

UMKC Honors College
Strategic Plan
2019-2028

Revision date: June 18, 2019

INTRODUCTION

This strategic plan will advance the mission of the UMKC Honors College within the framework of the [UMKC Strategic Plan](#) and the [University of Missouri System Strategic Priorities](#).

The Honors College Strategic Plan will be implemented over the period 2019-2028, with annual assessment of progress toward strategic goals.

MISSION STATEMENT

The UMKC Honors College promotes the University's commitment to academic excellence.

The Honors College:

- offers an enriched program of honors education for outstanding students of all majors;
- fosters intellectual and civic values: inquiry, discovery, knowledge and imagination, as well as community service, social justice and ethical leadership;
- offers support for instructional innovation and provides the best possible teaching and learning environment for faculty and students.

VISION STATEMENT

The UMKC Honors College aspires to become a program of national distinction, recognized as one of the most innovative, engaged, diverse and inclusive honors colleges in the United States.

UMKC Honors College

STRATEGIC PLAN PILLARS

Pillar One – Student Success

Provide exceptional student learning, success and leadership development.

Pillar Two – Discovery

Promote student and faculty engagement in undergraduate research and creative scholarship.

Pillar Three – Community Engagement

Transform our community and region with impactful engagement that promotes [social justice](#).

Pillar Four – Diversity and Inclusion

Foster an environment of invigorating multiculturalism, globalism, diversity and inclusion.

Pillar Five – Sustainability

Develop a strong and resilient social and physical infrastructure that promotes the conservation of natural resources and [environmental sustainability](#).

Foundational Commitment – People

Provide an unwavering commitment to the development of our people.

UMKC Honors College

STRATEGIC GOALS

Note: Concrete strategies and specific planning metrics have been provided (where possible) for each of the following strategic goals. Unless otherwise stated, the intended target date for accomplishment of each goal listed below is June 2024 (five years from the June 2019 inception of this strategic plan), with annual assessment of progress in each area. We envision the completion of all strategic goals listed in this plan by June 2028.

Pillar One – Student Success. Provide exceptional student learning, success and leadership development. The Honors College will become a nationally recognized model for academic excellence through innovative teaching and learning, student engagement, and development of ethical leadership.

METRICS

Specific targets for this pillar include:

- Increase the number of Honors College applicants to 250 students per year.
- Increase total Honors College enrollment to 8% of UMKC undergraduates enrolled in baccalaureate degree programs, or approximately 600 students.

Goal 1.1: *Recruit and retain well-prepared, highly motivated students in the Honors College.*

STRATEGIES:

- A. Expand Honors College enrollment by admitting a greater number of qualified students while maintaining rigorous academic standards.
- B. Work with the Office of Planning, Analysis, and Decision Support to develop accurate data regarding Honors College student retention, progression and graduation.
- C. Develop predictive data analytics to review and improve existing support initiatives and co-curricular activities for Honors College students.

Goal 1.2: *Sustain existing honors courses and develop new courses and co-curricular programs that embody academic quality and personalized, flexible, diverse and engaging learning experiences for students of all majors.*

STRATEGIES:

- A. Assess and continuously improve the student learning outcomes of honors courses.

- B. Design and implement new honors courses, especially in General Education and other high-demand areas, in order to provide a comprehensive program of honors education for students of all majors.
- C. Honors courses should promote the development of skills that are transferable across a broad range of disciplines and professions, using pedagogical approaches that advance student learning outcomes in critical thinking, logical analysis, problem solving, communication, teamwork, digital literacy and emotional intelligence.
- D. To the extent possible, honors courses should include at least one of the following **four focus areas** as an essential component. With evolving career opportunities and ever-changing cultural values, it is vital to imbue our students with skills, ethics and intercultural understanding beyond what is available in a traditional classroom experience.
1. **Social Justice and Cultural Awareness**: As an urban institution, UMKC aims to be at the forefront of social justice reform. Today's leaders must be citizens of the world. The Honors College believes the experience of study abroad to be of utmost importance for all students. Students also have opportunities to learn more about diverse cultures in our own community through pre-professional internships and community service. Working with the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, Honors College students will learn how to challenge their own preconceptions and become better and more inclusive citizens of the world.
 2. **Environmental Sustainability**: Climate change is an issue that will have an enduring impact on current and future students. Honors students must have a strong background in basic science and technology in order to fully understand the difficult environmental challenges we face and be prepared to make decisions, both in their daily lives and on a broader scale, that will have positive environmental impacts and help start healing the earth.
 3. **Leadership and Ethics**: Leadership is a necessary skill, and one that continues to change as our culture and society evolves. It is imperative to give honors students the tools to become effective leaders who know how to challenge authority and engage in ethical reflection in order to make the changes necessary to help their organizations thrive. The Honors College seeks to build future leaders who are capable of making informed ethical decisions. Honors students will learn how to assess the needs of a team, adapt to diverse community and cultural standards, and how to contribute when not in the lead.
 4. **Kansas City History and Urban Engagement**: Almost half of UMKC alumni stay in the metro area after graduation. The Honors College will prepare its students to become the backbone of the area by building their local knowledge and getting them

engaged early. Honors students work with local charter schools, engage with UMKC alumni, and work closely with local nonprofits and elected officials to build a better Kansas City.

Goal 1.3: *Provide effective advising and mentoring for honors students and sustain the development of Honors College student peer mentoring programs.*

STRATEGIES:

- A. Assess and continuously improve the outcomes of honors student advising.
- B. Implement an Intrusive Advising approach that provides intentional contact with students with the goal of developing a caring and beneficial relationship that leads to increased academic motivation and persistence.
- C. Improve recruitment, training and professional development for Honors Ambassadors and honors student peer mentors, known as OWLs (older, wiser learners).
- D. Implement and monitor the success of the Honors College Preceptor program, with Honors College faculty members serving as mentors for first-year honors students.
- E. Promote and evaluate student success in post-graduate employment and admission to graduate and professional schools. Compile reliable data on post-graduate employment and graduate and professional school admission for Honors College graduates.

Goal 1.4: *Become recognized as a program of national distinction in honors education.*

STRATEGIES:

- A. Enhance the visibility and centrality of the Honors College on the UMKC campus and publicize the quality of the Honors College at the local, state, and national levels.
- B. Communicate with Honors College students, faculty, parents, alumni and friends through newsletters, targeted mailings, social media and website development.
- C. Collaborate with UMKC Strategic Marketing and Communications (MCOM) to feature the accomplishments of Honors College students, faculty and staff in various UMKC publications.
- D. Collaborate with the Admissions Office to promote the Honors College in UMKC recruitment and orientation materials and outreach events.
- E. In collaboration with the UMKC Foundation and the Office of University Advancement, engage with Honors alumni and other potential donors to assure a strong financial foundation for the continued growth and development of the Honors College.
- F. Become recognized as a leader in the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC) and the Great Plains Honors Council (GPHC) through honors student and faculty conference

presentations, faculty publications on honors pedagogy, and service by the Honors College dean as an NCHC-certified external reviewer of honors programs.

- G. Develop benchmark comparisons with operational and aspirational peer institutions to assess progress toward national standards of excellence in honors education.¹

Pillar Two – Discovery. Promote student and faculty engagement in undergraduate research and creative scholarship.

Goal 2.1: *Increase student participation in undergraduate research and creative activity.*

STRATEGIES:

- A. Collaborate with the Undergraduate Research Advisory Board to promote the development of undergraduate research courses and programs at UMKC.
- B. Encourage students to participate in undergraduate research through EUREKA courses, SEARCH, SUROP, and other competitive funding opportunities.
- C. Increase student participation in the Senior Honors Thesis and related coursework in research methods and thesis writing.
- D. Sustain and enhance honors student participation in *Lucerna*, UMKC's only peer-reviewed undergraduate research journal for students of all majors.

Goal 2.2: *Increase faculty participation in mentoring and advising students engaged in undergraduate research and creative activity.*

STRATEGIES:

- A. Promote the development of EUREKA courses (Experiences in Undergraduate Research) that offer undergraduates the opportunity to experience the excitement of discovery early in their academic careers and to begin building a relationship with a faculty mentor.
- B. Provide appropriate recognition to all UMKC faculty members who mentor Honors College students engaged in undergraduate research and creative activity.
- C. Recognize and support Honors College faculty members who serve as mentors for undergraduate research projects and senior honors theses, and who serve as faculty advisors for *Lucerna*, especially in the context of annual faculty performance review and promotion review.

¹ The National Collegiate Honors Council has identified the best practices that are common to successful honors colleges. See [Basic Characteristics of Fully Developed Honors Programs/Colleges](#).

Pillar Three – Community Engagement. Transform our community and region with impactful engagement that promotes social justice.

Goal 3.1: *Recognize and support Honors College student participation in community service.*

STRATEGIES:

- A. Develop an Honors College “point system” to encourage and recognize student participation in community service.
- B. Sustain and expand honors student participation in Federal Work-Study community service placements at the Ewing Marion Kauffman School and the Academy for Integrated Arts (AFIA).
- C. Promote honors student and faculty participation in *Educate-Organize-Advocate* (EOA), a social justice and civic engagement conference held annually at UMKC.
- D. Offer professional development opportunities for Honors College faculty and staff to enhance their knowledge of best practices in embedding community engagement opportunities within honors courses, internships and co-curricular activities.
- E. Advocate for the development of a UMKC service-learning course designation in order to establish consistent student learning objectives, provide appropriate faculty development, track student engagement and recognize student accomplishment in service-learning.

Pillar Four – Diversity and Inclusion. Foster an environment of invigorating multiculturalism, globalism, diversity and inclusion.

METRICS

Specific targets for this pillar include:

- Sustain and increase the proportion of underrepresented populations among Honors College students. The Honors College should enroll the same (or a larger) proportion of underrepresented minority students as the UMKC general undergraduate population.
- Develop accurate data on underrepresented student retention, progression and graduation in the Honors College. Retention and graduation data for Honors College students is not currently available in the Data Warehouse; we will advocate for this data to become available in future.

Goal 4.1: *Recruit, increase and retain underserved and international students.*

STRATEGIES:

- A. Increase the diversity of the Honors College student population through affirmative action and targeted recruitment.

- B. Build recruitment pipeline programs with local high schools and community colleges, especially those with highly diverse student populations.
- C. Develop new honors courses and continuously improve existing honors courses that achieve student learning goals in multicultural understanding, diversity and inclusion.
- D. Support the Honors Diversity and Inclusion Advocates (HDIA), the Honors College Student Association (HCSA), and the Honors Ambassadors in their work to organize and promote events that enhance cultural awareness and intercultural communication.
- E. Collaborate with the Division of Diversity and Inclusion, the Office of Student Involvement (OSI), the *Educate-Organize-Advocate* conference committee, and other university programs that promote diversity and social justice.

Goal 4.2: *Recruit, increase and retain underserved and international faculty and staff.*

STRATEGIES:

- A. Increase the diversity of the Honors College faculty and staff through affirmative action and targeted recruitment.
- B. Provide professional development opportunities for Honors College faculty and staff to develop their knowledge and skills in promoting and advocating for diversity and inclusion.

Pillar Five – Sustainability. Develop a strong and resilient social and physical infrastructure that promotes the conservation of natural resources and environmental sustainability.

Goal 5.1: *Develop an honors curriculum that promotes understanding of environmental science and sustainable solutions to environmental problems.*

STRATEGIES:

- A. Develop new honors courses in such fields as environmental science and technology, resource conservation, environmental advocacy and sustainable economic development.
- B. Establish [environmental sustainability](#) as one of the four focus areas regarded as an essential component of honors courses. Honors students must fully understand the difficult environmental challenges we face and be prepared to make decisions, both in their daily lives and on a broader scale, that will have positive environmental impacts and help start healing the earth.

Goal 5.2: *Promote student participation in co-curricular activities and student organizations that advance sustainable solutions and engage in environmental advocacy.*

STRATEGIES:

- A. Engage Honors College students in hands-on initiatives to improve sustainability, recycling and energy efficiency in the Honors College office suite, Oak Street Residence Hall, and elsewhere on the UMKC campus.
- B. Provide effective faculty advising for the Honors College Student Association and other honors student organizations that promote environmental awareness, advocate for sustainable environmental policies, and participate in the development of conservation and sustainability initiatives at UMKC and throughout the Kansas City metro area.

Foundational Commitment – People. Provide an unwavering commitment to the development of our people.

Goal 6.1: *The Honors College commits to ongoing improvement of workplace conditions and culture, becoming a place where people consistently find their work to be meaningful and rewarding.*

STRATEGIES:

- A. Honors College faculty, staff, students and administrators will be meaningfully involved in institutional planning.
- B. The Honors College will maintain an appreciative, respectful, fair and flexible work environment for all employees.
- C. The Honors College will meet employees' needs by providing facilities that are safe, well-designed and well-maintained.
- D. Faculty and staff will be compensated with pay and benefits that are satisfactory and will find satisfaction in work that is meaningful to the Honors College and to the community we serve.
- E. Faculty and staff will have access to the equipment and resources necessary to do their jobs, opportunities to develop their skills, and the requirements for career advancement and promotion will be clear and easily understood.
- F. Supervisors will solicit ideas, provide clear expectations and prompt feedback, and recognize success.
- G. The Honors College will recognize and support innovative and high-quality teaching and learning.
- H. The Honors College will encourage faculty, staff and student employees to engage in professional development and leadership training opportunities that build their proficiency and enhance their workplace performance.