provides an opportunity for students to put these skills into practice. New College will assist students in securing research positions in laboratories, internships in professional organizations, and similar experiences wherein they may engage in research and invention firsthand. Many students, especially those for whom foreign language or cultural studies are important, may find a position abroad. Certain students may elect to study or work together in various programs or venues. We expect that many of these positions will be selected by students on the basis of their principal concentration, and may provide the foundation for their subsequent research and eventually their keystone project.

**Proposal and Performance: Junior Seminars**

During their third year in the College, students take one seminar, either in the fall or the spring term, in which they will develop and defend a research proposal. (This arrangement should allow students to spend at least one semester abroad should they choose to do so.) The year culminates with a formal presentation and defense of each student’s research proposal.

The preliminary presentation will likely take the form of a brief, written statement. The form of the final performance would depend on the nature of the project: for some, it might be similar to a thesis defense (a seminar followed by intensive questioning by a panel of experts). For others, it might be an artistic performance or model. While the performance aspect of the seminar does not have to be geared to the keystone, we expect that in many cases it would be closely allied with it. The seminars would typically involve five to six weeks of material common to all members of the class; then four weeks of each student working on his or her individual topic. During this period the class would foster communication among students working in different disciplines and media. Acceptance of the junior proposal would be required for continuation in the program for senior year and for the release of a “discovery stipend” to support the keystone project.

Proposal and performance is a one-semester course, offered both semesters. Many of the most intensive concentrations begin to place significant demands upon students’ time in their junior year. Offering the course both semesters allows students to accommodate these demands. It also allows students to spend a semester in study abroad. During the semester in which students are
not enrolled in a New College course, the co-curricular activities will be structured to keep students engaged with the program.

Keystone: Senior Year Project

Many University programs incorporate a thesis or capstone project as the culmination of a student’s college experience. New College students in their senior year would concentrate on a project that is not simply the culmination of their 4-year program, but ideally would connect them with the life they expect to lead upon graduation. For this reason, we have chosen the name “keystone” better to reflect the purpose of this project. The keystone would take the form of original research, artistic creation, invention or the like.

The presentation of the keystone would take the form appropriate for the students’ chosen discipline. For example, in the sciences this is usually a scientific article presenting the fruits of original research, often accompanied by a research seminar. In the humanities the project may take the form of a thesis, and in the arts perhaps a performance or a series of works (e.g. paintings, short stories, etc.).

As the nature of research in some fields is inherently collaborative, the keystone project may involve a team of students, rather than an individual. This would allow students from different disciplines and Schools/Colleges to combine their efforts.

At the end of the senior year, New College students will present their projects in a conference, which they will take the lead in designing. The conference could take place directly before graduation so that family members might be present.

INTERDISCIPLINARY CONCENTRATIONS

Recommendation: We propose the development of new, cross-School and College interdisciplinary concentrations under the aegis of New College.

We expect that most students in New College will pursue conventional disciplinary majors in conjunction with their commitment to the research and discovery agenda. But the structure of New College is intended to allow experimentation with new pedagogical opportunities.
Specifically, as an all-University program, New College is the ideal venue to explore cross-School/College interdisciplinary concentrations that would attract and serve those students for whom traditional disciplinary majors are not adequate.

Given the danger of interdisciplinary studies’ degenerating into what is simply “undisciplined,” these concentrations must offer rigorous, coherent courses of study while permitting a significant degree of freedom and choice. For instance, it might be interesting to develop an “Arts Administration” concentration that combines fine arts, art history, and management. Also, we have begun to sketch out a business/liberal arts concentration, which combines management with history, international relations, philosophy/ethics, and literature.

As a small entrepreneurial entity committed to innovation, New College is well positioned to pioneer interdisciplinary concentrations. New College will design and administer interdisciplinary concentrations in conjunction with the other Schools/Colleges that will grant degrees. Students outside of New College can pursue one of the new interdisciplinary concentrations with the approval of their Schools/Colleges.

**STRATEGY AND STRUCTURE**

Recommendation: We propose that New College be led by a Dean who will report directly to the Provost, have its own administration and staff, and have two advisory boards: an internal board consisting of New College faculty representing Boston University Schools and Colleges and other deans (or their representatives) serving *ex officio*; and an external board consisting of figures from the worlds of business, education, science/technology, politics and the arts.

Our goal was to ensure that New College became a nucleus for intellectual experimentation for the entire University, drawing on faculty from all of its Schools and Colleges. Achieving this goal means breaking with the convention of establishing an isolated program cut off from the broader institution. Our task, therefore, was to devise a framework that would a) offer students the experience of a small college integrated with a large university, b) build and sustain a community dedicated to shared discovery, and c) offer opportunities for interdisciplinary, intercollegiate collaboration involving the liberal arts and the professional schools.
**Faculty**

New College will require the involvement of faculty from across the University. This involvement will take many forms: some faculty members will teach courses or modules of courses or act as discussion leaders. Others will participate by mentoring students and supervising keystone projects. We need a core of accomplished faculty members committed to the success of New College, but must avoid the impression that there is an elite honors faculty.

We want to ensure that faculty circulate in and out of New College. They will bring to New College their own disciplinary backgrounds, research agendas, and analytic approaches. And they will bring back to their departments an appreciation of the breadth of research and teaching at the University, experience with applying innovative pedagogies, and new courses that they can teach in their home departments.

We are seeking not only capable instructors, but also individuals who will be committed members of a community with a common cause. We expect that faculty will spend considerable time working as teams, planning and teaching. In addition, faculty will be expected to advise and mentor students. This requires a greater than usual commitment on the part of such faculty and, possibly, greater incentives.

Some honors programs/colleges use a corps of full-time lecturers to teach core courses. Others “buy” a portion of the time of full-time faculty and reimburse their departments and colleges with funds to hire adjuncts for “regular” courses. Both of these systems have significant disadvantages. The former leads to a group of dissatisfied second-class citizens (non tenure-track faculty) who tend to lack the research background and experience that is at the core of the New College rationale. The latter system may promote better instruction in honors programs/colleges, but tends to lower the quality elsewhere. The perception that a new program is taking away resources from existing programs is sure to discourage participation and fuel ongoing resentments.

In contrast, we propose several incentives to encourage participation in New College. First, as President Brown has suggested, this could mean compensating departments that commit substantial faculty time to New College with new faculty lines. The terms of participation could vary: it could mean buying out a certain faculty member for 3-5 years or buying out several faculty on, say, a quarter-time or half-time basis.
Incentives for faculty would likewise vary. For some, especially humanists and social scientists, the most effective incentive might be one-month’s summer salary. Others, notably scientists, might be more interested in graduate student fellowships, post-doctoral funding, or, perhaps, undergraduate funding. The post-doctoral fellows or graduate students would themselves be affiliated with New College, which would benefit not just individual faculty, but the entire College. This could also be a draw to help attract the best students and post-docs.

**Administrative Structure**

Administrative structure was one of the more complex issues that we faced. Our guiding maxim was that strategy should determine structure. The administrative structure that we propose ensures a high degree of both intellectual independence and intercollegiate cooperation. Though the Committee agrees that the structure may change over time, the following arrangement seems optimal for the present: New College should have its own Dean who will report directly to the Provost and have a seat on the Dean’s Council and other leadership councils as appropriate. This seems essential in order to ensure that the head of the University’s new flagship program participates in strategy, policy, and budget. The Dean ideally would provide intellectual leadership, entrepreneurial verve, and managerial skill. The Dean would take charge of policy, curriculum, personnel, and budget, and would work with other School, College, and University administrators. The Dean would also be the public face of the College to students, parents, and donors. In addition, we recommend the appointment of at least one Associate Dean who would be especially interested in curriculum development and in working with interested faculty from various branches of the University. Curricular and co-curricular affairs would be developed, coordinated, and overseen in conjunction with a governing committee composed of faculty and administrators (the latter might include other deans who would serve *ex officio*) from all of the relevant undergraduate Schools and Colleges. An external board consisting of figures from the worlds of business, education, science/technology, politics, and the arts will be instrumental in connecting New College to metropolitan Boston and providing access to experiences as part of the co-curricular program.

New College should have at least two professional administrators to oversee day-to-day operations. New College will also need a strong professional advising team, including one advisor per class, and a lead advisor to supervise and work with the whole College. It is difficult at this point to say exactly what other administrative staff are needed, but it does seem particularly important that every class has its own full-time professional academic advisor. Furthermore, the College will need at least three other staff members who would be in charge of internships (sophomore summer), co-curricular activities, and fellowships and career advising.
(Possible funding/staffing sources include personnel and budget lines currently located in UNI and the CAS Honors Program.)

Students would enroll in one of the existing undergraduate Schools and Colleges, CAS or CFA for example, and in New College. They would identify themselves with both entities, for instance, as CAS/New College ‘13 or SMG/New College ‘14. In a sense, these students would have “dual citizenship.” The New College program would have clear exit points, allowing students to complete their degrees in one of the undergraduate Schools/Colleges if they do not choose to finish the New College program.

Naming

The naming process was likewise complicated. The name should convey the distinctiveness and ambition of this project: neither “honors” (lacking distinctiveness) nor “program” (lacking ambition) seemed appropriate. Our discussions with students from the University Professors Program confirmed this view. These students felt that “honors” had little resonance, and had played no significant role in their college selection. They suggested that these names would not appeal to the many bright high-school students who regularly take honors courses or honors sections. Another disadvantage is that, as a relative latecomer, Boston University would have a difficult time setting itself apart from highly reputable, established programs at major public institutions such as Texas, Michigan, and North Carolina. Finally, the terms honors program or honors college encourage an elitism that we have no wish to promote. We ruled out other common terms as well. Boston University already has an “Academy.” “Institute” sounds forbiddingly academic and dry. “Project” suggests the kind of intellectual excitement and aura of innovation that we intend to promote, but also sounds somewhat ephemeral. We doubt, therefore, whether it captures quite the right tone for parents and students facing four years of high tuition plus room and board.

In the end, then, we settled on college both because it denotes a community of students, faculty, and researchers, and it conveys the small, intimate atmosphere that we hope to create. We considered naming the proposed college for a historic member of the Boston University community. We decided against pursuing such names because they lacked external resonance; would tie an innovative project unnecessarily to the past; and might discourage a potential naming gift from a donor. We also considered the name University College, because it symbolized the cooperative nature of our enterprise. In the United States, however, this term is often associated with continuing education, which might distract from our re-imagining of undergraduate education. (By contrast, University College is a respected name in Britain, and it
has been employed by the universities of London, Oxford, Dublin, and Cork.) We finally opted for New College because our venture will literally be a new college and we envision it as a new type of undergraduate experience.

**RECRUITMENT, SELECTION, AND ENROLLMENT**

Recommendation: We propose that prospective students apply for admission to a specific School/College while also indicating their interest in enrolling at New College. Students will be accepted into New College based on guidelines established by the faculty of New College in collaboration with the Office of Admissions. New College will not grant degrees.

Recruitment into “New College” will begin with high school sophomore and junior “inquirers.” We have some ability to target inquiry responses to students who fit a broad profile of the student we are seeking.

Recruitment will require new supplementary materials. These include both print and electronic pieces that capture the letter and spirit of New College. We will develop language that can be inserted into our recruiting presentations, tours, and information sessions, and ensure that the Boston University program is mentioned in major college guides and in materials that list and describe honors programs nationally.

One of our fundamental tasks will be to highlight what is distinctive and exciting about our approach. The “small college in a large university” theme that is common to many honors programs/colleges at large universities comes into play here. Unlike liberal arts colleges such as Swarthmore (where its President, Frank O. Aydelotte, pioneered the first junior/senior honors programs based on the Oxford model), Boston University can offer students not only liberal education and pre-professional education, but also the chance to combine them in new ways. One draw for the first classes of students is the opportunity to take part in an innovative new venture.

**Selection**

We propose allowing students to indicate on their applications whether they are interested in being considered for acceptance into “New College.” This allows students to retain their School or College affiliation, which is important since the New College will not be a degree-granting entity. Students selected for it would be admitted to a School/College and also be accepted into New College.
For those who indicated a desire to participate in New College but who are not accepted into it, we would include language in the decision letter to the effect that they will have an opportunity to transfer into New College after their freshman year based on certain criteria. This letter will be separate from the offer of admission. We will add a checkbox to the Common Application for New College. We will also add a short-answer (150 words or less) question to the Boston University Supplement asking students to express their specific interest in New College.

Given the size of the admit pool it is unlikely that we could resort to a traditional committee-based process to identify candidates for acceptance. We propose the following process: 1) working with a faculty committee, Admissions will develop broad criteria for selecting the New College class in a given year; 2) Admissions will identify the requisite number of applicants that best satisfy the criteria and the purpose of the College; and 3) the faculty committee will evaluate the success of the identification process each year, making suggestions and changes as necessary to the criteria and outreach and yield strategies. Although New College students will not be selected on the basis of scores and grades alone, it will be helpful to have guidance regarding GPA, SAT, and high school curriculum ranges or minima in order to ensure that we enroll students capable of completing this demanding program.

_Enrollment_

After students are admitted, we enter a period in which we work aggressively to influence their enrollment decisions. This period extends from April through matriculation in September and includes on-campus and off-campus yield events in April and University Orientation in the summer. It will be important to include sessions specifically for students accepted into New College in all of our yield and orientation activities, but we propose that these activities be part of or in addition to regular programming. That is, we do not support offering stand-alone programs for New College students which keep them separated from other students for the entire event, whatever that may be. We believe that this is in keeping with the general premise of New College as different from, but an integral part of the overall undergraduate program. Furthermore, it recognizes that students are choosing not only their academic home, but also the place where they will live, eat, and play during this critical yield period.
THE CO-CURRICULAR PROGRAM

Recommendation: We propose providing the option of residential housing for New College students; establishing an extensive co-curricular plan that includes a series of seminars, master classes, and site visits focusing on metropolitan Boston’s cultural, social, political, scientific and entrepreneurial institutions; and creating a physical setting that will provide a central gathering space for New College faculty, students and staff.

The co-curricular elements of New College are essential for students’ development as intellectually adventurous individuals, and offer ample opportunities for them to engage with each other and diverse members of the wider community. These activities encompass the environment in which students live, complementing and reinforcing classroom learning, and prepare them for successful and fulfilling lives after graduation. They also reinforce the core tenets of the academic program, linking discovery with practice. Students will assume responsibility for some aspects of co-curricular programming. Its purpose is to reinforce a sense of community, and to allow more advanced students to mentor and teach younger students.

Our location in Boston provides us with a unique resource. The co-curricular program of New College will use Boston as a laboratory, making use of the metropolitan area’s cultural, scientific, technological, commercial, and political resources. In keeping with New College’s emphasis on discovery and creation, engagement with institutions such as symphonies, museums, galleries, corporations, and governmental bodies will go well beyond attending performances and exhibitions, and will provide access and experiences that are not typically available to students. The participation of significant figures from metropolitan Boston on the external board of New College will be indispensable in this regard. The sort of engagement we have in mind – and the possibilities of internships – will solidify Boston University’s claim to be Boston’s University.

Residence Life

We recommend that New College include a residential component, incorporating designated housing for New College students. This housing should also provide space for faculty-in-residence and graduate resident assistants. These in-residence scholars are an important link between the curricular and co-curricular aspects of the program. The residence environment should include sufficient gathering space for informal programs, study, and program planning.
The New College Center

It is crucial that New College have a home where its members can engage with each other in a way that fosters a sense of community, intellectual curiosity, and devotion to research and exploration. A hallmark of the New College experience should be the avoidance of balkanization: students from all classes should interact with each other, along with faculty, researchers, graduate students and administrators. An environment that provides shared space that can be used for work in a relaxing atmosphere (such as a coffee house) that would be attractive to all members of the community must be created. Ideally this space would incorporate more formal venues, such as seminar rooms, as well.

Intellectual community

We envision a robust events schedule that will open and explore the boundaries between disciplines and Schools/Colleges, and between BU and the world, especially the greater Boston area. Though lectures will inevitably figure prominently in the offerings, the “master class” model used in music and the “studio” model used in art and architecture will loom large as well.

In addition to recognized researchers, scholars, and performers, we will reach out to alumni. If possible, we encourage the development of a visiting scholar/performer program, which would allow extended contact, both formal and informal. The academic program includes an annual conference and other opportunities for students to showcase their work. The planning and organization of such events should be predominantly student-led. Because New College is intended to be a laboratory of sorts for cultivating a new approach to undergraduate education, we suggest that it may be the place to initiate and develop academic service learning activities that could be translated for the larger undergraduate community. We expect that the members of New College will be active participants in the discovery or creative process, regardless of discipline.

Life following graduation

Students remain members of New College even after graduation. The College should also provide dedicated mentoring for internship placements, post-baccalaureate fellowship and graduate applications, and public service opportunities. New College should actively engage its alumni in its academic and co-curricular programs.
THE COMMITTEE TO DESIGN THE UNIVERSITY HONORS PROGRAM

List of Members:

Professor Charles Dellheim, Chair
Professor Andrew Cohen
Associate Dean Solomon Eisenberg
Professor Paula Fredriksen
Dean *ad interim* Charles Glenn
Professor Jonathan Hibbard
Sir Hans Kornberg, Director, UNI
Dean Virginia Sapiro
Professor James Schmidt
Dean Linda Wells
Associate Provost Victor Coelho, *ex officio*
Vice President Laurie Pohl, *ex officio*
Dr. Nancy Baker, Facilitator
## Appendix I: Selected Honors Programs

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<tr>
<td>Arizona State University</td>
<td>Barrett Honors College</td>
<td>4; but can also enter in soph. &amp; jr. year</td>
<td>3,015 (F2005); average SAT/ACT scores: 1320/29; stu/fac. ratio: 19:1</td>
<td>Students also enroll in a disciplinary college and pursue a major or concentration; graduate through the honors college. Transdisciplinary in nature, the College supports undergrad. research, encourages study abroad, guides students to relevant internships, and mentors students for outside fellowships; special access to distinguished visitors.</td>
<td>Honors thesis required</td>
<td>Eight Barrett College residence halls; community modeled after British universities; integrated living-learning environment</td>
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<td>Emory University</td>
<td>Honors programs are available only within most areas of concentration</td>
<td>No designated housing</td>
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<td>George Washington University</td>
<td>University Honors Program</td>
<td>2+2</td>
<td>Limited to c. 5% of undergrads; less than 500 students (says 700 elsewhere); entering freshmen and students below junior status</td>
<td>Small seminar-style honors courses during first 2 years; departmental honors in major during last 2 years. Honors courses: capped at 20, have multi- and interdisciplinary approach, and global and x-cultural perspective. Required common Proseminar for freshmen.</td>
<td>Honors senior thesis and seminar required; Global Issues practicum required</td>
<td>1st-year honors students have option of living in one of the two honors residential communities; sophomores also have an honors residential option</td>
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<td>New York University</td>
<td>Gallatin School of Individualized Study</td>
<td>4 for BA; 2 to a max of 6 for MA</td>
<td>1200 undergrads; 200 grad. Students</td>
<td>BA and MA degrees; flexibility and rigor. BA student develops, in conjunction with advisor, a concentration to suit his interests and goals; usually involves work in 2 or more disciplines and courses in several depts. or schools of the university; the Gallatin School offers a core curriculum of courses in writing, the great books, the history of ideas, the arts, and interdisciplinary studies; students must earn 32 credits in Gallatin School courses, and 32 credits in liberal arts courses. Can transfer in. Many opportunities for independent study, experiential learning, and lessons in the arts. All students take first-year seminars, writing courses, small interdisc. courses.</td>
<td>Senior colloquium: oral exam with 3 faculty members; student discusses books that have helped shape his ideas, usually concerning his concentration</td>
<td>No designated housing</td>
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<td>UNIVERSITY</td>
<td>COLLEGE/ PROGRAM</td>
<td>YEARS</td>
<td>STUDENTS</td>
<td>CURRICULUM</td>
<td>CAPSTONE/ THESIS</td>
<td>RESIDENCE ARRANGEMENTS</td>
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<td>Northwestern University</td>
<td>Honors programs available within departments</td>
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<td>No designated housing</td>
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<td>Swarthmore</td>
<td>Honors Program (sometimes called the external examination program)</td>
<td>Upperclass years; may apply as late as 1st sem. sr. yr.</td>
<td>Students apply at end of soph. yr, must be accepted by faculty. Choose a major and a minor in the Honors Program or design special interdisc. major. Program consists of 4 separate “preparations” from at least 2 depts; preparations are examined by outside examiners in 2nd sem. of sr. year, in both written and oral form. Competitive and demanding program; small seminars (c. 8 students); students given much freedom. 2nd sem. of sr. year, depending on the dept or program, do special project of Senior Honors Study (SHS).</td>
<td>Honors Program may include (optional) Senior Honors Study, that integrates the work of the preparations; Honors Special majors must write thesis or sit for oral examination</td>
<td>No designated housing</td>
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<td>University of California, Berkeley</td>
<td>General scholarship or departmental honors only. The Interdisciplinary Studies Field (ISF) major in the College of Letters and Science is not an honors program, but has many traits of honors programs.</td>
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<td>Applications for Interdisc. Studies Field major may be submitted to faculty advisor at any time, but as soon as possible after completing 60 units. Must describe the proposed area of concentration and provide a tentative list of required courses. Can develop individualized cross-disciplinary courses. The advising role is crucial.</td>
<td>Senior thesis required</td>
<td>No designated housing</td>
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<td>University of Michigan, Ann Arbor</td>
<td>Honors Program for students in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>General characteristics of students: focus, engagement, &amp; achievements. Median SAT: 1390-1490; median gpa: 3.8-4.0. In Honors Program, must maintain gpa of 3.4 or better.</td>
<td>Students are invited into the Honors Program after they are admitted to the College. May also apply for Honors concentration in 2nd or 3rd year. Program has special courses, stresses research relations with faculty, and cultivates a sense of community through intellectual and cultural events and the Perlman Honors Commons, an intellectual hub for the Program. Faculty Fellows of the Program engage the students outside of classes; students meet distinguished visitors to campus at a monthly “Lunch with Honors”; tickets to cultural events at reduced prices, special lectures, and workshops are offered. In underclass years, Honors students take about half their course work in Honors courses in different departments. Two honors courses per term; Literature and Ideas requirement. Many participate in research with fac. member in 1st two years (UROP). Then apply for Honors concentration in department. Nearly all upperclassmen pursue independent research, culminating in a senior thesis. Students may also pursue Honors in the Liberal Arts by taking challenging courses alongside their area of concentration. Study abroad encouraged.</td>
<td>Honors thesis required (with few exceptions)</td>
<td>Honors housing is an option, chosen by c. 72% of freshmen, and 20% of sophomores. Two dorms have designated areas where honors students live in contiguous rooms.</td>
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<td>University of Southern California</td>
<td>Thematic Option (T.O.) Honors Program</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>c. 200 freshmen; admission by invitation: need combined SAT I score of at least 2100 and a high school gpa of c. 4.0. Students may also apply as exceptions.</td>
<td>General education honors program consisting of an interdisciplinary core curriculum. It is organized by themes, rather than disciplines. Students must take 4 core courses taught around distinct themes, two writing courses, and two additional theme courses from departments campus-wide. Faculty and students together enjoy evening events such as dinners, speakers, and films. Each year the T.O. program hosts a Research Conference in which students present their own academic work in a public forum on panels chaired by USC faculty.</td>
<td>Two dorms are designated Honors or Deans Halls; the T.O. students may elect to live in them, and the Resident Honors Program students must reside there for their freshman year.</td>
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<td>UNIVERSITY</td>
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<td>University of Texas, Austin</td>
<td>Plan II Honors Program</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>Plan II is a competitive, interdisciplinary honors major with a required core curriculum; the core includes the study of literature, philosophy, society, the arts, math and the natural sciences, crossing intellectual and disciplinary boundaries. The broad core curriculum leads to students’ own choice of coursework in upperclass years. A common curriculum and small classes, emphasizing writing, discussion, and public presentation skills, create a sense of community. Core consists of a year of World Lit and of Philosophy, and three seminars on interdisciplinary topics. Thesis project in senior year. The Plan II program is interdisciplinary, but students concentrate in the area of their thesis. Study abroad is encouraged. Must apply to Honors program when apply to the University. The University Honors Center is a focal point for interdisciplinary honors activities at UT Austin, and offers a variety of enrichment programs for the honors students.</td>
<td>Thesis required</td>
<td>All honors students are eligible to apply for housing in the Honors Residence Halls, which offer special support services.</td>
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<td>Yale University</td>
<td>Directed Studies</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>Directed Studies is a selective, interdisciplinary program in Western civilization for freshmen. Students take three year-long courses—literature, philosophy, and historical and political thought—in which they read the central works of the Western tradition. Each course meets weekly for one lecture and two seminars, which have c. 18 students and one faculty member. Program is enriched by a series of colloquia, in which distinguished faculty members from across the University speak on issues related to the program.</td>
<td>No designated housing</td>
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Appendix II: Pathways to the Degree

One of our concerns has been to ensure that our proposed curriculum is a practical alternative for a wide range of students. One of the chronic complaints about UNI was that it was difficult for students in the sciences, including pre-med students, to complete the requirements.

The Committee therefore examined several transcripts of undergraduate degree recipients from 2003-2005 to see how our proposed curriculum might fit an existing set of degree requirements. Generally, we are confident that the proposed curriculum will fit into current degree requirements for all undergraduate Schools and Colleges. Students admitted to CAS or COM should have no challenges in participating in New College. Students admitted to SAR, ENG and SMG face fixed and more lock-step sets of course requirements. Thus, there may need to be some negotiation between the degree-granting Schools/Colleges and New College to articulate requirements. Issues that may require negotiation or clarification:

- the writing-intensive “Approaching the World” freshman seminars would need to satisfy individual School/College writing requirements,

- the sophomore “Architecture of Discovery” courses or the junior seminars will need to satisfy some humanities, natural science, or social science distribution requirements,

- and the senior keystone project may need to carry variable credit (4-8 credits) to make it feasible in some degree programs and be structured to do "double duty" in those Schools/Colleges that have an existing senior project.

With the proviso that there may need to be ongoing negotiation and discussion so that highly motivated students throughout the University have an opportunity to consider participation in the New College curriculum, the committee is confident that the proposed academic structure is feasible across undergraduate Schools and Colleges.