

History of Honors Education

By Eduardo Trejo and Nicholas Wilson

History of Honors Education

- The Honors Education was influenced by Oxford's Tutorial System. Beginning around the 16th century, the tutors served a social purpose. The tutors acted as personal advisors to the young students, teaching them good manners and controlling their financial expenses.



History of Honors Education

- The role of the tutor was to support a student in his academic endeavors and guide them towards successful acquisitions of knowledge. Think of them as the advisors we have today.

History of Honors Education

- It wasn't technically an Honors program until 1800 where a statute was made by Dr. John Eveleigh to which it required all students to take a comprehensive final examination. The results from the examination would put students in three categories, two of which are special or "honorary."



History of Honors Education

- 1. The First Class:
 - It consisted of students "worthy of some eminent commendation." This means that students will get positive respect and praising from faculty.
- 2. The Second Class:
 - It consisted of students "laudable progress." This means that students are worthy of great progress in school.
- 3. The Third Class:
 - It consisted of everyone else who did not get special mention in the examinations but had satisfied the examiners.

Early Attempts of Honors Education

- **Harvard University**
 - Comprehensive exams were required for Honors candidates.
- **University of Michigan**
 - Presented the "University System" where it excused its more talented students from regular requirements.
- **Princeton University**
 - President Woodrow Wilson adopted the "preceptorial system," which was similar to Oxford's tutorial program, in 1905.
- **Columbia University**
 - Inaugurated an early attempt in the form of a three-year program with supplementary reading and yearly final examinations.



History of Honors Education

- **Swarthmore College:**
 - With the help of Frank Aydelotte, the college was able to adapt the idea of Honors Education as higher education. It included ideas from tutorial system and the pass/Honors system from Oxford, active learning.



History of Honors Education

- After that, a man named Joseph Cohen founded a small committee, this committee would be called the *Inter-University Committee of Superior Student (ICSS)*, to form the honors system at the University of Colorado. He was inspired by Aydelotte and took his place as the major advocate of honors education advancement.



History of Honors Education

- After a while, ICSS was replaced by a new organization named The National Colligate Honors Council (NCHC). After the foundation of the NCHC, the honors education grew and advanced to what it is today. If it weren't for all the contributors, colleges, and professors/faculty to advance honors education, the honors system would look very different today.

Work Cited

Rinn, Anne. "Major Forerunners to Honors Education at the Collegiate Level." *Journal of the National Collegiate Honors Council – Online Archive*. University of Nebraska. Fall of 2006.

- <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1022&context=nchcjournal>