

Florida Atlantic University
Academic Program Review Response
Wilkes Honors College
Site Visit: February 17-19 2019
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On 17-19 February 2019, a team consisting of Dr. Hallie Savage (National Collegiate Honors Council), Dr. Michael Reder (Connecticut College), and Dr. Michael Horswell (Dean, Arts & Letters, FAU) visited the Wilkes Honors College (WHC) on FAU's John D. MacArthur Campus in Jupiter, FL. They conducted a review of the College as part of a seven-year self-study and review cycle. During their visit they met with WHC administrators (Deans, Chairs), faculty members, WHC staff members, current students and alumni, several members of the WHC Advisory Council, leaders in Admissions, Student Life, Public Affairs, and Advancement, as well as senior administrators on the main campus, including the Provost.

Their review indicated that the team developed an excellent understanding of the College including its strengths and opportunities as well as challenges and potential threats. It noted that given its mission, the WHC is well-positioned to play an important role in FAU's Strategic Plan, *Race to Excellence*, which aims to "position itself as a globalized, forward-thinking institution that caters to high-ability students," "expand opportunities for undergraduate students to participate in discovery-based learning," and promote interactive, interdisciplinary teams of researchers and scholars. The committee immediately recognized how the WHC is distinct from other honors programs and honors colleges across the country, pointing to how it has its own designated faculty who are evaluated and tenured within the WHC and how its students may take all 120 credit hours of coursework toward their degree within the College while also benefitting from the presence of other units on campus and throughout the university.

The review team emphasized the following strengths:

- 1) a strong sense of identity and mission of providing a rigorous education that offers transformative experiences;
- 2) the quality of the faculty both as to their educational levels, breadth and depth of teaching, and research and scholarship productivity;
- 3) the quality and diversity of students;
- 4) the quality of the undergraduate honors curriculum that includes a wide variety of concentrations and a strong set of Core Requirements, including the introductory Honors Forum, the Sophomore Writing Portfolio, three interdisciplinary team-taught Critical Inquiry Seminars, the Internship/Study Abroad experience, and the Honors Thesis. Also noted were the Pathway and "4+1" programs in partnership with the main FAU campus;

5) research productivity of the faculty across all disciplines, extramural funding, and strong relationships with the Office of Undergraduate Research and Inquiry, JLSI, the Brain Institute, the Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute, Scripps, and Max Planck; 6) strong administrative leadership team including the Dean, Associate Deans, Chairs, administrative staff members, and Business Manager.

The review team concluded their report noting that the Wilkes Honors College models best practices for student academic success by incorporating the following curricular scaffolding: 1) A required course emphasizing foundational skills in communication and critical reasoning; 2) A sequence of general education, and/or special topics courses; 3) A research seminar that keeps students on track toward a required thesis; and 4) A capstone experience of individual research or creative work. They added that the partnerships between WHC and research institutes, high quality internships, and study abroad experiences distinguish the Wilkes Honors College as a unique honors undergraduate program.

Besides noting these strengths, the reviewers' report is divided into sections labeled “challenges”, “opportunities”, “threats”, and “recommendations”. What follows is an amalgamation of their insights along with our responses to each recommendation.

1. Increase the visibility of the WHC locally and nationally.

The reviewers suggest we improve marketing materials so as to emphasize the energy on campus and the impressive quality of the experience we offer students and how it is much more affordable than what comparable schools offer. They suggest that FAU has yet to capitalize on the Wilkes Honors College story in a way that attracts national recognition and broad awareness.

Specific recommendations included undertaking a marketing study focused on increasing Wilkes’ visibility, especially regionally and nationally, to include internal constituencies as well as external audiences. It was suggested that the College's 20th anniversary is a good opportunity to expand visibility. The reviewers recommended that we emphasize the interdisciplinary strengths of the liberal arts and sciences and highlight the remarkable co-publishing by students and faculty (over 80 peer-reviewed articles and book chapters) as well as continued faculty/student/administrator participation at national conferences such as Council for Undergraduate Research [CUR] and other national and regional conferences.

Response to #1:

We agree that having our students showcase their research at CUR and other conferences would help advance awareness of the WHC on a national level and will continue to pursue such opportunities. This year we also had students present their research at [SACNAS](#) (a STEM diversity conference) and another who won the outstanding poster award at the Florida Academy of Sciences conference. The WHC will host the upcoming Florida Collegiate Honors Council Conference (in the WHC’s 20th Anniversary year).

As for marketing, the Public Affairs team for the northern campuses (MacArthur and HBOI) has noted that many new initiatives that have gone into effect this year, including a new social media presence, the addition of a WHC news piece in every FAU Jupiter newsletter, and new advertising in free local media (e.g., Abacoa newspaper). We have also worked with public affairs to initiate a video advertising campaign and we are in the process of developing a public radio spot. Public affairs noted the high cost of advertising more broadly and recommended that to increase the national presence of the WHC it would be beneficial to market the college within the context of the campus as a pillar or center of excellence within FAU.

The Office of Admissions and Enrollment Management on campus is working during the summer months of 2019 to align our marketing efforts to those of the larger university when developing marketing collaterals, communication campaigns and the use of technological tools (e.g. CRM, NRCCUA). The focus remains in sharing and maximizing resources while maintaining WHC specific messaging to high-ability students who have a strong likelihood of exploring the WHC. Beyond the record admissions number this year for the college, this partnership has the added benefit of drawing additional high-ability students to other FAU programs in both Jupiter and Boca Raton. More than 240 students with WHC touchpoints in the admissions process went to other colleges at FAU, and 17% of admitted WHC students eventually matriculated to other FAU units, demonstrating that the college serves as a magnet for high ability students into FAU.

The synergy between the WHC, Admissions and Enrollment Management, Public Affairs and Advancement for the 20th Anniversary represents an exciting opportunity to increase national awareness and launch the WHC into its third decade and beyond. In response to this review, we have initiated a visioning process exploring the roles that the WHC plays in the larger vision for serving high ability students in Jupiter from high school through placement into FAU's graduate programs. With the build-out in personnel in Public Affairs, Advancement, and Student Affairs, we are poised to collaboratively raise the profile of the college, campus, and the university in the coming years.

2) The name of the school.

The reviewers suggest that the entirety of the name "Wilkes Honors College of FAU" may not resonate with our target market. The need is to better message/brand the distinctive nature of the College and place a greater emphasis on 'Wilkes'. Clearer linkages of the experience to the unique research partnerships at Scripps, Max Planck, and the Brain Institute, faculty mentoring, and experiential learning opportunities seem to be needed.

Response to #2:

Prior to 2016 the name "Honors College" (without Wilkes) had been commonly used by College and University personnel. Former Dean Ellen Goldey made it a priority to emphasize "Wilkes" in creating national name recognition for FAU's very distinctive honors college and promoting "WHC" as the shorthand name within the University. Some honors colleges distinguish their distinctive brand via the (donor's) name, sometimes as a stand-alone identifier, as in "*Barrett*, the Honors College at Arizona

State," see <https://barretthonors.asu.edu>. Penn State, on the other hand, uses the full name, *Schreyer Honors College* at Penn State.

Given the rapidly growing reputation of Florida Atlantic University within the state and nationally, we believe that the *Wilkes Honors College of Florida Atlantic University* remains the best name and branding strategy for the school moving forward. Our goal is to make this name synonymous with the multiple and unique research partnerships, interdisciplinary curriculum, faculty mentoring, community engagement, and experiential learning opportunities available to our students here in Jupiter.

3) Reaching goals for Increased Enrollment.

The review committee noted that with enhanced marketing, promotion, and intentional recruitment, the WHC should be able to incrementally grow to meet the goals set by the Administration. They noted that being a Hispanic Serving Institution and being located in South Florida, the WHC might particularly appeal to students in Chicago, New York, Boston, Los Angeles, and cities in Texas. In addition, students could be recruited from schools where Wilkes alumni currently teach or have connections. Wilkes should explore partnerships with high schools in major cities, particularly science magnet schools. (See also point 6, below, on accommodating the influx of high school students starting in Fall 2020.)

The committee recommended as essential that recruitment goals targeting a total 800 students be carefully planned in incremental steps to ensure ongoing academic quality and maintain a low student-to-faculty ratio; the plan should take into account scholarship needs, facility needs including teaching labs, the recognition of the limited capacity of partners like Scripps and Max Planck to provide individual research experiences for all undergraduate students, the needs for more faculty and additional course offerings, administrative support (including a possible additional faculty secretary and support for the business manager).

Finally, the committee included particular recommendations concerning admissions, indicating that reliance on quantitative criteria such as test scores has costs and recommending the use of letters of recommendations, personal statements, and other measures that consider a student's motivation.

Response to #3:

Three of the major initiatives implemented during the 2018/2019 recruiting cycles have proven to be extremely successful, as the College has experienced a significant growth in First Time in College (FTIC) admission deposits. First, more than 750 students completed and submitted a Common App application. For year one, we are encouraged by the generated demand which led to over 400 of those students to be admitted to the University and the Wilkes Honors College. As of July 25th, 82 of those FTIC students have deposited and 76 are enrolled at the Wilkes Honors College for the Fall 2019 semester along with an additional 96 FTIC students who came through the regular FAU admissions process. Adding transfer students and subtracting a modest melt among the FTICs, we anticipate an incoming class of more than 200 students for this fall.

Second, the revamp of our financial aid awarding model has allowed for institutional aid to be inclusive of both merit and need funds. This initiative has allowed for a better allocation of scholarship funds while still attracting students to the Jupiter campus through scholarship opportunities. We have stretched our scholarship dollars while simultaneously increasing our enrollments. However, moving forward we will need to raise significant foundation funds to meet our obligations to incoming students. Doubling the student body will likely entail doubling our scholarship dollar expenses both from E&G and endowment funds.

Third, our partnership with Student Life and Enrollment Management has been extremely productive in harmonizing the efforts of the entire university recruitment and admissions apparatus with our college admissions. From prospect lists to CRM communications, every part of the admissions process is now attuned to the task of bringing high achieving students not only into the WHC but across the colleges at FAU. We anticipate another record-breaking admissions year in 2020.

We also agree that out-of-state marketing to high schools in cities where our alumni are located is an excellent strategy and will pursue this strategy in collaboration with Student Life and Enrollment Management.

4) Addressing the curricular needs to accommodate growth of enrollment.

The reviewers recognized that increased enrollment will create challenges with current resources. They commented that the traditional higher education mandate to “do more with less” has certainly impacted the Wilkes Honors College. More specifically, they note that small classes and an individualized educational experience help make the education exceptional, and help attract the kinds of students that the college wishes to enroll. In particular, it will be difficult to ensure sufficient internship and research opportunities at Scripps, Max Planck, and within FAU faculty labs if growth occurs too rapidly. The reviewers noted a need for more faculty lines in the college to accommodate growth. They also note that there is some concern that the STEM emphasis may crowd out the Humanities and Social Science disciplines that have been a hallmark of the College.

Response to #4: We agree that with growth will come the need to increase faculty, support personnel, and facilities. We cannot emphasize enough how encouraging it is that FAU’s President and Provost have pledged that we will not exceed a 15:1 student to faculty ratio, as small classes and faculty mentoring are the key building blocks of a top-tier honors college. As noted above, current projections are that the incoming FTICs will increase in the Fall by more than 60% over prior years, and the new MP-FAU Academy will add up to 50 more “FTIC-equivalent” students to the WHC classes in 2020. Therefore, it is conceivable that the first-year student population will increase $\geq 200\%$ in just two years, which will, in turn, lead to increased demand for upper-level courses in subsequent years. The need for financial investment from the university is critical to maintaining the expected excellence of the WHC and MP-FAU Academy programs.

Adjuncts and faculty overloads will likely be needed in the short term, but it is imperative that students have the ability to forge long-term relationships with faculty who will ultimately direct their theses, write letters of recommendation, advise students to ensure their timely graduation, and provide guidance regarding graduate and professional schools and career options. If we are to retain the students in these larger classes through graduation we must provide them with the same honors curricular and co-curricular experiences that attracted them to the college in the first place. We will implement a 5-year hiring plan to meet this enrollment growth in collaboration with the office of the Provost.

While the concerns the reviewers raised about STEM potentially crowding out the Humanities and Social Sciences are understandable, we see an opportunity where the reviewers see a threat. The interdisciplinary core and curriculum of the WHC is designed to produce well-rounded critical thinkers who understand that the challenges facing our world do not fit into neat disciplinary boxes. For example, the use of big data and artificial intelligence carry important ethical and practical implications that require multi-disciplinary approaches. How and where we apply our new understandings of how the brain works is mediated and extended by studies and findings from the social sciences and humanities. From climate change to economic development, the major challenges we face today require that teams bring scientific, ethical, policy, economic, and social perspectives together to address problems. Which questions we ask in our research, how we frame them, and how we interpret those findings have normative and empirical implications that can only be teased out by students and investigators who are well-versed in a variety of disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives. The Wilkes Honors College of FAU is uniquely suited to train and produce precisely those sorts of investigators.

We welcome this opportunity to grow both our student body and the impact of our interdisciplinary curriculum. Our team-taught course requirement ensures that students engage with multiple disciplinary perspectives frequently crossing the boundaries of the sciences and the humanities and social sciences. Perhaps most importantly, we are also aware that as our profile and size on FAU's John D. MacArthur campus grows, the strength and numbers of our humanities and social science students will grow as well. We will continue to work closely with our colleagues in Enrollment Management to ensure that our recruiting process draws promising students in the humanities and social sciences to maintain a healthy distribution across disciplines within the college.

5) Addressing physical plant needs to accommodate growth of enrollment.

The review committee emphasized the need to grow classroom and lab space as well as other campus amenities, including services for students support, options for dining, and the need for a bookstore and gym facilities. They noted the strong connection between honors housing and maintaining a strong sense of honors community and stated that to meet growth targets, more housing will be needed. They also emphasized the need for adequate lab and classroom space.

Response to #5: Not long after the review committee's visit, a proposal to build an additional 165-bed residence hall with wellness facilities on the Jupiter campus was approved by the BOG and announced on campus. While currently classroom space in Jupiter can accommodate WHC growth, projections for teaching-lab space for STEM courses in the HC building will be beyond capacity by Fall 2022 requiring additional facilities for teaching labs. We agree that additional support and facilities will be needed to ensure that the campus continues to meet the needs of the growing student body as these projections only include WHC and MPA students, not additional growth from the CoS.

6) Accommodating the influx of high school juniors and seniors from the Max Planck Academy.

The Review Team observed one of the biggest related challenges is the potentially large and sudden influx of high school juniors and seniors into classes and labs at the WHC. The first class of between 35 and 50 high school juniors is expected to matriculate in Fall 2020. The review team noted that at the main FAU campus the partnership with the Henderson High School works in part because those students are easily absorbed into a campus of more than 20,000 students in hundreds of different courses offered each day.

The review team specifically recommended that WHC major stakeholders come together and work towards a shared understanding of the impact the new Max Planck Academy will have on the WHC. They pointed us to the model of the University of Iowa's Connie Belin and Jacqueline N. Black International Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development is housed in the University of Iowa's Honors Program.

Response to #6: We investigated the University of Iowa's Connie Belin and Jacqueline N. Black International Center for Gifted Education at the University of Iowa and found that there are few parallels with the Max Planck Academy and the Wilkes Honors College of FAU (other than physical proximity of location on the same campus). The Center at Iowa is not targeted toward STEM, involves training for educators, the College of Education, and houses a clinic for assessing counseling services. Furthermore, Iowa's honors program requires only 24 hours of honors coursework or experiential learning and the program does not have its own interdisciplinary curriculum or faculty as does the WHC.

While the example provided was not particularly apt, we have wholeheartedly adopted the recommendation to coordinate and cooperate with other colleges and stakeholders in order to best meet the needs of the MPA high school students. We have established standing meetings with David Kelly and the MPA high school staff to discuss integration of the students into student life, research internships, and other co-curricular activities. We have also set up monthly standing meetings with the CoS and MPA staff to create flight plans for the MPA students in the premedical track in neuroscience and biology as well as plans for psychology and data science. The WHC also put a data science minor in place as well as a data analytics concentration to service both WHC and MPA students.

We are also doing some curricular innovation to meet the needs of both the MPA students and our incoming freshman. We will offer up to four one-credit interdisciplinary co-taught classes during the 2020/2021 year in order to provide an early experience with interdisciplinary problem solving and approaches to these first-year students. We are also investigating all synergies with the WHC curriculum and the MPA research requirements as well as the Max Planck Honors Program to provide the highest quality experience for students in those programs along with WHC students.

7) Assessment of WHC programs

The review committee noted that assessment already conducted by the College is well-conceived and executed, but they recommended a deeper assessment of honors education, including referring to the *Rubrics for Honors Evaluation and Benchmarking Criteria* developed by the NCHC. They noted that collection of course-assessment data is part of this process and is already in place at the WHC.

Response to # 7: Assessment is addressed at a University-wide level by TASL (Team for Assurance of Student Learning) with representatives from each college, many of whom have very impressive knowledge of assessment, and this recommendation will be shared with the TASL team as it continually evaluates our means of assessment across the university. We also note that the WHC participates in the ongoing university-wide IFP and WAC assessment processes. Insights from our assessments are incorporated into curricular innovations and pedagogical grant applications.

8) Retention and graduation rates.

The review committee noted that levels of retention and program completion at WHC are consistent with national trends. They note that close faculty-student relationships and strong student advisement contribute to the successful completion of the rigorous capstone experience, and thus, graduation. Once again, they note the importance of maintaining a low faculty-student ratio, given the intensive nature of the academic mentorship at the heart of the College's mission.

Response to #8: We agree with the importance of keeping the faculty-student ratio sufficiently low to maintain our high-quality, student-centered program and strong graduation and retention rates. A low ratio is critical to keeping class sizes at a level where students develop their writing skills through repeated practice and extensive feedback (across *all* disciplines) and develop their public-speaking abilities through in-class discussion and presentations, which prepares them for culminating presentations at the WHC's annual research symposium, other FAU and national conference venues, and success in graduate and professional programs. The low student-to-faculty ratio is also important for maintaining high-quality advising by the faculty advisors and especially for the labor-intensive mentoring needed to guide students to successful completion of their honors theses, a seminal part of the WHC's research-oriented curriculum.

With the assistance of a university-wide effort to monitor student progress, we believe there is room for further improvement in monitoring student progress, and reaching out to those in trouble in order to retain them. Recently faculty advisors had the opportunity to

be trained in Starfish, which provides information about students to the advisor, and allows faculty advisors to create notes and contact the student. The head of undergraduate academic advising, Joe Murray, has been supportive with this project and we hope to have further training sessions. We are also exploring a potential hybrid advising model (professional advising staff and faculty advisors) for MPA students.

We have also formed an enrollment management and retention committee chaired by the associate dean and initiated standing meetings with key staff members from student affairs, academic affairs, housing, and financial aid to track and assist students before they reach a crisis state or consider leaving FAU. While it may take time for these investments to pay off in the numbers, we believe these measures to be critical for improving retention and graduation rates for the larger incoming classes of 2019 and beyond.

9) Continue to engage Advisory Council and alumni support of the Honors College.

The review notes that the WHC Advisory Council has developed a clear understanding of its mission and strategic role, and is highly energetic and engaged. It recommends making full use of this body for development and recruiting and also to grow involvement of alumni in these efforts.

Response to #9: We are confident that we are already making great progress in this area. The members of the Advisory Council have this year identified specific sub committees, which include Marketing/Events, Development, Council-member recruitment, and Alumni Engagement. The Marketing/Events committee will have a busy 2019/2020 as it is the College's 20th Anniversary, and planning is already underway. Several events are planned that coordinate with the 20th Anniversary of the MacArthur Campus and what it now encompasses since the College opened. The Development committee is working closely with Advancement to identify and cultivate new and existing donors, and the Council is continuously assessing its membership and enlisting the service of new members that diversify the expertise and extend the reach of the AC into the community and beyond. The Alumni subcommittee this year has built the College's first Alumni Chapter, which requires hosting three formal alumni events on campus. These events have been highly successful, and have purposely dovetailed with recruitment efforts (e.g., Open House programs have included highly-popular panels of alumni speaking to prospective students and their families). Our goal is to utilize the 2020 to celebration increase our profile in the community and help to launch Jupiter's role in the capital campaign.

10) Create a formal program to promote pedagogical innovations among faculty at Jupiter and other FAU campuses.

The review committee recommends that we build and disseminate honors-specific instructional strategies and share successful practices with each other and beyond the College.

Response to # 10: The WHC has a long history of innovating and sharing our successful programs with other units throughout the university. From the undergraduate research symposium to social entrepreneurship and community engagement scholarships, we are thrilled to see our programs grow across the university to make all of FAU stronger.

The WHC will increase pedagogical innovations while also expanding curricular STEM offerings by partnering with the College of Science in pursuing NSF, NIH, and HHMI funding for high-impact practices such as course-based undergraduate research experiences, learning communities, and a tiered student mentoring system. With increases in enrollment, we will need creative strategies for scaling up teaching and mentoring and conducting ongoing assessment of new strategies. As a small, flexible environment, the WHC offers an ideal environment for beta testing of novel pedagogical strategies. We will also explore the possibility of initiating a Teacher Training Program that would provide pedagogical training and classroom experience for Max Planck trainees who are seeking to build their classroom skills. The training program would offer professional development opportunities for faculty, postdoctoral, graduate and undergraduate students and would be an attractive component for training program grant proposals. As new teaching and training practices are proven in the WHC, they can be disseminated throughout the university in professional development opportunities provided in partnership with the Provost's Office Fellow for Leadership and Professional Development.

The Provost has also agreed to purchase an online faculty development program from [ACUE](#), which has developed impressive online modules to promote the use of engaging pedagogies and other strategies which increase student persistence and success. We will have faculty that participate in this program next year and in the future. In addition, a group of faculty members across the sciences, art, humanities, and education are working on an NSF grant proposal which would include significant funding for faculty development.

Furthermore, our FAU faculty are also leading faculty development and student support innovations across the university. For example, a WHC Psychology professor designed and pilot tested a faculty training on "Student Crisis Assistance" with 40 WHC faculty and staff and received support from the President, Provosts, and Deans to disseminate it widely throughout the university this year and to present the broader university initiative to the FAU BOT and SUS BOG in the future.

11) Promote prestige scholarships.

The committee suggests that the WHC (and FAU overall) increase student pursuit of nationally/internationally competitive "prestige scholarships," such as Goldwater, in partnership with the Division of Research or Office of Undergraduate Education.

Response to # 11: The Provost has recently established a committee with the Dean of Undergraduate studies that should allow greater resources to be available for advertising these scholarships, identifying prospects, and helping them develop an effective application, and the WHC should play a major role on this committee. We will ensure

that high-performing students are actively advised and encouraged to pursue these awards, beginning in their first year on campus, so they can be developing the skills and knowledge to be highly competitive for these scholarships. Our students would be particularly competitive for NSF Graduate Fellowships as well. To this end, our college prestige scholarship committee will identify prospective applicants during their first-year in the college (and the Max Planck Academy) and begin mentoring them through the application process. Given the WHC's recent success with National Merit Scholar recruitment (with 11 in the incoming 2019 Fall cohort), we anticipate a significant increase in prestige scholarship applications from our students. Our goal is to work closely with the new prestige scholarship committee to generate a minimum of 25 applications for prestige scholarships from WHC students over the next five years.

12. Select and pursue an aspirational benchmark.

In response from a request by the Provost's office for aspirational benchmark comparisons, the reviewers noted that two large public universities with a significant enrollment of STEM students are the **Schreyer College at Pennsylvania State University** and the **Sally McDonald Barksdale Honors College at University of Mississippi**. These are examples of well-endowed honors colleges, one private and the other public.

Response to #12: As noted by the reviewers, the unique nature of the WHC (with a designated faculty and full curriculum of honors coursework) complicates the attempt to find a single benchmark model within another public university. We thus propose the following models to benchmark our metrics: 1) a very high aspirational private college model (Harvey Mudd College); 2) a high aspirational private college model at a large public/private university (Schreyer College at Pennsylvania State); 3) a SUS peer institution of similar projected size that currently ranked in the top 100 liberal arts colleges by *U.S. News and World Report* (New College of Florida).

In 2018/2019 we submitted a comprehensive report on our programs, curriculum, outcomes, faculty, awards, class size, and other key variables to the only national agency that specifically rates and reviews public honors colleges and programs. Of the 50 programs evaluated, we received the top score along with Schreyer College at Pennsylvania State University and five other honors colleges and programs. The other aspirational suggestion (Sally McDonald Barksdale Honors College at University of Mississippi) was rated in the 8-20 range, below our tier.

Our goal is to build upon the key performance indicators that contribute to FAU's overall ranking while growing our numbers to make a greater influence on that ranking. Harvey Mudd College is a STEM-focused private liberal arts college of approximately 900 students with an 8 to 1 student to faculty ratio, 98% resident student population, ranked by Forbes as the top 25 STEM colleges and no 18 in the *US News & World Report's* Best Liberal Arts Colleges. The school has a 98% freshman retention rate, an 85% four-year graduation rate, and a 90% six-year graduation rate. Their incoming FTIC students have an average SAT score of 1520 and they have a 15.4% admissions rate.

Harvey Mudd has an endowment of over \$300 million. We aspire to raise our retention and graduation rates to this tier.

Schreyer College at Pennsylvania State University is a public/private honors college of 2000 students within a large university. The college does not consider SAT scores in admissions but has a reported average of 1450. However, students are required to have only 35 honors credits before they graduate. The school reports a 91% six-year graduation rate and Penn State has a 93% freshman retention rate. Schreyer has consistently been rated in the top tier of honors colleges in *Inside Honors* and Penn State is ranked #20 in public universities. Shreyer has an endowment of more than \$103 million. We aspire to raise our retention and graduation rates and national reputation to this tier.

The New College of Florida is the closest thing to a peer institution for the Wilkes Honors College in the SUS system. The New College has 808 students and calls itself “the” Honors College of Florida. The college has a ten to one student to faculty ratio and claims an incoming FTIC SAT score of 1331. The college reports an 84% freshman retention rate, a 69.5% six -year graduation rate and a 57% four-year graduation rate. The New College was ranked #90 in National Liberal Arts Colleges and #97 in Best Value Schools in the *US News & World Report* 2019 rankings and has an endowment of \$38 million. We aspire to build a national reputation exceeding that of the New College while continuing to pursue graduation and retention rates exceeding theirs.

We will submit a profile again in 2020 for next round of ratings by *Inside Honors* to maintain or improve upon our status as Florida’s top-rated public honors college and one of the top-seven rated honors colleges in the country.