

Below is the agenda for our upcoming meeting on October 2nd at 10:00 a.m. in O'Shaughnessy Science Hall (OSS) room 435. To find this room, enter under the skyway and take the elevator to the 4th floor. Upon exiting the elevator, the room is directly to the right. Look for the colorful window decorations.

We have a lot of information to cover; so, I have attached a few documents (below) in advance for your perusal. I look forward to seeing everyone there.

An assortment of pastries and warm beverages will be provided.

Agenda:

- Introductions and Announcements
- Update on the Program (see attached)
- Roles of the Faculty Board
- Updates on Stakeholder Conversations
- Outlook of the Year Ahead
- Procedural Updates
- New Proposal Proposal (see attached)
- Essence of Honors (see attached)
- Fundraising
- Student Board Updates
- For Future Discussion
 - Automatic Acceptances
 - Essay

Please email me with any additional items to add if time allows.

Sincerely,



Eric H. Fort, Ph.D.

Associate Professor - Department of Chemistry
Director - Aquinas Scholars Honors Program

Aquinas Scholars Honors Program 2023 Vision

-Eric H. Fort, Chemistry Department, Director Fall 2018

"The Aquinas Scholars Honors Program is the undergraduate honors program of the University of St. Thomas. The program aims to enrich the educational experience of the school's most talented and dedicated students by creating a community of scholars committed to academic excellence, achievement, and the ideals of a liberal arts education."

Honors Program Structure:

- Established in 1980 in the College of Arts and Sciences
- Moved to Academic Affairs in 2007
- Honors Director Appointed by AVP for Undergraduate Studies
- Maintains a Faculty Advisory Board and Student Board
- Primarily Funded by Academic Affairs (in-loading support by CAS)
- Curricular requirements: 4 courses and 3 interdisciplinary seminars
- Participation requirements throughout each semester.
- Seminars are tuition free, currently do not count toward Core

Aquinas Honors Program
~4% of student body (250)
28 ACT/ 1200 SAT/ 3.8 GPA
2-12% SOC participation

National Honors Programs
5-6% of student body
26 ACT/ 1200 SAT/ 3.5 GPA
22% SOC participation

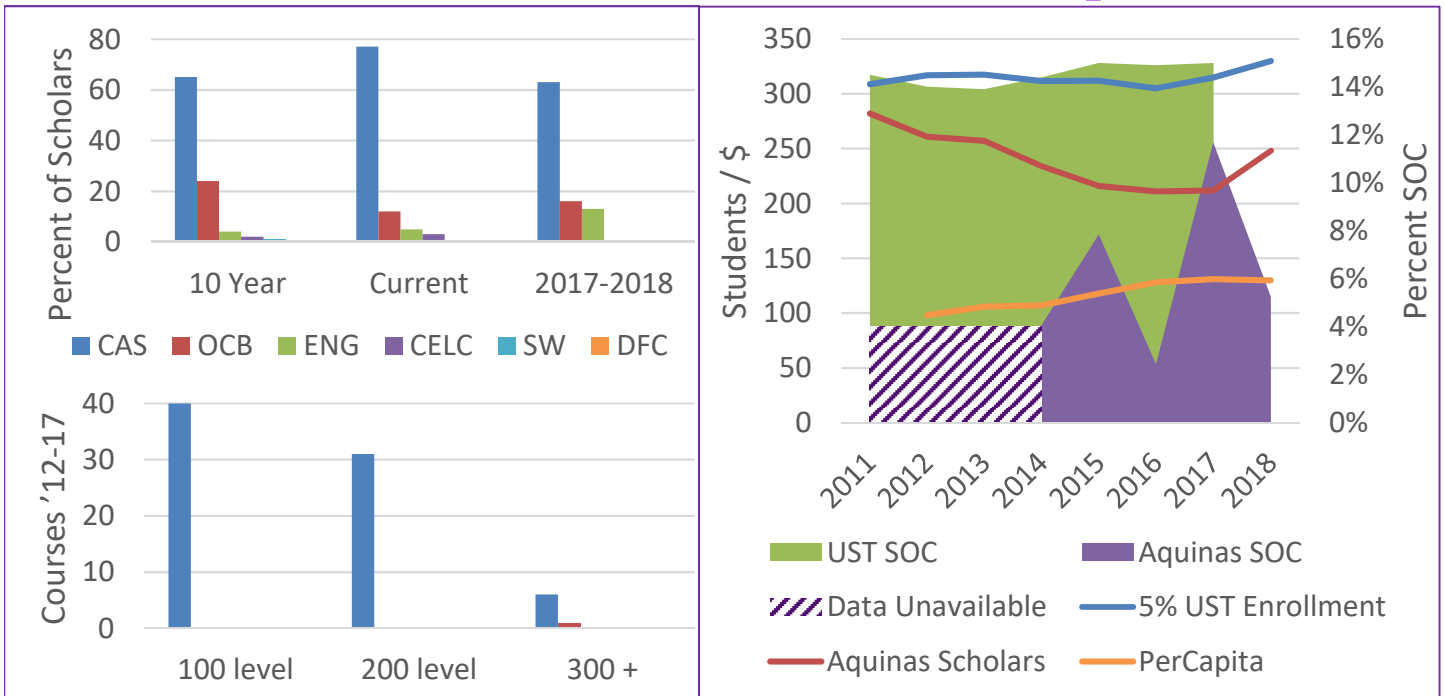
Program Highlights:

- Close-knit Community of Scholars
- Small Classes (<20)
- Honors Lounge
- Living and Learning Community
- Tuition-free Seminars (\$7,500 value)
- Mentorship Program

Recent Initiatives:

- Pioneered the current Living and Learning Community Model
- Foster student engagement through cohort model and points system
- Instituted calling nights to connect with applicants
- Established an honors pathway for Dougherty Family College students

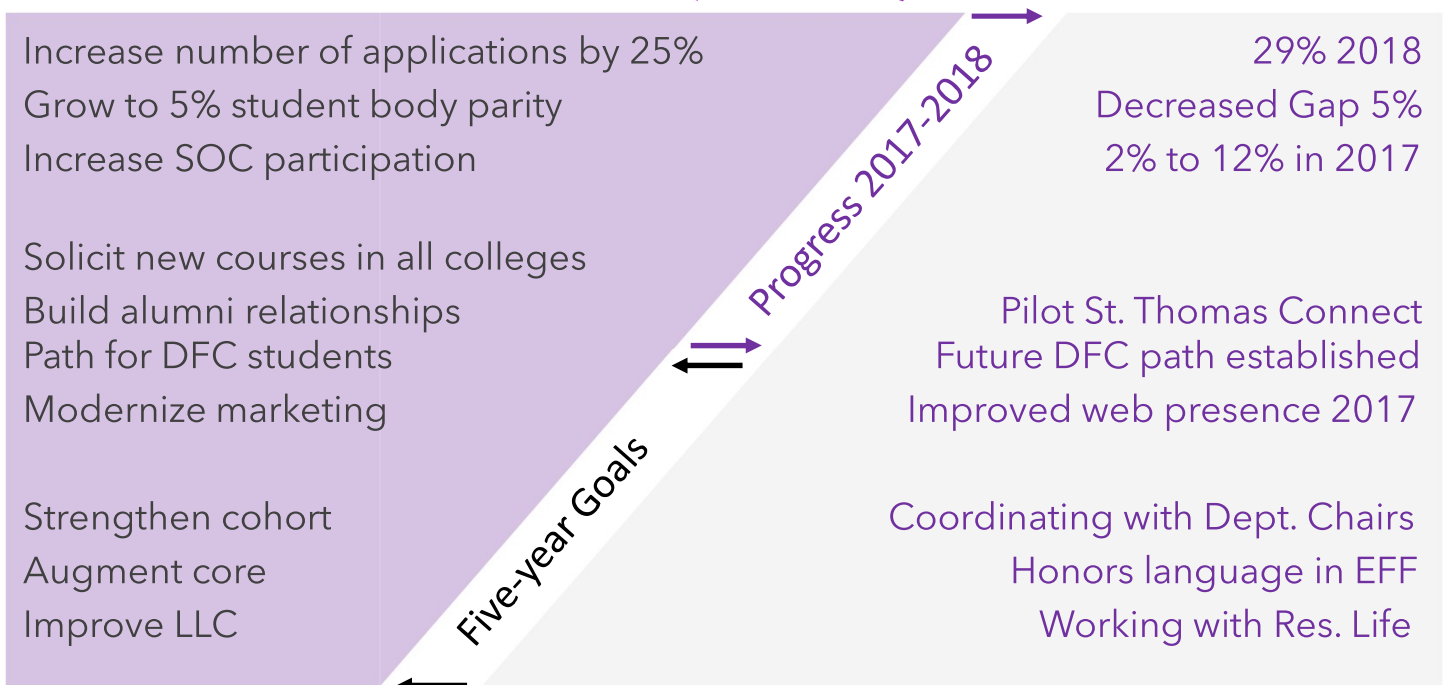
Self-Assessment: Room to Improve



Summary of Data:

- Growth in OCB and ENG
- First Enrollment Increase since 2008
- SOC enrollment below UST
- Budget increased 9% over 10 years
- Per Capita Spending increased 30%

Goals: Grow/Build/Better



Needs: Support and Investment

- Per-capita student support
- Scholarships and fellowships
- University-wide offerings
- In-loading across colleges

Aquinas Scholars Honors Program: Section and Seminar Considerations

The Aquinas Scholars Honors Program facilitates the offering of honors courses referred to as “Sections” and “Seminars” to fulfil the requirements of students in the Honors Program. Sections are typically four-credit courses similar in subject matter to traditional courses though providing an enriched environment for honors students and faculty. Seminars are typically two-credit courses with an interdisciplinary focus and more varied subject matter. When departments and faculty are considering offering a section or seminar, they are encouraged to reflect on the attributes below and try to incorporate them into their course or course proposal.

	An Exemplary Course...
H olistic	Supports the student as a whole. Promotes critical thinking. Provides multidisciplinary perspectives. Develops leadership skills or thinking. Exposes students to diverse world-views and promotes civil discourse of the topics.
O rganization	Is appropriately formatted for honors students. Includes a good balance of discussion and participation. Has a well thought-out syllabus and structure. Shows thoughtful planning. Uses appropriate supporting materials.
N ovelty	Approaches topics in an interesting manner. Stands apart from non-honors courses in topic, format, instructor, pedagogy, or experience. Produces a unique product or outcome for the students.
O pportunities	Includes enrichment not available in non-honors courses. Encourages students to interact with each other, guests, or society to augment the experience. Provides experiences outside of the classroom when possible.
R igor	Maintains academic rigor with a balanced approach to work “ <i>Smarter not Harder.</i> ” Has high expectations on quality, participation, completion, but does not necessarily rely on volume of work as a definition of quality.
S cholarship	Provides the student with knowledge as well as experience. Is accessible to the targeted honors audience. Has an appropriate depth and breadth of information for the subject matter.

More information regarding the Program can be found at www.stthomas.edu/aquinasscholars or by contacting me directly.

Sincerely,



Eric H. Fort, Ph.D.

Associate Professor - Department of Chemistry
Director - Aquinas Scholars Honors Program

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f (651) 962-5201

This proposal template has descriptive text written in purple. Please delete all purple text and this header prior to submission. Any questions regarding the course proposal, Aquinas Scholars seminars, or the Honors Program can be directed to the program director at aquinasdir@stthomas.edu.

COURSE PROPOSAL AQUINAS SCHOLARS HONORS PROGRAM

Seminar Title: _____

Seminar titles are best when creative, descriptive, and succinct. Often a confusing title has been a measurable barrier to filling a seminar and running the course. Try to provide a reasonable title, it is possible to adjust after seminar approval by the board.

CONTACT DETAILS

PROFESSOR #1		PROFESSOR #2	
Name:		Name:	
Dept.:		Dept.:	
Email:		Email:	
Phone:		Phone:	

Course Preferences (Check all boxes that apply)

Please indicate all reasonable times and days you could teach. We try to ensure that seminars do not conflict to accommodate busy student schedules. This also gives instructors a better chance at filling the course.

Semester	<input type="checkbox"/> Fall <input type="checkbox"/> Spring <input type="checkbox"/> J-Term <input type="checkbox"/> Summer
Day of Week	<input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> T <input type="checkbox"/> W <input type="checkbox"/> Th <input type="checkbox"/> F
Time	<input type="checkbox"/> Early Morning <input type="checkbox"/> Late Morning <input type="checkbox"/> Early Afternoon <input type="checkbox"/> Late Afternoon
Course Offered Before? When? How Often? How different from previous offering?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Compensation Preference

In-loading helps the program offer more seminars. If you are unsure of your department's policy, please inquire or ask the Honors Director regarding past in-loading experience from your department or college. An email from the chair or dean forwarded to aquinasdir@stthomas.edu is sufficient permission to indicate in-load is possible.

Professor 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Overload \$2700 <input type="checkbox"/> In-load – part of course load* <input type="checkbox"/> Either
Professor 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Overload \$2700 <input type="checkbox"/> In-load – part of course load* <input type="checkbox"/> Either
Chair/Dean Permission	* Required for in-loaded courses.

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Seminar Title: _____

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Course Short Description (Suitable for Distribution to Students)

This course description is distributed to students and is the primary method to garner interest and enrollment. In the past, students have indicated preference for descriptions that place the course in appropriate social or cultural context, describe the subject and goals of the course, and include interesting details regarding the course syllabus (see example proposals). Descriptions are best if fewer than 200 words, though that is not a requirement.

Course Detailed Description (Used by Faculty Board to Evaluate Proposal)

We encourage applicants to look at the example proposals provided to see variations on course proposals; however, the following are broad course-types that have been successfully offered in the past.

Experiential: Some seminars have a primary focus on experiential learning. This may involve events, interviews, service, or some other form of activity (meditation, design, etc.). These courses often use low-stakes reflection assignments or journaling as a primary assessment. A final presentation or some other culminating assignment is often included. Please be mindful to articulate the academic content of this type of course for the faculty board. In addition to just experiencing something, please describe what knowledge is gained from each experience and how that fits into your proposed interdisciplinary theme.

Conversational: Some seminars cover current-events or rapidly developing topics such as a new scientific innovation. These courses often involve short to medium-length readings followed by detailed in-class discussion. Often, these types of seminars will require semi-frequent 1-2 page writing assignments. These assignments, as well as participation, make up the bulk of the grade. A large final assignment should be considered carefully, introduced early, and often works best as a group assignment rather than an individual work. Since the exact topics are usually relevant to the semester the course is offered, it is often difficult to have an exact list of resources. In this case, please provide a reasonable list of topics and benchmark works that will be used as backup if the current events do not perfectly line up with the course progression.

Academic: Some seminars build throughout the course to a grand overarching academic theme. Each class period is adding to a particular facet of the theme. Discussion is encouraged and short to medium-length writing assignments are used to synthesize a group of themes more infrequently than in the rapid conversational style. This type of seminar often focuses on a larger culminating paper or presentation showing a broad grasp of the subject and development of themes throughout the semester. This type of course can often lose its interdisciplinary nature if the theme to closely aligns with one particular discipline or literary work. Please describe how you plan on maintaining the interdisciplinary nature of this course in your classroom.

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Instructors, Goals, Schedule, and Resources

The more detailed the better. In a few sentences, describe the background, interests and expertise that each instructor brings to the seminar. Include the manner in which the two professors will utilize their background to produce a truly inter-disciplinary course. Include a preliminary schedule (or descriptive course plan) for the course showing how the subject is distributed during the course period. Include preliminary list of resources to be used in the course, such as, text(s), articles, videos, and experiences. Use more space if necessary.

Instructor Backgrounds:

Interdisciplinary Plan:

Course Schedule:

List of Resources:

The detailed description is one of the main ways the Faculty Board evaluate course proposals. Every year bears unique circumstances (budget, competing topics, seasonal preferences); therefore, the proposals are weighed in many ways. With none of these constraints, however, the main evaluation criteria are:

- Interdisciplinary Nature
- Preparation of Proposal
- Likelihood for Success
- Student Engagement and Perceptions

A well thought out proposal and course will consider these items. Any questions regarding these items can be directed to the Honors Director aquinasdir@stthomas.edu

Course Assessment/Evaluation/Expectations

The more detailed the better. Please describe what assignments (i.e., papers, reflections, journals, discussions, presentations, projects, performances, exams, etc.) will be expected of students. Describe what students will do to integrate or synthesize the disciplinary approaches they will be considering in the seminar. A preliminary grading breakdown, indicating the weight of each type of assignment as a percent of the overall grade is required.

Type and number of assignments:

How assignments add to interdisciplinary nature:

Grade breakdown for the course:

This section is an important gauge used by the board. A well thought-out course plan should include the number and types of assignments expected of the students. Evidence from past seminars suggests instructors try to strike a balance regarding assignments and expectations in the course. A numerical breakdown of the grading scheme is an important and effective method to inform the board how the balance is made. Refer to the provided examples for more information.

Any questions regarding these items can be directed to the Honors Director aquinasdir@stthomas.edu