Graduating with Honors

John Brown University’s Honors Scholars Program began in the fall of 1987. The faculty and administration decided to move ahead with the idea after receiving multiple requests from prospective students and observing the success of similar programs in other institutions. Dr. Shirley Thomas, professor of English, served as the first director. The purpose of the Honors program was to provide classes in a unique format for those who wanted an alternative academic experience. Officials also hoped it would provide a sense of community and camaraderie for students with similar motivation and interests. Initial applicants were required to have a GPA of 3.5 to join and complete 15 hours of honors classes in order to graduate with an honors degree. The program graduated its first class in 1991 and quickly grew to seventy-five students within its first three years.

The program encouraged community among its members by establishing an Honors center where students could come to study, relax and spend time with their fellow classmates. The center was housed in a series of different locations: the Blood Memorial building, the basement of the townhouses and, finally, in the former residence of the president.

Through the years, Honors students have had the opportunity for many unique experiences such as writing a book during the 2002 Political Thought class, doing original research for an Honors thesis and presenting at academic conferences. They have participated in the life of JBU by leading chapel services, and organizing events such as poetry slams and campus-wide Jeopardy tournaments. They also sought to minister to the greater community through service projects.

The Honors Scholars program today, under the guidance of History professor Dr. Trisha Possey, has grown exponentially, boasting over 200 members. GPA requirements have increased, as have the number of hours required to graduate with an honors degree. Students continue to be actively involved in academic pursuits and campus life.

Milestones

October 11, 2001
The registrar’s office begins allowing students to register for classes and check class schedules and grades online.

October 11, 1985
The university announces that five night classes will be added to the schedule for the coming spring semester.

October 22, 1993
California Dorm celebrates its 70th anniversary
What the immediate future has in store none of us can know. One thing sure, everyone of us should push the battle for God and Christ and righteousness until the final culmination comes.

The same admonition that Christ gave to his disciples just before the ascension (Acts 1:7) is just as applicable today as then—“It is not for you to know the times or season, which the Father hath put in His power,” and thank God the command there given is just as binding today as then (Acts 1:8) “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

Oh children of the King everywhere, our business is to push the battle; and let me assure you that if our Lord delays His coming and there is yet to come a mighty revival that is to sweep the nations and turn them back from the abyss, that revival will come because God’s people found their way back to the old place of petition and intercession.”

Excerpt from “Upon This Rock”