

OCC to offer 2 honors courses in winter

After almost a year-and-a-half of preparation, Oakland Community College will offer two classes for honor students during the upcoming winter semester.

"Honors American Literature" and "Analysis of Social Problems" will be offered from 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. Mondays and Wednesdays on OCC's Orchard Ridge Campus in Farmington Hills.

OCC students attending any one of the college's five campuses may take the honors courses.

"The courses are one of the products of the college's Quest for Excellence program begun in 1984," said Dr. Donald Nichols, academic dean at Orchard Ridge.

"For the past 20 years we have offered the typical two-year transfer and vocational/technical programs, and there was a need to expand our offerings."

A COLLEGE-WIDE committee was established to examine honors programs among the nation's 1,200 community colleges.

OCC faculty and area high school counselors also expressed support for the concept of honors courses.

There was disagreement: Some faculty thought an honors program was elitist while others wanted a full-blown curriculum. The compromise: two pilot courses.

hey felt the availability of the experience would encourage students with high scholastic aptitudes to attend college in the local community.

"One of the complications that arose during the investigation of programs was disagreement over what form the honors program should take. The discussion ranged from faculty who believe that such a program was elitist and inappropriate for community colleges to those who wanted a full-blown honors curriculum," Nichols said.

"The compromise was to begin on a pilot basis with two courses — a class in literature and one in sociology that will start in January and run 15 weeks."

"HONORS AMERICAN LITERATURE" will be taught by OCC faculty Bill Alexander. Selected by students as a favored lecturer and a specialist in his discipline, Alexander will emphasize the works of Southern novelist William Faulkner.

"The course will challenge students to delve deeply into the intricacies of writings of the American 17th and 19th centuries, and focus on the relevancy of themes that span a group of writers and periods of time," Alexander said.

"Analysis of Social Problems" will be taught by OCC faculty Richard Smith. A tenured professor and chairman of the Orchard Ridge sociology department, Smith has been

active in updating curricular approaches and adapting courses to a variety of student populations. He was a finalist in the 1986 OCC outstanding faculty award.

"Over the years, most of the social issues have remained in the 'problem' area. Ecology and women's liberation are among the newest issues."

Students will be asked to use data and observe trends to make projections regarding emerging social problems," Smith said.

ADMISSION TO the Honors Programs is limited to currently enrolled OCC students who have demonstrated academic excellence.

Although a faculty recommendation is required, interested students also may meet with instructors and

express their interest in the program.

The OCC honors committee will evaluate the response to these two new courses, anticipating that a full range of honors courses in the liberal arts will eventually be offered.

New courses for the second-year students are in the development phase. "Advanced Philosophy" will utilize a team-teaching approach

with professors from different subject areas. "World Views" is a course designed to meld cultural, religious, and social-psychological perspectives.

Arrangements are also being made with the college registrar to designate honors sections on student transcripts. The college already denotes high academic achievement on diplomas earned by students.

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Culinary arts open house at OCC campus

A culinary arts open house will start at 7 p.m. Thursday at Oakland Community College's Orchard Ridge Campus in Farmington Hills.

Refreshments will be served, and advanced students will present a competition to be judged by top chefs in the region. Students also will demonstrate cake decorating, table-side cooking, vegetable carving and napkin folding.

The sixth annual open house will be in J Building. The campus is at Orchard Lake Road and I-696 freeway. Information about the culinary arts program is available from the college at 471-7786.

Together, there's so much good we can do.



Professor Richard Smith (left) will teach "Analysis of Social Problems," and Bill Alexander will lead "Honors American Literature."

Oakland Community College's first two honors courses.

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