

# Blueprint for Academic Excellence

## South Carolina Honors College, University of South Carolina

### AY 2023-2024 Accomplishments and AY 2024-2025 Plans

#### Goal 1: Maintain and Enhance Curriculum

##### AY2023-2024 Accomplishments

- 4% increase in overall honors courses (596 in AY22-23 to 618 in AY23-24)
- 7% increase in stand-alone honors courses (496 in AY22-23 to 533 in AY23-24)
- 15% decrease in H10 “meets with” courses (100 in AY22-23 to 85 in AY23-24)
- The average class size remained at 16 (cf. national average of 18.1).
- Grew experiential learning courses, including 14 service learning, 5 study abroad, and 8 domestic study away.

##### AY2024-2025 Plans

- Increase Honors Carolina-Core Science for non-science majors and Analytical Reasoning courses by 5%.
- Develop low-cost or no-cost study away opportunities (domestic and short-term).
- Assess the honors curriculum and implement any pedagogical changes and enhancements indicated.

**Goal 2: Cultivate Faculty Involvement and Engagement:** Draw upon faculty from all disciplines to recruit, teach, mentor honors students and support national fellowship applicants.

##### AY2023-2024 Accomplishments

- With the Center for Teaching Excellence offered workshops for faculty interested in getting involved in the Honors College.
- Maintained a diverse group of Honors Faculty Fellows, including our first from Music.
- Held 4 honors pedagogy workshops for new and returning faculty.

##### AY2024-2025 Plans

- Engage with new leadership in academic units seeking collaboration and partnership.
- Recruit 10 new faculty to teach in the Honors College, lead study abroad, and engage in service learning.
- Recruit and onboard ~14 new Faculty Fellows to replace those rolling off.

#### Goal 3: Provide Excellent Academic Advising and Support

##### AY2023-2024 Accomplishments

- 93% satisfaction rate for Honors advising.
- New senior class reflection: 80% met with an advisor.
- Half of our advising staff are active in NACADA, participate in regional conferences, and one advisor received an award for outstanding 1<sup>st</sup>-gen support.

##### AY2024-2025 Plans

- Evaluate feasibility and advisability of dual advisement models.
- Increase student participation by 10% in advising workshops for incoming students.
- Build on existing relationships with cross-campus partnerships, enhancing collaboration (meetings, communications).
- Enrich staff development: presentation of research, literature reviews, national orgs.
- Increase participation in senior reflection.

**Goal 4: Support and Advance National Fellowship Advisement:** Identify, encourage, and prepare USC students and recent alumni to compete for national and international awards.

##### AY2022-2023 Accomplishments (complete)

- New records set in AY22-23: # of applications (346), winners (112), funding (\$4.4 million).

### **AY2023-2024 Accomplishments (in progress)**

- 288 applicants and 17 winners so far (most awards pending).
- Student contacts up 24% overall.
- Reached 513 students during orientation.
- New offerings: Graduate Fellowships Bootcamp, 1-credit course for national fellowship prep.

### **AY2024-2025 Plans**

- > 300 applications, at minimum 5% increase over the 5-year average (target: 283): via programming, outreach, and one-on-one appointments.
- Increase SCHC applicants by 10% over previous 3-year average (target: 138).

## **Goal 5: Maintain and Enrich Student Engagement**

### **AY2023-2024 Accomplishments**

- Continued a remarkable number of events, large (Flotilla, Family Picnic, Bedtime Stories) to small (CMA trips, concerts, creative arts).
- New affinity groups—Honors Q and Latina X.
- Robust student involvement in organizing annual events such as the Gala.
- Utilized social media and a weekly newsletter to engage our student community.

### **AY2024-2025 Plans**

- Analyze survey data to develop initiatives to enhance the senior year experience.
- Enhance the peer mentor program by matching first-year students with experienced upper-class mentors for support and engagement that extends into the spring semester.

**Goal 6: Cultivate Top Scholar Engagement:** The Top Scholars, ~200 students who receive USC's most prestigious scholarships, enjoy high-impact activities designed to develop their full potential.

### **AY2023-2024 Accomplishments**

- Engagement in activities increased by 5.8% (target was 5%) for fall programs.
- Upperclassman participation in high-impact activities increased by 3% to 98%.
- Participation by juniors in non-academic advising increased by 36% (target was 5%).

### **AY2024-2025 Plans**

- Investigate the creation of a new Carolina Scholar travel fund (cf. McNair, Stamps).
- Ensure the 4-year retention rate of these students remains at or above 99%.

## **Goal 7: Support Inclusive Excellence**

### **AY2023-2024 Accomplishments**

- Hosted a dinner for students to discuss cultural, community, and inclusion topics.
- Held monthly, optional lunch discussions to foster staff community and engagement. ~60% of staff participated.
- Received grant from Office of Access and Opportunity for annual SCHC Pride event.

### **AY2024-2025 Plans**

- Foster and support students in initiating affinity groups, promoting community, inclusion, and peer engagement.
- Collaborate with other campus departments to work on initiatives that promote inclusive excellence.

## **Goal 8: Maintain and Upgrade Facilities**

### **AY2023-2024 Accomplishments**

- After years of effort, dramatic improvements were made to Harper 320: two large presentation screens, lectern with audio, logo, and cosmetic changes.

### **AY2024-2025 Plans**

- Begin the renovations of Harper College.
- Renovate non-ADA compliant restrooms in DeSaussure College.
- Add classroom space.
- Begin the Honors Residence Hall wing, to include residential, educational, recreational and office space.