

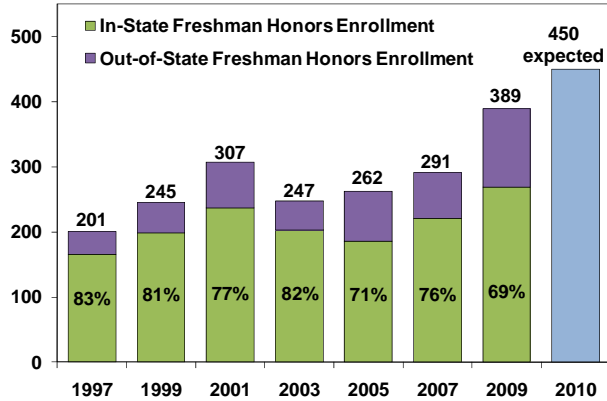
Program Report Card: University of Connecticut Honors Program

Quality of Life Result: Improving the economic prospects of Connecticut and its citizens with a better educated workforce.

Contribution to Result: Enhancing quality in undergraduate education is a key element to retaining in or attracting to Connecticut the next generation of bright, well-educated young professionals and the corporations that wish to employ them.

Partners: Our students and UConn faculty and staff give the Honors Program its successful content. Parents, high schools, and benefactors are partners in recruiting the best and brightest. Connecticut corporations, not-for-profits, graduate and professional schools, health care organizations, and private industry provide Honors students with post-graduate opportunities.

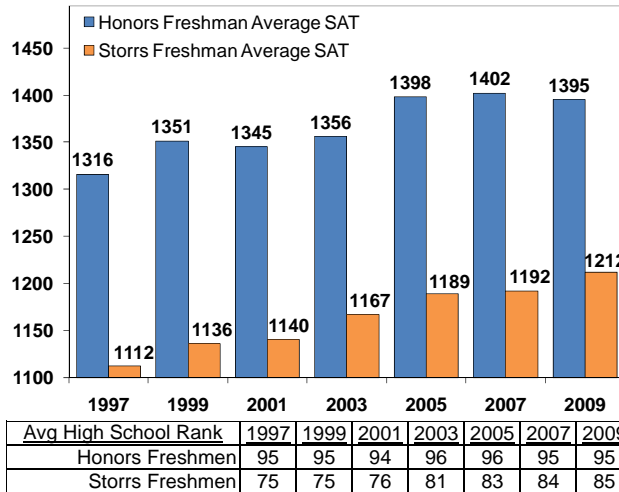
Performance Measure 1: Freshman Honors Program enrollment.



Story behind the baseline: The number of Honors freshmen entering UConn has more than doubled since 1996 reflecting Honors' success in "seeding" more high achieving students among the student body. Honors students add value to the UConn environment by encouraging academic engagement in the broader student population. This recruitment success is the result of the strong reputation of UConn Honors as a "first choice" alternative to the ivies and highly selective private and public institutions. Recruitment success reflects aggressive merit aid practices, persuasive print and online communications, and proactive outreach by the Office of Admissions. Continued recruitment success may be challenged by reductions in merit aid or by a stronger economy or better financial aid from competitors, enabling high-achieving students to select elite private institutions.

Proposed actions to turn the curve: To maintain success in recruiting excellent students, we must partner with: (1) University Communications to ensure high quality print and electronic coverage; (2) the Vice President for Enrollment Management to ensure proactive admissions and financial aid policies; and (3) high school guidance counselors and teachers to maintain our pipeline. Many of these efforts are low/no cost, requiring collaborative outreach by Honors Program leadership and staff.

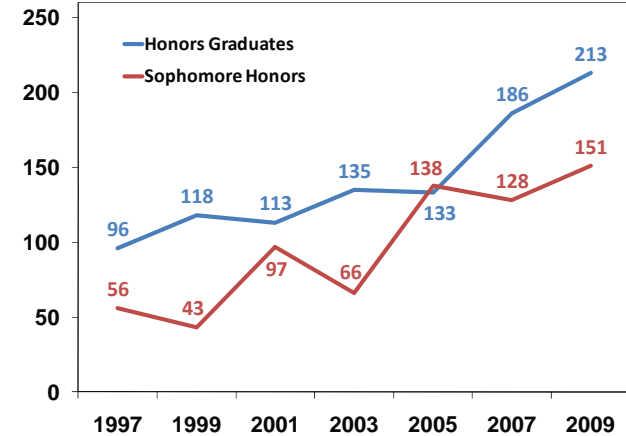
Performance Measure 2: Average combined critical reasoning and quantitative SAT scores and average high school class rank.



Story behind the baseline: The average combined freshman SAT for entering Honors students has increased from 1314 in 1996 to 1395 in 2009 and the average class rank has remained in the top 5%. This substantial increase in SAT scores is all the more impressive in light of the doubling of the size of the first year class during this same period. Entering Honors students are also significantly more academically competitive than the average Storrs freshman. As increasingly bright students are attracted to UConn, they will expect excellent educational experiences. Retention may become an issue. This positive trajectory would be threatened if increased funding is not forthcoming for Honors curriculum or programming or if faculty, departments, or the central administration withdraw their support.

Proposed actions to turn the curve: To continue the trend of attracting increasingly stronger students, UConn will need to focus on "delivering on our promises." We must retain and build on the quality of Honors students' academic and co-curricular experience including: stimulating Honors classes, required independent research projects, Honors living-learning communities, and support for international study. We must partner with: (1) academic departments to ensure quality advising, build-out additional Honors classes and provide independent research opportunities; (2) the Division of Student Affairs to maintain strong Honors communities; and (3) the UConn Foundation to raise additional funds for enrichment experiences.

Performance Measure 3: Sophomore Honors and Honors Scholar Awardees.



Story behind the baseline: Honors recognitions signify that students have completed the most challenging undergraduate curriculum we offer and are equipped for prestigious national scholarships, elite graduate and professional schools, competitive industry jobs, and ultimately for assuming leadership positions in the State and beyond. The number of students earning Sophomore Honors has more than tripled since 1997 and the number of students graduating as Honors Scholars has more than doubled. That said, there is significant attrition from the program. To obtain optimal value, the University would be better served to have more students earning Honors recognitions. Students may be deterred from program completion from fear of the scope of work involved, lack of support from faculty, or lack of interest or commitment.

Proposed actions to turn the curve: To increase the proportion of students receiving honors recognitions, we must clearly communicate expectations to students and faculty of the value of program completion. We must partner with: (1) faculty and departments to support personalized supervision and mentorship of Honors students; and (2) other university offices to build a community among Honors students and highlight role models. These actions are no-cost but require careful planning and a communications capability. We also need to ensure that sufficient funds are available to support faculty who mentor students in individualized research projects.