

**Recommendation from the Honors Program Workgroup  
as reached unanimously on 27 March 2026  
Prepared for the 4/29/26 Academic Senate Meeting  
On behalf of the Honors Program Workgroup  
by Matthew Martin and Nick Perrone, Honors Program Workgroup Co-Chairs**

**Background:**

An Honors Transfer Program (HTP) offers students an enriching educational experience that prepares them for the academic expectations once they transfer, and currently, more than fifty two-year colleges across the state of California have an Honors Transfer Program. These programs combine Honors-level coursework across disciplines, regular counseling support, Honors-specific transfer opportunities, access to scholarships, and academically and culturally enriching events like statewide community college honors research symposiums. Altogether, HTPs create a synergized, supported, and motivating educational experience for our students, with several of these programs reporting 90-97% of their HTP students transferring to a four-year (West Valley College and Glendale Community College). Every UC-transferable course is eligible for Honors credit, meaning students can personalize and tailor their Honors experience to align with their passions and goals.

**Recommendation:**

The Honors Program Workgroup of the Academic Senate, comprised of nine faculty members from nine departments, voted unanimously to recommend that Santa Rosa Junior College move forward with the creation of an Honors Transfer Program (HTP). This vote came after exploring the incredible work being done by many of the HTP programs throughout the state, along with careful consideration of the requirements to be a recognized HTP as put forward by the Honors Transfer Council of California (HTCC) and the UCLA Transfer Alliance Program (UCLA TAP). We believe it is important to meet the requirements for each.

While it is only required to be recognized by HTCC to have a viable HTP, as you can see in the attached crosswalk, the requirements for both programs are incredibly similar, and by meeting the requirements for both, we're giving our students access to scholarship/grant opportunities, access to statewide research conferences, virtual Honors Transfer Fairs, transfer partnerships around the country, and more specifically, to UCLA, the university with the highest number of transfer applications per year. While there is a National Collegiate Honors Council, through consultation with Diedre Cavazzi, the Honors Program Director at Saddleback College, we concluded it is not necessary to join NCHC, and this is something that can be revisited in the future.

**Reasoning**

The Honors Program Workgroup believes that creating an HTP aligns with the district's Mission, Vision, and Values. A conscientiously designed program will “encompass excellence, freedom, and responsibility in academics that promote civic engagement, a love of learning, and success for all students,” encourage “innovation, collaboration, and restorative justice that identifies and removes oppressive structures,” and highlight “our commitment to sustainability and social equity.”

The scope of each HTP is tailored to the individual district and community, highlighting and celebrating the values of the district as part of the program and structure. Requirements for earning an Honors Certificate can be designed to not only measure GPA and number of courses, but they can also encompass a level of community service, engagement with campus activities, and utilization of counseling services, for example. This allows for a program that builds off of and taps into the robust infrastructure and programming SRJC already offers. Events like the Student Research Conference, the We the Future Conference, the Intramural Speech and Performance Tournament, Arts and Lectures Series, WOLM events, and events put on by the Sawubona B.L.O.C. and Intercultural Centers are just some of the many opportunities we already have at SRJC that can pair beautifully with an HTP.

Equity will be at the forefront of an SRJC HTP as it will be designed with the intention of removing the historic barriers that have oppressed and othered our students. For example, we can decide to have no GPA minimum requirement for joining the HTP, offering every student a clean slate and open invitation to join the program, regardless of past academic performance. There is potential to model this program after successful equity-focused learning communities like the Puente Project, APASS, and Umoja—programs proven to increase the persistence and retention rates of our students. We can even embed honors courses into these proven programs.

It is the belief of the workgroup that the creation of an HTP at Santa Rosa Junior College will not only offer our students an enhanced educational opportunity and give them new opportunities for transfer, but it also has the potential to invigorate our district and synergize some of the great work we're already doing.

## HTCC & UCLA TAP – Requirements Crosswalk

This crosswalk compares the membership requirements of the **Honors Transfer Council of California (HTCC)** and the **UCLA Transfer Alliance Program (TAP)**. Both programs share the same core 15-unit honors coursework threshold and the same foundational structures, but differ in specificity and partnership obligations.

Category	HTCC requirement	UCLA TAP requirement	Alignment
<b>Minimum honors units</b>	≥15 semester units (or quarter equivalent) of honors coursework; 25% of lower-division coursework	≥15 UC-transferable semester units of honors/scholars coursework	<b>Both</b> <i>Identical threshold; TAP adds UC-transferability requirement</i>
<b>Minimum completion GPA</b>	3.0 or above	Establish student performance criteria (entrance, maintenance, completion) – Must align with HTCC floor	<b>Both</b>
<b>Course types allowed</b>	Honors/scholars courses and/or contracts	Honors/scholars courses, contract honors/scholars, or combinations	<b>Both</b>
<b>Course enrichment &amp; rigor</b>	Courses develop critical thinking, research, writing, and oral communication; small class size for appropriate faculty/student ratio	Research opportunities, reading/writing, analysis, critical thinking, use of technology; experimental pedagogies; hands-on experiences	<b>Both</b> <i>TAP is more explicit on pedagogy</i>
<b>Breadth of offerings</b>	Campus-wide; courses from various disciplines	IGETC coverage and major prep; courses needed for UCLA transfer offered regularly	<b>Both</b> <i>TAP adds UCLA-transfer-specific curriculum guarantee</i>
<b>Faculty leadership</b>	Program headed by instructional faculty; director compensated via reassigned time and/or stipend	Faculty Coordinator to oversee program and liaise with UCLA TAP Council; reassigned time or overload pay if not a primary role	<b>Both</b>
<b>Dedicated counselor(s)</b>	Counseling made available to support students including transfer planning	At least one designated counselor required; separate from Coordinator role; must be knowledgeable about TAP, UCLA & UC admission; participate in TAP Council; compensated if not primary role	<b>Both</b> <i>TAP is substantially more prescriptive – separate role, knowledge requirements, Council participation</i>
<b>Advisory/governance group</b>	Multidisciplinary advisory council	Advisory or policy-making group composed of faculty, students, and administrators; program reports to the academic dean or VP	<b>Both</b> <i>TAP specifies stakeholder composition and reporting chain</i>

<b>Physical space &amp; clerical support</b>	Dedicated physical space; clerical assistance commensurate with program size	On-campus office location; clerical support; access to space for students	<b>Both</b>
<b>Equity &amp; underrepresented students</b>	Concerted, continuous recruitment from underrepresented populations; welcoming to students of all backgrounds (religion, age, ethnicity, orientation, nationality, gender identity, disability, economic status)	Evidence of efforts to encourage participation of historically underrepresented students; opportunities for non-traditional (part-time, returning, older) students	<b>Both</b> <i>HTCC's language is broader and more explicit; TAP adds non-traditional student access</i>
<b>Program assessment</b>	Not specified	Written plan for program assessment and accountability required	<b>TAP only</b>
<b>Communication plan</b>	Not specified	Effective communication among students, faculty, and counselors for disseminating program information	<b>TAP only</b>
<b>Presidential / administrative endorsement</b>	Not specified	Written evidence of support from the Community College President	<b>TAP only</b>
<b>UCLA-specific obligations</b>	Not applicable	UCLA provides priority consideration for certified TAP applicants; scholarships info; college-specific data; recruitment support; library cards; data confidentiality	<b>TAP only</b> <i>Reciprocal obligations from UCLA – unique to TAP's partnership structure</i>
<b>Annual dues</b>	Annual dues of 200\$ to HTCC Council (may be waived per bylaws)	None	<b>HTCC only</b> <i>Dues currently set at 200\$ per year.</i>

**Key Takeaways**

- TAP is more prescriptive about staffing: the Faculty Coordinator and Counselor must be separate individuals, but both require the positions.
- TAP uniquely requires a formal program assessment plan, a presidential endorsement letter, and an effective communication strategy. These feel like best practices without significant extra work.
- TAP includes reciprocal UCLA obligations (priority consideration, library cards, scholarship data) – with no HTCC equivalent.
- HTCC requires annual dues of 200\$ to the Council; TAP does not require any membership fee.
- **A college meeting HTCC requirements will largely satisfy TAP requirements.**

Links for the original documents: [UCLA TAP Requirements](#) and [HTCC Requirements](#)

## **Benefits of an Honors Transfer Program**

Honors Transfer Programs have wide-sweeping benefits to our students, faculty, and district overall. Listed below are some of the many benefits, but note some of these are dependent on the scope of the Honors Transfer Program. This list should be seen as potential benefits we can create.

### **Transfer Benefits:**

Membership in the [Honors Transfer Council of California](#), which provides scholarship opportunities and transfer partnerships to over thirty-five universities throughout the country

- [UCLA Transfer Alliance Program \(TAP\)](#)
- Various Transfer Partnerships, including but not limited to:
  - [UC Davis University Honors Transfer Program](#)
  - [CSU Sacramento Honors Transfer Program](#)
  - [CSU Sacramento's Black Honors College](#)
- Receive the Honors designation on their transcripts for each Honors contract course they successfully complete

### **Academic Benefits:**

- A supportive community of peers, staff, and faculty
- Opportunities for original, semester-long, self-initiated research projects
- Deeper relationships with faculty-mentors
- Gain experience as an undergraduate research student; this is a unique opportunity for community college students seeking to transfer
- Develop research skills for major and/or for graduate school
- Opportunities to experience interdisciplinary research forums
- Close academic and social interaction with other highly motivated students
- The opportunity to do exciting and challenging coursework geared toward those who wish to achieve beyond what is normally required for lower-division classes
- The opportunity to participate in the statewide community college honors research symposium held at either Stanford University or UC Berkeley each spring ([Bay Honors Consortium](#))

### **Other Potential Benefits**

- Dedicated Counseling & Academic Advisors
- Field Trips/Events
- Leadership Opportunities
- The opportunity to become a student leader or member of the Honors Club
- Honors Certification Completion
- Honors receptions, special lectures, cultural events, tours of universities, and awards ceremonies