



SOME LCC HONORS PROGRAM MEMBERS
IN FRONT OF AN HONORS COURSE MURAL

HONORS AT LCC

Lane Community College starts an honors program

Long before Nadia Raza thought about getting a graduate degree and teaching at a college, she was a student at a community college, and that's where she first encountered an honors class. While at Costa Mesa Community College in California she signed up for an evening course and found herself enrolled in the school's pilot honors program. She stayed in the course and says it was "a transformative experience in understanding myself as being able to make meaningful contributions in an aca-

ademic environment." She went on to transfer to UCLA for undergrad, got a master's degree and is now getting a doctorate at the University of Oregon while teaching at LCC. She was also one of the core group developing the new Honors Program that is kicking off its second year at Lane Community College.

"The mission here is really to meet students where they are and help students achieve success," says Honors Program Faculty Coordinator Katie Morrison-Graham. For students that are highly academically motivated, the Honors Program will let them push themselves and give them a chance to work with other students who push themselves, she says.

LCC has been offering honors courses since last fall and any student can take them, Raza explains. The Honors Program is meant to be accessible and non-elitist, and she says, "If you raise the bar, our students will rise to it because our students are brilliant." The result of the

first honors course in summer 2011, an art class, is a brilliantly colored mural, visible from the cafeteria in the campus' Center Building.

Morrison-Graham says the highest number of honors students in an honors class this term is six, making the students basically a quarter of the class. She points out that LCC courses tend to be smaller and more personal than UO courses where a student might find herself lost in a 300-student lecture.

Jennifer Hare, Honors Program coordinator and advisor, says the program, which currently has 42 students, attracts students out of high school, some who perhaps always thought of themselves as "honors material," but the LCC program is also "profoundly rewarding for those who have maybe not had that academic experience." Sometimes, she says, you get a student who might have left college for one reason or another, and then comes back ready for a challenge. Hare, who also works with international students, sees the honors program as a draw for students coming from abroad as well.

While any LCC student can sign up for an honors course — or accidentally find herself in one — one has to apply to gain admission to the LCC Honors Program. Ce Rosenow, also a faculty coordinator for the program, says there are several ways to get into the program. A student can have a high school or college GPA of 3.25, two Lane honors courses with a 3.00 GPA, a 1,200 SAT or 27 ACT test score, or a letter of recommendation from a teacher.

LCC, like other community colleges, is experiencing a major demographic shift and increasing enrollments, Raza says, and the school works to provide a space for every cross-section of society: a program for veterans, for women in transition and now an honors program. As students learn that it's an option, Hare says she expects the program will attract students who "are financially savvy, want to take it up a level and save money." Full-time tuition (12 credits) at the UO costs \$2,013, while at LCC 12 credits cost \$1,080, not counting the fees at either institution.

Though the majority of honors courses are made up of both honors and non-honors students, Rosenow says the honors students also take seminars that are restricted to those in the LCC Honors Program, and the seminars wrap up with a symposium that features civic and campus-wide engagement on issues as well as showcases the "transformative learning experience centered on scholarly inquiry, academic rigor and intellectual growth" the program seeks to provide. — Camilla Mortensen

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