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## UMass Boston creates new Honors College

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By Matt Rocheleau, Boston.com Staff

The University of Massachusetts Boston has established an Honors College, campus officials announced.

“The college signifies that UMass Boston takes very seriously its commitment to offering all students an academically challenging, ambitious, and rigorous curriculum,” said a [statement](#) from the founding dean of the Honors College, English professor Rajini Srikanth.

The college grew out of the campus’ two-decade-old University Honors Program. University trustees have approved the creation of the college.

“The Honors College is an integral part of our 25-year strategic plan, demonstrating our commitment to fostering student success,” said Chancellor J. Keith Motley said in a statement. “It’s also yet another example of our rapidly growing reputation for academic excellence.”

Three components set the college apart, campus officials said – “personalized advising, a senior project, and small classes with an interdisciplinary curriculum.”

Classes will include no more than 20 students, which campus officials said will allow for more active and productive discussions.

The senior project will have students conduct an extended study on a particular problem or issue, which they will present and defend to a panel of faculty and fellow students.

During their time in the college, students will keep in touch with honors advisors “about their intellectual ambitions and interests, and address any obstacles to achieving career goals,” campus officials said.

The Honors College “serves students who want to push themselves, who want to enter unfamiliar intellectual terrain, who want to be able to demonstrate their capacity to think across intellectual boundaries,” Srikanth’s statement said.

Another principal objective of college’s curriculum is to give students an understanding of themselves as “global citizens,” officials said.

“It shows the Commonwealth, it shows the country, it shows the rest of the world that we are cultivating students who have complex analytical skills, who appreciate

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connections among different fields of knowledge, who are going to be trained to look at complex problems in really creative and innovative ways, and who appreciate how research isn't just about working in a lab," Srikanth added.

The 400 students currently enrolled in the Honors Program will be automatically enrolled in the Honors College, which has the same admissions requirements, officials said.

Students will continue to be admitted at various stages of their academic careers and will still receive degrees from the colleges in which they have majors; the Honors College does not have its own majors.

The establishment of an Honors College at UMass Boston comes just several months after the university system's flagship campus in Amherst opened a seven-building, \$192-million Commonwealth Honors College complex to house its that officials there hope will help attract top students.

Matt Rocheleau can be reached at [matthew.rocheleau@globe.com](mailto:matthew.rocheleau@globe.com). Looking for more coverage of area colleges and universities? Go to our [Your Campus pages](#).

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