

Pros and Cons of the WWU Honors College Proposal - Rough Draft

Pros	Cons
Bring more money/revenue to the university through out-of-state student admissions	Would shift university's attention from in-state to out-of-state students (directly goes against WWU's mission statement)
"Attract and retain additional talented and diverse students to wwu academic programs"- quoted from proposal	The money establishing this college could go to other proposals that have been around longer and hold wider support - We also don't know where the money is coming from
"Invite significant external support to meet the colleges mission" - quoted from proposal	Mainly serves advantaged students - AKA many of those within the honors program. Doesn't help BIPOC students or first generation students broadly (in fact it may harm them - see the bolded points below)
An attractive recruitment tool for prospective out-of- state students	The Honors College proposal is similar to Fairhaven College, this would put an already-established college at competition with the new programs (in regards to admissions and potentially funding)
Build a closer bond with Honors & Admissions?	This proposal is going through the university system too quickly (being fast-tracked by admin compared to how long other possible colleges - like Ethnic Studies - have progressed forward) without any accountability - not thoroughly examined
Recruit diverse faculty and students - according to honors board meeting notes	Lack of transparency: to everyone - Honors Board voted to make it a college without telling anyone or gaining any <i>community/student</i> input, especially from BIPOC, (other than Faculty committees)
Expand the Honors Program in general	There will (reportedly) be no representation from the Honors College on WWU committees - quoted from Honors board
SEMI-PRO: honors college pays more and some NTT faculty lean on Honors program for income	The university has attempted to create other recruitment tools in the past, and they have failed (like the university president's plan to internationalize by recruiting and taking in international money, known as "study guide")

	It seems like a top-down push by admin to program (when no one asked for this but they did ask for the bolded points below) and a profit-making tactic - the university president has a past of creating Honors colleges at previous universities to make them more appealing to out-of-state students
	Pushes BIPOC student concerns on the backburner after Honors students of color (HSOC) has been asking for curriculum and social changes in the program (due to microaggressions and racism) for years
	The university is prioritizing this college proposal (a “top-down push” that no one asked for) over prioritizing an Ethnic Studies College or BSO demands, which thousands of students have been asking for, for years - against WWU values, strategic plan, and mission statement
	Goes against BSO demand number 3 due to the program’s focus on merit while demand 3 is meant to erase merit-based systems
	Also, it expands an elitist/merit-based program with Eurocentric curriculum that is even less diverse than WWU as a whole
	Although it may recruit more students of color, it would be unethical to invite more BIPOC into a program that has historically harmed them without addressing those concerns (which is what is happening)
	Could take advantage of newly recruited BIPOC/NTT faculty in doing the labor to make the program seem more diverse/anti-racist
	POSSIBLY would increase the amount of AS Student Senators due to the AS Constitution stating that there are 2 senators for <i>each</i> college, which means it would increase student fees - an extra cost to students

**We don’t necessarily have a problem with the Honors College happening.
HOWEVER,**

We are concerned about the process: why it's happening, how it's happening, the speed in which it's happening without any community/student input, where the money is coming from, how it will affect BIPOC students, what priorities (Ethnic Studies College, BSO demands, and Honors student of colors' requests for curriculum as well as social changes) are being sacrificed or put on the back burner for it, etc.

There is an urgent need for transparency by WWU admin and the Honors Program.

Gain stories from honors students of color and first-gen.

General/clarifying questions:

Specifically, who will be benefiting from the creation of an Honors College? Who does Honors serve?

The proposal says there will be an increase in admissions of 200 students. Who will they be? Out-of-state students or in-state students? Is this college focused on admitting more out-of-state students? (if out-of-state, how does this proposal contribute to WWU's mission to serve those within Washington state?)

The honors program claims it is not a merit based program, but has extremely high testing averages and highschool GPAs, how is it not merit based?

Why is this proposal happening during the time of a global pandemic?

How does the creation of an honors college support meeting WWU's mission? (Referring to a statement made in proposal)

Funding questions:

How will this college be funded? Will it take away resources from other programs?

Where exactly will this funding be going? What is the proposal for the budget?

Are there any additional resources that will be taken from other programs/departments of the university (eg. jobs, space)?

Anti-racism and diversity questions:

What does the creation of an Honors College mean for promotion of equity at WWU?

How will you ensure that the labor needed to start a college like this will not be put on faculty of color and NTT faculty who don't receive the same benefits as others?

How will the creation of the honors college better serve marginalized students?

Why is the university pushing for this proposal when the support for the College of Ethnic Studies has been present for years?

How will this new college make Western a more diverse and anti-racist institution?

What is the retention rate for BIPOC and first generation students within the honors program?

How often does honors admit students who are under the average gpa and SAT score requirement?