**Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Board of Governors amend board statute 2.43.05.100, to approve a reduction from a minimum of 36 credit hours to 28 credit hours required for University Honors, effective Fall 2019.

**Background**

Students in the Irvin D. Reid Honors College may graduate with University Honors, Departmental Honors, or both. Departmental Honors requirements, including required numbers of credits for Honors-designated courses, are set by individual departments. University Honors requirements are set by Board of Governors statutes, which currently require 36 Honors-designated credits among the 120 required for graduation.

**Current Statute Language**

2.43.05.100 **Graduation.** For graduation from the Honors College, students must have a minimum cumulative honor point average of 3.3, and must complete a minimum of 36 credit hours in honors-designated course work (including credits in an independent research project, essay, or thesis). Graduates of the University-wide Honors College will be so recognized on the transcript and diploma.

**Recommended Statute Language**

2.43.05.100 **Graduation.** For graduation from the Honors College, students must have a minimum cumulative honor point average of 3.3, and must complete a minimum of 28 credit hours in honors-designated course work (including credits in an independent research project, essay, or thesis). Graduates of the University-wide Honors College will be so recognized on the transcript and diploma.

**Rationale**

The current 36-hour requirement is substantially higher than most of many peers and Michigan publics (e.g. Michigan State University: 21-28; Eastern Michigan University: 24; Western Michigan University: 18). Reducing the requirement to 28, which is a more typical (but still robust) number, would achieve a number of objectives: It would put is more closely in line with our peers/competitors; it would make it more feasible for students to graduate with University Honors within 4 years; and it would make it easier for us to maintain quality-control over Honors-designated courses. Currently, students lean heavily on “Honors Options,” which allow them by agreement of the professor to receive Honors designation for non-Honors sections by way of additional assignments or projects. Many students have reported difficulty in finding sufficient Honors courses to meet the 36-hour requirement within four years.
The National Collegiate Honors Council website states that in a fully developed Honors College, “The curriculum of the honors college constitutes at least 20% of the student’s degree program.”\(^1\) 28 credits would comfortably meet that guideline; indeed, it would constitute nearly 25% of most degrees.

**Accommodations for Current Students**

Current students will be allowed to complete their program based on requirements at the time of admission or the revised requirements according to university policy.

**Approvals**

This change has been voted upon and unanimously approved by the Honors Council, which controls curriculum for the Honors College and consists in a representative from each of the Undergraduate Schools or Colleges, plus two student representatives. This recommendation has also been approved by the Provost.

\(^1\) [https://www.nchchonors.org/uploaded/NCHC_FILES/PDFs/NCHC_Basic_Characteristics-College_2017.pdf](https://www.nchchonors.org/uploaded/NCHC_FILES/PDFs/NCHC_Basic_Characteristics-College_2017.pdf), point 9.