

Dear MVCC Faculty,

The Honors Program Design Team worked diligently throughout the 2011-12 academic year to develop an expanded Honors Program that is available to a broader audience than was MVCC's previous version. We have launched the program in the Fall 2012 semester by inviting the Presidential Scholars to participate in this first year. Currently, 44 students are enrolled in specialized sections of ED100, and their instructors—Sarah Beck and Sarah Tierney—are preparing them for the next phase of the program.

As Honors Program students plan for phase two in the spring 2013 semester, they will choose to register for Honors Seminar, an interdisciplinary, theme-based, three-credit course, *or* to pursue an individual Honors Project. Much like the Honors Projects that were commonly completed as part of MVCC's former Honors Program, the Honors Project involves the development of a research question, the generation of a proposal, and the execution of research. Alternatively, an Honors Project may involve a creative piece—a sculpture, a short story, a photographic essay, for example—that explores or illustrates a particular theme. **Each project should challenge the student to pursue work in the discipline that is more rigorous or in some way exceeds the student learning outcomes that are standard in a particular course.**

Those who opt to complete an Honors Project have been asked by their current ED100 instructors to begin preparations either for a research or creative project. Then, they will approach an instructor teaching one of the classes in their spring schedule and seek guidance from that individual for the Honors Project. If a student requests your guidance and expertise in conjunction with this Project, he or she should have an "Honors Project Agreement" form for you to sign, indicating your willingness to mentor students through the process. **Faculty members who agree to work with an Honors Program student should consult the Center Dean in which the course is housed regarding compensation for this effort.**

Faculty who agree to work with students on Honors Projects will be invited to **an informal session on Thursday, January 17th from 1-2PM in IT 225, so that they may ask any unanswered questions and brainstorm with their colleagues.** They will also be given a rubric which explains the criteria for research and creative projects and some ideas for viable projects—a "tool kit" to aid them as they begin their work. Finally, faculty mentors can visit the following website, <http://www.mvcc.edu/honors-program>, for an overview of the Honors Program.

The Honors Program Design Team appreciates your consideration of joining this important component of the Honors Program. We know that, with our collective participation, the Honors Program will be an enriching experience for faculty and students alike.

Sincerely,
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