

Senate approves honors program

By LISA WILLIAMS

A new Honors Degree Program was approved Wednesday by YSU's Academic Senate even though the University's present Honors Program may be languishing.

The new program, submitted to the Senate by its Honors Programs and Individualized Subcommittee, "is intended to attract and retain superior students, to stimulate faculty interaction and growth, and to serve as a tangible emblem of the University's academic excellence."

The new program is expected to go into effect beginning Fall Quarter, 1983.

According to the proposal distributed among Senators, the program is designed to "create a distinct and continuing community of intellectual excellence by bringing together superior students from diverse disciplines, challenging these students with extraordinary courses, and recognizing their unique academic achievements with a special honors degree."

Those YSU students wishing to enter the Honors Degree Program

must meet the following criteria: 1)

High school graduates with an ACT composite score of 28 or an SAT total score of 1,230 or a grade point average (GPA) of 3.7 on a 4.0 scale. 2) Current YSU students having completed at least 12 quarter hours of college-level studies or students having completed at least 24 quarter hours of college-level studies accepted for credit at YSU (not to include remedial courses or courses designed to make up high school deficiencies) with a cumulative GPA of at least 3.4.

Students must enter the new Honors Program no later than the completion of 90 quarter hours if they are pursuing a baccalaureate degree and no later than the completion of 33 quarter hours if they are pursuing an associate degree.

In order to remain in good standing in the program, students must maintain a grade point average of at least 3.4. Should a student fall short of that average, his eligibility to participate further in the program will be relinquished until his GPA is restored to the 3.4 level.

Once the student is enrolled in the Honors Degree Program, the

student is expected to complete a minimum of 40 hours of honors credit (no more than 20 may be completed in one academic year). At least 12 of those honors credits must be earned in the student's major if he is pursuing a baccalaureate degree.

Requirements are decreased to a minimum of 20 hours of honors credit (no more than 12 may be completed in one academic year) for those students pursuing an associate degree. These students must complete at least eight hours of honors credit in their major.

Additional requirements for those planning to graduate with honors include four University honors seminars, two of which must be upper division, for baccalaureates and two University honors seminars for associates.

While a limited number of honors courses are offered to YSU students and while departments are being discouraged from implementing new courses, honors students do have the opportunity to contract a particular course.

In order to do so, a student must petition a faculty member to take

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any regularly scheduled course for honors credit and the faculty member, should he agree to that contract course, will establish additional specific requirements.

Contract courses must be completed with the grade of 'B' or 'A' in order for the student to be eligible for honors credit and specific additional requirements incorporated into the course must be of at least 'B' in quality.

A grade of 'C' or less will result in the withholding of honors credit.

Various Academic Senators questioned the program's practicality and student interest.

Dr. Bernard J. Yozwiak, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, called the program impractical and opposed the honors program in its entirety.

Yozwiak reminded the Senate that there are no takers in the cur-

rent honors program — due to the fact that it was not publicized adequately or that there were simply no students interested — saying, "We are now talking about a program that goes well beyond what is current — the new program is too ambitious in view of the current program."

Yozwiak also said that "prefixing" a degree with the word "honors" was an indictment on YSU and strange in the field of academia. "Does an Honors Bachelor of Arts Degree from YSU rate higher than a Bachelor of Arts Degree from Oberlin?" asked Yozwiak, in order to make a point.

The dean objected to the diploma title, saying, "It seems to me that a student would be receiving for instance, an 'Honors Bachelor of Arts Degree with Distinction in Psychology *summa cum laude*.'"

Yozwiak did say that he saw the program as "beautiful and idealistic," but not realistic, in

view of the limited number of honors courses available and the reluctance some professors may have in agreeing to a contract course.

Others saw the contracting of various courses as a deposition on faculty, since such courses are not included in the regular work load.

The committee agreed with a majority of comments that the number of variances in the new program would have to be looked at and adjusted as individual cases came up.

Many believe that the program may be impractical, but are willing to give it a shot as a strive for furthered academic excellence at YSU.

"We are equally entitled to regional prominence in academics," said one Senator, in reference to the Board of Trustees resolution to develop YSU athletics to the level of competitive and regional prominence. /