

FIU | Honors College



FIU

Honors College

FIU HONORS COLLEGE

**STRATEGIC PLAN
2020-2025**

INTRODUCTION

Our strategic plan is anchored in the belief that building and strengthening the Honors College helps build and strengthen FIU. We support FIU's efforts to be recognized as a top 50 public university by making sure our students reach their highest potential through their education and experience at FIU. Our students buoy many of FIU's metrics as established by the State University System Board of Governors and U.S. News & World Report. We also understand that access and social mobility are critically important for the lives of our students, their families, our communities, and for FIU. Our goals, mission, values, and vision remain the same.

DEAN'S MESSAGE

In Spring 2020, the Honors College was completing the review of our strategic plan that would clearly state the unit's priorities and would align with FIU's Next Horizon 2020 - 2025 Strategic Plan. At around the same time, the COVID-19 pandemic erupted and suspended our lives. Like all other university units at FIU, we responded to the new circumstances by quickly going to remote operations and by doing all we could to support our students, faculty, and staff face the challenges of the emerging world of the coronavirus. We also began to examine our plans for the Fall semester and in turn, to question the present and future of higher education and the role of an Honors College at a large, urban, minority-serving university.

The new circumstances necessitated a fresh view at our strategic plan, although our goal remained the same: **to become a top-ranked Honors College with a national reputation for excellence and innovation by 2025.**

To achieve this goal, we have selected the following priorities:

- Expanding opportunities for undergraduate research
- Encouraging students to become global citizens
- Preparing students for the jobs and professions of the future
- Developing the infrastructure to support the Honors College and the Strategic Plan

ABOUT HONORS

OUR MISSION

The Honors College is the center of undergraduate academic excellence at FIU. We are also the most powerful engine for student success at the university. We are a community of students, faculty, and staff from all backgrounds and disciplines who are dedicated to excellence in all pursuits. We offer a unique academic and social experience that is compatible with all majors, transcends disciplines, and encourages our students to become life-long learners.

OUR VISION

The Honors College will foster a student-centered community and achieve global recognition by providing a transformative education and motivating our students to discover their passions and maximize their full potential.

OUR VALUES

Excellence: We achieve the highest standards of scholarship and performance through an exceptional community of faculty, staff, and students.

Diverse Perspectives: We cultivate an inclusive environment for learning that promotes diversity by recognizing the uniqueness of each individual, promoting the exploration of different cultures, and building upon our differences.

Experiential Learning: We believe learning happens through action and experiences that further enhance knowledge and skills.

Global Citizenship: We create global citizens who are aware of the wider world and engage with their local and global communities with the belief that we can all make a difference.

Integrity and Accountability: We exemplify honesty, honor, and responsibility in all we do.

ABOUT HONORS

The Honors College marked its thirtieth year in 2020. Over 6,000 students have graduated in their majors through the Honors College in that time. Many have gone on to become leaders in their fields from engineering to medicine, entrepreneurs to actors. What started as a small program of 100 students, has grown with the university, all while keeping to the mission, values, and core curriculum it retains to this day.

Today, the FIU Honors College is home to almost 2,800 ambitious, curious, and open-minded students drawn from every major and college at FIU. We bring them together with top faculty and practitioners from a variety of fields through a unique curriculum that works alongside any major and transcends disciplines. We focus on helping students develop the intellectual and vocational abilities they need to succeed at FIU and beyond.

We invest in the success of our students – we nurture curiosity and intellectual development, support their involvement in research and creative activities, encourage their participation in civic activities and leadership opportunities, help prepare them for their next steps whether it is continued education or the workplace. And finally, we urge them to give back to their Alma Mater after they graduate.



PRIORITY #1: Expanding opportunities for undergraduate research

The Honors College will promote and expand the culture of research and excellence at the College by supporting the work of our students, faculty, adjunct fellows, and research mentors. The promotion and support of undergraduate research and creative projects is one of our strategic priorities.

All students engage in some substantial research activity during their time at the Honors College. A smaller group participates in the Advanced Research and Creativity in Honors program (ARCH) - the center of our undergraduate research effort. ARCH provides opportunities for Honors College students to engage in supervised research and creative projects in any subject field under the supervision of FIU faculty experts. The students write research or departmental theses, research apprenticeships, senior design projects, performances, exhibits, and other projects. The students are required to present their work at the Undergraduate Research FIU Conference during the Spring semester. They are also encouraged to present their work at other venues and can apply to ARCH for project support and funds to attend conferences.

Goals by 2025

Students

- 100% of students will participate in at least one of the following: meaningful mentored research, significant community-based research projects, research or departmental thesis, a creative project (performance, exhibit, reading), engage in international learning experience (COIL), start a business, participate in study abroad, or complete a substantial internship in their chosen field
- Double the number of Honors College students participating in ARCH from 120 (2020) to 250 (2025)
- Grow the number of students participating in the annual URFIU Conference (Honors and non-Honors) as a way to involve, encourage, and engage students in research above most recent pre-COVID numbers (200 to 350 presenters, 350 to 500 attendees)

Resources

- Create a named endowment to support research scholarships for students
- Expand support for student participation in internal and external conferences

Research Community

- Increase engagement with FIU faculty and the research community through info-sessions, workshops, and social events to recruit research mentors and garner support for Honors College students
- Establish ORCID ID's for all freshmen Honors students (in the Fall IDH 1931 class) and for transfer students new to the Honors College – in addition to the existing ORCID ID's of ARCH participants
- Track faculty, staff, and student research in Scholars@FIU
- Collaborate with the FIU Center for Excellence & Writing to create a new undergraduate research journal to capture ARCH productivity

PRIORITY #2: Global Citizenship

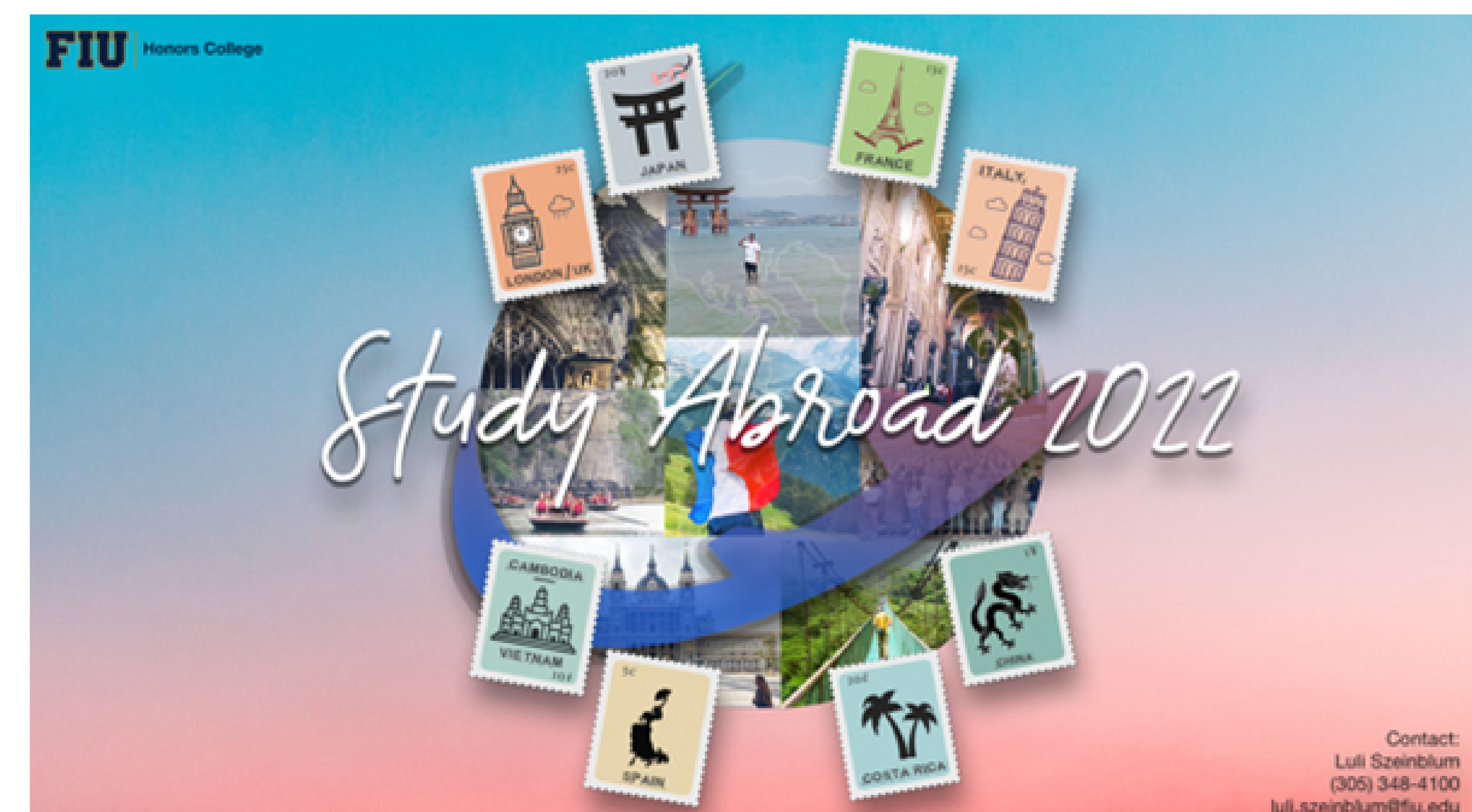
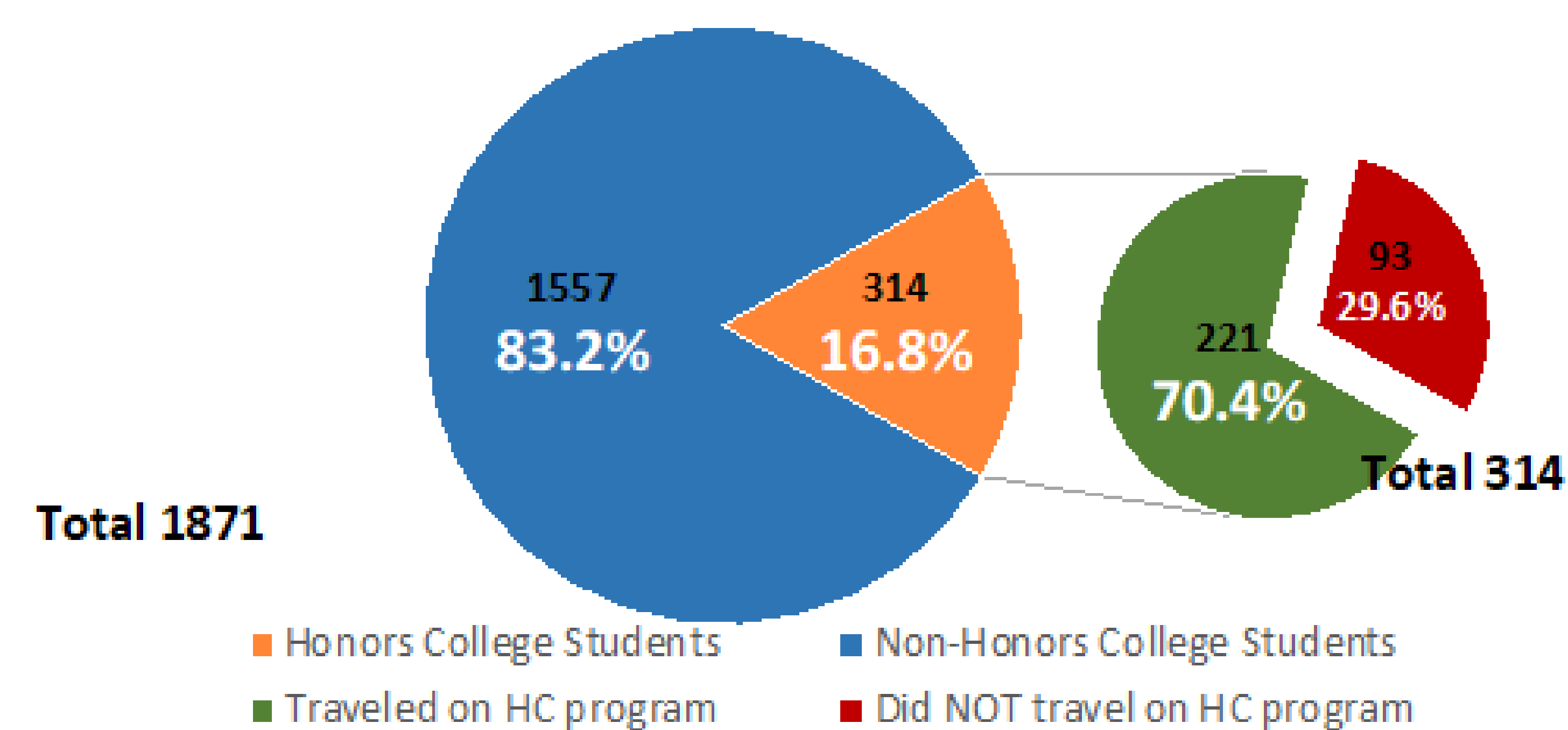
The Honors College strives to create global citizens who are aware of the wider world and engage with their local and global communities with the belief that we can all make a difference. COVID-19 forced us to rethink what global citizenship means for the Honors College. The conversation took us beyond study abroad and our Global Learning-certified courses (all IDH 3004, all IDH 3005), and took us to a discussion of access and variety. We want to increase the number of students participating in Study Abroad, Study USA programs, as well as COIL courses. New programs can be created, but equity demands we gave an opportunity to those who could not afford the time or money to participate. We will accomplish this by adding courses including shorter, less-expensive programs, and by creating a scholarship fund to help Pell-eligible students afford the opportunity to travel.

Study Abroad

The Honors College currently has eight Study Abroad Programs: France, Italy, Spain, Japan, Costa Rica, Vietnam/Cambodia. The United Kingdom was added in 2018 and China in 2019. The programs consist of a Spring semester course with the travel occurring in Summer A or B. The programs are popular with our students. During the period 2017 – 2019, 13% of all Honors College participated in travel abroad. Almost 17% of all FIU students traveling abroad were Honors College students who in turn, make up approximately 6% of the undergraduate population. Approximately 30% of our students who travel abroad, do so on other non-Honors university programs.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, programs were suspended in 2020 and 2021.

Honors College Students
Participation in FIU Study Abroad
2017 - 2019



PRIORITY #2: Global Citizenship

Study USA

The creation of the Study USA program was a response to the ban on international travel. Study USA programs consist of a semester-long course, with domestic travel of no more than ten days embedded in the curriculum. There are currently three in preparation for Summer 2022. They are Civil Rights Journey (Atlanta-Alabama), Orlando-Tech, and New Orleans: Liminality in Religion, History and Identity. We are working in collaboration with Casa Cuba and the Cuban Research Institute that uses the US travels of Jose Marti in the late 19th century to understand immigrant communities today and in the time of Marti (Key West, Tampa, New York).

Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL)

COIL is an innovative program that matches FIU courses with classes at universities outside the United States. Students engage in joint projects. Maybe FIU students engage in joint projects with students at partnering, international universities.

Goals by 2025

- 20% of all Honors College students will study abroad, participate in Study USA, or take a COIL course
- Introduce one new Study Abroad program
- Launch Study USA program
- Creation of an endowed travel scholarship fund for Pell-eligible students
- Hire an Assistant Coordinator to assist the Senior Coordinator for Study Abroad/Study USA (by Summer 2022)
- 20% of all Honors College students will take at least one COIL course
- 20% of all upper division courses will be COIL
- Designate an Honors College faculty fellow for COIL to recruit instructors, guide course development, and serve as liaison between the Honors College and the FIU COIL office

PRIORITY #3: Preparation for the jobs and professions of the future

The Honors College helps prepare students for success after graduation whether they decide to enter the workforce or continue their education. Our interdisciplinary curriculum emphasizes critical thinking, inquiry, curiosity, and rigor. We also stress values and characteristics that will make our students more competitive, competent, and confident as they move through the next quarter of the twenty-first century. Our students are encouraged to get internships (and micro-internships) and jobs in order to gain experience and get an advantage. We also stress the importance of mentorship and coaching as they move through their undergraduate education.

Each semester the Honors College offers almost two dozen courses that incorporate internship opportunities into the curriculum with the instructor providing coaching and referrals to students. Most of these classes are in the clusters Technology and Innovation, Pre-Law, and Business, Entrepreneurship, and Leadership. Notable among these courses are the Softbank Operator School, Innovation Nation, and Criminal Legal Internships.

The Honors College has had an increased demand from companies specifically requesting our students as interns. Students are recruited directly through the Honors College by local and national companies large and small such as CDR Maguire, Goja LLC, Amerant Bank, and Baptist Health South Florida because of the quality of our students and their diversity. Multinational corporations such as Morgan Stanley have formed partnerships with the Honors College and developed an internship-apprenticeship hybrid where our students work, receive training, and get a stipend during a 1 ½ year, four rotation program that is intending to culminate in employment.

A new program was launched in Fall 2021 which connects Honors students with opportunities for paid micro-internships in local start-ups and in larger companies that are part of the #MiamiTech scene. The program is a partnership between the Honors College, the Shrimp Society (a community of local early-stage startups), The Human Cloud, and Parker-Dewey.

PRIORITY #3: Preparation for the jobs and professions of the future

Goals by 2025

Institutional

- Establish an Office for Careers and Professional Development
- Hire a director for Internships and Talent Development to help match students to internships or micro-internships, prepare students to review resumes, prepare students for interviews, and work with university partners and counterparts
- Hire a director for External Partnerships and Industry Pipelines to connect students and VIP industry partners for internships, mentoring, and apprenticeships leading to employment through exclusive partnerships, e.g., Morgan Stanley

Partnerships

- Increase the number of apprenticeship-style partnerships and industry pipelines to six
- Establish micro-internship pipelines in various tech-related industries
- Establish a mechanism to more formally connect students with alumni
- Create badges and micro-credentials designed to enhance professional development

Programming

- Create series of talks and workshops by entrepreneurs, innovators and leaders from top companies from around the world



PRIORITY #4: **Developing the infrastructure to support the Honors College and Strategic Plan**

To reach our goal of becoming a top-ranked Honors College with a national reputation for excellence and innovation by 2025 requires we constantly reexamine our mission and operations to assure we invest resources wisely. In addition to FIU sources (e.g., AIM) and our own indicators, we look to our peer colleges, the National Collegiate Honors Council, and the Council of Honors Education – APLU for reference as we strive to develop the institutional, physical, and communications infrastructure to support the Honors College and the Strategic Plan.



PRIORITY #4: **Developing the infrastructure to support the Honors College and Strategic Plan**

Goals by 2025

Reorganization and Institutional Review

- Invite external reviews to identify best practices and experiences to help the Honors College become a top-ranked program with a national reputation
- Complete and implement organizational reorganization plan
- Hire staff to support the programs, students, and academic mission of the Honors College

Space

- Create a signature space in a highly visible location at FIU for student use and administrative offices

Communications

- Assemble a media/communications team to include:
 - Multimedia content producer
 - Social media-website director
 - Publications and marketing director
- Work with FIU media and external affairs to coordinate, prepare, and disseminate printed and digital materials



HONORS COLLEGE METRICS

Performance Indicator	FIU 2018 Actuals	FIU 2025 Goals	Honors College 2018 Actuals	Honors College 2025 Goals
FTIC 2-yr Retention Rate	88%	90%	96%	98%
FTIC 6-yr Graduation Rate	57%	70%	85%	95%
FTIC 4-yr Graduation Rate	39%	60%	76%	95%
AA Transfer 4-yr Graduation Rate	67%	70%	94%	98%
Percent bachelor's graduates employed (\$25K) or enrolled	68%	73%	68%	75%
Percentage of alumni giving annually	4%	18%	11.8% (2020-2021)	25%

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U.S. News & World Report Metrics

Metrics	Weight	FIU 2021	FIU 2022	FIU Diff.	Honors 2020	Honors 2021	Honors Diff.
Average 6-year graduation rate	17.60%	58%	61%	3	93%	92%	-1%
Class Size Indicator Rank	8.00%	358	352	-6			
% of classes with fewer than 20 students	0.00%	30.4%	34.6%	4.2	12%	97%	85%
% of classes with 20-49 students	0.00%	52.1%	49.9%	-2.2	88%	3%	-85%
% of classes with 50 or more students	0.00%	17.5%	15.5%	-2	0%	0%	0%
Average first-year student retention rate	4.40%	89%	89.8%	0.8	97.9%	96%	-1.9%
6-year grad rate of students who receive Pell Grant	2.50%	64%	68%	4	93.3%	91.5%	-1.8%
Diff. between 6-yr grad rates of Pell & non-Pell recipients	2.50%	4%	3%	-1	2%	0.5%	-1.5%
Student/faculty ratio	1.00%	25	23	-2	20	19	1

APPENDIX

Inside Honors Methodology - 2021

Metrics	Weights	FIU Honors SAT 1329	Arkansas ****1/2 SAT 1325	ASU ****1/2 SAT 1370	UCF **** SAT 1465	Clemson **** SAT 1483	Average SAT 1409
Honors Curriculum Requirement	20%	12-19	12-36	21-36	25-29	18-30	30.2
Number of Honors Sections	10%	219	225	243	203	-	#
Number of Honors Sections in 15 key disciplines	10%	n/a	86	176	82	76	#
Honors Enrollment	10%	2700	3055	7228	2280	1643	1870
Average Honors Class Size	6.25%	19	17.1	15.8	18.1	17.4	18.4
Overall Honors Class Size	6.25%	19	20.1	36.8	18.1	18.4	22.7
FT FTIC 4-Year Graduation Rate	3.33%	87%	66%	-	69%	-	-
6-Year FTIC Grad Rate	3.33%	92%	-	88%	87%	97%	89%
2-Year AA Transfer Grad Rate	3.33%	61%	-	-	-	-	-
Staff-to-Student Ratio	7.50%	1:245	1:105	1:59	1:111	1:117	1:112
Honors Housing Amenities	7.50%	Parkview	Private hall	Honors campus	Tower III	Honors Residential	#
Availability of Honors Housing	2.50%	500+	642	1942	497	400	#
Prestigious Awards (lifetime)	7.50%	n/a	81	149	(3.5*)	(3.5*)	#
Priority Registration	2.50%	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

FIU

*Peer Honors College ratings with ***** (5 stars) being the highest score. FIU Honors College not rated.*

Source: John Willingham, Inside Honors 2020-2021