

*Gifted Education*

*Honors Curriculum*

# From Theory to Practice

Jaclyn M. Chancey, Ph.D.

Jennifer Lease Butts, Ph.D.

Honors Education at Research Universities

May 22, 2019

**UConn**  
HONORS PROGRAM



# Gifted Education Theories

The whole field in about 5 minutes

# Three Paradigms of Gifted Education



- Differentiation
- Gifted Child
- Talent Development

(Dai & Chen, 2013)

# Differentiation



- Every student has individual needs that vary by context
- Pro: Very flexible
- Con: Incompatible with identifying “honors” students

# Gifted Child

---

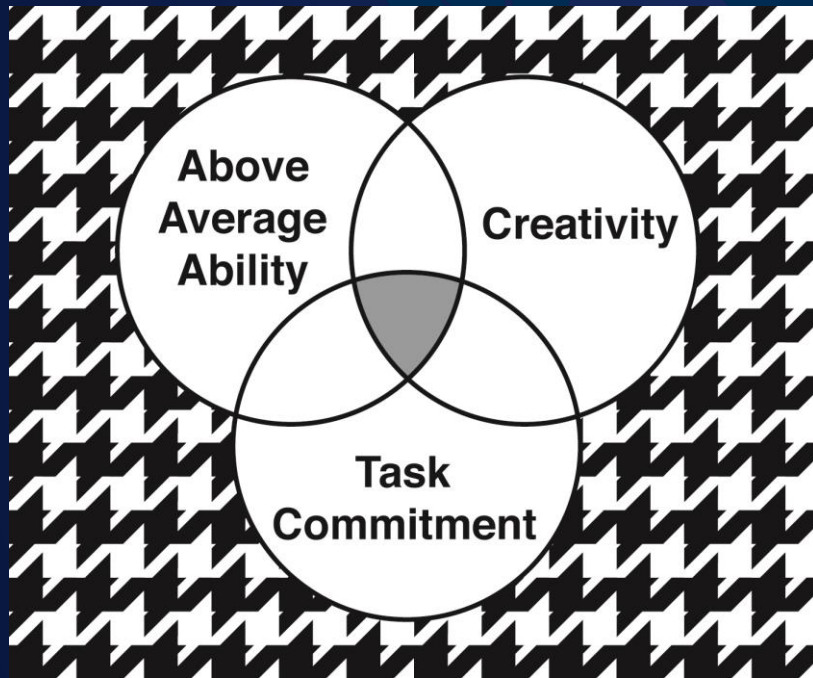
- Particular students identified as “gifted” across all contexts
- Pro: Useful social-emotional theories
- Cons:
  - Exclusivity
  - Incompatible with holistic admissions

# Talent Development

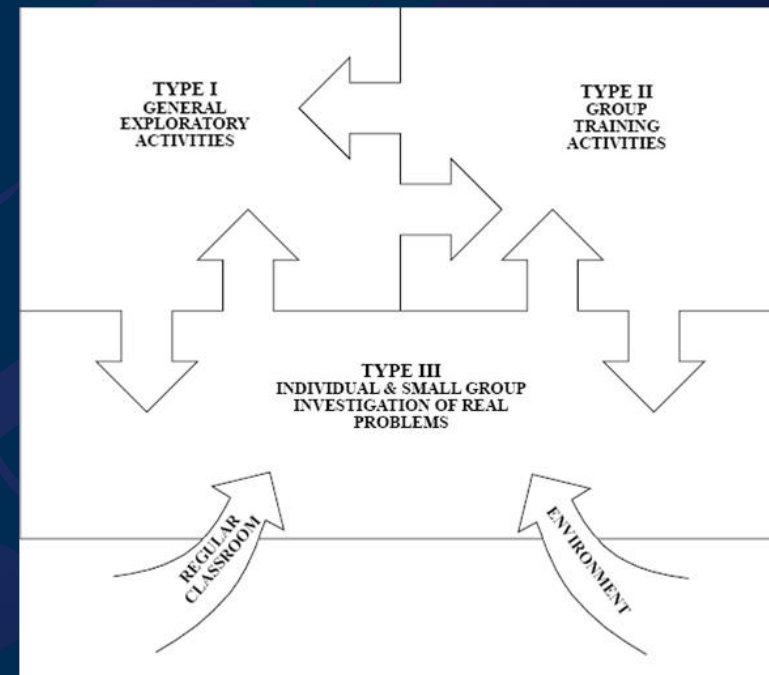
---

- Emphasis on student growth and development, with domain-specific talents beyond the “norm”
- Flexible identification that includes context
- Focus on match between program and student

# Three Ring Conception of Giftedness & Enrichment Triad Model



(Renzulli, 1978)



(Renzulli, 1976)

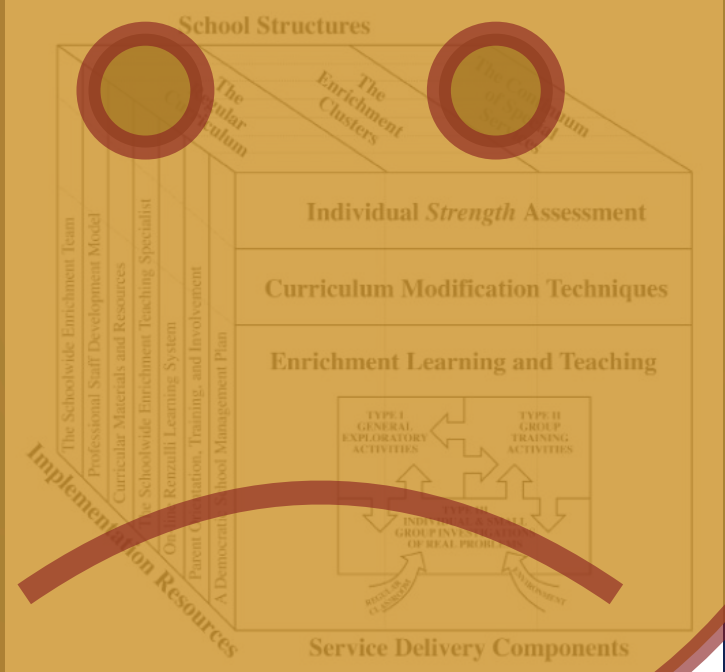
# Major Implications

---

- Creative productivity: Our students change things
- Honors curriculum can:
  1. Reposition the intersection of the Rings
  2. Increase the size of one or more Rings
  3. Practice bringing Rings together
  4. Support Houndstooth background factors



# Schoolwide Enrichment Model



(Renzulli & Reis, 1997)



---

# Curriculum Mapping

---

Without curricular control

# Old model: 2+2

---

- Sophomore Honors: 16 Honors credits, including:
  - Honors First Year Experience (1 credit)
  - Approved interdisciplinary Honors Core (3-4 credits)
  - Honors First Year English (4 credits) *if needed*

# Old model: 2+2

---

- Sophomore Honors: 16 Honors credits
- Honors Scholar: 15 Honors credits, including:
  - Credits in major or related, 2000+ level (9 credits)
  - Additional credits towards thesis (3 credits)
  - Honors in at least 2 subjects
  - “True” Honors course

# Problems

---

- Sophomore Honors
  - Value unclear to students
  - Not recognized at graduation
  - Meaning unclear to most
  - Too rigid; only available for first-year admits
  - ENGL 2011 potential bottleneck

# Problems

---

- Sophomore Honors
- Honors Scholar
  - Breadth/depth difficult for some 3<sup>rd</sup>-year admits
  - Penalized students who earned Sophomore Honors

# What worked well?

---

- Sophomore Honors:
  - Early curricular engagement
  - Interdisciplinary Honors Core
- Mid-career check-in
- Depth and thesis in Major

# Constraints

---

- Honors degrees awarded by schools/colleges
- Must be accessible to all majors and all UConn campuses
- Must accommodate 3 admission points
- Cannot add to total credits required for graduation
- Flexibility and scale: 10% of undergraduates



# Solution

---

- Rigid 2+2 replaced with two overlapping awards with flexible timing
- Honors Scholar award refocused on depth and creative productivity in the major
- New University Honors Laureate adds breadth

# Honors Scholar in the Major

- 15 Honors credits *in major or related*:
  - Credits at any level (3 credits) ← Type 1
  - Credits at 2000+ level (9 credits) ← Type 2
  - Additional credits towards thesis (3 credits) ← Type 3

# University Honors Laureate

- 30 Honors credits
  - Honors Scholar in the Major (15 credits) ← *Type 1,2,3*
  - Additional credits at 2000+ level (6 credits) ← *Type 2*
  - Additional credits at any level (9 credits) ← *Type 1*
- Distributed across all 30 ← *Type 1*
  - Category (Arts & Humanities, Social Sciences, STEM)
  - Diversity & Multiculturalism
  - Interdisciplinary Honors Core ← *Type 1*



---

# Into the Classroom

Where administrators fear to tread

~~What does an Honors class look like?~~

~~How should I teach an Honors class?~~

*What should my Honors class accomplish?*

*What role does my Honors class play in student talent development?*

# Three Teachers

---

- First teacher: enthusiastic, conveys love for the field
- Second teacher: expert training in skills and methods
- “Master” teacher: highest levels of talent development

(Bloom, 1982)

# Future Steps

---

- Assessment & evaluation
- Partnership with Center for Excellence in Teaching & Learning
- Promoting ePortfolio as high impact practice
- Modifying course conversion contract



---

**Questions, Comments, or  
Suggestions?**

---



# THANK YOU!

---

<http://honors.uconn.edu>

[honors@uconn.edu](mailto:honors@uconn.edu)

Jaclyn Chancey

[jaclyn.chancey@uconn.edu](mailto:jaclyn.chancey@uconn.edu)

Jennifer Lease Butts

[jennifer.lease@uconn.edu](mailto:jennifer.lease@uconn.edu)

**UCONN**  
HONORS PROGRAM